



20 Top Tips for Creating Infographics

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20 Top Tips for Creating Useful and Eye-catching Infographics People Can't Help Sharing



If 2011 gave us Pinterest, then 2012 gave us the concept of infographics. All over the internet, people – and businesses – took to infographics like small children to mud puddles.

Infographics provide a ridiculously easy and fast way to share information. Infographics are entertaining and visually stimulating. Most of all, people like sharing infographics because they are fun.

What is an Infographic?

Put together the words “information” and “graphic”, and you have information conveyed in visual form. It is also commonly understood that infographics most often contain **multiple, related facts** about **a single topic**.

When Pinterest first burst on the scene, the big viral share incentive used to be pictorial witty or wise quotes but these have become over-used. If you really want people to share your information, present it as a well-thought-out infographic.

The format alone virtually guarantees viral sharing... provided you follow these 20 tips to make sure your infographic doesn't disappoint.

1. Be timely and relevant.

What's on people's minds, right at this moment? That's the question to ask yourself when sitting down to create an infographic.

For example, this infographic was featured on the December 31 sign-up page at Infogr.am, an infographic creation social network. The year was drawing to a close – in fact, it was New Year's Eve that very evening – so the topic drew 100% marks for relevancy and timeliness.



2. Create evergreen infographics

If you can't be timely, be relevant – and what better way to ensure this than to make your infographic is **always highly relevant** to your core niche members.

For example, if your target customers are all young mothers, an infographic entitled “10 Signs of Poisoning Every Parent Should Know” is far more likely to be viewed than one entitled “15 Essential Engine Parts for your John Doe Tractor”!

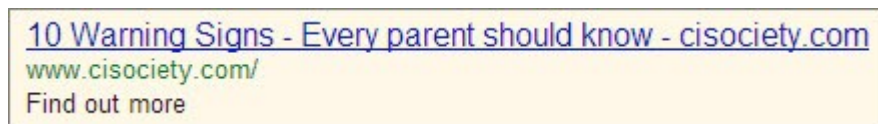
An evergreen topic is information that:

- Your intended audience will always need
- Doesn't change over time

3. Deliver what you promise

The quickest way to ensure your infographic is *not* shared consists of presenting something other than what your title promises.

A case in point: In response to a search on “children signs of poisoning”, this ad...



...led to a jargon-and-science-heavy site dealing with a condition known as Primary Immunodeficiency. It had nothing to do with poisoning symptoms in children at all!

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The Immune System, Primary Immunodeficiency & Resources

What is Primary Immunodeficiency (PI)?

The immune system is a complex system of cells and organs that work together to protect the body from foreign invaders. Some of these cells will remain in the bone marrow and mature into the so called B lymphocytes (literally, lymph-cells). Some of these B cells will produce the antibodies to respond to the invading foreign body. These antibodies are very specific proteins that recognize and lock onto a particular protein and by doing so they trigger a response in other cells to move in, surround, destroy and remove the invading body. Some of these B cells will keep a record of the invasion and response for use in future.

The bone marrow is a major site in all of this. Here all the cells of the immune system originate. Some of these cells will remain in the bone marrow and mature into the so called B lymphocytes (literally, lymph-cells). Some of these B cells will produce the antibodies to respond to the invading foreign body. These antibodies are very specific proteins that recognize and lock onto a particular protein and by doing so they trigger a response in other cells to move in, surround, destroy and remove the invading body. Some of these B cells will keep a record of the invasion and response for use in future.

Some cells that form in the bone marrow move out to the thymus gland where they mature into T lymphocytes. Like the B cells they come in a variety of types for a variety of jobs. Some trigger the B cells into action, some regulate the speed of response, some destroy, some clean-up.

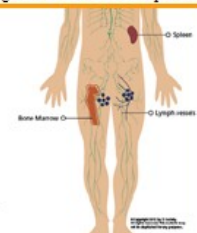
These cells, carried throughout the body by the blood, are the first and centre operators of the system that scans, filters and fights for the well-being of the body.

What is Primary Immunodeficiency (PI)?
Primary immunodeficiency refers to an immune system which from birth is either broken or completely missing. It is not a condition acquired after birth from infection or accident. It is a genetic malfunction, unique to an individual, and can affect just one cell or many parts of the immune system.

Each individual has his or her own blueprint, a map made up of millions of bits of information called genes. The gene-map of each individual is a unique mix of genes from the mother and father. This map instructs the body how to build and how to maintain itself. Sometimes there are malfunctions in this map. When it fails to produce a functioning immune system the disease resulting is called a primary immune deficiency (PI). Sometimes there may be a history of such a malfunction in the family, but often there is not. It all depends upon how the genes of the parents have come together to make up the blueprint for a unique and distinct individual.

