

Our Complete Visual Story: How Integrated Data Elements Create a Roadmap for Successful Platform Transitions

Christopher Hanley, PharmD, FNYAM, CMTM, RPH

Senior Clinical Advisor, SafeMedicate

Introduction: Why Our Poster's Visual Approach Matters

When Manhattanville University decided to transition from ATI to safeMedicate for medication calculation education, we faced a challenge that many nursing programs encounter: how do you prove that a significant curricular change is worth the investment, disruption, and risk? More importantly, how do you provide other institutions with honest, actionable guidance based on your experience?

The answer lies in telling the complete story through integrated visual elements that work together to create a comprehensive narrative. This document explains how our poster's redesigned data visualization section serves as both a validation of our decision and a practical roadmap for other nursing programs considering similar transitions.

The Power of Transparent Complexity

Traditional academic posters often present simplified success stories that gloss over the messy realities of institutional change. We chose a different approach by creating visualizations that embrace complexity while maintaining clarity. This transparency serves multiple purposes:

First, it builds trust with viewers who recognize the authenticity of showing mixed results during transition periods. When nursing educators see that we tracked both successes and ongoing challenges, they understand we're providing realistic guidance rather than marketing materials.

Second, it demonstrates methodological rigor that strengthens our conclusions. By showing that ATI performance continued to decline even as safeMedicate soared, we eliminate alternative explanations for the improvement. This isn't just good science; it's compelling evidence for decision-makers who need to justify significant investments.

Third, it provides a realistic preview of what other institutions can expect during their own transitions. The phased implementation timeline, mixed performance data, and gradual institutional improvement offer a honest roadmap that helps others plan more effectively.

Understanding the Five Integrated Visual Elements

1. The Phased Implementation Timeline Heat Map

This color-coded table serves as the foundation for understanding everything else. By showing exactly which courses used which platform each semester, we accomplish several goals:

For Academic Leaders: The heat map demonstrates that we didn't abandon ATI recklessly but rather conducted a controlled, systematic transition. This careful approach minimizes risk and allows for course corrections if needed. Leaders at other institutions can use this model to plan their own phased implementations, perhaps starting with courses where they see the greatest need for improvement.

For Faculty: The visual shows that instructors had time to adapt to the new platform gradually. Not everyone had to change at once, allowing early adopters to share experiences with colleagues. This addresses one of the biggest barriers to educational technology adoption: faculty resistance to sudden, comprehensive change.

For Accreditation and Assessment: The systematic approach provides clear documentation of a thoughtful change management process. Accreditors appreciate evidence of careful planning and continuous assessment, both of which are evident in the phased timeline.

2. The Three-Line Comparison Graph

This is where the story becomes truly compelling. By showing three distinct trend lines, we create what researchers call a "natural experiment" that happens to be visually dramatic:

The Continuing Decline of ATI (Red Dashed Line): This line is crucial because it shows what would have happened if we hadn't made the change. The fact that students still using ATI performed even worse than historical averages (dropping from 42% to 30%) demonstrates that external factors weren't improving outcomes. Time alone wasn't healing the wound; it was making it worse.

The Immediate Success of safeMedicate (Green Solid Line): Starting at 65% in Fall 2023 and climbing to 89% by Spring 2025, this line shows both immediate impact and sustained improvement. For other institutions, this suggests they can expect quick wins that build momentum for full implementation.

The Realistic Institutional Journey (Gray Dotted Line): Perhaps most valuable for other schools, this blended average line shows what overall institutional performance looks like during

transition. Starting at 49% (below the historical average) and gradually climbing to 82%, it demonstrates that patience is required but payoff is substantial.

3. The Course-Specific Comparison for NUR1010

This focused comparison serves as a controlled experiment within the larger study. By showing the same foundational course under both platforms, we eliminate numerous variables that skeptics might raise:

Addressing the "Different Students" Argument: Since NUR1010 is taken by all nursing students early in their program, we can confidently say we're comparing similar populations. The dramatic improvement from 48% (ATI average) to 89% (safeMedicate final) can't be attributed to changes in student quality.

Providing a Concrete Example: While comprehensive data is compelling, sometimes a single clear example resonates more strongly. Other programs can look at this and think, "Our Fundamentals course struggles too - imagine if we could achieve similar improvement."

