

# (Optional) : Getting Started with Google Looker Studio

Welcome to this instructional reading on getting started with Google's Looker Studio.

This instructional reading will give you the basic knowledge required to help you complete the hands-on labs and final assignment for Looker Studio if you decide to use this product instead of IBM Cognos Analytics.

Looker Studio was originally named Google Data Studio, and it is essentially a free cloud-based tool to visualize your data using a variety of visualizations, including dashboards and multipage reports.

In this reading, we will discuss:

- Navigating the Looker Studio interface
- Creating reports
- Connecting to data sources
- Adding visualizations to a report
- Configuring theme and layout settings

## Navigating the Looker Studio Interface

You can access Looker Studio by navigating to [lookerstudio.com/google.com](https://lookerstudio.com/google.com) in your web browser. All you need to access Looker Studio is a valid free Google account.

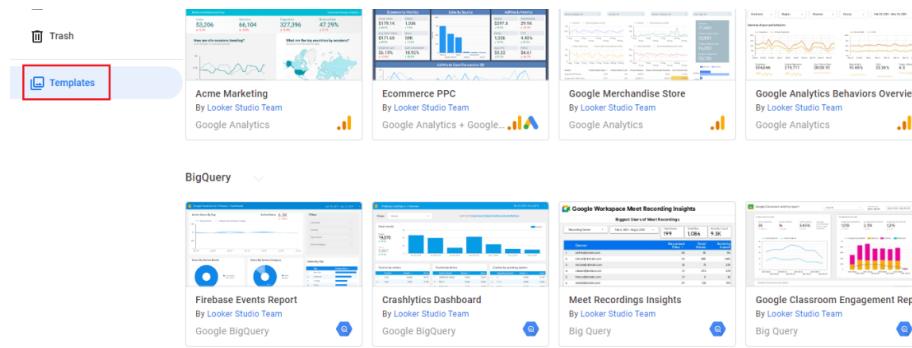
You will be redirected to the Recent section of the Looker Studio home page, where you will see a list of templates to choose from to start your first report. You will also see any recent reports and dashboards you have already worked on.

The screenshot shows the Looker Studio interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a 'Create' button, a search bar, and user profile icons. Below the navigation bar, the 'Recent' tab is selected, showing a list of recent files. The list includes 'Blank Report' (Looker Studio), 'Tutorial Report' (Looker Studio), 'Acme Marketing' (Google Analytics), and 'Search Console Report' (Search Console). To the right of the recent list, there is a 'Template Gallery' section with a heading 'Start with a Template' and several template cards. At the bottom of the page, there is a large 'Create a Report' button with a bar chart icon and a placeholder text 'Use the Create button to add one.'

Here, on the **Reports** tab, we can see that there are no recent files, as this is our first time opening the Looker Studio interface. The same applies to the **Data sources** and **Explorer** tabs, too.

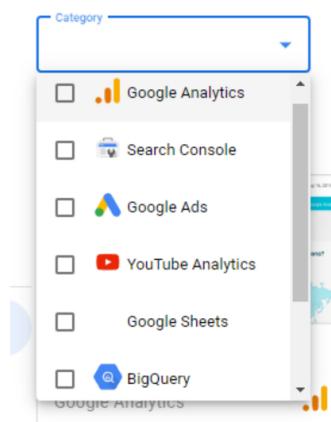
The **Template Gallery** can be accessed by clicking **Templates** in the left navigation menu on the home page.

The screenshot shows the Looker Studio interface again, but this time the 'Templates' tab is selected in the left navigation menu. The main area displays the 'Template Gallery' with a 'Category' dropdown menu. Below the category menu, there is a list of template cards, including 'Google Analytics', 'ACME', 'Commerce PPC Dashboard', 'Google Merchandise Store', and 'Google Analytics Behavior Overview'. The rest of the interface is similar to the previous screenshot, with the 'Create' button and the 'Recent' section.



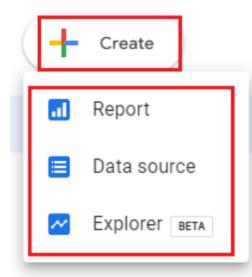
You can also browse the various templates by their category, such as Google Analytics, Google Sheets, and BigQuery, by scrolling down the page, or you can filter the Template Gallery view by one or more of those categories.

### Template Gallery



From the **Create** button, you can create Reports, Data sources, and Explorers.

