

DO



**INFO** 

**GRAPHICS**

— **STILL WORK?**

*A FACT-BASED STUDY*



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# INTRODUCTION

Infographics took the marketing world by storm in the early 2000s as the rise of social media made for a perfect distribution method for these bold, informative, gold mines of interesting facts, trivia, stories, and concepts.

Perhaps no format was better suited to go viral than the infographic, as it was  
a) relatively new, b) packed with information, and c) relatively low on data consumption.

 In fact, infographics were, as recently as 2015, infographics were liked and shared 3 times more than any other visual content. 

Here at Infographics World (**surprise, surprise**), we're somewhat partial to infographics as a marketing tactic. We have a history of delivering award-winning, results-driven infographics to our customers and their customers and their friends. But don't just let our bias tell the story.

This is a fact-based exploration of the question that keeps arising year after year (and keeps getting answered in the affirmative): **Do infographics still work?**



1. <http://www.massplanner.com/10-types-of-visual-content-to-use-in-your-content-marketing/>

# NOT ALWAYS

Why some infographics are worse than nothing.

So, at the peak of the infographic boom, everybody started making infographics, including people who really had no business making infographics and some that really didn't have all that much info.



It became enough of an epidemic that researchers at MIT examined the effect of infographics of varying quality on subjects' ability to read, learn, and retain information.



Some infographics were so bad, so distracting, so disorganized, that readers' brains struggled to make sense of them, sometimes creating the sense of a faux image in the reader's mind. The net result was that readers would very often learn nothing.

**The answer to their study was, in fact, that bad infographics don't work.**

Of course, that's true of just about anything: do it poorly, and you won't accomplish the desired result.

1. <http://www.scribblelive.com/blog/2013/11/19/how-do-our-brains-process-infographics-mit-mongrel-shows-peripheral-vision-at-work/>

# JUST THE FACTS, EH?

Strictly informational infographics.

One of the key purposes of infographics is simply information for the sake of . . . informing people. Crazy, right?



**Statistics  
Canada**

Statistics Canada, as the name implies, is the agency of the Canadian government responsible for producing statistics about life in Canada. They are prolific infographic creators, churning out high-quality infographics that pack loads of data into streamlined, brilliant infographics. Anyone who questions whether infographics work should pay close attention to what Statistics Canada is doing. Their goal isn't better SEO, increased sales, or brand awareness—they're out to use infographics to inform, and they're doing an amazing job. **Their infographics work.**

**A little industry secret, though: when infographics are truly informative and fascinating, they can be used quite easily to increase SEO, boost sales, and send brand awareness through the roof.**



**Increase in SEO**



**Sales Boost**



**Brand Awareness**

This particular infographic is a good case study in how Statistics Canada uses its massive amount of data to create truly informative graphic works.

1. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/start>

# COLOR ME ATTENTIVE

The power of color to affect comprehension.

One of the great aspects about infographics is the flexibility to use color creatively in the presentation of data-heavy information. How do you communicate fact-loaded content without losing the audience?



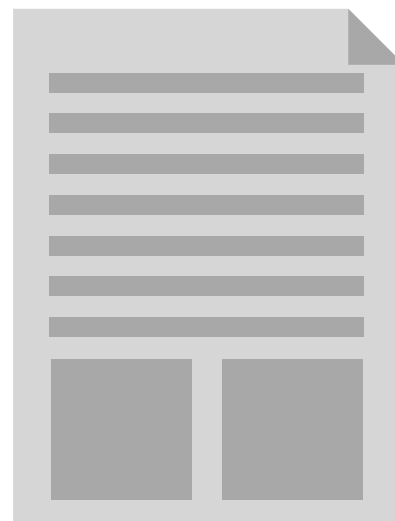
Color plays a pivotal role, boosting reader comprehension by up to **73%**.



It also capitalizes on learning in general, improving memory retention by up to **78%**.



If the facts you want to communicate are as important as they are massive, colorful infographics can get the job done so much better than text alone.

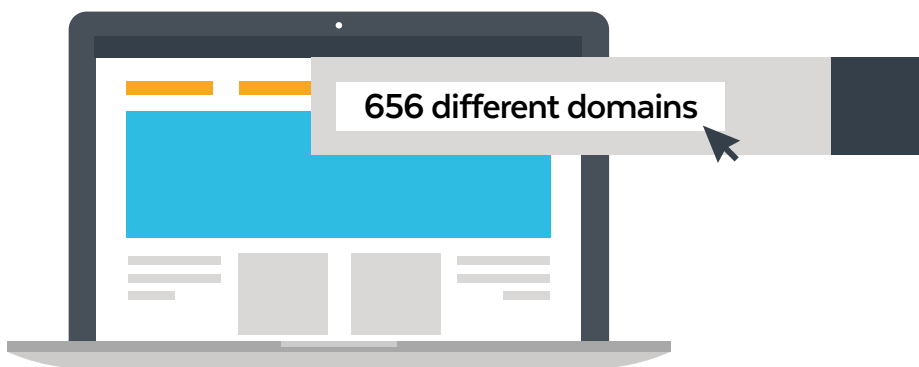


## Infographics' effect on search engine ranking.

**A successful infographic generates a huge burst of traffic, sometimes short-lived and other times a mainstay atop popular search results.** Beyond the initial traffic, however, is the sheer volume of backlinks your site can acquire as various blogs, news organizations, and social media outlets link to the post on your site.



