



The Ultimate Nonprofit Guide to Creating **Social Media Graphics**



Part of the
Ultimate Nonprofit
Guide series!



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About Me

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A Boston native, Julia Campbell has been involved with the social good sector her whole life, from coordinating food drives as a child to volunteering at homeless shelters in high school to assisting NGOs in Senegal, West Africa and beyond.

In her current position as an author, coach, and speaker, she trains nonprofits large and small on the best ways to use digital tools to raise money and awareness for their organizations.

The author of the new book [Storytelling in the Digital Age: A Guide for Nonprofits](#), Julia's blog about online fundraising and nonprofit technology is consistently featured in the list of Top 150 Nonprofit Blogs in the world.

Find her blog and contact information at: www.jcsocialmarketing.com



PART ONE

Why Are Visuals So Vital?



It's A Visual World

And I Am A Visual Girl

There is no doubt that visuals are driving social media communications.

- When people hear information, they're likely to remember only 10% of that information three days later. However, if a relevant image is paired with that same information, [people retained 65% of the information three days later](#).
- 4X as many consumers would [prefer to watch a video](#) about a product than to read about it.
- Facebook users spend [3X more time watching live videos](#) than traditional videos.
- Eye-tracking studies show internet readers pay close attention to information-carrying images. In fact, when the images are relevant, [readers spend more time looking at the images](#) than they do reading text on the page.
- Tweets with images receive [150% more retweets](#) than tweets without images.
- Facebook posts with images see [2.3X more engagement](#) than those without images.

Warning!

Don't Get in Trouble

When creating graphics to use online, it is important to remember to use legal images that you have the rights to edit and/or use.

That means do not just go to Google Images and swipe something that looks great.

If you do not own the copyright to an image, do not share those images on your social networks!



Getting Started

Planning & preparation

If only we could just snap our fingers or click our heels three times to create high quality graphics instantaneously!

Graphics and visuals that our audience loves, that are guaranteed to go viral, to delight and inspire!

Creating visuals to share with the public takes a little bit more planning, thought, and preparation.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA](#)



Getting Started

Planning & preparation

Before you start with the tools, you need to do some planning first.

- 1) Determine what story you are going to tell.** Is it a before and after story? Is it a behind-the-scenes story? A success story? A lessons-learned story?

Figure out what you want to convey with this particular photo, graphic or infographic. (It might just be sharing a great quote in a beautiful way – that’s fine and will get a good response!)

- 2) Think about your community.** Will they find it compelling? Is it something they are interested in? Will it resonate?

- 3) Double check your data.** If you are creating a data visualization or infographic based on statistics, double check the statistics for accuracy.

Input all the data into an Excel spreadsheet for easier importing – many of these tools work with Excel.



Getting Started

Planning & preparation

- 4) **Double check your photo permissions.** If you are editing a photo for publication, make sure that you have the proper permissions, both from the subject and the photographer.
- 5) **Take some time.** Learning these tools, no matter how simple they may seem, will take some time.

Budget for a few hours of professional development and experiment.

- 6) **Don't get discouraged.** Above all, connecting with supporters and donors on social media is supposed to be fun – not stressful.

It takes a while to learn these tools and the process.

Know that you are doing a great job! It might take a while to feel appreciated.



Getting Started

Planning & preparation

7) **Keep learning.** Check out these resources for some nonprofit inspiration on all things social media and visual storytelling:

- My blog: www.jcsocialmarketing.com/blog
- John Haydon: www.johnhaydon.com
- Beth Kanter: www.bethkanter.org
- CauseVox blog: www.causevox.com/blog/
- Classy blog: www.classy.org/blog/
- #npengage by Blackbaud:
<https://npengage.com/tag/blackbaud/>
- Nonprofit Tech for Good: www.nptechforgood.com



PART TWO

Characteristics of Great Nonprofit Social Media Graphics



Tell Your Story

In photos and videos

I've heard nonprofit marketers say: "I can't make graphics or share photos for my organization.. *My cause isn't interesting or sexy.*"

I'm willing to bet that's not true.

Every nonprofit has a story to tell. There is a *reason* you exist, after all.

