Dear designers,

I really enjoyed your work on visualization of examining Netflix rental patterns: *A Peek Into Netflix Queues* (http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/01/10/nyregion/20100110-netflix-map.html) especially its consistency, simple display and intuitive operations. However, for now, I think it is hard to see what your choice of services and intended users are, so I would like to make several suggestions to make it more informative and useful to people who might like to survey on finding movie rental patterns or just want to look for popular movies of the year.

First of all, it would be much better if more detail is provided. Right now, it only shows the ranking of the rentals within a same zip code area. However, in my opinion, the ranking itself is not enough for analyzing the pattern. For example, I would like to add a little change on providing more regional information such as not only the race and ethnicity but also the income, gender, and average age just like *Mapping America: Every City, Every Block* (http://projects.nytimes.com/census/2010/explorer) shows the race percentage of the residents.

Second, adding map filters as in *House Map* (http://elections.nytimes.com/2010/results/house) would enhance your work. Along with more details, filters by genre, age or gender of renters, actor, or director will remove the noise that a user might not want to see. Also, having search options could be a great improvement. For instance, if one likes to find a specific movie, then the easiest way is to sort the movies in alphabetical order and move the scroll bar to get the information one need which means there is no shortcut to use. These additional changes would help understanding the patterns of the preference or the characteristics of any specific region.

Finally, I suggest showing the bigger pictures; not a tree but the forest. Although it gives a quick look on how a movie is rented national-wide, it does not provide various units of area since it represents the information only by one zip code to another. Therefore, it is difficult to get the picture of the common popularity in broader area such as a county or a city. Also, having periodical information will give the users a wider view for finding patterns. Although it only has data for the year 2009, if you get this data every year, then you might be able to show time-related information as shown in *House Exit Polls* (http://elections.nytimes.com/2010/results/house/exit-polls). With this, I would love to find out what steady-rented movies are, the relation between the movies people rent and the four seasons.
To sum up, it is very interesting to see how people tend to rent movies by region for and I believe adding more information, filtering, searching and forest-viewing will bring more improvement on your work.

Sincerely,
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