How to Easily Create Infographics Using Free Tools Online

Contents

Introduction

If you're looking for a way to drive traffic to your business website, increase social media marketing results, and establish credibility and authority in your niche, look no further than infographics.

Put simply, an infographic is a visual representation of data, information, or knowledge. You can use an infographic to represent any type of data and to tell a variety of stories. As a business coach or service provider, there is most certainly an abundance of information to share with your audience.

For example, "10 Things an Entrepreneur Should Know," or "5 Best Blogging Applications," might make exceptional infographic topics.

Infographics follow the same basic rules of content. They must provide value to your reader. Because infographics are information driven and easy to view and share, they are a simple tool to provide quick value to your audience.

13 Benefits of Infographics and Reasons to add them To Your Content Marketing Today

1. An Abundance of Inbound links – Infographics are not only sharable, you can also include an embed code, list your graphic on directories, and let other bloggers and business owners post them on their websites. It creates an inbound link to your site which boosts your search engine ranking.

2. Analytics and Tracking – Whether you use an embed code or not, infographics are generally easy to track. You can, and should, measure the traffic generated from each graphic. Use analytics to calculate page views, clicks, and time spent viewing the infographic.

3. Keywords – Your infographic is another tool you can use to embrace traffic generating keywords most popular in your niche. Use infographics to boost your search engine ranking for those keywords. Place the keywords in your title and in the description of your infographic.

4. Increase Followers and Subscribers – One potential way to use infographics is to share them on social media. You'll be able to reach a broad audience because infographics are shared by millions each day. As more people become aware of your business and social media profile, you'll earn more subscribers and followers.

5. Blog Engagement – Infographics tend to generate comments when they're published on a blog. You can increase the interaction on your blog by sharing an occasional infographic.

6. Relationship Building – Creating great content including infographic content helps forge a connection between you and your audience. The more value you provide them, the more they'll interact with you and become an active member of your community.

7. Credibility – Publishing relevant and useful infographics that educate and offer value, positions you as a thought leader within your niche.

8. Branding – Infographics can and should include your voice, logo, and message within. This helps brand your business.

9. Scannable – The majority of people are visual learners and infographics serve them well. They're easy to scan and provide a useful way to educate your audience.

10. Viral in Nature – Include an embed code in your infographic and watch it spread. You'll see your content on Pinterest, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Google + almost overnight. People love to share infographics.

11. Increased Traffic – Inbound links, improved SEO and more awareness for your brand and business all mean one thing, traffic.

12. Multi-Purpose Content – Your infographics can expand beyond your online marketing. You can use them as print material as well. Whether you publish a brochure, book, or marketing collateral, infographics serve a variety of purposes and functions.

13. They're super easy to create – You don't have to be a graphic designer to create an infographic, the free tools with easy to follow wizards help you get the job done.

Why You Don't Have to Be a Graphic Designer to Create Great Infographics

Let's be honest here and admit that most people are not talented when it comes to graphic design. It's a specialized field that requires a great degree of talent and practice. Infographics utilize elements of graphic design so if you're creating one from scratch, without the use of templates or software, you'd probably need to be highly skilled.

Yet, there are templates and software products that you can use which eliminate the need for a graphic designer. In fact, many of these step by step products and templates are created by highly skilled graphic designers. All you need to do is plan your infographic and follow the wizard tool for your chosen software.

If you can plan your information and follow directions, you can easily create infographics using free tools online. That's where we'll begin. In the first chapter of this report we'll take a look at the seven most popular free online infographics tools. We'll break down the pros and cons of each product and highlight the features.

In the second chapter we'll explore the steps to take to compare infographic tools so you can identify the tool(s) that work best for your business needs. Finally, we'll take a look at how to create attention grabbing infographics, including a step by step approach you can take to planning your next infographic. We'll close out this report with tips for creating exceptional infographics and discuss effective ways to market and promote your work.