You just have to **starting thinking in a visual way.** Visual marketing opportunities can be found everywhere you look – *you just have to look.*

Don't think of this as creating graphics and visuals for the sake of a few Facebook likes. Don't think of it as just adding one more thing to your ever-expanding To Do list.

Think of creating graphics as showing the world what you do and why you do it, in a compelling, interesting and easy-to-share way!

Your nonprofit's mission and impact are worth sharing if you get a little creative.

Now get out there and start creating!

Characteristics

Of awesome nonprofit graphics



They are visually compelling.

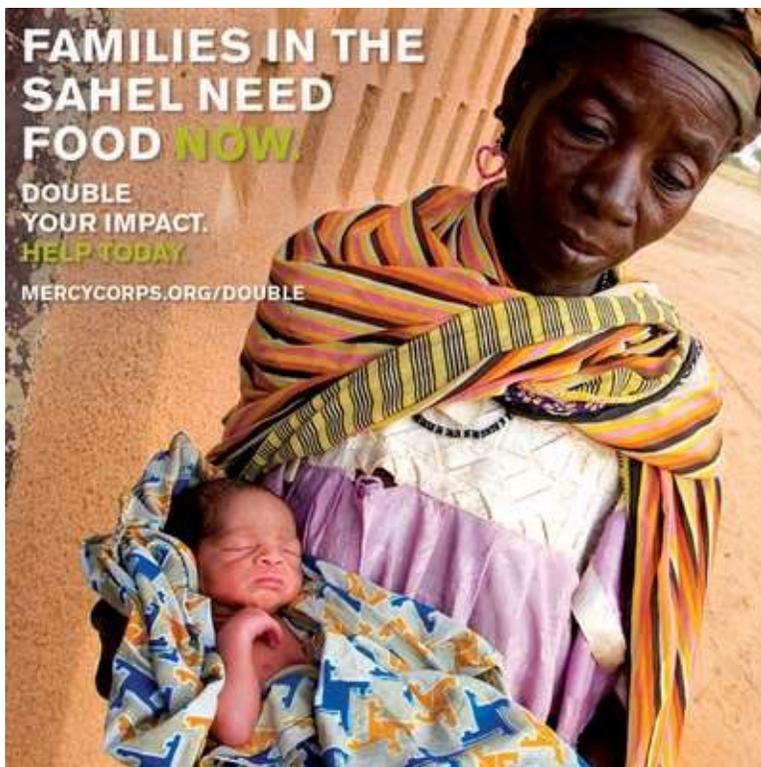
The more visually interesting, unique or compelling the visual, the more it will be liked, commented on and re-pinned.

Getting engagement (likes, comments, shares) on your visual is key!

Source:
<http://www.instagram.com/charitywater>

Characteristics

Of awesome nonprofit graphics



They tell a story.

Research estimates that you have two seconds to capture someone’s attention before they move on to the next thing.

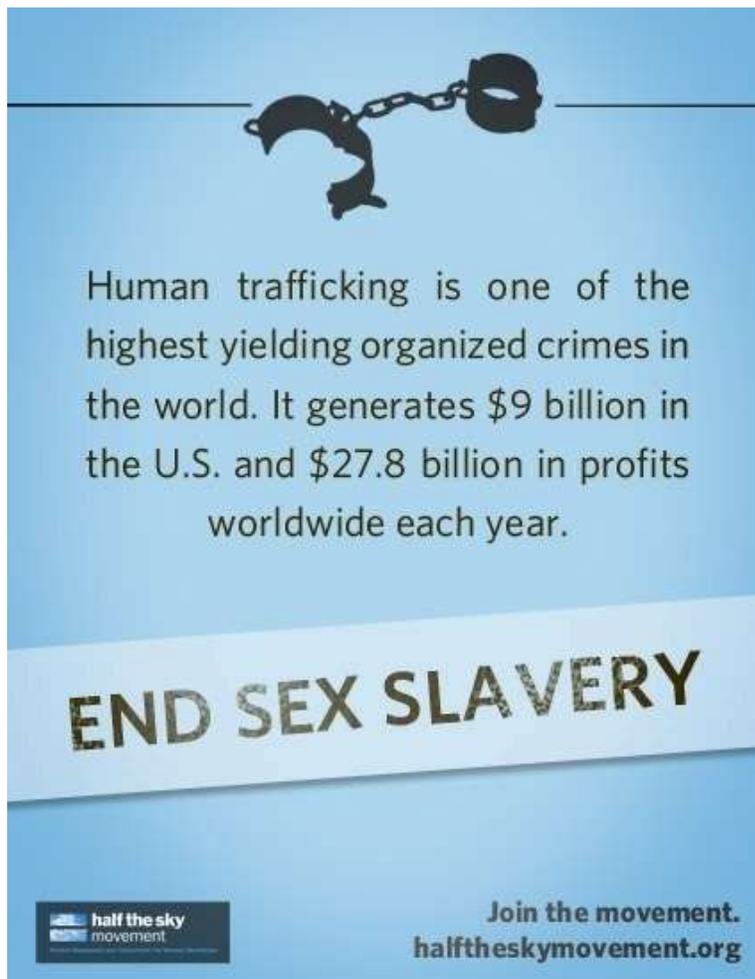
Your nonprofit graphics and visuals should say what you need to say in one image – enough to capture someone to click to learn more, or share it to their social networks.

