

Let me comment on the merits of heatmaps as a way of representing data in the context of representing crime activity.

Criminal activity-related data often has both components of time and location.

Sometimes, all that is required is a line chart, but heatmaps can visualize data that will be too big for a table.

Plotting data on maps is much more effective than a table for location based data, and is eye catching.

What is the edge of predictive policing?

Many police forces are exploiting their databases to focus finite resources on problem areas.

Not only do analytics help improve policework, the outputs are also good communication tools to decision makers in government, and the wider public.

The application of analytics to data like this is new and growing, with companies like PredPol and Palantir leading the effort.