

White paper

Visualising your data with Microsoft Power BI reporting

Introduction

Data is the asset that drives the modern digitalised economy. In conjunction with globalisation and an increasingly interconnected world, the ever growing amount of data offers incredibly useful information on global economic trends and markets, geopolitical factors, supply chain events and customer behaviour.

The challenge: transforming the raw data into formats suitable for decision-making and strategy-building. This is where the concept of business intelligence (BI) enters the equation. BI is all about understanding the facts and the relationship between facts; allowing individuals and organisations to guide decision-making and actions. Getting the best out of your data becomes a lot easier once you can visualise the information. Microsoft Power BI allows you to do just that.

Read on to find out how Microsoft BI reporting allows you to transform raw data into meaningful business insights that will give you an edge over your competitors.

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What is Microsoft BI reporting, and why do you need it?

Power BI is a Microsoft SaaS solution that enables you to easily connect to, manage, and visualise all of your data. Power BI allows you to make all of your data viewable in a single location, regardless of where the data actually resides. If you include Power BI Desktop (a visual data exploration and reporting tool) and the set of native, interactive applications for Windows, iOS and Android, you have access to a powerful ecosystem where you can analyse, visualise and present data in a professional and insightful manner on and from any device.

Group and present data in Power BI, with the use of dashboards and reports. A Power BI dashboard is a set of data visualisations from one or more underlying reports. The information is presented in an engaging, easily scannable way (charts, infographics). This allows everyone—even those with little to no data analytics expertise—to derive insights from the data that is presented. Dashboards may contain visualisations from multiple reports and are highly customisable. You can add ‘pins’, charts and images as you see fit. Dashboards are not exclusively suited for viewing purposes- you can also drill deeper into the underlying reports to see more details.

Power BI’s user-friendly interface also enables each user to create detailed interactive reports. These reports form the foundation of the dashboards. A report is a set of charts (often described as visualisations) based on a joint dataset. A Power BI report is a multi-perspective view of a dataset, with visuals that represent different findings and insights from that data collection. A report can have a single visual or several pages full of visuals.

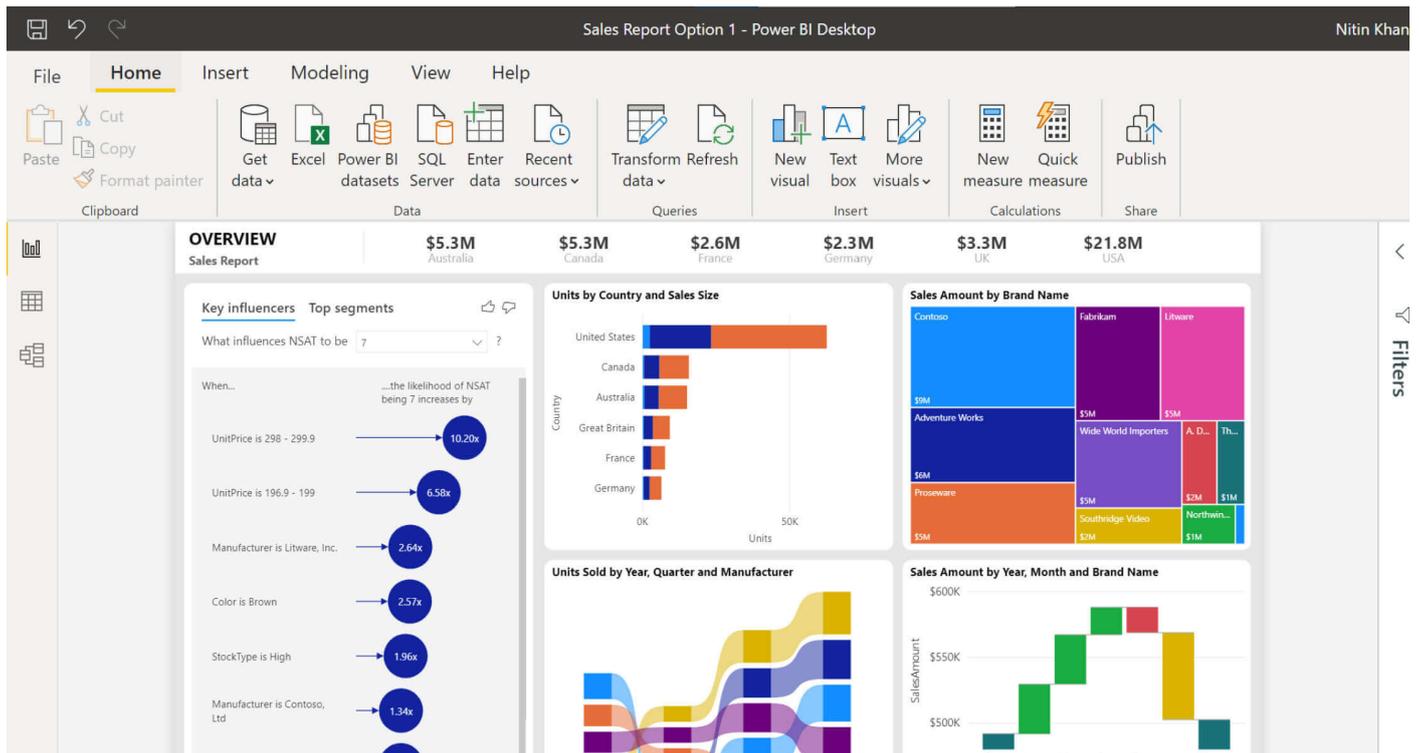
Creating a new report from scratch? Selecting or modifying a pre-authored report? Or applying a default report for a given dataset? It’s all possible with Microsoft BI reporting. You can also customise reports (for example, by modifying visualisations in an existing report or adding new visualisations) and generate as many reports as you want from a single dataset. You also have the option to share reports with other individuals within your organisation and generate them on both desktop and mobile devices.