### Looker Studio



**Trash**

**Templates**

We will discuss **Reports** and **Data sources** in the readings in this course, and you will practice with them in the hands-on labs and the final assignment. However, you won't use **Explorers** in this course, as they are currently an experimental feature in Beta.

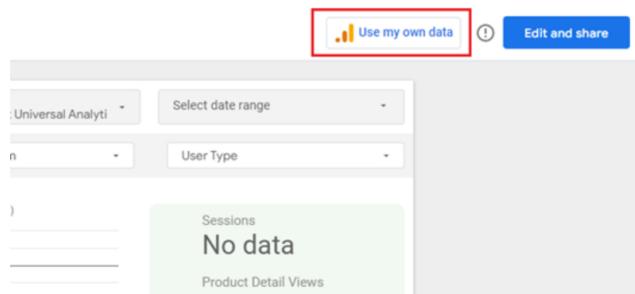
### Creating Reports

You create reports in Looker Studio to enable you to visualize your data and get better insights into your data. You can then share those reports with your colleagues or customers.

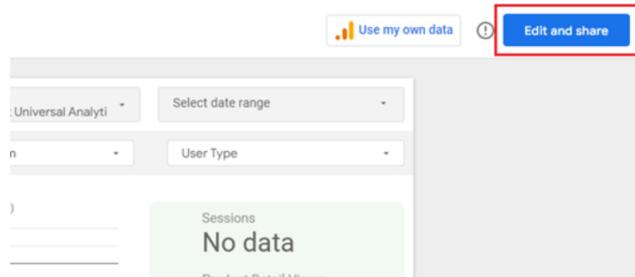
You can either create a blank report from scratch and add components to it, or you can create a report from an existing template and either use it as it is or modify it to meet your own needs.

To create a report from a template:

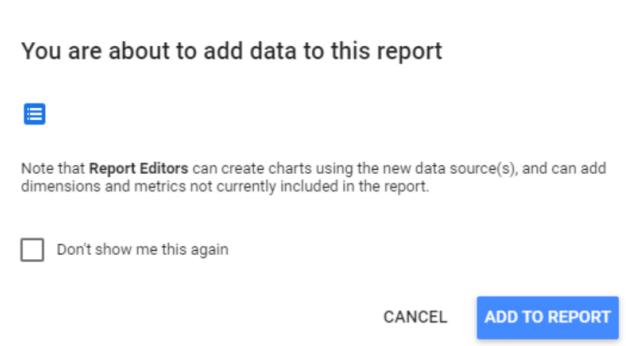
1. Click **Templates**.
2. Select a template from the gallery.
3. In the template, you can use the provided dataset or click **Use my own data** to upload your own data and populate the template with it.



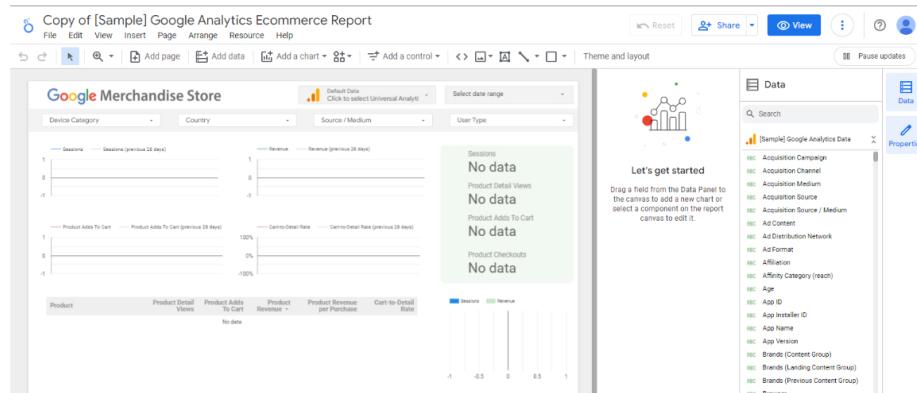
4. You can start to edit the template by choosing **Edit and share**.



5. Click **ADD TO REPORT** in the pop-up dialog box.



6. Then, use the **Report Editor** to make changes to the copy report from the template.



To create a blank report:

1. Click **Create**, then select **Report**.
2. On the **Add data to report** page, you need to select a *connector* for your data source.
3. After selecting a connector, you can drag and drop your file directly onto the window.



