

I SEE DATA PEOPLE

Handy Links

d3.js Home Page
<http://d3js.org>
NVD3 - easy to use d3.js
<http://nvd3.org>
TED Talk on Data Visualisation
<http://bit.ly/1keoG28>
Smashing Magazine's article
<http://bit.ly/1iy9mc9>
36 Tools for Visualization
<http://bit.ly/1aZmoSV>

Tangentially Related Links

Original Flocking Paper
<http://bit.ly/1k9wluq>
IEC Results Download
<http://bit.ly/1jnmz86>

Evan's Links

[@EvanJKnowles](http://www.knowles.co.za/articles)

Java developer expressing himself through JavaScript, with a passion for clarity, clever things and cross overs of disciplines.

So, what was this all about?

We're surrounded by data in various shapes and forms. It's becoming more and more apparent that, in its raw form, data can be overwhelming. Although our brains can process data fairly efficiently, consciously we battle to take it all in.

What we need is information presented in such a way that gives us context, preferably in the form of visual cues, that allow us to draw inferences from that data.

What did we look at?

The IEC were kind enough to supply some data for us to stare at, in the form of several hundred megabytes of recent and historical election data. This was preprocessed a little to bring it down to levels which were reasonable for live rendering.

With what did we look?

By far the most popular tool for data visualisation in the world at the moment is d3.js. Being a group of thorough professionals, we examined a couple of the different visualisation options that d3.js brings to the table.

d3.js has a range of beautiful and surprisingly dynamic graphing options. We need something more to truly visualise data - instead of necessarily generic, template solutions we need something that provides some visual clues and associations as to the way the data moves over time.

Flocking was the tool chosen to achieve this - representing the choice of the voters with groups of flocking, party-appropriate colours. Over time we can see as the flock grew and waned according to the changing opinions of the voters, giving a dynamic look at the recorded state of our most recent democratic elections.