

# Talk:Information Visualization: Times Square Method (TSM)

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This article discusses a useful method of presenting information known as the Times Square Method (named after Times Square in New York, where this technique of presenting information has been used for a long time). This method displays information to the user by scrolling text across the screen, usually at the top or bottom of the display. This method has in recent times becomes popular in news broadcasts. In terms of mobile applications has the advantage of allowing us to overcome limitations in terms of screen size, but scrolling large amounts of text across the same piece of screen space.

Despite the advantage of allowing lots of information to effectively share the same screen space, this technique does have some potential drawbacks, which this article does well to identify. Probably the most significant problem is that this way of displaying information requires quite a lot of visual attention. Furthermore, the movement of the text across the screen can be distracting. In addition, not all users will be comfortable with the same scrolling speed and care needs to be taken to localize the direction of scrolling according to the user's language. While it is common for Western languages to read from left to right, this is not true for all languages.

The article provides some useful advice for addressing the potential usability problems of the Times Square Method. Providing customization options is extremely important, as users need to be able to adjust attributes the speed, directionality, font and color according to their personal preferences. This will help to ensure that users are comfortable using the "ticker" as it conforms to their requirements. Another common problem with these sort of ticker controls is that users will often only catch the last few words of a sentence which might grab their attention. It is important, therefore, that users be able to scroll back to read the full sentence if they so desire.

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