

MAKING SENSE OF NUMBERS

Webinar, 30 September 2021
By Harold Tor





DON'T THINK TOO MUCH

Let me do the thinking for you.

WHAT IS DATA?

1.

Set of characters

2.

Numeric information collected through observation

3.

Volume, Velocity, Variety

Listening
Targeting
Communicating
Predicting



**HOW DO WE
USE DATA
IN DIGITAL
ADVOCACY?**

WHAT WE THINK OF NUMBERS. DATA IS EVIDENCE.

1. ■ How does data & data visualisation reinforce your policy position?

2. ■ What are the pitfalls one should look out for?

3. ■ Is data the silver bullet in public affairs?



'And this is how thou shalt make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits (137m), its width fifty cubits (23m), and its height thirty cubits (11.5m).''

Genesis 6:15

**WHAT WE
THINK OF
NUMBERS.
DATA IS
SCIENCE.**



WHAT WE THINK OF NUMBERS. HOW WE COMMUNI CATE ABOUT DATA IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

Hear us.

“Overall, [our industry] directly and indirectly supports an estimated

9.4 million jobs

and contributes

€624 billion (4%)

to EU GDP.”

We demand action.

“[That industry] could be responsible for

17% of global CO2 emissions

in 2050 if left unregulated,
according to a new scientific study.”

It's not us.

“As this interactive map shows, the market uptake of electrically-chargeable cars is directly correlated to a country's national income (GDP per capita), showing that affordability remains a major barrier to consumers in the EU... Countries with an electric car share of

less than 3%

have an average GDP per capita

below €17,000.”

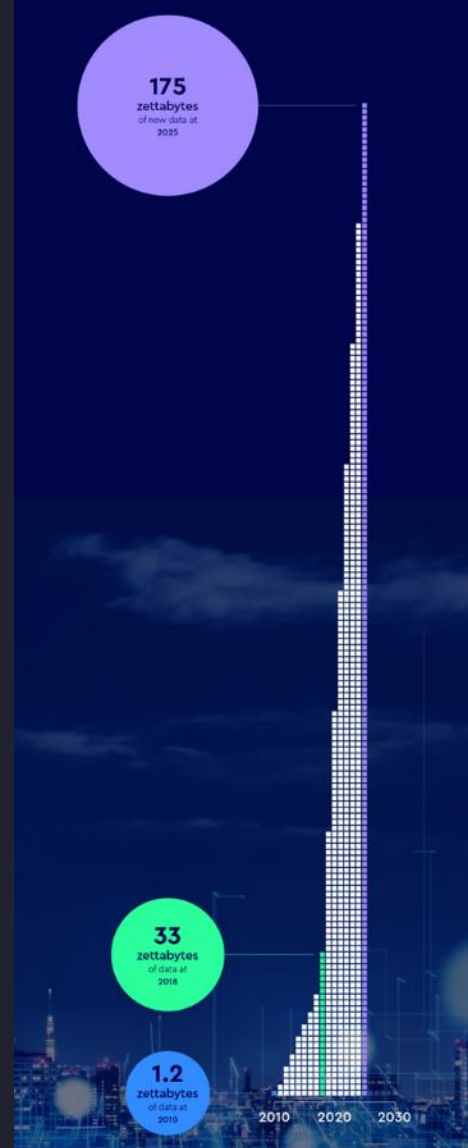
HOW WE ACTUALLY PERCEIVE NUMBERS. DATA IS INTANGIBLE.

