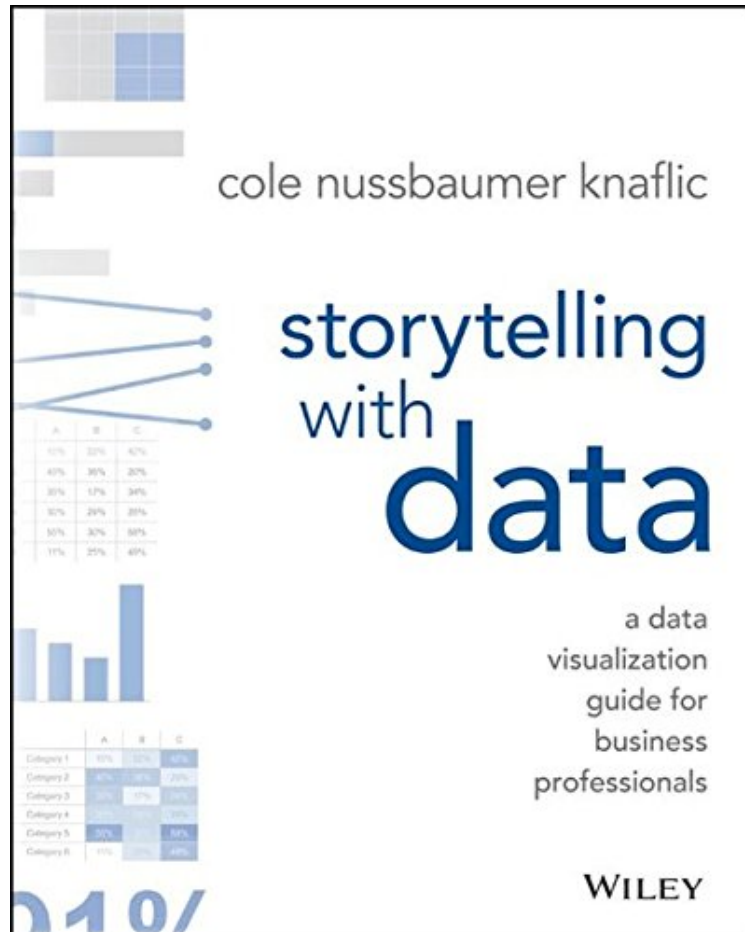


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# Storytelling with Data: A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals

*Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic*

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#2874 in Books Nussbaumer Knaflic Cole 2015-11-02Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .80 x 7.201, 1.44 #File Name: 1119002257288 pagesStorytelling with Data A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals | File size: 25.Mb

## **Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic : Storytelling with Data: A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals**

before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Storytelling with Data: A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals:

102 of 107 people found the following review helpful. a worthwhile book that does well what it tries to doBy Nick CoxPeople wanting a basic introduction to presentation graphics would be well served by this book by Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic. Prerequisites are minimal: there is almost no mathematical content and no use of any but the most elementary statistical methods. Knaflic's encouraging message is that MS Excel and PowerPoint can be quite enough software for good graphics, but you will need to go beyond the defaults and work at the details. Almost all the examples are of very small datasets already to hand with two-way structure. 2 variables for 12 months and 5 products for 7 years are typical sizes. In practice when analysing data it can be hard work deciding what methods to use and reducing a

