



Teaching Method

***myInfoViz—Working
with Personal Information
Visualisations***



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myInfoViz—Working with Personal Information Visualisations

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Abstract

»myInfoViz« is a teaching method that helps to get to know each other better; it is recommended to be used in the beginning of an collaborative online course.

»myInfoViz« is an information visualisation of ones routines, behaviours, and personal information that aims to introduce each other on the one hand and to learn to collect and to visualise data on the other hand. It takes awhile to design the infographic, so it makes sense to integrate this task into a course that deals with data collection, data structuring, and the presentation of data, structures, and relations in form of infographics and data visualisations.

Description of method

Students are asked to record their daily routines and activities. This is done either manually (writing, sketching) or automated (tracking). The combination of manual and automated data collection within one infographic is possible because data will be selected anyway in the design process (which data do you want to collect, which story do you want to tell).

The collected data are evaluated, which means they are viewed, sorted, and structured, e.g. according to the LATCH principle by Richard Saul Wurman. Wurman notes the finite ways to organise information, that “it can only be organized by location, alphabet, time, category, or hierarchy” but he points to the great possibilities of structuring: “While information may be infinite, the ways of structuring it are not. And once you have a place in which the information can be plugged, it becomes





that much more useful. Your choice will be determined by the story you want to tell. Each way will permit a different understanding of the information—within each are many variations.” (Wurman, R. S. (2001): Information Anxiety 2. Que, Indianapolis, p. 40)

After organisation of collected data, students have to select correct visualisation methods. The representation of quantities, spatial data, principles and structures is the next unit practiced with this teaching method.

Finally, the subtleties of the aesthetic representation are practiced. This is done according to Bertin’s so-called »Graphical Variables« Shape, Size, Valuze, Texture, Colour, and Orientation in a 2d setting. (Bertin, J. (2011): Semiology of Graphics: Diagrams, Networks, Maps. Esri Press, Redlands, California, p. 43)

Implementation of the method into collaborative courses

It is recommended to be used in the beginning of an collaborative online course because the topic of the visualisation is about personal data, routines, and behaviours. So you can use it instead of or additionally to conventional introduction of participants. As content is visualized — e.g. about ones working methods, his or her preferred working tools, and professional experiences, this method is more helpful than an oral idea. However, this requires certain specifications for data collection are given by the teachers.

As it takes awhile to design the infographic, it makes sense to integrate this task into a course that deals with data collection, data structuring, and the presentation of data, structures, and relations in form of infographis and data visualisations.

Material

The personal Annual Report of Nicholas Felton work very well as inspiration for students.

<http://feltron.com/FAR14.html>; <http://feltron.com>



Example

ONE WEEK OF MY LIFE

Uni Days: **THREE**

Working Days: **TWO**

Hours Awake: **123**

Hours Asleep: **42**

Minutes Procrastinated: **HUNDRED-FIFTY-THREE**

Late Regional Trains: **3** (OUT OF 3)

Minutes Showered: **102**

While Procrastinating, I Visited Websites about:

- THE 29 WHITEST FAMILY PHOTOS OF ALL TIME
- 419 NIGERIAN FRAUD
- MYERS-BRIGGS-TYPINDIKATOR
- THE STELLAREXPLOSION BLOG

People I Missed the Most:

- MICHAEL
- LISA
- RAMIN
- SUSAN
- LEA
- MERLE

Daily Sleeping Pattern

Mouse Movement Doing this Graphic (I used IOGraph to make this):

(Some) People I met and talked to longer than 30 minutes.

Visited Places:

Best Overheard Conversation:

HOMELESS GUY: "YOU HAVE SOME CHANGE?"

GIRL: "I DON'T THINK I HAVE SMALL MONEY."

HOMELESS GUY: "GOOD FOR YOU, THAT YOU DON'T KNOW IT..."

Best Place I've Been This Week: **MakeTechX, Platoon Berlin**

Kilometres on the Way: **497,1**

Minutes on the Way: **1106**

Place Furthest Away: **YOUTH CONGRESS 2013, WERBELLINSEE, 71 KM**

I Met Somebody Who Had Had:

AUTOSOMAL DOMINANT POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY DISEASE, RISK OF PARAPLEGIA, REGULARLY DISLOCATED JAW BONE, EXTREME ARACHNOPHOBIA, SLEEPWALKING, BITTEN BY A CLOWN-FISH, BROKEN NOSE, FALLEN FROM THE TEACHER'S DESK

Most Heard Artists:

- SIXTO RODRIGUEZ
- NICOLAS JAAR
- HINDI ZAHRA

How Often I Watered The Flowers: **0**

How Often I Wanted to: **SIX TIMES**

I Tried to Chicken Out of:

- QUIT WORK
- WATER FLOWERS
- VID

Buy Food Vs. Cook Food

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Literature

Bertin, J. (2011): *Semiology of Graphics: Diagrams, Networks, Maps.* Esri Press, Redlands, California, p. 43

Wurman, R. S. (2001): *Information Anxiety 2.* Que, Indianapolis, p. 40