Part 1 – Top Free Infographic Creation Tools

There are dozens of great infographic creation tools. The functions and features vary from tool to tool. For example, some infographic tools provide you with templates while others let you create your graphic from scratch. Some tools are focused on a single function while others are broader in nature. The following is a list of the top free infographic creation tools as well as a breakdown of the pros and cons for each tool.

1.   Visual.ly

Site: www.visual.ly
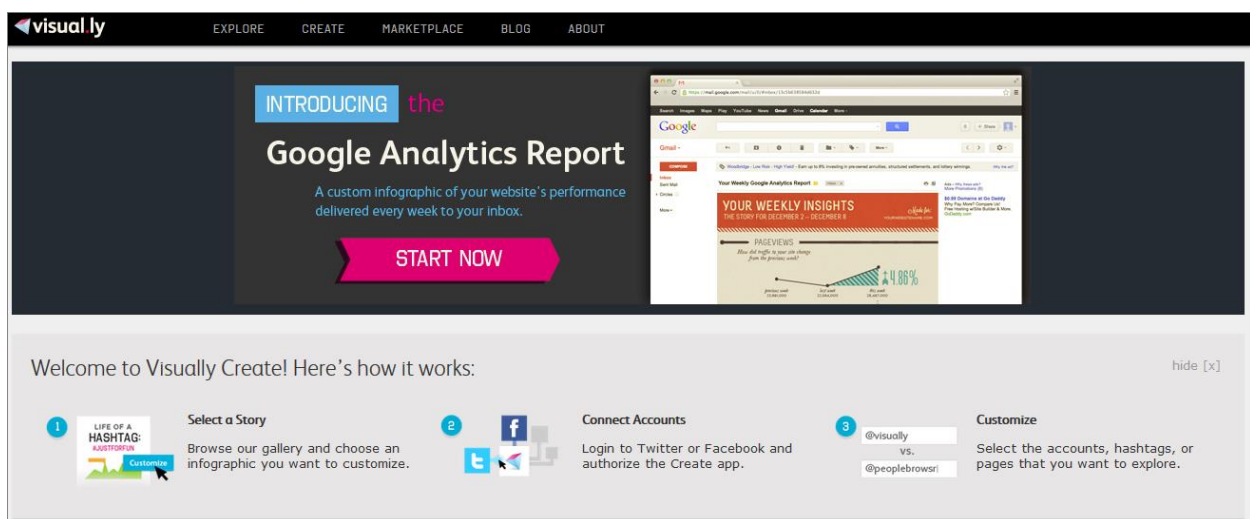
Visual.ly is a fantastic tool that allows you to accomplish many tasks. Using their directory you can share your infographic. You can also use the site to find, and embed, other relevant infographics onto your blog or social media page.

Additionally, you can use Visual.ly to create your own infographics. It takes less than three minutes to accomplish using their handy tool. Additionally, using the creation tool is about as easy as clicking a button.

All you have to do is:

- 1 Register at Visual.ly (registration is free).

- 2 Click on Create, or visit http://create.visual.ly/, and begin creating your infographic. There are only a handful of infographics that you can choose from and each of them relates to your social media interactions and reputation. That's the downside of Visual.ly; it's limited to information that they can automatically find and calculate using their applications.

There are presently about 15 different types of infographics you can create. They range from the Life of a Hashtag to an exploration of your Facebook Brand page. You simply enter the details for your social media site, allow Visual.ly access to your information and let it create the graphic for you. It takes less than 60 seconds to create your graphic when you can then download and/or embed.

The Pros – Visual.ly is a quick and easy tool to use and it provides a number of other useful functions including the ability to embed other relevant infographics. It's also a good research tool to identify what makes a good infographic.

You also have the ability to sign up for a free infographic template, you can explore the marketplace to find ideas or use the system to get matched with a graphic designer.

The Cons – As far as free tools go, you can only create a narrow range of infographic topics and they're limited to your website or social media presence.