Data
Visuals

1

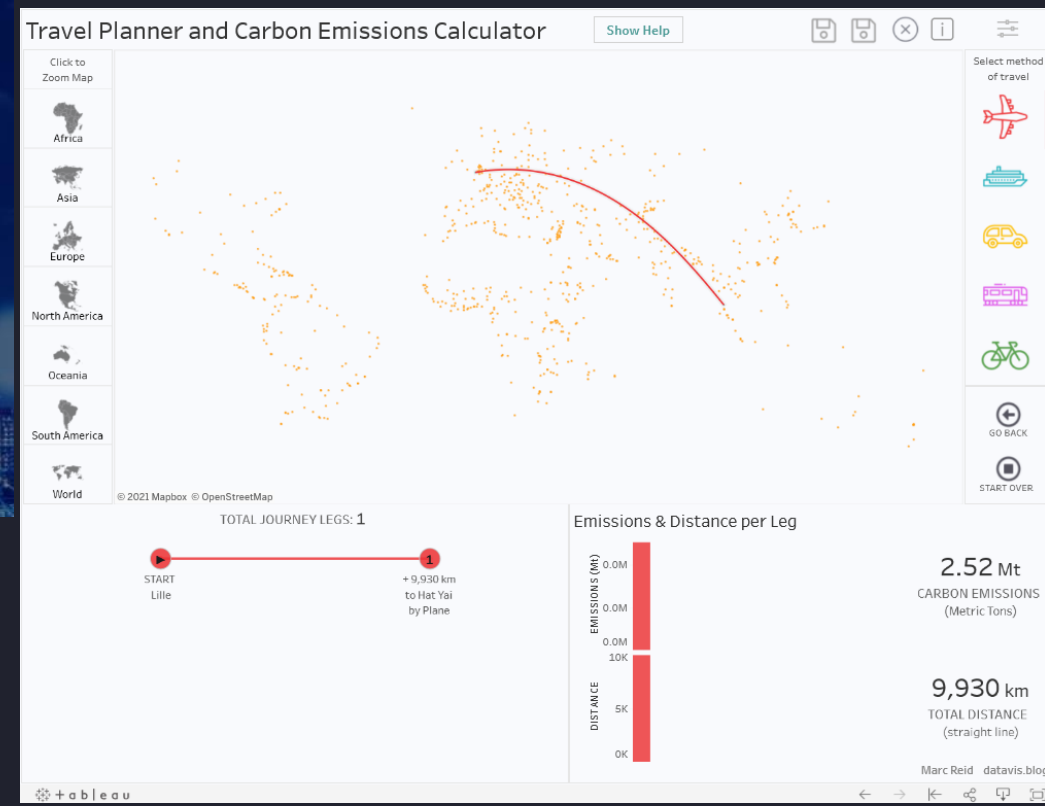
Infographic

informationisbeautifulawards.com



2. Data visualisation

public.tableau.com



DEAD WEIGHT

AS YOU CONTEMPLATE EATING THAT SECOND HELPING AT THE NEXT HOLIDAY PARTY, CONSIDER THIS:

A new study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* looked at a group of 1.46 million white, nonsmokers between the ages of 19 and 84 over a 10 year period. They found a disturbing correlation between Body Mass Index (weight in kilograms divided by height—in meters—squared) and likelihood of death. People with a BMI between 20 and 24.9 were the least likely to have died within the 10 year period. Here is how much a higher BMI increased chances of death within 10 years.