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The 4 steps to visualising data

Visualise your data in Power BI reporting in just a few steps.

- 1. Preparing the data.** Use the 'Get data' option to import data of various sizes from different platforms, applications and systems. The Power Query Editor allows you to navigate through and transform the data. Click 'Close & Apply' in the top-left corner of the home section in the Power Query Editor to make sure your changes are applied.
- 2. Creating a report is the next step and provides you with a number of options.** You can select your preferred visualisation method from the visualisation pane and go back to the fields pane to select the data that you want to analyse. You can opt for a bar, line or pie chart, but you can also select a map or a number of KPIs as your preferred data visualisation method. You also have the option to delete charts and add new pages by clicking on the '+' icon at the bottom of the window.
- 3. Copying and pasting all the visualisations that you have created allows you to make a dashboard.** The 'Mobile Layout' button allows you to create a mobile dashboard. You can drag and drop visualisations onto the screen as you desire.
- 4. Saving and publishing.** You can navigate to the 'File' button (top-left corner) and click on 'Save' or use the combination 'Ctrl + S' to save your work. If you go to the 'Publish' section under 'File', you can select a workspace, then view and publish your BI report.



What can Power BI reporting do for you?

Visualising data using Power BI reporting can benefit your organisation and employees in a number of ways. First of all, the Power BI platform and features allow you to connect, combine and analyse raw data and loosely organise datasets into deep and helpful insights. This enables you to harvest the data and turn the power of information into a competitive advantage.

Combining Power BI reporting with Power Apps and Power Automate allows you to easily build business applications and automate workflows. You can go from data to insights and from insights to action in no time. It also helps that Power BI reporting provides agile inquiry and analysis without the need for specialised technical support. It supports a powerful natural language interface and the use of intuitive graphical design tools, which makes assessing the data relatively simple.

As a result, your employees don't have to be data scientists to create advanced reports and insightful dashboards. And when you have trouble grasping certain principles of BI, there is always a large and knowledgeable community to lend you a helping hand.

Because Power BI runs in the cloud and can be accessed from anywhere, it is also an excellent data analytics and visualisation option for mobile teams, hybrid working environments and businesses with many locations. Do you need to access data from your phone when you are on the road? Do you want to view or present graphical representations on your tablet during a management meeting? Or would you like to collaborate with colleagues on a file, regardless of your geographic location? Power BI makes all of this possible.

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Learn how to analyse data with Power BI

Would you like to learn how to master data analysis and visualisation using Power BI? Then Global Knowledge's four-day course [Analysing Data with Power BI](#) will fit you like a glove. The course discusses the various methods and best practices that are in line with business and technical requirements for modelling, visualising, and analysing data with Power BI. The course also shows you how to access and process data from a range of data sources, including both relational and non-relational data. Participants will also explore how to implement proper security standards and policies across the Power BI spectrum.

The Analysing Data with Power BI course is ideally suited for IT professionals, data professionals and business intelligence specialists who want to learn how to accurately perform data analysis using Power BI.



More information

Is learning the tricks of the data visualisation trade at the top of your to-learn IT skills list? And do you want to explore the many exciting features of the Power BI platform? Then be sure to contact us by calling **0118 912 1929** or sending an email to info@globalknowledge.co.uk. Or book the course [Analysing Data with Power BI](#).

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