



Marking Time

Online timeline lets you slide through history

As we turn the calendar from the year past to the year ahead, time is a subject on the minds of many. Did I make the most of my time last year? Will I make the most of it this year? How much time did I waste? Why does time seem to go faster as I get older? Am I spending too much time worrying about how much time I have?

Histography.io is a website that looks back across the time that has passed since the Big Bang, the event many scientists consider the beginning of the universe — and of time itself.

The site is an interactive timeline spanning 14 billion years. It was created by designer and developer Matan Stauber as a final project for his studies at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem. Events marked on the timeline are linked with Wikipedia entries that provide more information and imagery.

Histographyio's home page is composed of two sections: Editorial Stories; and Everything. The first, Editorial Stories, is a curated selection of events from across history. A scrollable list of selected events is displayed on the left side of the screen. As you scroll through the list, a circular array of dots that takes up the majority of the page and reconfigures itself with each event. Each dot represents a historical event. As you go further

back in time the dots become fewer and less densely packed, since recorded history is eventually replaced by the less comprehensive fossil record and speculation.

The Everything section contains all of the historical events on the site represented by dots arranged along a central, horizontal axis. The dots for each year are stacked vertically above and below the axis. As you move to the right, toward the human years, the stacks get taller since people have a habit of recording events. As you move to the left, toward prehistoric times, the stacks get shorter as the historical record gets more sparse.

Traveling through time

There are several ways to track and control your place on the timeline. As you move your cursor across time, a white, vertical line tracks your position and displays the year at the top. At the bottom of the screen are a pair of sliders that let you bracket the portion of the timeline you want to view. Move the left slider to 1965, and the right one to 2015, and only 50 years worth of time will be displayed. The timeline dots dynamically rearrange themselves to reflect the amount of time selected.

When you move your cursor down to the sliders a panel slides up into view from the bottom of the screen. The panel displays the time periods covered by the years you select. For instance, if you bracket the years 1400 to 2015, the panel indicates you are looking at the Renaissance, the Industrial Age and the Information Age.

Earlier time periods include The Beginning, Earth Formation, Seeds of life, Age of Fish, Age of Reptiles, Age of Mammals, the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age and the Middle Ages.

A list of categories on the left side of the screen allows you to filter your search even further. Categories include Literature, Wars, Art, Politics, Inventions and more. You can select a category, or two categories at once, in the time frame you've bracketed and only events in those categories will be displayed. This allows you to look for relationships in events. For instance, selecting Wars and Politics will put together key players and events that led up to and resulted from conflicts in history.

Both the Editorial and Everything sections display individual events in a similar fashion. Thumbnails of significant events are displayed along with the name and year. Hovering over a dot in the Everything section will bring up a thumbnail for any events from the year you're on.

Clicking on a thumbnail opens a window with a bigger image and a few links. Many of the entries have a link to a video on the subject. Most of the entries have a link to the Wikipedia information on the event, and many also have a link to related events.

The site is an innovative and engaging way to spend a little bit of time contemplating time.

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