Are Your Color Choices Ruining Your Reports?

Jaime D'Agord

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**Color Harmonies**

**Question:** Why does Fred Flintstone wear a blue tie, the minions wear blue jumpers and the hulk wear purple pants?

**Answer:** Color Harmonies

**What are color harmonies?**
Colors on the color wheel that work well together.

- Complementary
- Analogous
- Rectangle
- Triadic
- Split Complementary
- Square

**Tip!** Contrasting colors work well in reporting. Complementary colors have the best contrast.

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**What color is that?**

**How does a red-green color blind person interpret color?**

- Original
- Like this?
- Or this?

A person who is red-green color-blind sees in black and white - **FALSE**

Red and green appear similar for a person who is red-green color-blind - **TRUE**

- Imagine this: using different shades of a color to determine if you finished a Rubik's cube

- Good design practices would ensure you take all of the population into consideration when creating data visualizations.

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**Let’s Consider the Color Blind**

**Social Media Active Users – Feb 2018**

- Original
- Color-blind
- Color-blind friendly

Tip! Use monochrome in reporting. The color-blind can distinguish different shades of one color.

- Why is Facebook blue?

Facebook co-founder, Mark Zuckerberg is red-green color blind. Blue is the richest color he can see!
Everyone universally understands that green is good and red is bad.

Glancing at the report we understand the meaning without looking into the details.

Our eyes are drawn to the darkest spots and we want to know why?

Color to Show Associations

Question: Does this graph convey information quickly? Why is color used?
Answer: No, it does not. Color is being used for decoration and serves no purpose.

Much better! No confusing colors and our eyes are drawn to what’s important. The Data!

Tip! Introduce color when differentiating between groups to show association.

Color and contrast to emphasize information.
Stephen Few suggests 9 colors that go well together (separated in 3 hues). These colors are harmonious, like on a paint strip. They can be used interchangeably in reporting and work!

Tip! A bright color palette makes small data points easier to read.

When your brain processes gold, silver or bronze, it doesn’t link to pretty shades of blue. When representing colors on a graph use their corresponding color.

Hard time choosing color palettes? Use Nature! Natural color palette used in reporting

Here’s some considerations...

Issue: The graph is pretty to look at but the colors are confusing compared against the legend.
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