NICAR 2015, Visualization for Reporting: Coulter Jones, Michelle Minkoff

Slides here:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1CwcI7nQgcAxleTYUwgCQSSEJSON-GjuEdweUiGXOuHU/edit?usp=sharing

Tools: Suggested for generating visualizations to help you find your own stories in data, and not necessarily for presentation

Excel:
- Basic charting tools on your computer.
- Use =REPT("|", A5) formula to put down a | in a cell for each character in a given cell. Helps you to visualize "see" numbers for comparison without moving to a graph. If you have big numbers, you may want to divide by 1000, 1,000,000, etc., as appropriate so you get a ratio of different characters that fits in a cell.
- TIme series lines can help you see upward and downward trends, and outliers over several years
- Stacking bars or lines lets you see in multiple dimensions, so across years, and over different states

Datawrapper: https://datawrapper.de/
- Make simple visualizations
- Cut and paste Excel data in to system
- Can be useful if you are running into formatting problems with Excel itself.

TimeFlow: https://github.com/FlowingMedia/TimeFlow/wiki
- Organize your data by date as you do reporting, and then look at trends across those dates.

Textalyzer: http://textalyser.net/index.php?lang=en#analysis
- Find most frequently used single words, and two-word phrases, as well as other stats
- You can paste in data, give it a website to grab text from, or upload a file from your computer

Textature: http://textexture.com/
- Look at networks of how words are connected.

ManyEyes: http://www-969.ibm.com/software/analytics/manyeyes/
- Explore other visualization types, and switch among them more quickly
- Receive suggested visualizations
- Tool interface has undergone a complete overhaul since 2014
- Heat map and double chart options can be particularly helpful

Google Fusion Tables: https://support.google.com/fusiontables/answer/2571232

- If you have addresses in your data, upload your spreadsheet and click on the map tab
- You may need to update your column types to be location if you are having trouble
- If you are still having trouble, it might be helpful to combine all address information into one category (=CONCATENATE(A1, A2, A3)) when in Excel, and then uploading.
- To double check the accuracy, look at the map and zoom in on a point to make sure it's appearing in a place that makes sense given address information.
- If you come across the word geocoding, that only means taking addresses and converting them into a geographic point that a computer can understand.