2.   Piktochart

Site: http://piktochart.com
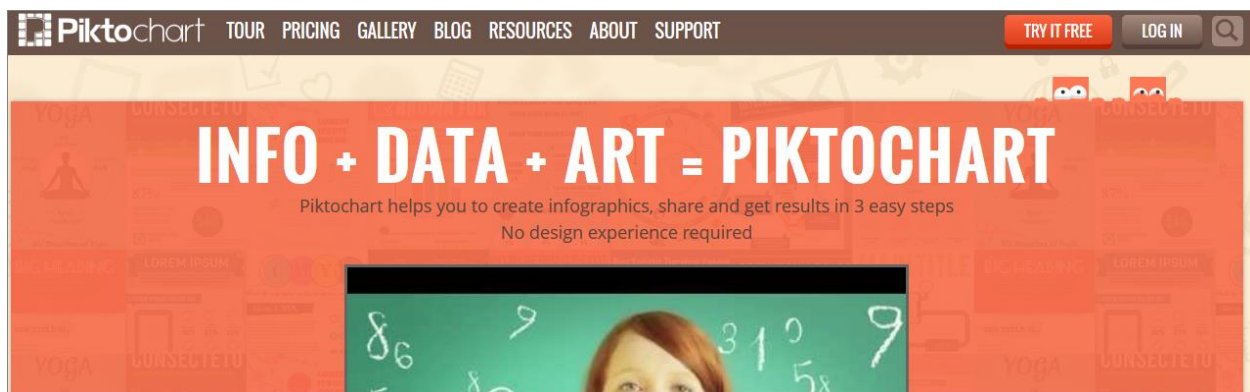
With Piktochart, you get to create an innovative Infographic using a combination of different types of visualizations which include: themes, icons, vectors, images and a chart exporter. You'll enjoy a broad range of color schemes, shapes, and fonts.

It's a super easy tool to use with a shallow learning curve. If you can click, drag, and drop then you can create an infographic with Piktochart.

Drag-and-drop and click your way through color schemes, shapes and fonts. Once your image has been created you can then export or embed the infographic to your website.

Piktochart has more than 300,000 users and more than 100 included themes. You'll likely be able to find several themes that are relevant to your infographic goals and to your niche.

The Pros – Piktochart is easy to use and there are more than 100 themes to choose from.

The Cons – It's only free for the first month. After that, it's $29 a month, although you may find that the results you get from infographics make $29 look like a fantastic investment.

3.   Infogr.am

Site: http://infogr.am
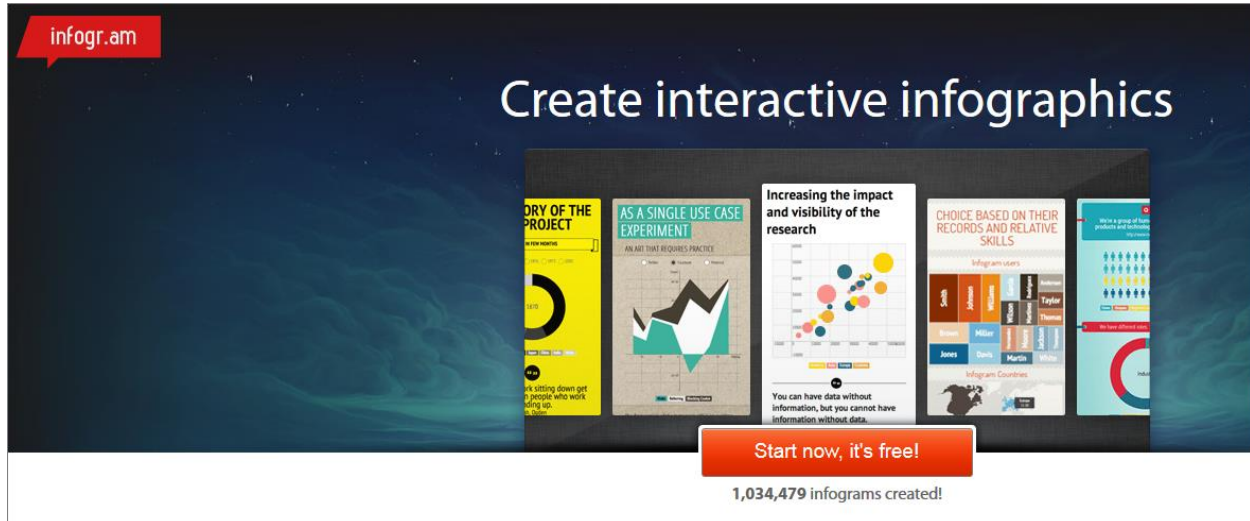
Infogr.am is free, and it's one of the most popular free online tools available. It's been used to create more than 800,000 infographics.