Source:

<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/430164201878471786/>

Characteristics

Of awesome nonprofit graphics



They educate and inform.

A big part of your mission to create awareness around the problem you are solving .

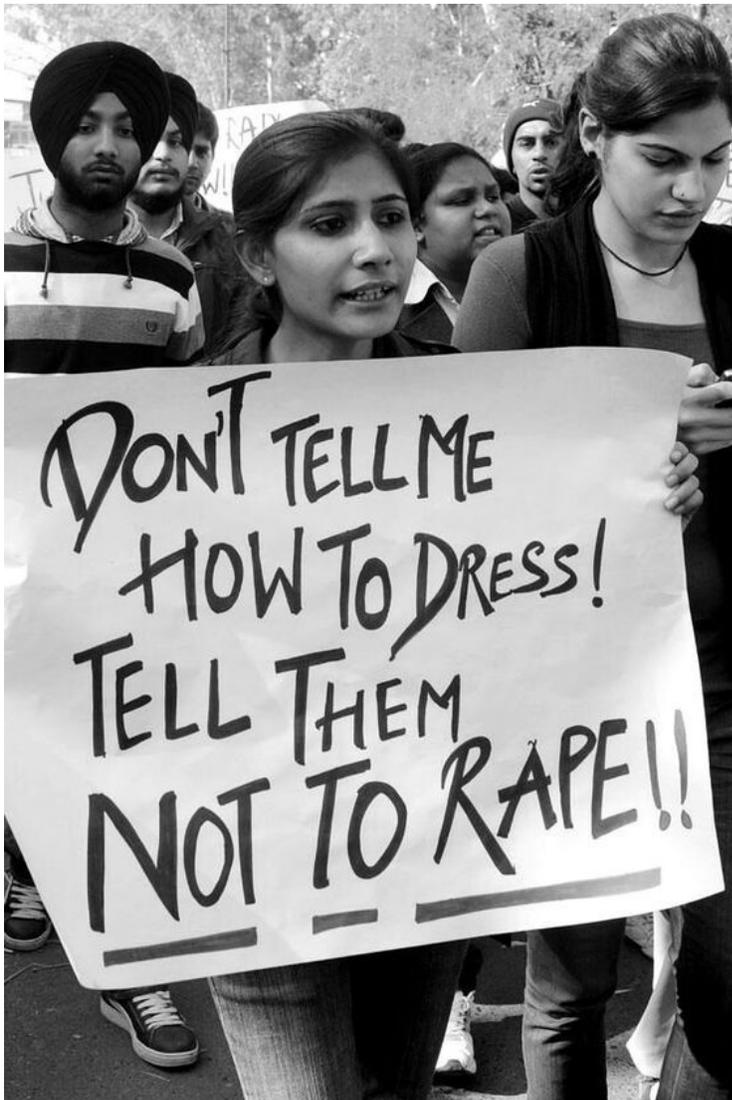
Your visuals and graphics should easily educate and inform your supporters about the problem at hand.

