

Deloitte.

Deloitte's 10 commandments for

Effective Dashboard Design



The 10 commandments

Follow the following rules to create an effective and user friendly dashboard

Chart choice can make or break the comprehension

Use 1 color and ...50 shades of another color

Ease of use may be invisible, but its absence sure isn't

Good Design

1 What's your point?

2 3 Location, location, location

4 5 Cleanliness makes it easier to see the details

6 **Do not overload your dashboard**

7 8 Spend time on your text – not only the charts

9 **Moving to Mobile First**

10

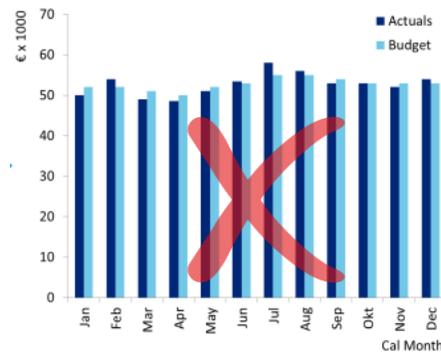
What's your point

Know the message or goal that you want to get across before thinking about the framework or chart type

The most important question to ask yourself before building a dashboard is **“What's your point?”**

- What is the message that the dashboard as a whole should convey?
- What should people remember / have learned after using it?

Example: Chart showing the absolute Actual & Budget values



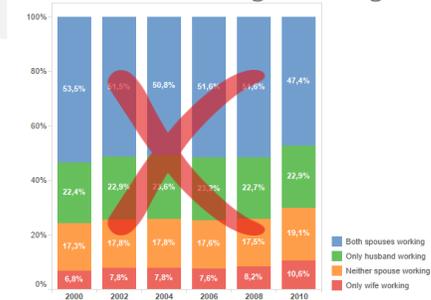
“ Asking the most important question sharpens the thinking and the messaging surrounding the data and, in doing so, reveals the best way to visualize the data ”

Chart choice can make or break the comprehension
The most well-suited chart type is set by the message it has to convey

All charts are trying to demonstrate one of four possible eventualities:

- **Relationship**
- **Comparison**
- **Composition**
- **Distribution**

Example: Bar Chart showing all categories



“ The right chart for your data and message will make for a much more interesting and influential chart that will tell the story almost by itself ”

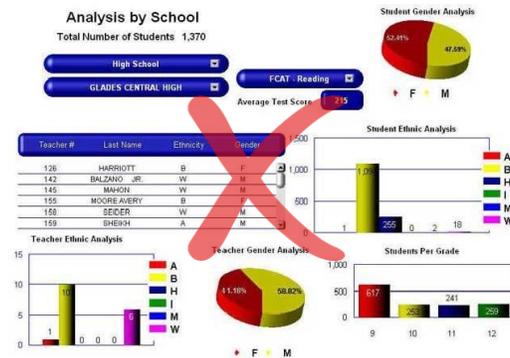
Location, location, location

Make sure every element on the page is aligned to an underlying grid

All elements of a dashboard should adhere to an **underlying, invisible, grid structure**

- A grid is a structure made up of a series of straight guide lines. It divides the page into a set of identical columns

Nothing screams unprofessionalism like a badly aligned dashboard



“Proper alignment will make dashboards visually more appealing, easier for users to scan over a page, and sub-consciously also offers a calmer reading experience”

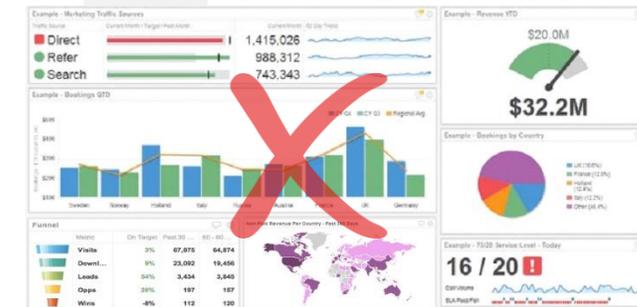
Use 50 Shades of Grey... & 1 Color

Design your dashboard in grey tones and use one color to draw attention

There are several reasons why the excessive use of colors is harmful for understanding a dashboard

- Most dashboards feature red for bad and green for good. However, **10% of the male population is color blind** and cannot see the difference.

Your eyes bounce around not knowing where the important information is



“Focus on creating a dashboard that draws attention intuitively to the areas that need it most, not that the house style colors or stoplight palette are implemented”

Cleanliness makes it easier to see the details. Remove all redundant or obsolete elements from the page

Designing a dashboard aims at telling a story. A **simple, clear** and **accurate** presentation of data is required for directing attention to the information that tells that story.

Example: messy table design

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Company A	€2.031.021,00	€2.032.983,00	€2.101.039,00	€1.999.827,00	€2.112.921,00
Company B	€2.012.751,00	€1.924.241,00	€1.998.298,00	€2.020.989,00	€2.124.832,00

“

To find signals in data,
we must learn to reduce the noise

”

Do not overload your dashboard. Remove all redundant or obsolete elements from the page

A common misperception is that more information leads to more added value. In fact dashboards were invented to provide at a glance insights and serve as **a solution to information overload**, not to recreate this overload.