4. Alternatively, you can click the **CLICK TO UPLOAD FILES** button, then browse to the location where the dataset file is stored and open it.

5. The file will start being processed.

6. Once the file has finished being processed and uploaded, the status will change to **Uploaded**, and you can click **Add** to add it as a data source to your blank report.

7. The untitled report will be displayed with the data added.

8. Looker Studio will make assumptions about how you want the data displayed and visualized, but you can modify this as you see fit and add more data fields to the report to create more visualizations from.

The screenshot shows the Looker Studio interface with a report titled "Untitled Report". On the left, there's a chart and a data table. The data table has three rows: Positive (44,885), Neutral (17,216), and Negative (14,528). A red box highlights the data table area. On the right, there's a sidebar with "Chart" and "Data" tabs. Under "Chart", "sentiment.csv" is selected as the data source. Under "Data", "Date" is selected as the Date Range Dimension, and "Sentiment" is selected as the Dimension. The metric "Record Count" is also listed under "Data".

9. Click the **View** button in the top right of the page to view the report as a user would see it.

This screenshot shows the same "Untitled Report" in "View" mode. The "View" button in the top right is highlighted with a red box. The sidebar configuration is identical to the previous screenshot, with "sentiment.csv" as the data source, "Date" as the Date Range Dimension, and "Sentiment" as the Dimension.

10. The report will be displayed in read-only mode. Click the **Edit** button in the top right of the page to return to edit mode.

This screenshot shows the "Untitled Report" in "Edit" mode. The "Edit" button in the top right is highlighted with a red box. The sidebar configuration is identical to the previous screenshots.

11. You can use the **Share** button in either 'Edit' or 'View' mode to share your report with colleagues.

This screenshot shows the "Share" menu options in the top right corner. The "Share" button is highlighted with a red box. The menu includes "Invite people", "Schedule delivery", "Get report link", "Embed report", and "Download report".

12. The report can either be shared as an email invitation to individual users or groups of users.

13. It can also be shared via a link.

14. Then, you can copy the link and send it directly to those people who you wish to be able to access it via the link.

You can also embed the report as code or as a URL or download the report as a PDF and then share it as a file instead.

## Connecting to Data Sources

Data sources enable you to manage the connections to your data and configure the data fields in your data that you will use in your reports. You may also see the term *connector* being used instead of *data source*, but they are two slightly different components.

### *Connectors and data sources*

*Connectors* are the components that connect your underlying data to Looker Studio features.

Whereas data sources are the components that represent a specific instance of a connector, such as a connection to a Google Sheets spreadsheet, an SQL Server database, or a CSV file.

So, *connectors* are used by a *data source* to retrieve your data from a given data platform or database product.

Whenever you create a report, you'll notice that you are first asked for a data source to connect to.

As we've seen, on the Connect to Data tab of the Add Data to Report window, you can create a new data source for your report by selecting one of many available connectors, such as the Google Sheets connector.



Then, you need to either navigate to a local file to upload or connect to a database system, or in the case of the Google Sheets connector, you need to select a worksheet from your Google Drive to add.

Then, the **Report Editor** will open a new report with your selected data already embedded.

Alternatively, if you select the **My data sources** tab of the **Add data to report** window, you can add an existing data source to your report by selecting from one of your listed data sources.

After selecting an existing data source, add it to your report.

The **Report Editor** will open, and a chart connected to your existing data source will already be added to your report.

The screenshot shows the Report Editor interface. On the left, there is a table visualization titled "Untitled Report" with columns "First Name" and "Record Count". The data includes rows for Paris, Norman, Sydney, Daryl, Jamey, Loren, Leon, and Casey. On the right, the "Chart" setup pane is open, showing the "Data source" set to "CustomerLoyaltyProgram.csv" and the "Metric" set to "Record Count". A sidebar titled "Data" lists various dimensions and metrics such as "City", "Count", "Country", etc.

