

Measure Names and Measure Values Explained

A large portion of questions we receive involve the Measure Names and Measure Values fields. These fields are automatically generated when you connect to a data source and can be used in a variety of ways. While the Online Help has a more detailed discussion about these fields here's a quick overview so you can get started using these powerful tools in your analyses.

Here's How it Works

What are the Measure Names and Measure Values fields?

When you connect to a data source Tableau automatically creates a field that contains all of the measure names and measure values. For example, below is a simple data source that contains three measures. From this data source, Tableau would create the Measure Names and Measure values fields shown on the right.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Date	Region	Sales	Profit	Discount	
2	1/1/2009	East	\$100	\$50	0%	
3	1/2/2009	West	\$300	\$100	10%	
4	1/3/2009	Central	\$500	\$200	30%	
5	1/4/2009	East	\$400	\$160	40%	
6	1/5/2009	South	\$600	\$500	0%	
7	1/6/2009	West	\$800	\$750	0%	
8	1/7/2009	West	\$400	\$250	0%	
9	1/8/2009	Central	\$100	\$65	20%	
10	1/9/2009	East	\$300	\$254	50%	
11	1/10/2009	South	\$200	\$89	75%	
12	1/11/2009	South	\$100	\$40	30%	
13						

Measure Names

Sum of Sales
Sum of Profit
Sum of Discount

Measure Values

Sum of Sales	Sum of Profit	Sum of Discount
\$100	\$50	0%
\$300	\$100	10%
\$500	\$200	30%
\$400	\$160	40%
\$600	\$500	0%
\$800	\$750	0%
\$400	\$250	0%
\$100	\$65	20%
\$300	\$254	50%
\$200	\$89	75%
\$100	\$40	30%

Why would you use these fields?

A common use of the Measure Names and Measure Values fields is to create a details table that shows all of the measure values for some categories. For example, the text table below shows financial measures for each product type. When you use the Measure Names and Measure Values fields, the Measure Values card automatically opens. You can use this card to quickly add and remove measures from the view.

Pages

Filters

Measure Names

Marks

Automatic

Text: Measure Values

Color:

Size:

Level of Detail:

Columns: Product Type

Rows: Measure Names

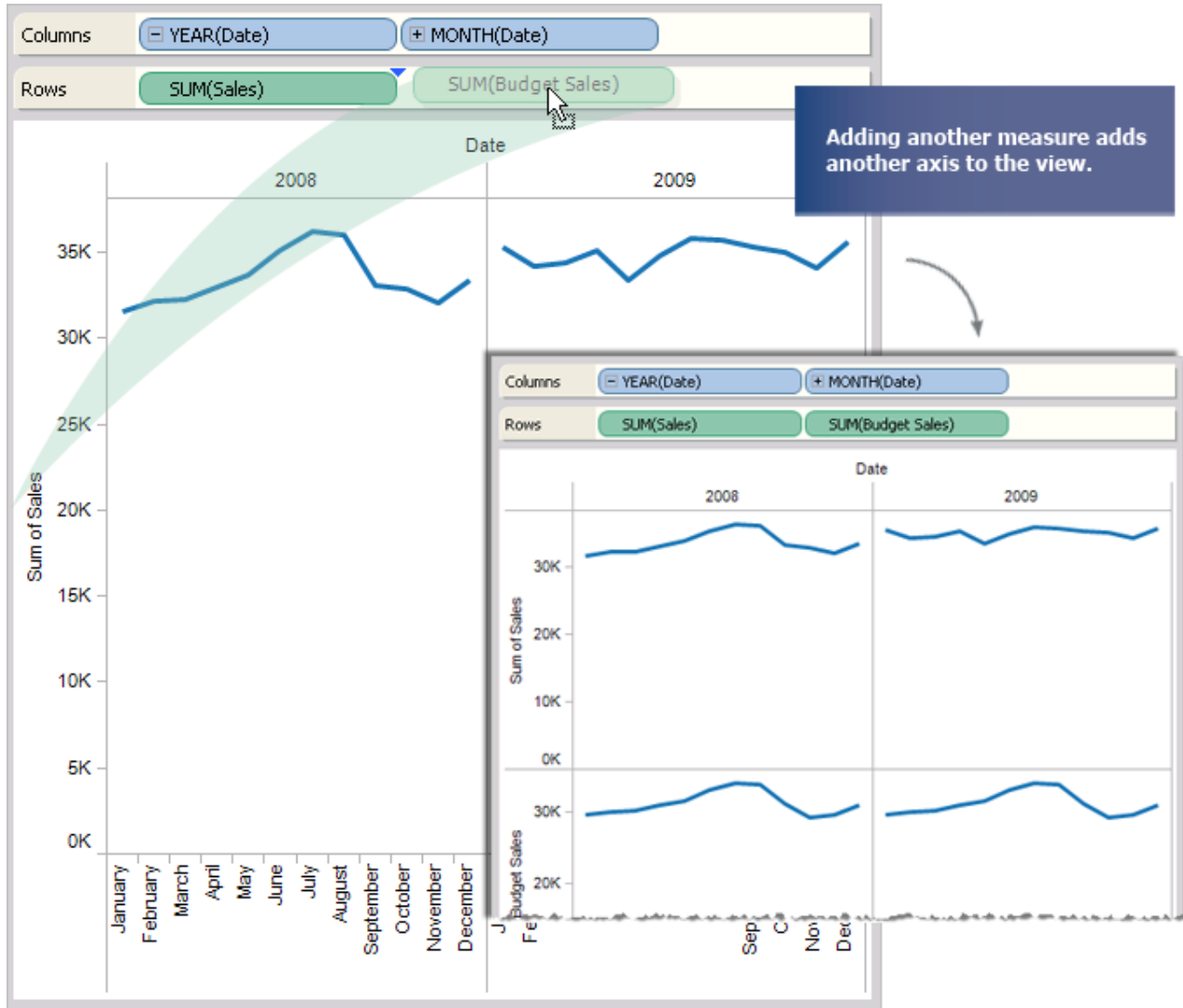
	Product Type			
	Coffee	Espresso	Herbal Tea	Tea
Sum of Budget COGS	\$96,880	\$90,800	\$73,060	\$57,140
Sum of Budget Margin	\$131,740	\$122,680	\$97,400	\$76,460
Sum of Budget Profit	\$83,880	\$71,900	\$58,720	\$44,260
Sum of Budget Sales	\$228,620	\$213,480	\$170,460	\$133,600
Sum of COGS	\$90,696	\$97,000	\$92,810	\$78,166
Sum of Inventory	\$803,954	\$789,748	\$828,968	\$760,702
Sum of Margin	\$121,572	\$121,172	\$110,000	\$80,284
Sum of Marketing	\$33,366	\$38,200	\$38,200	\$38,200
Sum of Profit	\$74,683	\$68,600	\$68,600	\$68,600
Sum of Sales	\$216,828	\$222,900	\$222,900	\$222,900
Sum of Total Expenses	\$60,025	\$64,603	\$57,814	\$47,220

Drag measures to and from the Measure Values card to show and hide them in the table.