There are a wide variety of options with Infogr.am including:

- The ability to make more than 30 different types of charts.
- The ability to download files in PNG or PDF format.
- The ability to publish your infographic online, including the ability to embed it, which makes it sharable.
- You can also password protect your data and create a private link.

The Pros – It's a quick and easy tool to create visually friendly infographics and charts. It's free and the developers are actively working to add features and functionality.

The Cons – It's still limited when it comes to adding icons and shapes to your infographic. The templates are also a bit limited.

4.   Google Chart Tools

Site: https://developers.google.com/chart/

Google Chart Tools is powerful, simple to use, and like all Google Applications, it's free. You can choose from a variety of charts which you can then customize and configure to display the information in a cohesive and visually pleasing way.

Additionally, because it's Google your data is gathered in real time and Google Developers are always on the job and working to improve their applications.

The Pros – It's free and there are a seemingly infinite number of charts and customizable options. Google makes the interface intuitive and easy to add to your website or blog.

The Cons – It's limited to charts. Not all infographics are charts; many are simply a varied collection of images and text that flow seamlessly together.
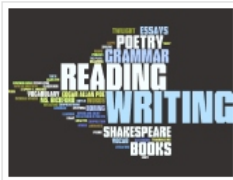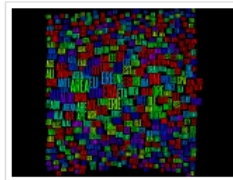
5. Wordle

Site: http://www.wordle.net/

Be careful with Wordle, it's addictive. You may find yourself creating dozens of these fun word clouds. A word cloud is a visually appealing collection of words. Ideally, you'd choose words related to your business like "Innovator," and then let Wordle get to work. You provide the text and choose a theme, and then Wordle creates an automatically generated word cloud.
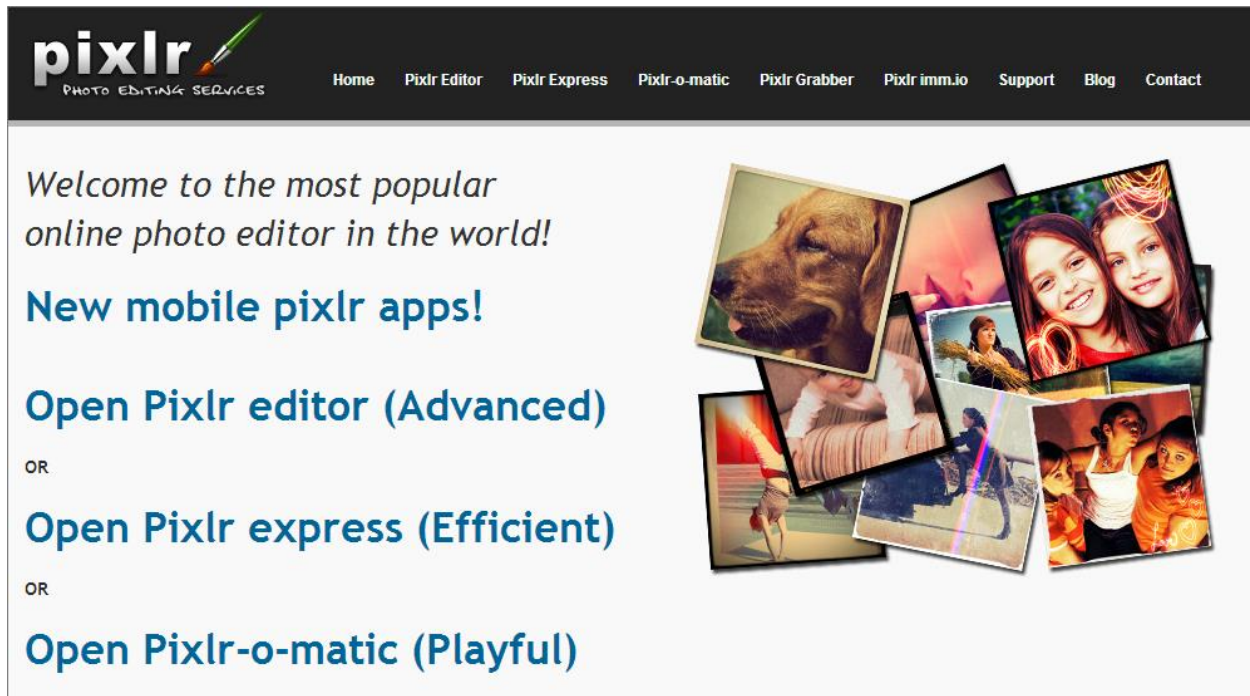
You can then customize the image by choosing different fonts, layouts, and color schemes. You can then save the image to the Wordle gallery, share, and post on your blog. Wordle is free and it takes less than thirty seconds to create an image.