## Adding Visualizations to a Report

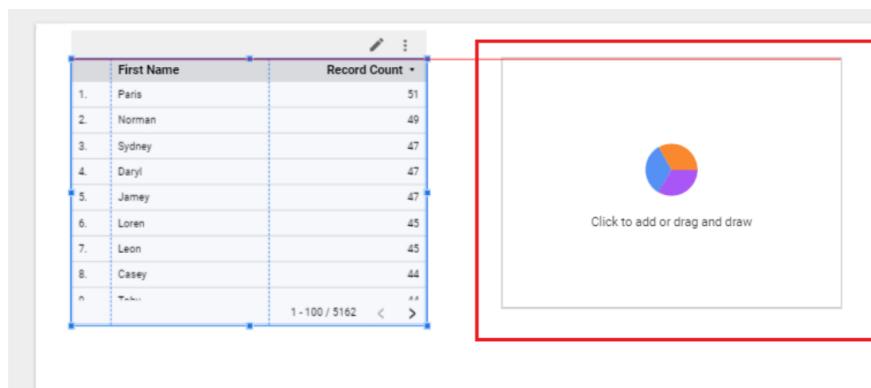
You can add various types of charts to your reports to help tell a visual story about your data.

In the **Report Editor** window, click **Add a chart** from the toolbar, then select a chart type from the list, such as a bar chart, pie chart, line chart, map, or bubble chart.

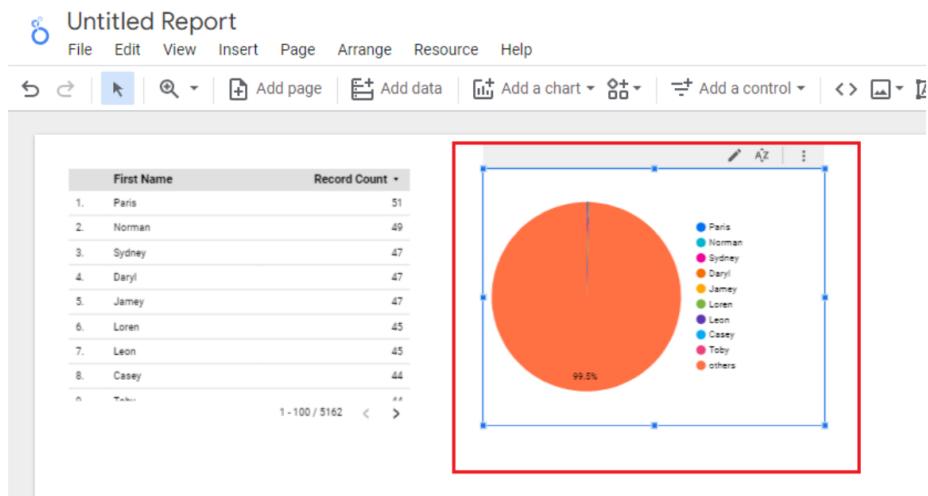
The screenshot shows the Report Editor with the "Add a chart" button highlighted in red. To the right, a large red box encloses a list of chart types: Table, Scorecard, Time series, Bar, Pie, Google Maps, Geo chart, Line, and Area. Each category has several sub-options shown as icons.

Having selected a chart type, such as a pie chart, you then decide where you want to place the new chart on your canvas by clicking the mouse in that position.

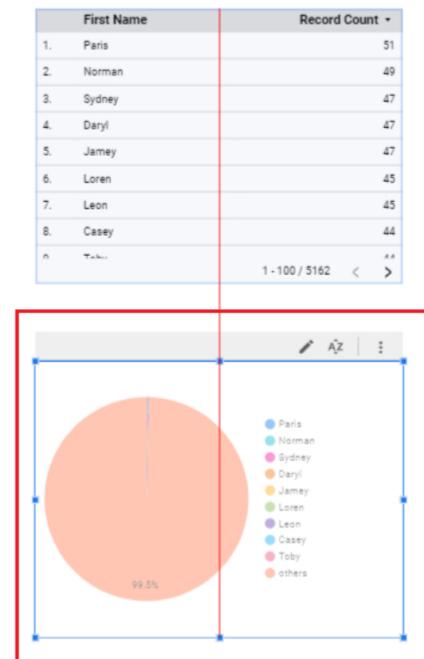
The screenshot shows the Report Editor toolbar with the "Add a chart" button highlighted in red. The toolbar also includes buttons for "Add page", "Add data", "Add control", and "View".



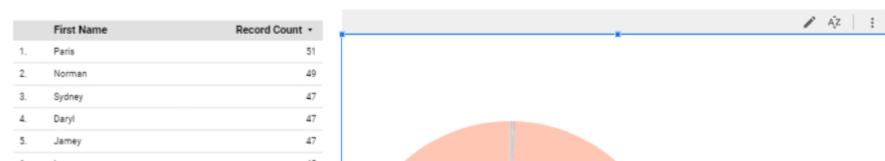
The chart will be added to the canvas.