Source:

<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/430516045598947683/>

Characteristics

Of awesome nonprofit graphics



They elicit emotion.

Visuals should get people talking.

Make them [angry](#), make them [happy](#), elicit an [emotion](#) and that will translate into engagement!

Source:

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/354447433143444475/>



Characteristics

Of awesome nonprofit graphics



They showcase impact.

Tell your online community what you are doing! Visuals that showcase impact are effective.

Everyone likes to be a part of a winning team, and your supporters like to know that their donations are making a difference.

Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/humanesociety>

Characteristics

Of awesome nonprofit graphics



They inspire.

Your visual should convey the message that you desire, but also inspire people to learn more or get involved.

I love this collage update from Carry The Future (left), as it makes the donor the hero but showcases the results of their work in the past year.

Characteristics

Of awesome nonprofit graphics



They are shareable.

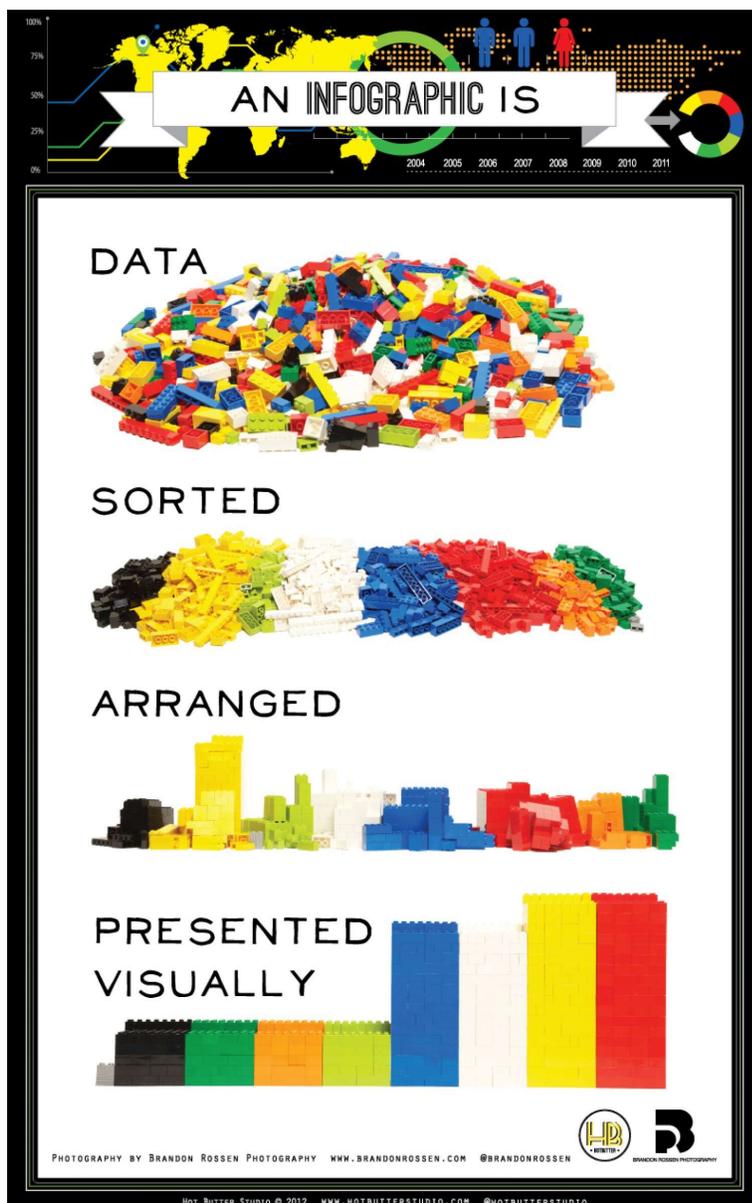
Great nonprofit graphics inspire people to share them – on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and other social networks.

This update (left) from The Malala Fund is very clear and inspires sharing.

Directly ask your network to share in order to raise awareness. If you don't ask, you won't get!

Establish Authority

With infographics



What is an infographic, anyway?

An infographic is a visual representation, like a chart or illustration, of text or data. Basically, it just makes consuming text and data more appealing.