BMI
25
UP TO 29.9

13%

Increase in the likelihood
of death in 10 years

BMI
30
UP TO 34.9

44%

Increase in the likelihood
of death in 10 years

BMI
35
UP TO 39.9

88%

Increase in the likelihood
of death in 10 years

BMI
40
AND HIGHER

150%

Increase in the likelihood
of death in 10 years

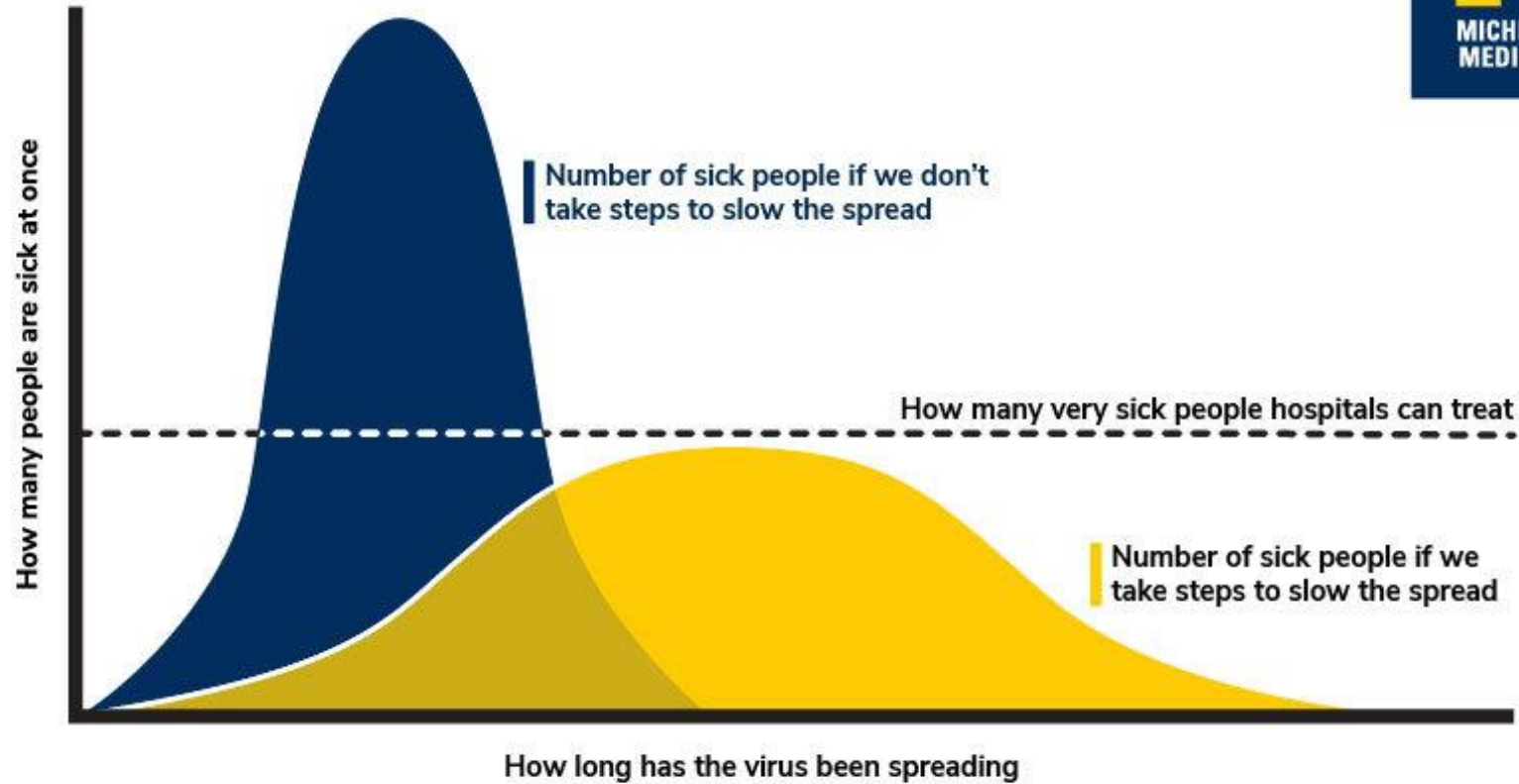


These are the numbers for white female nonsmokers. White male nonsmokers had similar results. The reports author's assume that results would be more pronounced for other ethnic groups.

A collaboration between GOOD and Gregory Hubacek

SOURCE "Body-Mass Index and Mortality among 1.46 Million White Adults," *New England Journal of Medicine*

VISUALISING THE INTANGIBLE. CONTEXTUALISATION.




**VISUALISING
THE
INTANGIBLE.
CTA.**

"Stories are the things that tell us who we are.
And for me, that's the great value of doing this kind of work.
We are a narrative animal. We're an animal that
understands itself by telling stories.

And all of us, we live in stories. Families have family stories. Cities have stories of the city. Communities, secular or religious, have stories which define them. Countries have national stories. And we live in these concentric circles of stories, and we understand ourselves through them. Stories contain, in the most beautiful way, what we have been, the potential of what we could be, speculations about how we might be."

Salman Rushdie,
on the 'Concentric
Circles of Stories We Live
Within'

A close-up portrait of Salman Rushdie, an older man with a grey beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit and a light blue shirt. He is looking slightly to the left with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

**VISUALISING
THE
INTANGIBLE.
DIGITAL
STORYTELLING.**



MAKING SENSE OF NUMBERS. 3 TAKEAWAYS.

1

Numbers alone do not tell
■ your story.

2

Firmly tie your data
■ visuals to a CTA.

3

■ Keep it simple.

Time

Format

Algorithm

User habits

Device



**MAKING
SENSE OF
NUMBERS.
TECHNICAL
CONSTRAINTS.**

**IS DATA THE
SILVER
BULLET IN
PUBLIC
AFFAIRS?**



A person with blonde hair, wearing a colorful striped sweater and blue jeans, is holding a large black pot containing a Monstera plant with large, green, deeply lobed leaves. The person's face is partially visible behind the plant.

THANK YOU!

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With special thanks to:
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Katie Owens @ktowens
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