

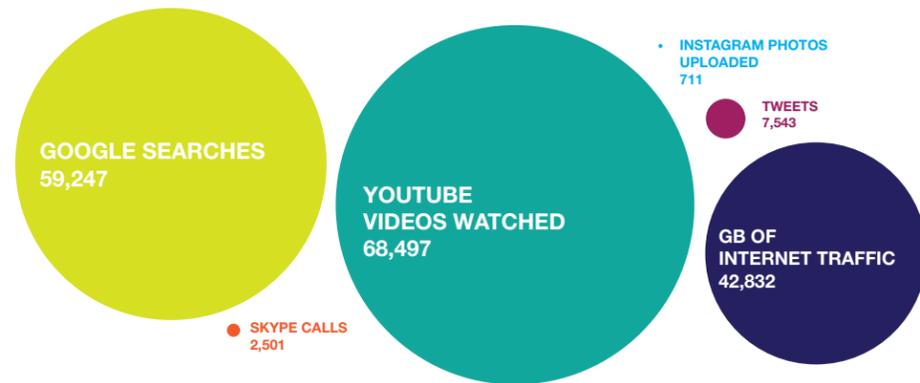
Learning to Storytell

Data Visualization in the Workplace

By IDa Design

Information is everywhere. We are constantly surrounded by new facts and data; it's impossible to get away from them. Together, technology and the Internet have increased our data exposure to unprecedented levels. According to [Internet Live Stats](#), an organization devoted to tracking the amount of data created daily on social media, this is what is being produced **every single** second:

- 771 Instagram photos uploaded
- 2,501 Skype calls
- 7,543 Tweets
- 42,832 GB of Internet traffic
- 59, 247 Google searches
- 68,497 Youtube videos watched

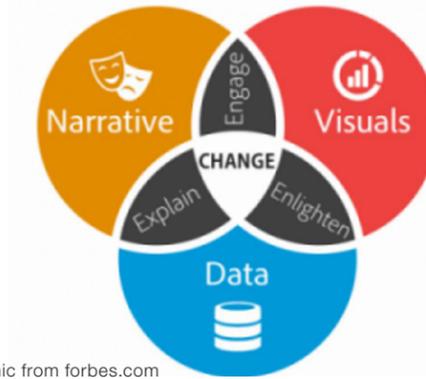


Chances are you didn't dwell on the stats above to the left, but rather looked at the visual representation on the right. This is due to the simple concept of "show, don't tell". According to media company, [OneSpot](#), 92% of consumers want brand advertising to feel like storytelling. Likewise, delivering data as stories makes this information more appealing. And an added bonus: the brain processes images 60 times faster than words alone. People decide if they will read an article within two to four seconds, so first impressions are important. The more data that's produced, the more important storytelling becomes. Storytelling affects the brain in numerous ways. We are naturally wired to mirror what



Graphic from OneSpot

we see and hear. When a story is told, our brains want to "live" the story with the speaker, which makes it more memorable. Adding graphics engages our sense of sight and makes it even easier to recall. The chart to the left explains what is going on in our brains to make remembering stories effortless.



Graphic from forbes.com

There are different types of data storytelling. It can either be objective or editorial, and can be used for a variety of purposes including news, learning systems, school, and articles of all types. According to [Forbes](#), designing well-structured data involves three key elements: data, visuals, and narrative. Narrative appeals to emotion, visuals show process, and data explains a concept. All the parts come together to make a piece of art. Numbers have an important story to tell, and when it's told well, change happens.

So why is this important in the workplace? Glad you asked. The study called [The Promising State of Human Capital Analytics](#), found that almost 70% of executive teams are using people-based data to drive their business in some way. From the moment someone is hired, they start creating data. Every time they fill out a timesheet, or take vacation, or receive a pay increase, data is generated. Until recently, this cache went unused. Collected data is useless unless information and insights can be taken from it. Using an employee's timesheet to determine punctuality can help employers give better vacations based on real measurements, making it more objective and quantifiable. In addition, employers can investigate issues that are going on in the workplace and design solutions based on data rather than feelings (too many or too few) or a particularly vocal employee who may not speak for all.

Speaking of work, data can be used to compare work styles among employees. The fun [infographic](#) below by writer Mason Currey shows the daily routines of famous creatives. The ability to quickly compare artists of all types and time-periods makes this "big data" easily understood in seconds. This is just the tip of the iceberg of what is possible with visual analytics.

“Storytelling is by far the most underrated skill in business.”

Gary Vaynerchuck