The Pros – You can create an infographic in about thirty seconds. It's super easy to do and to embed onto your website or blog.

The Cons – It's limited to Word Clouds.

6.   Pixlr

Site: http://pixlr.com/

Pixlr is an online photo editor. You can upload images from your computer, from the Internet, or from an image library. It works like many other photo editors. You can add text, you can also use the Pixlr-o-matic to take photos of yourself with your computer's webcam and to add graphic elements to that photo.

The Pros – A simple editor that's free and easy to use. You can add a quote to a photo in a matter of seconds and have an image that's ready to Pin, post, and share.

The Cons – It's a photo editor, which means that it has a learning curve. Adding text to a photo is one thing, but creating a full scale infographic is another. It may take some time to become a pro with this tool.

7.   Easel.ly

Site: http://www.easel.ly/

This free web-based infographic tool offers you a dozen free templates which they call "vhemes" or visual themes. Each vheme is customizable. You can create an infographic using their collection of shapes, arrows and lines, fonts, and colors.

And unlike many free online infographic tools, Easel.ly lets you upload your own component graphics and position them onto your infographic. This tool is one of the most comprehensive and easy to use infographic tools available. It uses a simple drag and drop process. However, it's a drag and drop process that you guide, and there isn't a wizard tool to walk you through the steps.

The Pros – Easel.ly is easy to use. What's easier than drag and drop?

The Cons – Easel.ly is currently in beta. You may find it a bit frustrating if you don't have clear goals before you sit down to create your infographic.

With so many tools to consider, it can be difficult to know which tool is right for you and your business needs. In the next section we take a quick look at how to compare free tools and find the one that's best for you.

Part 2 – 7 Tips to Compare Free Tools and Choose

First things first; you certainly don't have to choose just one tool. You might combine the features and functionality of a few tools in your creation process. For example, you might create an infographic using Google Charts and then add some design elements to that chart using Pixlr.

That being said, the following tips will help you with your approach.

1. **Tutorials**

    Assuming you're not a graphic designer (and even if you are), there is a learning curve for each tool. The quality and depth of the tutorials can make or break your experience. If it takes you several hours to learn how to use a tool then it may not be the best choice.

    Generally speaking, you want to be able to hit the ground running and begin creating your infographic right away. The tutorials a program offers may be video, print, or a combination of the two.

    Before you download any software or sign up for any service review the tutorials. Are they easy to understand? Do they suit your learning style? For example, if you learn by watching then a video tutorial may be the ideal option.

