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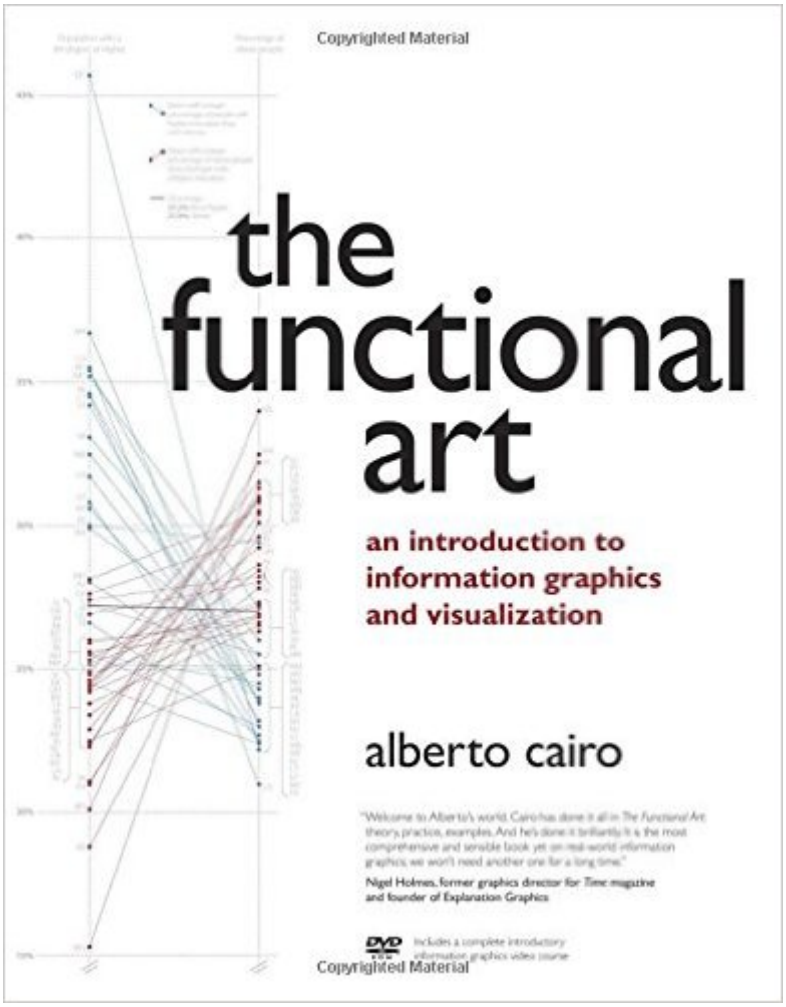
The Functional Art: An Introduction To Information Graphics And Visualization (Voices That Matter)



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Synopsis

Unlike any time before in our lives, we have access to vast amounts of free information. With the right tools, we can start to make sense of all this data to see patterns and trends that would otherwise be invisible to us. By transforming numbers into graphical shapes, we allow readers to understand the stories those numbers hide. In this practical introduction to understanding and using information graphics, youâ ™ll learn how to use data visualizations as tools to see beyond lists of numbers and variables and achieve new insights into the complex world around us. Regardless of the kind of data youâ ™re working withâ “business, science, politics, sports, or even your own personal financesâ “this book will show you how to use statistical charts, maps, and explanation diagrams to spot the stories in the data and learn new things from it. Youâ ™ll also get to peek into the creative process of some of the worldâ ™s most talented designers and visual journalists, including CondÃ© Nast Travelerâ ™s John Grimwade, National Geographic Magazineâ ™s Fernando Baptista, The New York Timesâ ™ Steve Duenes, The Washington Postâ ™s Hannah Fairfield, Hans Rosling of the Gapminder Foundation, Stanfordâ ™s Geoff McGhee, and European superstars Moritz Stefaner, Jan Willem Tulp, Stefanie Posavec, and Gregor Aisch. The book also includes a DVD-ROM containing over 90 minutes of video lessons that expand on core concepts explained within the book and includes even more inspirational information graphics from the worldâ ™s leading designers. The first book to offer a broad, hands-on introduction to information graphics and visualization, The Functional Art reveals: â ¢ Why data visualization should be thought of as â œfunctional artâ • rather than fine art â ¢ How to use color, type, and other graphic tools to make your information graphics more effective, not just better looking â ¢ The science of how our brains perceive and remember information Â â ¢ Best practices for creating interactive information graphics â ¢ A comprehensive look at the creative process behind successful information graphics Â â ¢ An extensive gallery of inspirational work from the worldâ ™s top designers and visual artists On the DVD-ROM: In this introductory video course on information graphics, Alberto Cairo goes into greater detail with even more visual examples of how to create effective information graphics that function as practical tools for aiding perception. Youâ ™ll learn how to: incorporate basic design principles in your visualizations, create simple interfaces for interactive graphics, and choose the appropriate type of graphic forms for your data. Cairo also deconstructs successful information graphics from The New York Times and National Geographic magazine with sketches and images not shown in the book.

Book Information

Series: Voices That Matter
Paperback: 384 pages
Publisher: New Riders; 1 edition (September 1, 2012)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0321834739
ISBN-13: 978-0321834737
Product Dimensions: 6.9 x 0.8 x 8.9 inches
Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (38 customer reviews)
Best Sellers Rank: #61,218 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 inÂ Books > Computers & Technology > Graphics & Design > Desktop Publishing #63 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Computer Science > Graphics & Visualization #81 inÂ Books > Computers & Technology > Programming > Graphics & Multimedia

Customer Reviews

I've always enjoyed the visualizations, static and interactive, done by the New York Times. They generally contain a balance of simplicity and depth. Simplicity in presentation and organization while providing enough depth for exploration.What I didn't fully appreciate was how much visual journalism (journalism in which the story takes a graphical form) parallels some aspects of a data scientist role. It wasn't until I picked up `Functional Art' by Alberto Cairo that I understood that visual journalists faced similar challenges in identifying the overarching story, organizing the structure, and designing visual communications to a general audience.The book explores the theory and process of visual journalism based on Cairo's experiences working at Spanish newspaper El Mundo and teaching at the School of Journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.Three of my favorite ideas/sections:1. The `Visualization Wheel', a model of Cairo's that serves as a reference point when developing a visualization. There are two main halves to the wheel - the top part representing increased complexity and depth and the bottom part representing simplicity and lightness. The key takeaway is to provide balance to a visualization with the audience in mind. Certain audiences are likely to gravitate towards one than the other.2. Discussion of engineers versus designers in their approach to graphical forms. On one extreme is Edward Tufte, who espouses a minimalistic approach to visualization. On the other extreme is graphic designer Nigel Holmes, who takes a more emotional, mimetic approach to graphic design. Cairo argues that there are benefits to both approaches.3. A concise explanation of how the visual brain works.

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