[HubSpot](http://visual.ly/what-infographic-2) found that brands that publish infographics increase their website and blog traffic an average of 12% over those that do not.

Source:
<http://visual.ly/what-infographic-2>

(An infographic about an infographic! What next?)

Establish Authority

With infographics



Collections of great nonprofit infographics:

<http://www.pinterest.com/kanter/nonprofit-infographics/>

<http://www.pinterest.com/nonprofitorgs/nonprofit-ads-posters-infographics/>

<http://www.stayclassy.org/blog/five-of-our-favorite-nonprofit-fundraising-infographics/>

WaterWorks

Safe water and adequate sanitation are critical. Follow the pipe to see what life is like without them and what you can do to make a difference.



884 million people have no clean water.

WHO/UNICEF 2010

2.6 billion people have nowhere to go to the toilet.

WHO/UNICEF 2010

Half the hospital beds in developing countries are filled with people suffering from diarrhoea.

UNDP 2006

Diarrhoea is the biggest child killer in Africa. Worldwide, it kills 4,000 children every day...

WHO/UNICEF 2010

AIDS, malaria, measles

...that's more than AIDS, malaria and measles combined.

There's a huge shortfall in the funding needed to tackle the water and sanitation crisis...

1990
2009

Aid

In 1990, 8% of development aid was for water and sanitation. By 2009, that had fallen to 5.5%.

OECD

Recently, governments across Africa agreed to commit to spending the equivalent of 0.5% of GDP on water and sanitation.

0.5%

In almost all cases, this promise has not been met

African Union 2008

In April 2012, world leaders will meet in Washington DC to talk about water and sanitation. We need to tell them: **Water Works!**

For every \$1 you invest in water and sanitation...

on average \$8 is returned in better health and increased productivity

UNDP 2006

Access to safe water + sanitation = **4,000** children's lives every day

Make sure that world leaders know Water Works. Take action now at www.wateraid.org/waterworks



THE ALS ASSOCIATION #IceBucketChallenge



PLEASE ACCEPT THIS BIG BUCKET OF THANKS

because of you, we've raised an incredible



\$70.2 MILLION NATIONWIDE

↳ *from nearly two million donors*

*So...
what does my
donation support?*

in
only **27**
DAYS!

providing care services to assist people with ALS and their families through a network of chapters working in communities across the nation



a global research program focused on the discovery of treatments and eventually a cure for the disease



public policy efforts that empower people to advance public policies in our nation's Capital that respond to the needs of people with ALS



**NEVER BEFORE
HAVE WE BEEN IN A
BETTER POSITION
TO FUEL OUR FIGHT
AGAINST THIS
DISEASE.**

Your videos have resulted in increased awareness and unprecedented financial support, which comes with incredible opportunity.



**WE CAN NOW CONSIDER INNOVATIVE
PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN
UNFUNDED TO DATE, AS WE CONTINUE
TO DELIVER ON OUR EXISTING
MISSION-CRITICAL PRIORITIES!**



PART THREE

**Free and Low-Cost Tools to
Create Great Nonprofit
Graphics & Visuals**



Graphics Tools

For nonprofits

So now you understand the importance of having eye-catching visuals on your website, blog and social media networks.

I reviewed several characteristics of great nonprofit visuals and graphics, and provided some examples for inspiration. Since this e-book is for nonprofit professionals, all tools are free or very low-cost.

Even so, you may still be saying, “There is no way I can do this! I have no time, and I can’t even edit a picture in Microsoft Paint!”

Take a breath. There is a misconception that you need to have experience in graphic design to create colorful, informative graphics.

You do not need to be a technology expert or PhotoShop wiz to use these tools (and if you are, then by all means stop reading this e-book)!

These are tools that I have tested and approved. I receive no compensation by recommending them to you. They are in no particular order, but one is my favorite (you have to read to find out!)

If I have omitted any great free or low-cost tools that you use and that you would like to add, please let me know:

julia@jcsocialmarketing.com



Quotes

Jazz up text quotes

[Quozio.com](#) – “Enter Your Quote!”

Ridiculously simple and fun to use. Go to www.quozio.com and enter your text (it doesn't have to be a quote). Press Go. They will automatically format it for you, but if you don't like what they give you, browse their other templates until you see one you like. Then you can share to social networks, email the pin to yourself or Keep it – save it to your Quozio account. If you want to download the image, just right click on the image and select Save image as. Easy peasy!