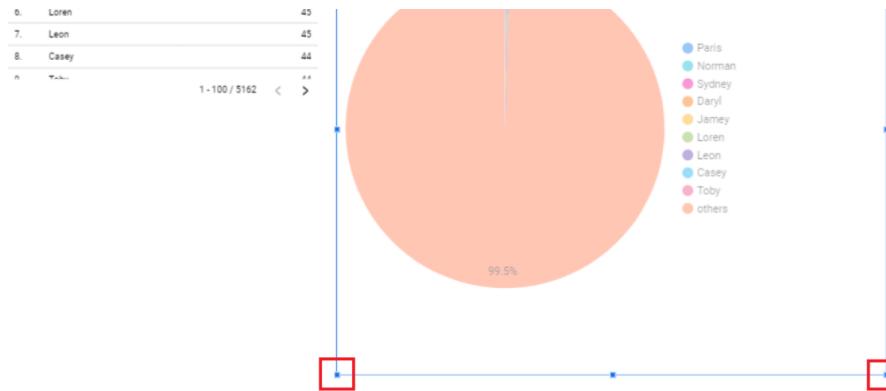


You can drag and drop a chart anywhere else on the canvas if you decide you want to change its position.



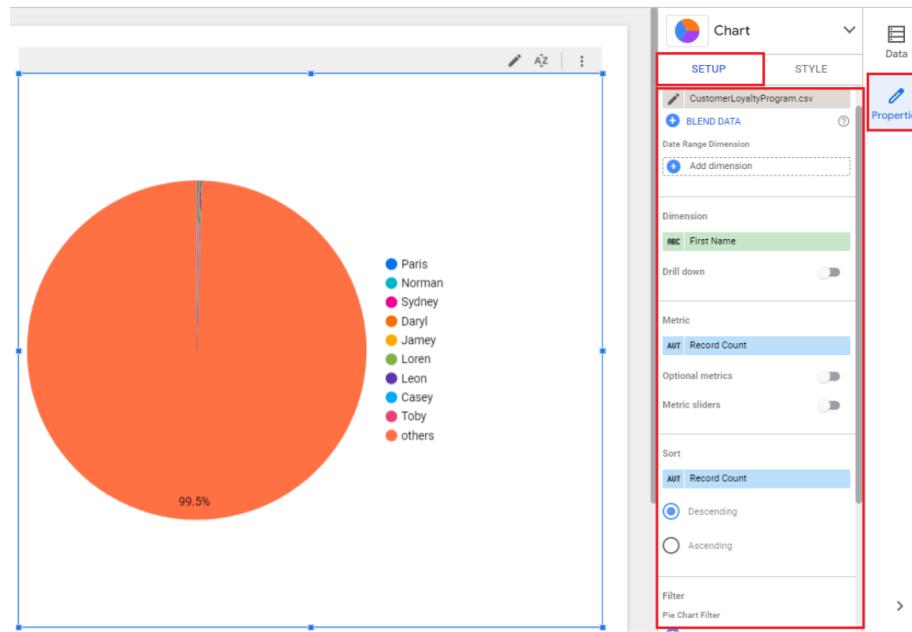
You can use the *drag handles* in the corners to resize the chart object.



