PREFACE	ix
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
INTRODUCTION	хi
CLARIFYING THE VISION What exactly are dashboards? For what purposes do we use them? From what precedents did they arise? Why are they important? Why do they often fail?	1
THIRTEEN COMMON MISTAKES IN DASHBOARD DESIGN The fundamental problems with most dashboards stem from poor design. What are the common design mistakes that dashboards exhibit, and why do they matter?	35
ASSESSING WHAT'S NEEDED How can we assess what people really need from dashboards before the design process begins?	59
FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS What basic questions should we ask to determine how a dashboard should be designed? These questions address issues such as frequency of use, the nature and experience of those who will use it, the size of the screen on which it will be displayed, and the type of data it will be used to monitor. What are the primary features that we should require of software products that are used to develop dashboards?	65
TAPPING INTO THE POWER OF VISUAL PERCEPTION What must we understand about visual perception (seeing) and cognition (thinking) to design dashboards that will work effectively for people's eyes and brains? What specific design practices should we follow to achieve this?	77
ACHIEVING ELOQUENCE THROUGH SIMPLICITY How can we display a great deal of information in a way that people can rapidly monitor and understand? What are the key characteristics of a well-designed dashboard? How can we achieve eloquence of communication through simplicity of design?	93

1.

2.

3.

5.

6.

7.	ADVANTAGES OF GRAPHICS Why should information be displayed graphically on a dashboard whenever possible? What can graphics provide that text-based displays cannot?	113
8.	AN IDEAL LIBRARY OF GRAPHS What types of graphs are particularly useful on dashboards, and how should we design them?	119
9.	DESIGNING BULLET GRAPHS The bullet graph is a gauge-like form of display that was designed specifically for dashboards. In what ways can bullet graphs be designed to support various purposes?	151
10.	DESIGNING SPARKLINES Sparklines are a powerful way to concisely show historical information on a dashboard. In what ways can sparklines be designed to support various purposes?	159
11.	OTHER DASHBOARD DISPLAY MEDIA In addition to graphs, what other forms of display are useful on dashboards, and how should we design them to work most effectively?	177
12.	CRITICAL DESIGN PRACTICES Aside from selecting the best means of display for each element of information, what other design practices should we follow to produce effective dashboards?	183
13.	PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER The proof is in the pudding. When the design practices taught in this book are followed, what's the result? What do well-designed dashboards look like and what can they do?	203
14.	FROM IMAGINING TO UNVEILING What steps are involved in the dashboard design process? How should we introduce a dashboard design to those who will use it? How do we confirm a design's effectiveness?	235
	INDEX	243