mass of raw data to a concise summary. These steps, sometimes most of a project, are here assumed already done. The subtitle flags a focus on "business professionals"; the content tactfully implies junior people presenting with PowerPoint to time-challenged bosses at brief meetings. Seemingly few write reports to be read any more, or use any other presentation software. Knaflic is excellent on the need to keep things simple. She has a good eye and sound logic on what looks and works well and what does not. Examples show how mediocre graphs can be improved by reducing clutter, killing the key, better use of color, and similar standard tricks. Horizontal bar charts are usually more readable than vertical, and pie charts and a false third dimension are best avoided: these points have been well made many times, yet do deserve forceful repetition. Various kinds of bar and line charts are her main work-horses. Sometimes the discussion seems a little contrived, as poor graphs are set up to be shot down, but that's often what convinces. Readers should be on the author's side as she encourages us towards effective and tasteful graphics. Her combinations of blue for data deserving emphasis and grey for data providing context -- or of blue and orange for groups to contrast -- are good design patterns for experienced analysts as well as outright beginners. The closing chapters are more long-winded and repetitive, but do include small gems. A splendid case study on avoiding spaghetti graphics (lots of tangled lines) stands out, and the problem and the ideas deserved more. I always find it disappointing when datasets are fabricated or sufficiently anonymous that they might as well be. People care most about their own data which an author cannot provide, and confidentiality constraints often bite, but real data examples are still generally preferable to fake. Too many examples here are variants on Products A to E or Features A to O. Unfortunately an outrageous example of a bar chart from a well-known U.S. television news network (p.50) seems all too real. What's not here includes Cleveland dot charts, histograms and box plots even among the staples of good introductory statistics courses, let alone (say) use of logarithmic scale, always one of the first graphical devices for many sciences. So if you want something with more statistical bite or depth, you need to look elsewhere. Naomi Robbins' excellent, no nonsense Creating more effective graphs <http://www.com/Creating-Effective-Graphs-Naomi-Robbins/dp/0985911123> would enable you to go further. As in any first edition there are some small slips and exaggerated claims. 40% is not a majority (p.5). There is confusion between number and percentage on p.39. Any rule that "bar charts must have a zero baseline" (p.52) is simplistic. It is quite correct that bar charts should encode departures from some sensible reference level. (The television network responsible should have paid attention.) But that reference level could easily be some value not zero, such as parity between men and women, or the mean of a variable, or 32 degrees Fahrenheit to separate freezing and non-freezing temperatures. I disagree that every dollar amount or percent should be labeled as such (p.90); that is repetitive clutter such as Knaflic rightly deplores. Nor is it an absolute principle that every axis needs a title. If the axis labels are 2008 to 2015, no one should need "Year" to explain what is happening. Far from being "extremely rare" (p.141), several exceptions to that principle are included in this book! A note on style: Inside a very useful book is an even more useful shorter book struggling to get out. For my taste, the motivational warm-ups and little anecdotes are often too spun-out or too trite. Good graphics should be presented as illustrations within a good story: a keypoint, but not one that required a long chapter with digressions on Red Riding Hood or on Aristotle on drama, or advice from a junior high school teacher. A tighter copy-editor would have signalled that "leverage" (used as a verb about 70 times) was too much of a personal favorite, while "de-emphasize" for "tone down", "utilize" for "use" and "incredible" for things all too credible are among several other repeated tics. An easy solution is to skip and skim: if a book is on graphics, you can always just look at the graphics. In this case, Knaflic has written a worthwhile book that, small details aside, does well what it tries to do. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent resource By Jim the prez I have a number of data visualization reference books because I process a lot of information. This book is definitely the most approachable and in my opinion sits at the top of the stack. Not only does it illustrate effective ways to develop charts/graphs, it helps you conceptualize the presentation strategy as well. Very well done. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. I'm only like halfway through this book so far By J. Singer I'm only like halfway through this book so far, and it's already massively helped me put together powerpoints or emails that require presenting data.

Don't simply show your data tell a story with it!

"In *Storytelling with Data*, Cole has created an of-the-moment complement to the work of data visualization pioneers like Edward Tufte. She's worked at and with some of the most data-driven organizations on the planet as well as some of the most mission-driven, data-free institutions. In both cases, she's helped sharpen their messages, and their thinking." Laszlo Bock, SVP of People Operations, Google, Inc. and author of *Work Rules!* From the Back Cover praise for *storytelling with data* "Storytelling with Data is a superbly written, masterful display of rare art in the business world. Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic possesses a unique ability a gift in telling a story through data. At JPMorgan Chase, she has helped improve our capabilities to explain complicated analysis to executive management and the regulators with whom we work. Cole's book brings her talents together in an easy-to-read guide with excellent examples that anyone can learn from to encourage smarter decision-making." Mark R. Hillis, Chief Risk Officer of Mortgage Banking at JPM Chase "We have so much data that it can be hard to get people to pay attention to our critical findings. Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic taught us valuable lessons in her workshop and it is fantastic to see these expanded upon in

Storytelling with Data. My team is already using the lessons Cole teaches to move people to action as they see new pearls of understanding and make a difference in the lives of others. Now others can, too!" Eleanor Bell, Director of Business Analytics at Bill Melinda Gates Foundation "There is something lovely about being consistent with your own teachings. Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic accomplishes that with her first book. She is an advocate for clarity and concision in visualization, and her book is as clear, concise, and practical as it gets. If you are a beginner in visualization, or if you struggle to produce good charts in your everyday job with tools like Excel, Tableau, Qlik, and the like, this is a great place to start learning the core principles." Alberto Cairo, Knight Chair in Visual Journalism and Professor of Visualization at the University of Miami, and author of *The Functional Art* "Data slides are not really about the data, they are about the meaning of the data. Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic understands this and has written a straightforward, accessible guide that will help anyone who communicates with data connect more effectively with their audience." Nancy Duarte, CEO at Duarte, Inc. and bestselling author *About the Author* Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic tells stories with data. She is the author of *Storytelling With Data: A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals* and writes the popular blog [storytellingwithdata.com](http://storytellingwithdata.com). Her well-regarded workshops and presentations are highly sought after by data-minded individuals, companies, and philanthropic organizations all over the world. Her unique talent was honed over the past decade through analytical roles in banking, private equity, and most recently as a manager on the Google People Analytics team. At Google, she used a data-driven approach to inform innovative people programs and management practices, ensuring that Google attracted, developed, and retained great talent and that the organization was best aligned to meet business needs. Cole traveled to Google offices throughout the US and Europe to teach the course she developed on data visualization. She has also acted as an adjunct faculty member at MICA, where she taught *Introduction to Information Visualization*. Cole has a BS in Applied Math and an MBA, both from the University of Washington. When she isn't ridding the world of ineffective graphs one pie at a time, she is baking them, traveling, and embarking on adventures with her husband and two young sons in San Francisco.