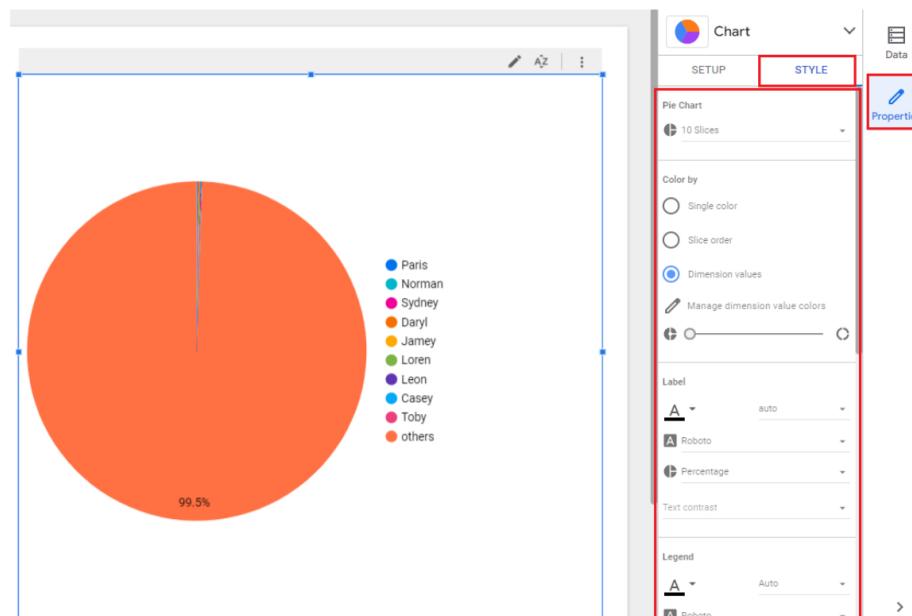


Whenever a chart is selected, you will see a **Data** button and a **Properties** button displayed on the far right side of the page.

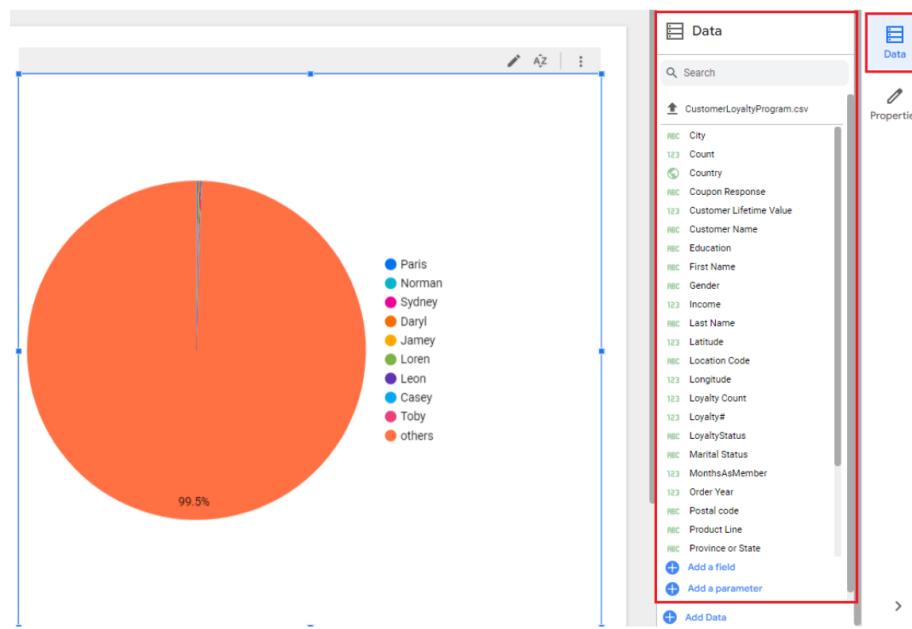
The **Properties** button displays the chart's properties in a pane on the right, and you can use this to configure your chart. On the **SETUP** tab, you configure the data fields that are displayed in the chart and configure filters.



On the **STYLE** tab, you configure the look and feel of the chart, such as the colors used, the data labels, the legend, and the background and border.

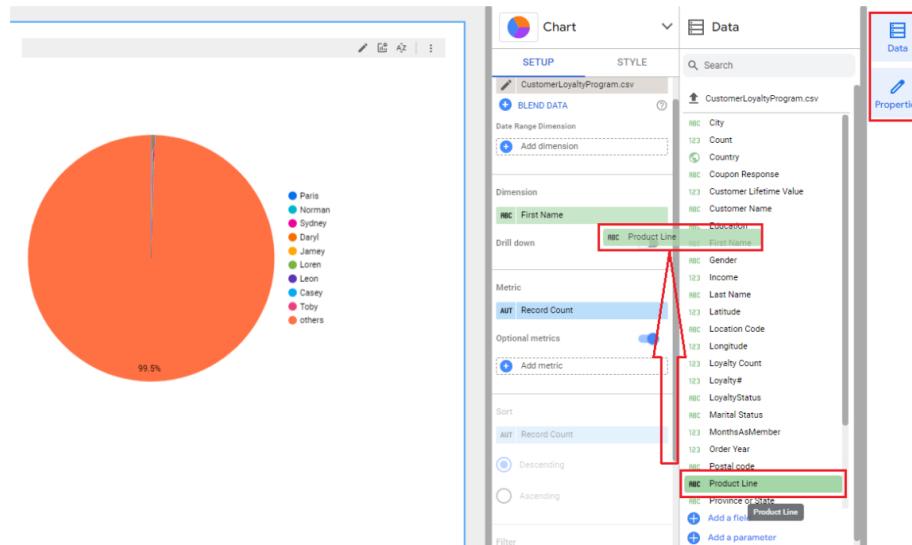


The **Data** button displays the source data embedded in the chart and all the fields contained in that data source.