One company that recently had overwhelming success to that end was Podio, who created an interactive infographic about the habits of famous people. It is engaging, interesting, and incredibly linkable. **656 different domains linked to the infographic**, generating tremendous traffic and providing a strong stable of backlinks that give Podio a significant foothold in search.

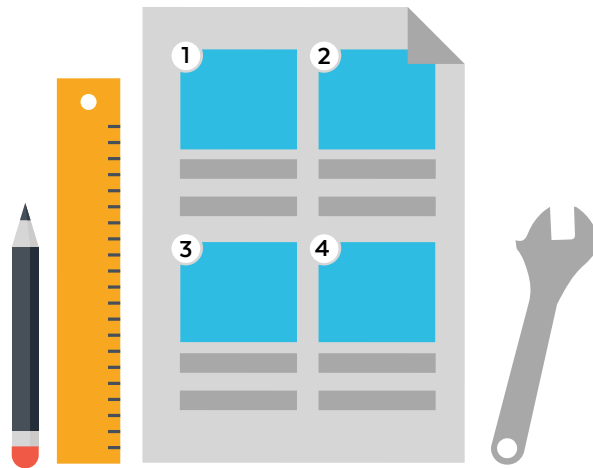


# CRYSTAL-CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS

The teaching power of symbols.

**Infographics can be extremely useful for internal communications as well.** If your company has an internal training department, a new-hire training class, or introduces a new system of some kind, infographics provide an excellent way to communicate instructions.

One study showed that participants increased adherence to instructions by **2,500 percent** when copy was paired with pictograms compared to text alone.



That increase in comprehension and accuracy can eliminate wasted time, human error, and customer frustration. (Just ask anyone with furniture from IKEA.)

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/m/pubmed/15950838/>



# YOU'RE GETTING WARMER

An infographic with a strong message.

A well-crafted infographic can tell a story with a dramatic ending in the same way any other storyteller would, and perhaps no one has done a better job of that than the satirical comic site, [xkcd.com](http://xkcd.com).



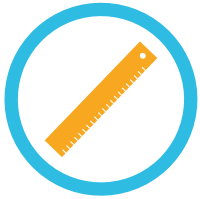
Their infographic timeline of Earth's average temperature tells 22,000 years of history in five minutes' time. As a reader scrolls and scrolls and scrolls . . . and scrolls through the millennia, they're greeted with a playful stream of facts and dates and jokes. It's all very fun until the jaw-dropping present-day conclusion. .

The infographic's power for persuading its audience on climate change and compelling us to act is so well done. **It's a clear example of infographics working in the best, globally conscious way possible**

# LONG AGO, IN AN INFOGRAPHIC FAR, FAR AWAY...

Infographic art on display.

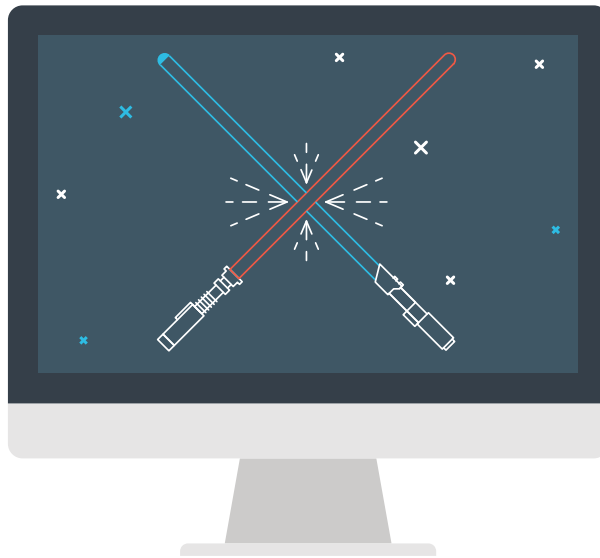
Illustrator Martin Panchaud created an infographic based on *Star Wars, A New Hope*. Or he illustrated *Star Wars* and based the format on an infographic.



The whole thing is longer than a football field. But it's *Star Wars*. It's hard to say if it works or not but Martin definitely did.



He spent **1,000 hours** and the better part of a year working on it. And a fine job he did.



# CONCLUSION

## CONTENT IS KING

**The bottom line: yes, infographics work incredibly well when they feature good content and design.** Scientifically, the amount of visual information that can be communicated and the attention, time, and brain power it compels viewers to employ goes beyond what text alone can do, even more than video can do on some levels.

The key is and always will be, make it great content  
and people will always want to consume it.

It is important to think beyond the mainstream usage of infographics at its peak when infographics reigned supreme over all other social media content. They communicate clearly, instruct effectively, and at times entertain hilariously or inspire profoundly.

**That's not a trend that comes and goes—it's a rule of business,  
and we love to help our customers excel at it.**



*Infographic World is a visual communication  
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