

..... See Tufte's take on the iPhone interface at <http://www.edwardtufte.com>

Edward Tufte

A Modern-Day Hero of Information Design



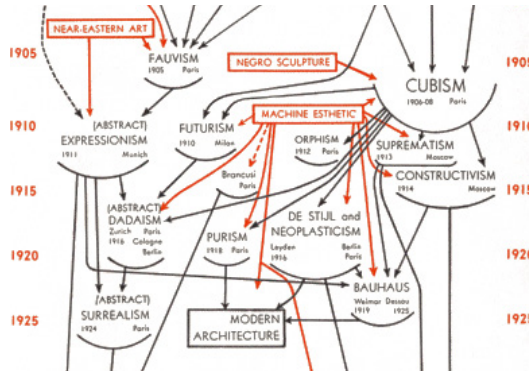
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There is something awkward about a speaker who stands in front of an audience and reads words off a screen, especially when the spectators have silently taken in all the information before the presenter has time to say it. Widespread maxims such as "Know your audience," "People need to hear it as well as see it," and "Make your slides interesting to look at" have done everyone a disservice.

Enter Edward Tufte, born in 1942. He arrived just in time to expertly guide the Western world through the challenges of the Information Age – notably the sheer volume of data and

the abuse of graphic technology by the masses. His deep concern for the accurate communication of data, mature artist's eye, and passion to voice his views has made him a sought-after consultant. His confident critique of the interfaces that people encounter daily has proved invaluable to companies such as IBM, *The New York Times*, Hewlett Packard, and NBC.

Tufte, or E.T. as he likes to be known, earned degrees in statistics and political science from Stanford and Yale. He has since then received seven honorary doctorates from various institutions around the country. He taught statistics, graphic design, and political economy at Princeton and Yale for 33 years. These days, he spends a good deal of time on speaking tours.



“Good design is clear thinking made visible.”

– Edward Tufte

Those who attend one of his seminars emerge well schooled in the evils of PowerPoint. His first commandment of presenting is “Know Your Content” and the second is like it: “Respect Your Audience.” Participants may also get a glimpse of some of Tufte’s early edition volumes of his intellectual predecessors, such as Galileo and Euclid. They also receive four of Tufte’s books.

His information design-related titles are: *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, *Envisioning Information*, *Visual Explanations*, and *Beautiful Evidence*. In order to have better control over the production and sales of his many books, Tufte founded Graphic Press.

In *Envisioning Information*, Tufte explains that “clutter is a failure of design, not an attribute of information.” He explains that great amounts of data can be shown clearly in a relatively small space when specific, transcendent principles are followed. Complex does not have to be difficult to understand. “Good design,” he says, “is clear thinking made visible.”

Tufte has been hailed as “The Da Vinci of Data.” As the Renaissance progressivity of his thinking continues to connect with today’s global audience, the world will learn to better show-and-tell.