The World Health Organization recognizes more than 150 different forms of PI. These forms range widely in severity and symptoms. Early diagnosis is crucial because an untreated PI can lead to serious damage to organs, physical disabilities, and in the most severe cases, death.

Approximately 13,000 Canadians suffer from a PI. That may not seem so large a number, but that is greater than the total number of those who suffer from leukemia and lymphoma combined.



The infographic shows a human figure with labels for the Bone Marrow (in the chest and hip areas) and Lymph Nodes (along the neck and in the armpits). It illustrates the distribution of immune cells throughout the body.

The young mother scrambling urgently to find out if her child could be suffering from poisoning is likely to feel enraged and tricked upon clicking the ad and being taken to a scholarly general article on the human immune system.

Infographics are no less immune to irrelevancy. Our first example, “End of 2012 (Not the World)” you might think would at least reference the Mayan Apocalypse – the first thing most people think of when you read “2012” and “End of... World” all within the same title.

When you open it, however, instead of the witty and entertaining infographic you were expecting, you get another infographic... on what seems to be year-end data for a specific company:



The general reader not belonging to that company could be left feeling anywhere between annoyed at having their time wasted and regretful over the opportunity that the creator of such a great title completely missed, when it came to entertaining and connecting with the title topic's true audience.

4. Use infographics to share complex information instantly

A picture is not just worth a thousand words – it can eliminate the need for them altogether.

Infographics are especially useful for sharing figures, percentages, graphs, pie charts and other data of the sort that often seem to make heavy reading when presented in text paragraphs.

Seeing something compared side-by-side gives a much better grasp of the topic than data conveyed by mere figures.



5. Use comparisons.

People love comparisons. In fact, a comparison between A and B is often what they are actually searching for.

Titles containing the “A vs. B” formula – such as “Google+ vs. Facebook” in our previous example – are irresistible to those searching for information on either the A or B in your title.

6. Keep it “above the fold”.

One of the biggest failings seen in infographic information sharing – data that disappears off screen, so that one has to scroll down to find it.

The real problem with this: The reader instantly loses the easy overview that infographics should deliver. It's no longer a case of "information at a glance", and that can be disappointing.

Plus having to scroll backwards and forwards, trying to compare data, can be irritating.

Make your pictures and text smaller, so that all your data fits onscreen whenever possible.

7. Make your infographic unique

Try to share information that no one else has yet thought of or explored, rather than creating your own version of a Google+/Facebook comparison.

Just make sure it's highly relevant to your target viewers. Topics that are on everyone's mind make wonderful infographic fodder – just as long as you give them your own new "twist".

8. If you make a "True or False" infographic, make sure you include both true and false examples.

If your examples are all true or all false, this seems to narrow the entertainment factor and people tend to lose interest before finishing your infographic. And if you were planning on springing the exception to your rule at the end of your infographic, don't try to be clever – people may bale on you before your big finale.



Besides, it's the contrast element that people like the most.

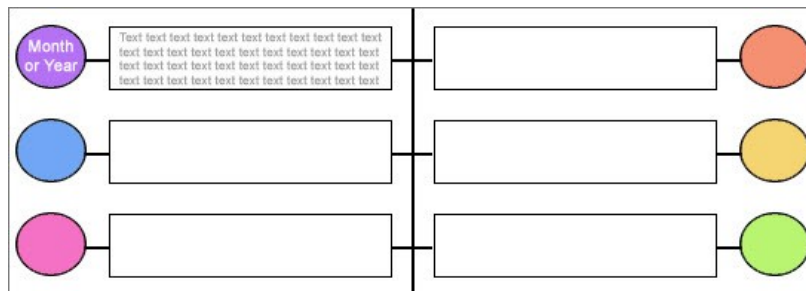
9. Vary the type of infographic you create

Suit your delivery method to your audience. Are they big on entertainment? Try a “True or false” format.

Do they need to sort out confusing facts? Run a comparison between their two biggest interests.

Have they got a question? Answer it.

Do you need to quickly educate your target customer? Try a “Timeline” format.



Want to get the most shares and increase your audience? Pick a topic that is trending or seasonally relevant: (E. g. “Ten Worst Valentine’s Day Presents Ever”).