2. **Ease of Use**

    Tutorials are just the beginning. The product also has to be easy to use. Many of the infographic tools shared in the previous section have wizards that walk you through each step of the process. Some don't. For example, with Pixlr, if you haven't used photo editing software before then the learning curve may be steeper for you. If you are familiar with photo editing software then you'll be able to jump right in with this particular tool.

    The only way to know how easy a product is to use is to spend a few minutes playing around with it. Review the screenshots if there are any. Take a look at the dashboard and review the tutorials as well. This should all give you a general impression of the tool and how easy it is to use.

3. **Development**

    Development refers to the ongoing nature of the tool. Are people actively developing it and working to improve it? Or is the product old and neglected? Due to the nature of

open source and free online tools, many times you'll find a good product, but if no one is working on improvements and glitches then it can quickly become outdated.

Some products may not integrate well with your other technologies. Take a look at the latest news and information about any given product. Have there been any improvements or additions in the past year? If the tool has a blog you can also review it to see how active the developers are in their community.

4. **Themes and Templates**

Many, but not all, infographic tools have templates and themes that you can use. You can modify them or use them as the foundation for your infographic.

Take a look to see if templates are available and if they are, how many are there to choose from? Do the themes or templates match your infographic needs? If not, then it's probably not worth your time to learn how to use the product.

5. **Customer Service and Assistance**

Tutorials and wizards are a good beginning but what if you have questions? What if the product isn't working for you or you're having technical difficulties?

You want to be able to contact someone and have your issue resolved immediately, right? Even free products should have good customer service and a way to get your questions answered.

6. **Goals**

What do you want your infographic to do? For example, do you want it to present data in a chart or do you intend to tell a story with your information and need more graphic design tools? Identify what you want to accomplish with your infographics and then compare products to make sure each product can fulfill your needs.

7. **Features and Functions**

Each tool has its own array of features and functions. For example, you can use Visual.ly to not only create useful infographics, but you can also search their directory of graphics and share relevant ones on your blog. You can also list your infographic on their directory for more exposure. Compare features and functions to determine which best suit your needs.

Finally, some of the tools mentioned in the first section of this report also have paid versions. If you believe you may expand and embrace infographics as a major component of your content

marketing strategy, then you may be interested in the paid version of a particular tool. The paid version may come with more features and opportunities to grow your business.

Now that you're fully armed with the best infographic tools for your needs and goals, it's time to start creating your first infographic. In the third and final section we'll take a look at the steps necessary to create high quality and attention grabbing infographics.

Part 3 – Planning and Creating Your Infographic

You have the right infographic tools and you have an abundance of information. How do you combine those two to create viral and business building infographics? The first step is to understand the different types of infographics. Then you'll identify your goals and the data. In this section we'll also explore the fundamentals of good infographic, how to avoid common mistakes and we'll wrap it up with tips to market and promote your infographic.

Different Types of Infographics

As with any type of content there are different formats you can create. For example, with articles or blog posts you can create lists or reviews, as well as how to articles. The same is true for infographics. Here are a few of the different types of infographics to consider:

A Versus B

With this type of infographic you're comparing one thing to another. For example you might compare the difference between starting a service business and starting a product based business. Or you might compare mastermind groups to mentoring.

Visual Article

This type of infographic has all of the elements of an article including a headline, a body, and a conclusion or call to action. The difference is that an infographic displays the information rather than writing it out. Factual articles work well. For example, "10 Things You Didn't Know About Starting Your Own Business."

The Flow Chart

The flow chart is an infographic that your reader can use to answer a question. For example, "Is it Time for You to Hire a Coach?" The flow chart poses "Yes" or "No" questions and the reader follows the chart to their desired answer.

Data Heavy

If you have a lot of statistics to share then an infographic can be a simple way to get your message across. They're user friendly and can help your audience understand the information quickly. One

example of a data driven infographic might be "The Impact of Social Media On Your Business." It would then outline all of the relevant facts and statistics in an interesting and organized manner.