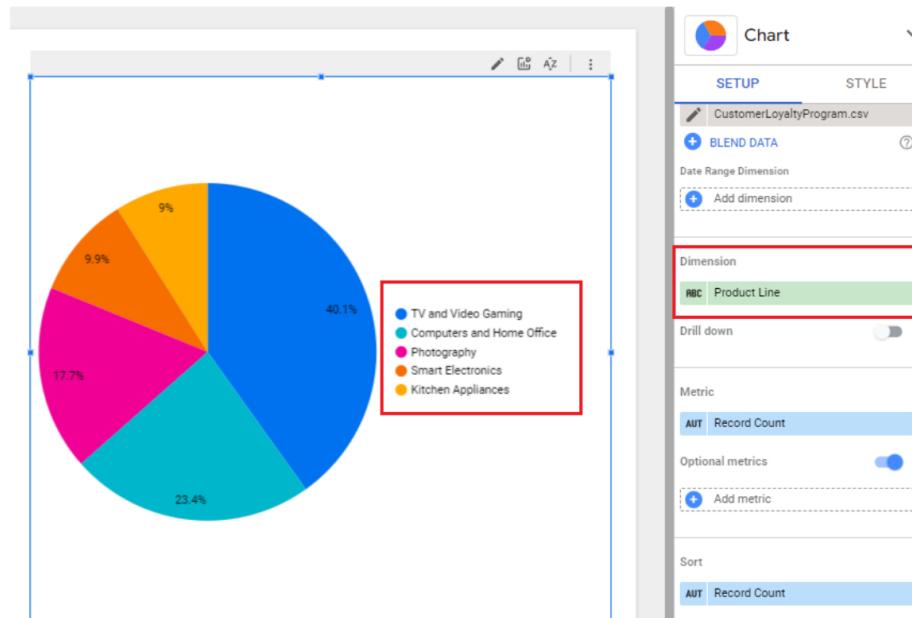


Both these buttons can be toggled on or off to show or hide them.

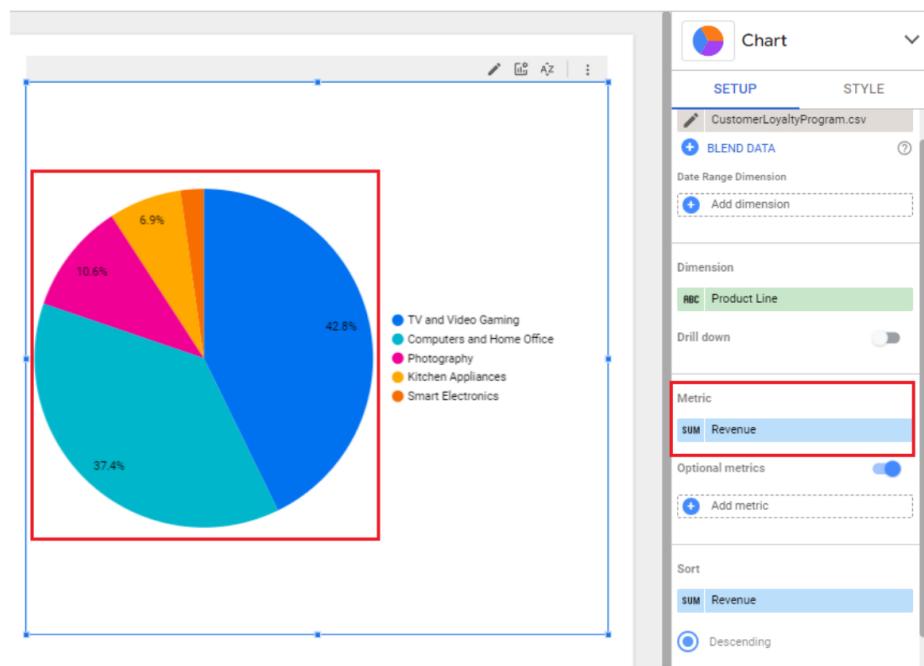
With both buttons switched on, you can easily drop a field from the **Data** pane to a **Dimension** or **Metric** field in the **SETUP** tab of the **Properties** pane to modify the chart.