[Recitethis.com](#) – “Turn a quote into a masterpiece”

Enter a quote or piece of text into the box on the homepage, click on See How It Looks! And voila! Super easy. It will start you off with a template, but you can always try another one until you find the layout you like best. Recite then gives you an option to share directly to Pinterest or other social networks. You can even download the image for uploading to your blog. Super easy!



Quotes

Jazz up text quotes

[Behappy.me](#) – “Happy, beautifully designed quotes”

Click over to Behappy.me and browse their featured quotes, most popular creations or create your own (at the top). Once you enter your quote or piece of text, you can then choose a font and a background color. Simple, but pretty. You then have the option of downloading the image or submitting it for sale, where you can purchase the quote on posters, t-shirts, anything you like! Much easier to use than CafePress (in my opinion), but it has less options than some of the other graphic design programs out there. I also really like the option to turn your quote into a Facebook cover photo.

[QuotesCover.com](#) – “Make your own beautiful quotes pictures quickly, effortlessly”

Don't have your own quote, or are you looking for a great quote to share? QuotesCover has an option to search for quotes either by person or by topic. You can also insert your custom quote and turn it into a Facebook Cover, Google+ Cover, e-card, wallpaper or a print.



Photo Editors

In photos and videos

PowerPoint

Everything you need to know about creating photo effects in good ole PowerPoint: [Create Impressive Photo Effects In PowerPoint](#)

[PicMonkey.com](#) – “Photo editor. Design maker. Idea realizer.”

PicMonkey is great for editing existing photos. You can also create graphics from scratch using their design templates. Hover over the “Design” button atop the home page, and PicMonkey shows you six blank canvas size options. Then you can go to town!

They also currently offer a 7-day free trial of all the premium features

Photo Editors

In photos and videos

[Pixlr.com](https://www.pixlr.com) – “Make every moment beautiful with our family of photo editing apps”

Pixlr offers several quality options for creating and editing photos. It is a bit more difficult to use at the beginning, but definite more robust in its offerings.

- *Pixlr Editor* – This is where you can create a new image from scratch or edit an existing image from your computer, URL or Facebook. While there are numerous options, this involves more tech know-how and could be frustrating for a photo-editing newbie.
- *Pixlr Express* – Create a graphic using an existing image or your webcam. You can also use this feature to create a collage of images.
- *Pixlr O-Matic* – The easiest, most user-friendly option. Use your webcam to snap a photo, or upload from your computer. You can also play with the O-Matic feature using a Pixlr image. This is where you can create invitations, cards and more using their free templates.
- Pixlr also offers a *mobile app* for photo editing on the go.



Mobile Apps

Edit photos on the go

[Shapely](#) – This is a free iPhone app you can use to make interesting photo shapes, logos, and more. No technical skill required.

[Piclab](#) – Free app that allows you to create professional quality graphics from your smart phone. Add multiple layers of text with different colors, fonts, and move them anywhere on the photo.

[Marksta](#) – Marksta is great if you want to add your nonprofit logo or watermark to all photos (probably a good idea). You could also add a Twitter handle or website to ensure that wherever the photo goes on the social or mobile web, your name goes with it.

[Piction](#) – Add text in different fonts onto your photos.

[Typic](#) – Text color is limited to black and white, but the beautiful fonts and filters will help you create a simple, eye-catching graphic from a photo.

[WordFoto](#) – This one is *really* neat. It turns your pictures into images – made of words! Seeing is believing for this neat and original app.



Mobile Apps

Create works of art

Prisma – This app turns your photos into works of art! I guarantee you will get addicted to turning the photos in your phone to masterpieces.

WordSwag – One of my FAVORITE mobile apps, WordSwag lets you overlay text onto existing images or create inspirational quotes using their layouts and fonts.

SparkPost – Create graphic text overlays on photos that you can purchase or your existing photos.

Legend – Turn words into stunning animations, in video and GIF formats.

Layout – An app developed by Instagram, it lets you easily combine multiple photos into a single image.