The Timeline

The timeline is exactly what it sounds like. It's a chronological breakdown of information. It can be used to help your audience understand the big picture. For example, "The Evolution of Online Business" might walk your reader through the various changes over the past decade.

When it comes to creating your infographic you can create your own format as well. You can also combine a few different types to provide your audience with an informative and visually appealing graphic.

Identify Your Goals and Your Data Sources

What's your goal and what information do you have to share? That's the next step in the infographic planning and creation process. The data you share must be accurate, credible, and backed up by a reliable source.

If the information comes from your own data collection then that's fine too. Identify the type of data you want to share and where you're going to find the information.

For example, if you're listing the top blogging applications then you'll likely do your research at the Apple App Store and compare reviews, price, and functionality.

As you're identifying your goal for your infographic, i.e. what you want it to accomplish, this is a great time to brainstorm headlines.

For example, if you want to motivate your audience to sign up for a free coaching consultation a potential headline might be, "How to Know When it's Time for a Business Coach."

From this point, it's time to begin using your chosen infographic tools. You'll begin drafting your infographic and creating the final product.

Create Your Story Board and Infographic

Using the goals you've established for your infographic and the data you've collected, the next step is to organize the information in a logical manner. You might want to grab a piece of scrap paper and a pencil to draft your infographic.

This draft will help make the actual creation process quick and easy. With many of the creation tools all you'll need to do is click and drag. If you have a plan, it can take just a few minutes from start to finish.

Keep in mind that too much data will be overwhelming to your reader and too little data can be dull or unhelpful. Aim for somewhere between six and ten data points depending on the structure of your infographic.

As you're creating your infographic, keep the following design tips in mind:

Use complementary colors – Designs that use complementary colors rather than random colors tend to perform better.

Use large fonts – Make sure your audience can easily read your infographic with a large and easy to read font. Keep styling and font formatting to a minimum. Generally, the best designs use no more than two different fonts and it's best if they're in the same font family.

Use illustrations – Graphs and charts are wonderful for breaking down data and explaining it. However, infographics with pictures and illustrations tend to perform better.

Go Vertical – Infographics read from the top down, not from left to right. Make sure you remember this when you're designing your storyboard and layout.

Include your logo – Branding is one of the benefits of an infographic. Be sure to include your logo somewhere on the graphic as well as your URL. And if you used data from a 3rd party source, make sure you cite the appropriate source URLs at the bottom of the graphic.

Publish and Market Your New Infographic

Where are you going to publish your infographic and how can you get the most mileage from it? Depending on where you create your infographic you can add an embed code to it. Visual.ly is one of the free online tools that allows you to do this. WordPress also has available embed code generator plug-ins.

You can of course share your infographic on your blog. You can also share it via social media sites like Facebook and Pinterest. Additionally, one of the more powerful ways to promote your infographic is to have other relevant blogs and businesses share your graphic on their sites.

You can send an email to your list of relevant businesses to let them know about your infographic. You can make it available to your affiliates if you have an affiliate program. And you can use your infographic as part of your email marketing campaign.

In addition to that template, you can also submit your infographic to the following directories:

- http://www.infographicsarchive.com/submit-infographics/
- http://submitinfographics.com/
- http://infographicsite.com/submit-infographic/
- http://visual.ly

- http://reddit.com/r/infographics/
- http://www.nerdgraph.com/submit-infographic/
- http://www.infographiclove.com
- http://infographicjournal.com/
- http://www.infographicas.com/

This list of directories is just the beginning. There are dozens of directories available to you.

Next Steps

Start comparing and start using the free infographic technology available to you. The best way to learn how to integrate and benefit from infographics is to start experimenting. Use the same content planning and strategy tools and systems you'd use for print content.

For example, test and track the headline, track clicks and shares as well. Infographics can become a powerful tool to build your business.

Integrate infographics into your other marketing efforts to broaden their reach and capabilities. You may be surprised how effective one infographic can be.

Final Tips

I suggest you have fun with Infographic creation. At the same time, make sure your data, statistics, or facts are accurate.