Example: overloaded dashboard



“

Perfection is achieved not when there is
nothing more to add, but when there is
nothing left to take away

”

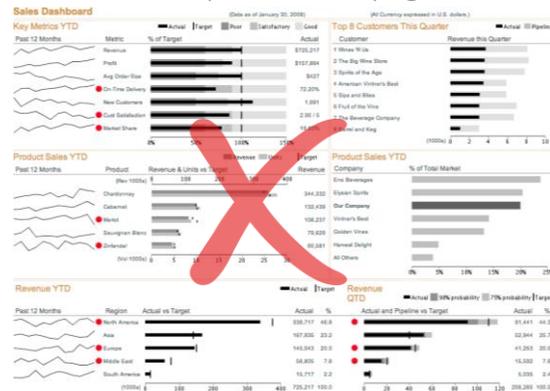
Ease of use may be invisible, but its absence sure isn't

Do not underestimate the difference a good user interface design can make

Don't make your user think. An intuitive design is vital for users to effectively use your dashboard!

And the golden rule: Make sure to test your design with volunteers. Someone taking a fresh look at your design can spot things you didn't even consider.

What is the user question this page is answering?



“ One should aim not at being possible to understand, but at being impossible to misunderstand ”

Spend time on your text – not only the charts

Most underestimate the power that good typesetting has on the effectiveness of a dashboard

A dashboard with well executed typography will look more professional, neater and better organized

Wrong choice of two fonts; the difference is hard to tell



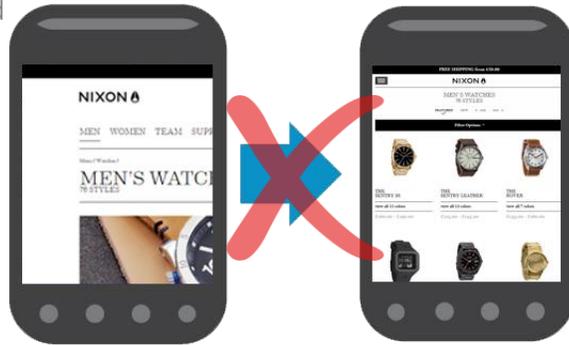
“ Typography is the use of type to advocate, communicate, celebrate, educate, elaborate, illuminate, and disseminate. Along the way, the words and pages become art ”

Moving to Mobile First

Always keep in mind that your dashboard may be viewed on a wide range of devices

Responsive design is an approach aimed at providing an optimal viewing and interaction experience across a wide range of devices, from desktop monitors to smartphone screens

Non responsive design will only show a small section of the dashboard



“

The web's moved beyond the desktop,
and it's not looking back

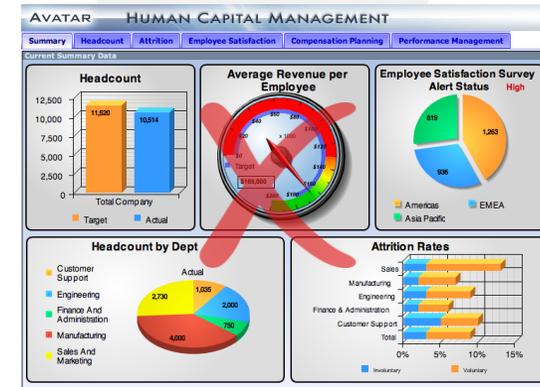
”

Good Design

Follow the rules set out by the companies that rule design space – don't try to reinvent the wheel yourself

By using popular design styles you can simply create tight, consistent, clean, and minimalistic dashboards without having to reinvent the wheel yourself

No consistency in the design and too bright and too much different colors



“

The details are not the details.
They make the design.

”

Contact details

Feel free to contact us to learn more about dashboard design



Alfredo Maria Garibaldi
agaribaldi@deloitte.it



Daniele Bobba
dbobba@deloitte.it



Marco Leani
mleani@deloitte.it



Giuseppe Ficara
gficara@deloitte.it

Deloitte refers to one or more of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, a UK private company limited by guarantee (“DTTL”), its network of member firms, and their related entities. DTTL and each of its member firms are legally separate and independent entities. DTTL (also referred to as “Deloitte Global”) does not provide services to clients. Please see www.deloitte.nl/about for a more detailed description of DTTL and its member firms.

Deloitte provides audit, consulting, financial advisory, risk management, tax and related services to public and private clients spanning multiple industries. With a globally connected network of member firms in more than 150 countries and territories, Deloitte brings world-class capabilities and high-quality service to clients, delivering the insights they need to address their most complex business challenges. Deloitte’s more than 220,000 professionals are committed to making an impact that matters.

This communication contains general information only, and none of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, its member firms, or their related entities (collectively, the “Deloitte network”) is, by means of this communication, rendering professional advice or services. No entity in the Deloitte network shall be responsible for any loss whatsoever sustained by any person who relies on this communication.