

Ich verstehe, wenn ich es sehe.

I understand when I see it.

The power of infographics

Infografiken gewinnen in der Kommunikation und im Marketing von Unternehmen mehr und mehr an Bedeutung. Doch was ist eine Infografik eigentlich? Was können wir von ihr erwarten? Wann setzt man sie ein? Und wie plant man Infografiken? Eigens mit einer Infografik beantworten wir diese Fragen.



Neid
hart/
Schön



The infographics as the tip of the iceberg

Interview with Tjeerd Krumpelman, Head of Advisory, Reporting & Engagement at ABN AMRO

Graphical visualizations of business models are becoming increasingly common in corporate reporting. This is not least due to the trend towards Integrated Reporting. On the surface or at the tip of the iceberg, visualization facilitates communication with stakeholders, while at a deeper level it promotes opinion-forming processes within the company. For example, at ABN AMRO, a leading universal bank that is among the top ten banks in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index.

➤ Tjeerd Krumpelman, why did you choose this presentation of the business model?

ABN AMRO published its first integrated annual report in 2015. In doing so, we were guided by the IIRC* model, which reflects the process of value creation. Since the model claims to be valid across all industries, we have tailored it to our needs as a bank. For example, by adopting the six capitals to our own business model. As a bank, financial capital is extremely important as an input, but natural capital is less material as an input. Our larger outputs and outcomes are on manufactured and financial capital. However, on the output or impact side, our lending and investment activities will negatively affect natural capital. It makes sense to show these differences in the various capitals; the IIRC framework is very useful for that.

➤ What impact did you expect from the visualization?

For us, integrated reporting is a means of promoting integrated thinking within the company. Visualization requires reduction to the essentials while at the same time looking at the big picture. This helps us to recognize what is really important for our long-

term success. For us, the true value of reporting is the internal discourse that is set in motion across the hierarchical levels from the supervisory board to the communications department.

➤ What are your experiences from the process?

The graphic artist brought a lot of experience with infographics. The cooperation was great and we were able to reduce the information density. There was a constant process in the development of the final model. This process helped us a lot to make our message more concrete.

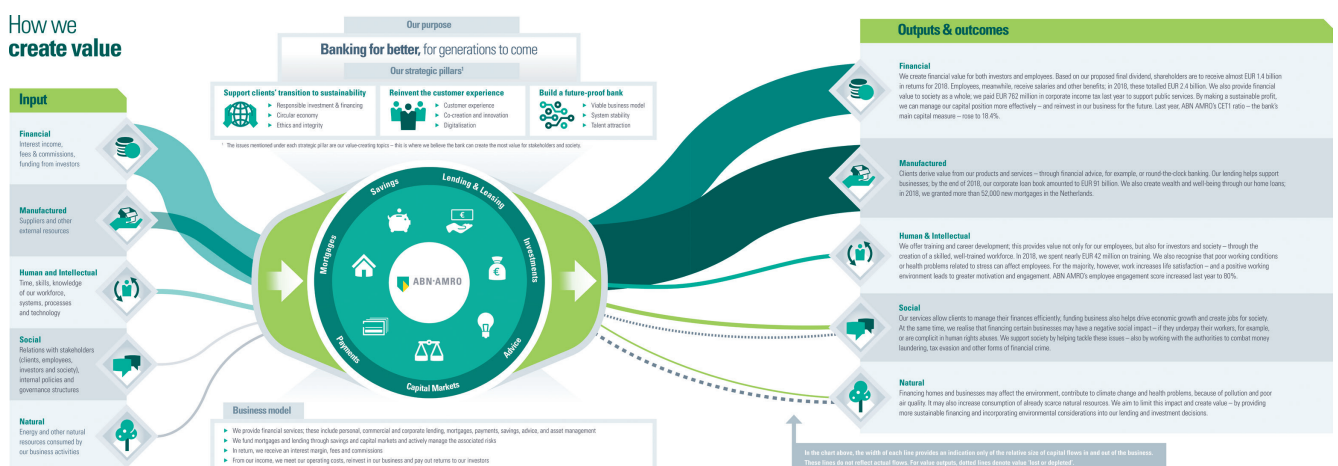
➤ Have you achieved your communicative objectives?

We want the visualization as well as the entire reporting to be both understandable and as specific as possible. From the reactions of the different stakeholders we know that the visualization must be commented on in order to be understood. So there is always room for improvement. We will continue to work more specifically on the conditions at ABN AMRO and to describe the impact of our work more concretely. However, the value creation model will continue to be just the tip of the iceberg.