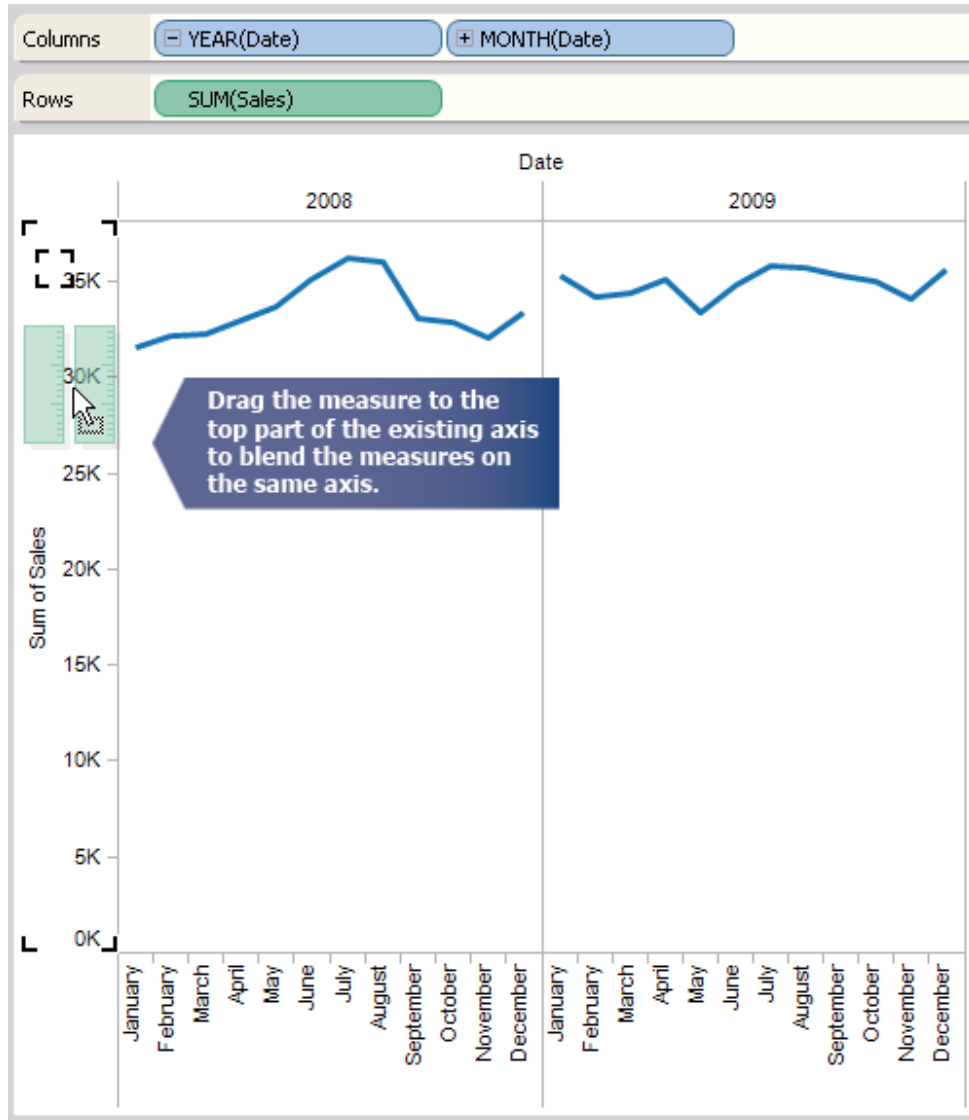
Measure Values

- SUM(Budget COGS)
- SUM(Budget Margin)
- SUM(Budget Profit)
- SUM(Budget Sales)
- SUM(COGS)
- SUM(Inventory)
- SUM(Margin)
- SUM(Marketing)
- SUM(Profit)
- SUM(Sales)
- SUM(Total Expenses)

Another common use for these fields is when you want to blend measures on a single axis. For example, let's say you were looking at a line chart showing sales over time. But then you ask, "How are the actual sales compared to the Budget?" When you drag the Budget Sales measure to the Columns shelf, you add another axis.



What you really want to do is add another line to the same chart. That's where the Measure Names and Measure Values fields come in handy. Instead of dragging the Budget Sales measure to the Columns shelf, drag it to the existing Sales axis in the view. You'll see an icon showing two axes side by side to let you know that you are about to blend two measures into a single axis.



When you blend two measures the Measure Values field automatically replaces the measure on the Columns shelf and the Measure Names field is placed on the Color shelf. Now the view has two lines --one for the actual Sales (orange) and one for the Budget Sales (blue). We can see sales has exceeded expectations in both years.



Measure Names and Measure Values fields can be used for so much more than just blending measures and text tables. For example, you can use Measure Names on the text shelf to label and annotate marks or you can create a quick filter on Measure Names to quickly show and hide data in the view. Now that you've seen an example of how to use the Measure Names and Measure Values fields, start experimenting and see how these fields can help you answer questions of your own data.

Learn More

- Learn more about these fields by searching for Measure Names in the [Product Manual](#).
- Contact Tableau User Support at: (206) 633 3400 x2.