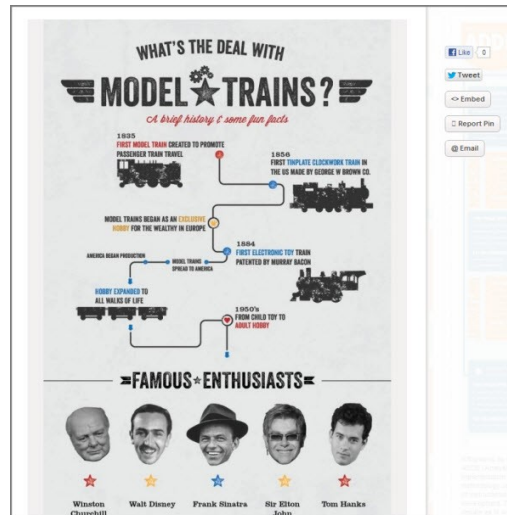
Other types of infographics:

- “Little known facts about...”
- “How to...” (e.g. set a formal dining room table; iron a man’s dress shirt)
- Process mind-map
- Single graphic chart with multiple elements (e.g. map)

- Mixed chart (with variable elements such as text, head shots, statistics, etc.)

The popularity of a topic will affect your infographic's viral potential. For example sex, celebrities and humor always grab huge shares of general audiences.

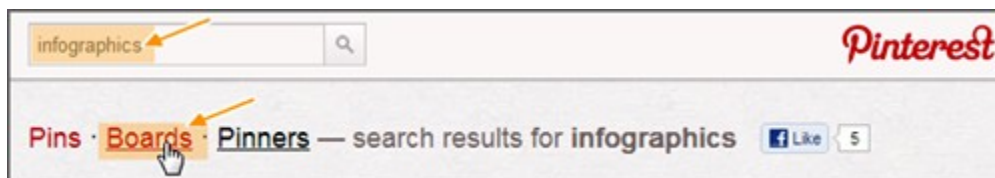
For more specific audiences, you need to know **their most pressing need, issue, interest or passion**.



10. Share your infographic!

This doesn't mean just one posting on your Facebook news feed as you sit back and wait for your infographic to go viral. Instead...

- **Share it specifically with influential people in your niche** – on their wall. (Make sure it is highly relevant to their friend/audience base!)
- **Share it via Pinterest** – not just in your own pinboards, but also on specific "Infographics" boards. (Just search Boards with the keyword "infographics".)



- **Share via other social networks.** Twitter, SlideShare, StumbleUpon, Digg, Pheed, to name just a few.
- **Share it on infographic-friendly sharing sites.** Those currently most popular include:

- [Visual.ly](#)
 - [Pinterest](#)
 - [Piktochart](#)
 - [SlideShare](#)
 - [Easel.ly](#)
 - [Reddit Infographics](#)
- **Share it regularly.** This doesn't mean bombarding your viewers. Just keep an eye and ear out for cues and opportunities to share it again. And after a few weeks is a decent interval for another general share.
 - **Share it on your blog.** Talk about why you created it, and what you learned: What was the most eye-opening fact, and what it means to you.

Most of all, what it offers your viewer!

One blogger even recommends sharing your infographic via press releases, if you can turn the story of your infographic into something to reach viewers of the publication or directory where you're sending your press release.

10 More Quick Tips

- **Make sure you include sharing buttons** with your infographic – especially on your blog or website/
- **Involve JV partners by asking them to contribute data** – and then allow them to co-release the infographic to their subscribers at the same time you do.
- **Use your infographic to brand your business.** Concentrate on speaking as the authority on your niche – not on driving people to sign up pages or links.
- **Ask your audience to share your infographic!** Remember that all-important call to action.
- **Use infographic web apps like Easel.ly to create infographics quickly** (they provide ready-made, tested templates you can use).
- **Create infographics for mobile – and then promote them with a QR code.** (Sites like Easel.ly even provide mobile theme templates.)

- **Put your website URL as straight text – not as an anchor link.** You want people to remember your site name this time, rather than click through.
- **Tell your audience where they can get more infographics** (your site or Pinterest boards).
- **Include your share buttons at the end of your infographic** instead of anchor links (you're less likely to be penalized by Google).
- **Track your infographics.** You can:
 - Set up Google Alerts
 - Track through Facebook Insights and other social network tracking systems
 - Track through social media managers like HootSuite
 - Use paid ads or paid infographic sites that provide tracking software or apps

Creating great infographics is a learning process, so just start creating and improving your infographics as you go along. See which infographics get the best response, get feedback from your readers and keep on creating.