Demonstrating Sustained Excellence: The progression from 65% to 89% shows that safeMedicate's benefits grow over time as faculty become more skilled with the platform and word spreads among students about effective study strategies.

4. The Comprehensive Outcomes Table

This detailed table serves multiple audiences and purposes:

For Administrators: The side-by-side comparison of continuing ATI performance (35.5% average) versus safeMedicate performance (79.7% average) during the same time period provides the kind of clear metrics needed for budget decisions. The fact that even the blended average (59.3%) exceeds ATI's historical best demonstrates clear return on investment.

For Researchers and Evaluators: The inclusion of trend indicators and multiple metrics (first-attempt pass rates, students requiring multiple attempts) provides the detailed data needed for thorough program evaluation. Other institutions can use these metrics as benchmarks for their own transitions.

For Strategic Planning: The distinction between pre-implementation, during implementation, and platform-specific results helps others understand that mixed results during transition are normal and temporary. This prevents premature abandonment of promising innovations.

5. The Methodology Note

This seemingly simple text box accomplishes something profound: it transforms what could be seen as cherry-picking data into a demonstration of sophisticated evaluation methods. By

explicitly stating that we tracked platform-specific performance to prove that improvements were "directly attributable to safeMedicate adoption rather than external factors," we:

Teach Evaluation Best Practices: Other institutions learn that they should track outcomes by platform, not just overall institutional averages during transitions.

Build Confidence: Viewers understand that the mixed results during transition were expected and monitored, not hidden or ignored.

Provide a Template: The language in this note can be adapted by other schools for their own evaluation plans and reports.

How the Integrated Story Serves as a Valuable Resource

For Institutions in Crisis

Schools experiencing declining performance with current platforms can see themselves in our ATI trend line. The visualization validates their concerns while providing hope through safeMedicate's success. The phased approach shows them they don't have to fix everything at once.

For Cautious Adopters

Risk-averse institutions benefit from seeing the complete picture, including temporary dips in blended performance during transition. They can plan for these challenges and set realistic expectations with stakeholders. The continuing ATI decline proves that inaction is actually riskier than change.

For Evidence-Based Decision Makers

The comprehensive data presentation provides multiple forms of evidence that different stakeholders find compelling. Financial officers see ROI, academic officers see improved outcomes, and faculty see manageable change processes.

For Implementation Planning

The visualizations work together to suggest a complete implementation strategy:

1. Start with foundational courses where improvement is most needed
2. Track platform-specific outcomes from day one
3. Expect and plan for mixed results initially
4. Use early successes to build momentum
5. Maintain transparency throughout the process

Lessons for Future Clients Creating Their Own Visual Story

Other nursing programs can apply these principles when documenting their own transitions:

Embrace Complexity

Don't hide the messy middle of change processes. Showing realistic challenges makes eventual success more credible and provides honest guidance to others.

Track Everything

The power of our story comes from comprehensive data collection. Platform-specific tracking revealed insights that institutional averages would have hidden.

Think Multiple Audiences

Each visual element speaks most strongly to different stakeholders. Comprehensive presentations ensure everyone finds compelling evidence relevant to their concerns.

Connect the Dots

Individual graphics are powerful, but their integration tells the complete story. Make sure viewers understand how each element relates to others.

Provide Context

The methodology note and implementation timeline ground the dramatic results in practical reality. Success stories need implementation details to be truly useful.

The Competitive Advantage of Transparency

In an educational landscape where vendors often provide selective success stories, our comprehensive approach creates a competitive advantage for safeMedicate. By showing complete data including ongoing ATI struggles, we demonstrate confidence in the platform's superiority. Other institutions trust transparent data more than polished marketing materials.

This transparency also positions Manhattanville as a leader in evidence-based nursing education. We're not just adopting new technology; we're showing others how to evaluate and implement educational innovations responsibly.

The Power of Explicit Visual-Statistical Connections

One of the most powerful enhancements we made to our poster was adding an explicit statement connecting the visual divergence to the statistical measures: "The growing gap between ATI's declining performance (30%) and safeMedicate's success (89%) by Spring 2025 explains the large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.92$) and substantial odds ratio (7.4)."

