



Advanced Online Media

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Making Infographics

Piktochart

A Website that allows you to make static infographics.

- We'll be using the Free option
- Register. You can use your Facebook or Twitter logins, if you want. Or Create a New Account.
- There are Y
- Select a theme. It can be modified. You can go back to Select a Theme to change it (see selections on left bar). Under Change Mood, you can change color palette, font style or background graphics.
- There are Properties across the top of the screen. Here you can toggle the Background on and off, use the undo and redo features and change the zoom level. You can add or remove additional blocks to the bottom of the page. You can also lock and group items on the screen to make them easier to manipulate.
- You can also adjust items you select, to control the color and the font size, the arrangement, rotation, opacity.
- Back on the left bar, under Edit Info, you have several options. Most of these options are drag and drop.
- Tools - upload an image or create a chart
- Add Shapes - there are various shapes you can add and then modify.
- Add Graphics - there are a few additional graphics you can add.
- Add Text - Select the type of text to add, either header, subheader or text.
- Theme Graphics - there are some additional graphics associated with the theme.
- Uploaded images. You can see the images you have uploaded and can use them again. You can only use 5 images with the free version.
- Use the Save button at the top to Save the image as you work on it. You can see all your saved graphics under My Infographic.
- To Download, there is a download button where you can save the image. But you should adjust the Actual Size button and slider before you save. Piktochart saves as a png, and you can print this or use it on the Web.

The PiktoChart YouTube channel has a lot of tutorials.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/Piktochart>. Look for the ones that have the new interface.

Infogr.am

Infogr.am is best for an infographic that will be used online. It is fairly self-explanatory to use, but has limited ability to customize when compared to PiktoChart. The layout is typically various blocks vertically presented on the page.

With Infogr.am, you register and then you can choose a new infographic or a new chart. For a new chart, you are able to pick chart type and add data. When you make a new chart, it is published on the Web. You can share it or embed it.

There are interactive elements to the chart, like hovering over bars for more info or changing time periods.

You can go back to your library to edit or delete the chart at any time. These charts are very good for adding an individual chart to a website or a blog post.

For a New Infographic, you can choose a template. There are limited settings based on the theme.

You can add

- charts - there are several different kinds of charts. You pick and then add the data. Double-click on the chart to add the data.
- maps - you can select a map and then add data for location info.
- text - you can add different types of text to the page.
- photos - you can also add a photo
- videos - must be hosted on YouTube or Vimeo. You need the url.

From the library, you can Preview, Edit, Duplicate or Delete a chart.

When you are editing a chart, you can choose to UnPublish it to make it private.

There are other sites that help you create infographics. **Visual.ly** pulls in data for you, from things like Twitter and Facebook, to do meaningful comparisons. Just choose Create, pick a Story and connect accounts. Try out the different stories. There are a lot of fun things you can create with Visual.ly and it gets the data for you.

Finally, if you are comfortable with a program like **Adobe Illustrator**, it has a handy charting feature. You can add and customize various charts to an Illustrator file. Look for the chart icon in the toolbar. You can add data, just as you would in a spreadsheet. Then you can build your chart elements around it. The items in the chart become individual elements that you can modify or group. Tip: it is helpful to put labels across the top horizontally when charting data.

There are more options mentioned here:

<http://www.infographicsarchive.com/create-infographics-and-data-visualization/>
and here: <http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/infographic-tools/>

Exercise 1 – Using PiktoChart

You are to work on this in class. Use PiktoChart to analyze an aspect of SXSW using data and graphics on a static infographic.

Visit the schedule at <http://schedule.sxsw.com>.

Use the filters and ability to sort to look up items of interest. You can look at Music, Interactive or Film panels and events. You can sort by event type or category. You can sort by Time, Event, Speakers, Venues, Theme.

You can search for words that show up in the descriptions. It appears that if the word is in the title, it comes first in the list, then in the description. Search for some words that interest you and see how they come up.

Hint: You may end up with many results that are difficult to count by hand. We will be using some introductory “scraping” capabilities to count results. Use Chrome. Download the Scraper Extension and install it. When you right-click on an element, you will see Scrape similar. The extension will try to scrape the items on the page. You can then review these items to see if it extracted what you wanted and you can download to Google Docs.

If it doesn't automatically get what you wanted, don't worry. You can use the XPath commands to modify what it scrapes. I have looked at the CSS on the SXSW schedule and have found that for Interactive items, they have a css class of :

```
class="link_item link_itemInteractive"
```

This means that they are using multiple class declarations here, for link_item and for link_itemInteractive, all as part of the <a> tag. You can see this by using Inspect Element in Chrome. If you are looking at Music or Film items, the second part of the expression is different, i.e. link_itemMusic.

Your XPath code needs to be changed. Use either:

```
//a[@class="link_item link_itemInteractive"]
```

this will get all the items that have the multiple declaration. It gets the title and the link.

Or this:

```
//a[contains(@class, "link_item")]
```

This will get all the items using the link_item class. It also gets the title and the link.

Play with the scraping feature and compare it to the results you get on the page. You can then export to Google docs as a spreadsheet so that you can do any further analysis. You can also export to Excel if you need to use any of those features (in Google Docs, see Download As)

Make an infographic with PiktoChart about some aspect of SXSW, post to our blog with some description of what you did and the story of the chart.

Exercise 2 - using Infogr.am

You will work on this over the next two weeks. Pick any topic that you want. Think about something that interests you and that you are able to find data. Use Infogr.am this time to do your chart. Do a blog post about this chart and compare and contrast the usefulness of PiktoChart vs. Infogram. This should be a separate blog post than the one above.

If you need to scrape additional data, you can try to use the Scrape Similar feature. Try to figure out what XPath command is necessary to get what you want out of the page. Otherwise, just use data that is readily available in csv or other format. We will talk more about scraping in a few weeks.

Exercise 3 - using Visual.ly

For fun, pick one of the chart types in Visual.ly, and illustrate your own social media usage in some manner. Add this to your blog post for Exercise 2 and discuss the benefits of using this site.