Mobile Apps

Create short videos

Boomerang – Create captivating mini videos that loop back and forth.

Hyperlapse – Create amazing time lapse videos with Hyperlapse. Using Instagram’s in-house stabilization, Hyperlapse shoots polished time lapse videos that were previously impossible without bulky tripods and expensive equipment.

Ripl – Billing itself as “a marketing team in your pocket”, Ripl lets you create eye-catching animated videos to share to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in one tap.

Quik – Create multimedia slideshows to post to social media.

Animoto – Turn your photos and video clips into video slideshows, quickly and easily.

Dubsmash – A super fun and silly app for creating “lip dub” videos, where you mime along to famous songs and film/TV quotes, then share the results with friends – on social networks or (a recent addition) by messaging them within the app.



Infographics

Away with boring text

[InfoGr.am](#) – “Create interactive infographics”

No tech savvy required – you just need the data and text that will go into the infographic. You have a choice of templates. If you have your data in an Excel sheet you can simply upload it. Can also be used to create charts for presentations and reports.

[InfoActive.co](#) – “Make data-driven stories”

Currently in “private beta” mode, you can enter your email address and receive an invitation to the site. InfoActive features drag and drop templates that are easy to customize with no tech know-how.

[Piktochart](#) – “Make information beautiful”

Piktochart claims to help you “get results in 3 easy steps”. You can choose from their template library or create your own using a blank canvas. Easy sharing to social media sites when finished. This is one of the most popular infographic tools on the web.



Infographics

Away with boring text

[Easel.ly](#) – “Create and share visual ideas online”

Very similar to the other tools mentioned, Easel.ly is another “drag and drop” graphics creator. Choose a template, drag and drop new art onto the infographic, and easily customize everything on the Canvas including colors and fonts. Share it on social networks or save it.

[Venngage](#) – “Social Reports & Infographics”

Sign up for a free account, and peruse the Marketplace of templates or create your own from scratch. The Venngage templates are free but some others have a small cost. Add text, data and images to the template to customize it. One of the easiest to use.

[HubSpot](#)

HubSpot currently offers [15 free templates](#) for infographics in PowerPoint. Easy to use and customize. You need to sign up for their mailing list to access the templates.

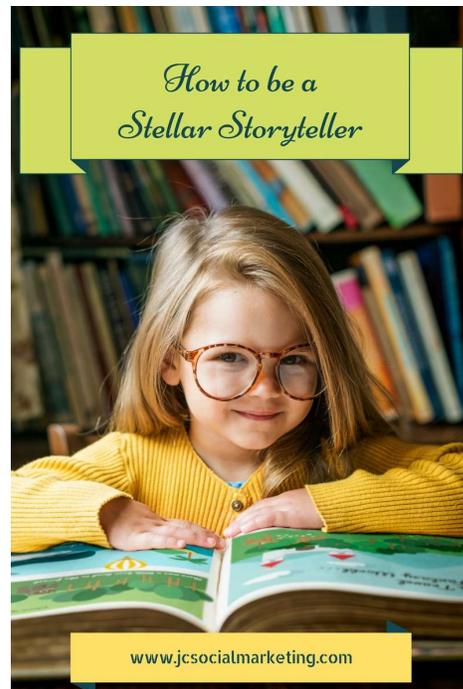


My #1 Tool!

CANVA.COM

[Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) – My FAVORITE graphics tool!

Canva is one of the easiest to use and best graphic design tools out there. With thousands of options and an incredibly easy user interface, Canva is my go-to tool when I need a graphic for my blog or for social media. Some of their templates cost \$1, but most are free. It gives you the option to create presentations, blog & social media graphics, Facebook cover photos, and much more.



Sharing is caring!



If you found this e-book helpful, would you consider passing it on to another nonprofit professional that might need it? Thanks!

Blog: www.jcsocialmarketing.com

Facebook: www.fb.com/jcsocialmarketing

Twitter: [@JuliaCSocial](https://twitter.com/JuliaCSocial)

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/juliagulia77

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/juliacampbell/

Google+: <https://plus.google.com/+JuliaCampbell>

Email me: julia@jcsocialmarketing.com

“You can either fit in or stand out.
Not both.”

- Seth Godin