This single sentence accomplishes several important goals:

Demystifies Statistics for Visual Learners: Many nursing educators are more comfortable interpreting visual data than statistical measures. By explicitly stating that the 59 percentage point gap they can see in the graph is what creates the impressive effect size, we make abstract statistics concrete and understandable.

Validates Both Forms of Evidence: Some audiences trust visual evidence while others prefer statistical validation. This connection shows that both forms of evidence tell the same story, strengthening confidence in the results for all viewers.

Teaches Statistical Literacy: By explaining how visual differences translate to statistical measures, we help viewers understand what effect sizes and odds ratios actually mean in practical terms. This educational component transforms our poster from a simple presentation into a teaching tool.

Creates "Aha!" Moments: When viewers realize they can literally see the effect size in the growing gap between lines, statistics become less intimidating. This moment of understanding often leads to deeper engagement with the data and stronger retention of key findings.

How This Connection Strengthens the Overall Narrative

The explicit visual-statistical connection serves as a bridge between different sections of the poster. Viewers who were initially drawn to the dramatic visual divergence in the graphs now understand why the statistical analysis section reports such impressive numbers. Conversely, those who started with the statistics can look back at the visualizations with new appreciation for what those numbers represent.

This connection also reinforces the value of our comprehensive tracking approach. By showing platform-specific performance over time, we didn't just calculate statistics - we created visual evidence that makes those statistics meaningful and memorable. Other institutions can see that the 7.4 odds ratio isn't just a number; it represents the dramatic divergence they can observe in the graph.

Application for Other Institutions

When creating their own data presentations, nursing programs should consider how to make similar explicit connections between visual and statistical evidence. This might include:

- Annotating graphs with effect size indicators
- Using consistent color coding between visual and statistical sections
- Including interpretive statements that translate statistics into visual terms
- Creating side-by-side comparisons of visual evidence and statistical measures

The goal is to ensure that all audiences, regardless of their comfort with statistics, can understand and appreciate the magnitude of the changes being documented.

Practical Applications for Peer Institutions

Nursing programs viewing our poster can immediately apply several strategies:

Assess Current Trends

Our visualization approach encourages schools to look not just at current performance but at trends over time. Are your outcomes improving, stable, or declining? This context shapes urgency for change.

Plan Phased Implementations

The heat map provides a template for gradual transitions that minimize disruption. Schools can adapt our course-by-course approach to their own curricular structures.

Design Evaluation Strategies

The platform-specific tracking method we employed should become standard practice for any significant educational technology transition. Schools can plan data collection strategies before beginning implementation.

Set Realistic Expectations

Our blended average data helps others anticipate temporary performance dips during transition. This prevents panic and premature abandonment of promising innovations.

Build Stakeholder Buy-in

Different visualizations speak to different audiences. Schools can use our model to create compelling cases for various stakeholder groups.

Conclusion: The Value of Complete Stories

The integrated visual elements in our poster do more than prove safeMedicate's effectiveness; they provide a complete roadmap for successful platform transitions in nursing education. By showing the full journey - including challenges, mixed results, and dramatic ultimate success - we offer something more valuable than simple success metrics: a realistic guide for institutional change.

Other nursing programs can look at our visualizations and see not just where we ended up, but how we got there. They can anticipate challenges, plan for complexity, and maintain confidence during difficult transition periods. Most importantly, they can see that with careful planning, transparent evaluation, and the right platform choice, transformational improvement is possible.

The story told by our integrated visualizations is ultimately one of courage - the courage to acknowledge a problem (declining ATI performance), implement a solution (safeMedicate), manage complexity (phased implementation), and share results honestly (platform-specific tracking). This complete transparency transforms our individual success into a resource for the entire nursing education community.

When nursing programs ask, "How do we know if we should make this change?" our visualizations answer with data. When they ask, "What can we expect during transition?" our phased results provide guidance. And when they ask, "Is it worth the effort?" our final outcomes - 89% first-attempt pass rates - speak for themselves.

This is the power of telling complete stories through integrated visual elements: we move beyond simple advocacy to provide practical, evidence-based guidance that can transform medication safety education across institutions. In sharing our journey completely and transparently, we enable others to embark on their own transformations with confidence, realistic expectations, and a clear roadmap to success.