

WHAT SHOWBIZ HAS TO DO WITH IT

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If you show the core numbers of statistics, rather than the meaning of the data, your audience will be small. Just imagine what would happen if you climb the stage in a concert hall just to show a PowerPoint presentation of the musical notes of a famous piece. Even if it is from a great composer you will not get a standing ovation. Neither will you if you just display a newly constructed musical instrument to the audience. The success in music depends on a great composition being played on a good musical instrument that fits the composition by a musician that adds his personal interpretation but sticks to the notes of the composer. This is my vision for statistics. Get the great data sets with time series compiled by professional statisticians, let the IT industry develop new instruments for animated graphic displays, and then develop a new strain of statistical musicians. In other words just as meteorologists are doing every evening on prime time TV with their data. And those meteorologists with show biz talents become like rock stars in many countries. By serendipity Gapminder Foundation found that the beauty of a statistical database can be unveiled to a broad audience if the data set can be animated in newly developed software. Many things are needed and the last step is a presenter who manages to display the dataset in that software in a way not too different from how a musician can unveil the beauty of a composition. The value of a statistical database depends on how widely it can be used and understood and that in its turn depends on whether the database is made available in a uniform and machine readable format to faster innovation of graphical data display. Animated displays of time series do not replace any other form of data presentation. Its aim is to attract new user groups to the beauty of statistics. I will review what it will take to bring statistical databases into prime time TV.

Illustrated verbal presentation