Tjeerd Krumpelman
Head of Advisory, Reporting & Engagement
ABN AMRO

* The International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) is a global coalition of regulators, investors, companies, standard setters, the accounting profession and NGOs.



Value creation model in the integrated annual report of ABN AMRO 2018

Approaches to strategic information design

Interview with Bernd Riedel, Director of Strategy at Ellery Studio

In today's high-paced environment, organizations must excel at efficient and fast information transfer. In this context, strategic information design condenses complex information into visuals, short executive summaries and easy-to-comprehend reporting. But what's more, it can act as a key framework for consulting, workshops and planning. Ellery Studio, a Berlin-based strategy and design outfit, offers an insight into its specialized visual strategy lab.

➤ How would you define strategic information design?

I would define two main applications: first, it means providing easy access to information through visualization, while also designing an environment to reach the intended audience and achieve a desired effect. This effect can be to A) help them make decisions or B) enable them to become knowledge agents (who further disseminate the information). Second, strategic information design can also be the conscious application of the infographic mindset or, in other words, putting the skills you need to create good infographic pieces to use in other disciplines. If you think of infographics as the crafted outcome of a structured process of learning, understanding, curating and translating information, then this process itself can hold value for other strategic purposes like workshop facilitation or collaborative decision making, framing or diagnostics.

➤ What role can strategic information design play within organizations?

A strategic use of infographics or information design can be a very effective way to support any transformative process that depends on buy-in and participation from the members of a changing community. It is, however, imperative to first ensure you really know your audience and to answer the question "What does this mean for me personally?". That is the first step towards developing in-

spiring and stimulating solutions that simultaneously inform and entertain, and even encourage critical thinking.

➤ How do organizations benefit from strategic information design?

The main purpose of infographics is to translate complex issues into effective and recognizable visual forms, provide quicker, easier access to information and make the presented information easier to understand. This can lead to enhanced performance in organizations that understand how to fully utilize this potential. A good infographic in the right environment can make all the difference between indifference and excitement. Using a transparent, well-structured information design approach within change processes already from the very beginning accelerates decision making and strengthens collective ownership and participation.

➤ What potential do you see in strategic information design for the future?

Some might consider this a niche market, but I feel that collaborative or participatory environments can greatly benefit from having someone with an infographic mindset as part of the team. Strategic information design can be a great supplemental tool for addressing what Rittel & Webber describe as wicked problems: social or cultural issues or concerns that are inherently very difficult to solve because of incomplete, contradictory or shifting requirements that are often hard to recognize. Examples of these topics include things like diversity, social justice, health care and climate change.



Bernd Riedel
Director of Strategy
Ellery Studio



Ellery Studio's award-winning Infographic Energy Transition Coloring Book tells the story of climate change and the energy transition.

Center for Corporate Reporting

Das Center for Corporate Reporting (CCR) ist das führende, unabhängige Kompetenzzentrum für Unternehmensberichterstattung. Hauptsächlich durch Firmenmitglieder getragen, ist das CCR die erste Anlaufstelle für alle Firmen bei Fragen zur Unternehmensberichterstattung.

Center for Corporate Reporting – Dorfstrasse 29 – 8037 Zürich
+41 44 446 83 50 – info@corporate-reporting.com

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NeidhartSchön AG – Dorfstrasse 29 – 8037 Zürich
+41 44 446 82 82 – info@neidhartschoen.ch

Prof. Michael Stoll

Seit 2005 lehrt und forscht Prof. Michael Stoll an der Hochschule Augsburg, Fakultät für Gestaltung, im Fachgebiet Informationsdesign – seit 2018 im Rahmen der Forschungsprofessur «Strategic Visual Knowledge Transfer». Prof. Stoll sammelt historische Infografik und besitzt eine der umfangreichsten Sammlungen zu diesem Thema.

Hochschule Augsburg – Fakultät für Gestaltung – An der Hochschule 1 – 86161 Augsburg
+49 821 5586-3413 – mstoll@hs-augsburg.de



Design Consultants



Hochschule
Augsburg University of
Applied Sciences

Impressum
Gestaltung
Redaktion
Schrift

© 5.2019
Prof. Michael Stoll, Jonas Jetzig, BA (HS Augsburg)
Dr. Joëlle Loos-Neidhart (NeidhartSchön Group)
Benjamin Kaltwasser (Center for Corporate Reporting)
Ubuntu Condensed (2011, Dalton Maag)