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Information Visualization: An Introduction

By Robert Spence



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Information Visualization: An Introduction By Robert Spence

Information visualization is the act of gaining insight into data, and is carried out by virtually everyone. It is usually facilitated by turning data – often a collection of numbers – into images that allow much easier comprehension. Everyone benefits from information visualization, whether internet shopping, investigating fraud or indulging an interest in art. So no assumptions are made about specialist background knowledge in, for example, computer science, mathematics, programming or human cognition. Indeed, the book is directed at two main audiences. One comprises first year students of any discipline. The other comprises graduates – again of any discipline – who are taking a one- or two-year course of training to be visual and interaction designers. By focusing on the activity of design the pedagogical approach adopted by the book is based on the view that the best way to learn about the subject is to do it, to be creative: not to prepare for the ubiquitous examination paper. The content of the book, and the associated exercises, are typically used to support five creative design exercises, the final one being a group project mirroring the activity of a consultancy undertaking a design (not an implementation) for a client. Engagement with the material of this book can have a variety of outcomes. The composer of a school newsletter and the applicant for a multi-million investment should both be able to convey their message more effectively, and the curator of an exhibition will have new presentational techniques on their palette. For those students training to be visual/interaction designers the exercises have led to original and stimulating outcomes.



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Editorial Review

Review

“The book itself is a very good introduction to information visualization, and as such, it can serve for an introductory course allowing various pedagogical paths for an instructor to take. ... it is a very readable book to be recommended not only to prospective students of information visualization, but to anyone interested in the topic, since it is written in such a way that there are no prerequisites to be able to read it.” (P. Navrat, Computing Reviews, July, 2015)

“The title is accurate. There is a minor genre of books on this topic within statistics. This book differs in focusing on a broader range of data types. It also gives more attention to psychological and cognitive issues. ... Professionals working primarily on interface design for a broad audience, say map or web page designers, may find the text useful as it discusses many issues other books on visualization ignore.” (Robert W. Hayden, MAA Reviews, June, 2015)

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Bob Spence's research has ranged from engineering design to Human-computer Interaction, and often with the way in which the latter can enhance the former. He was involved in the 1970s with the invention of algorithms to enhance mass production, the proposal of the first focus+context display in 1980, and the

invention of the Attribute and Influence Explorers in the 1990s. Bob also led development of the MINNIE CAD system which became a product in 1985. Since 1970 Bob has pioneered the field of Information Visualization and has taught the subject in courses in many countries. Latterly his interest has focussed on Rapid Serial Visual Presentation in which images that might interest a user are presented rapidly and effectively, as with the riffling of the pages of a book.

Users Review

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