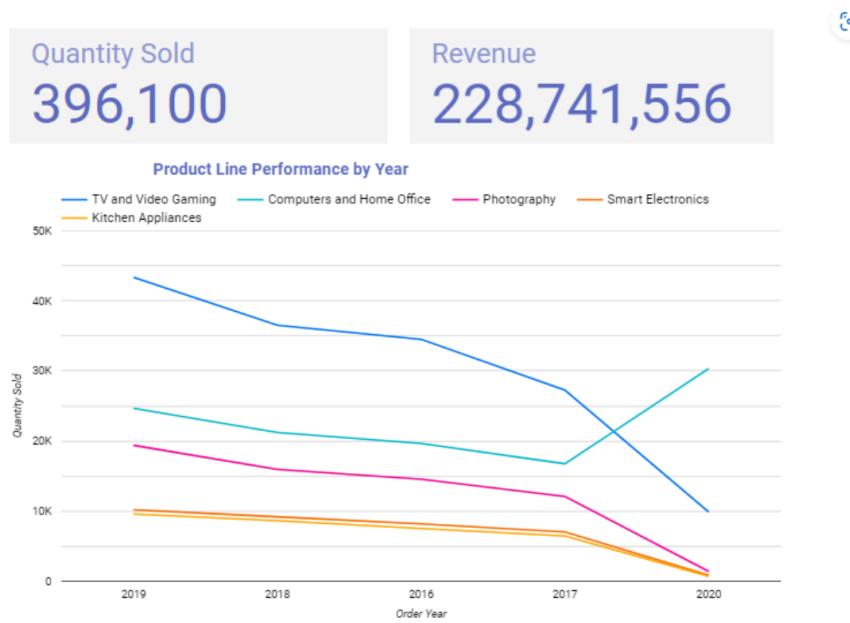
The chart will update with your changes. Here, the **Dimension** has been changed from **First Name** to **Product Line**.



While here, the **Metric** has been changed from **Record Count** to **Revenue**.



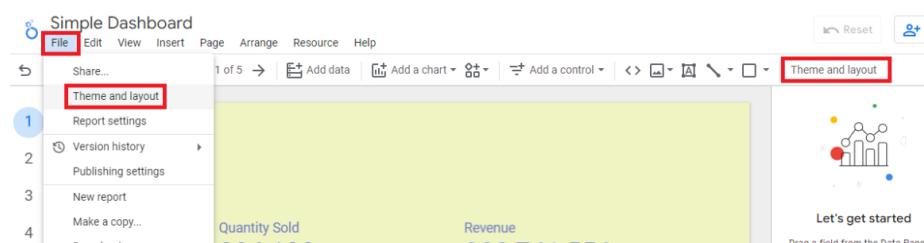
Using this approach, you can add multiple different visualizations to your reports to create an informative and appealing dashboard.



### Configuring Theme and Layout Settings

Looker Studio doesn't use a predefined dashboard template layout for the canvas, as seen in Cognos Analytics by default. This means you have the flexibility to place your visualizations wherever you want on the canvas rather than in specified panels.

What Looker Studio does have is the **Theme and layout** pane. You can open this pane from the **File** menu or toolbar.





On the **THEME** tab, you can choose one of the predefined themes for your report or make your own custom themes.

### Theme and Layout

**THEME** **LAYOUT**

Current Theme Default [Customize](#)

**Default**

**Text**

**Edge**

**Text**

**Constellation**

**Text**

When you apply a theme, it gets applied to all the pages in your report.

1 2 3 4 5

Quantity Sold 396,100 Revenue 228,741,556

Product Line Performance by Year

50K  
40K  
30K  
20K  
10K  
0

2019 2018 2017 2016 Order Year

Quantity Sold

TV and Video Gaming Kitchen Appliances Computers and Home Office Photography Smart Electronics

Data Last Updated: 9/28/2023 6:10:01 PM

Edge

Constellation

Groovy

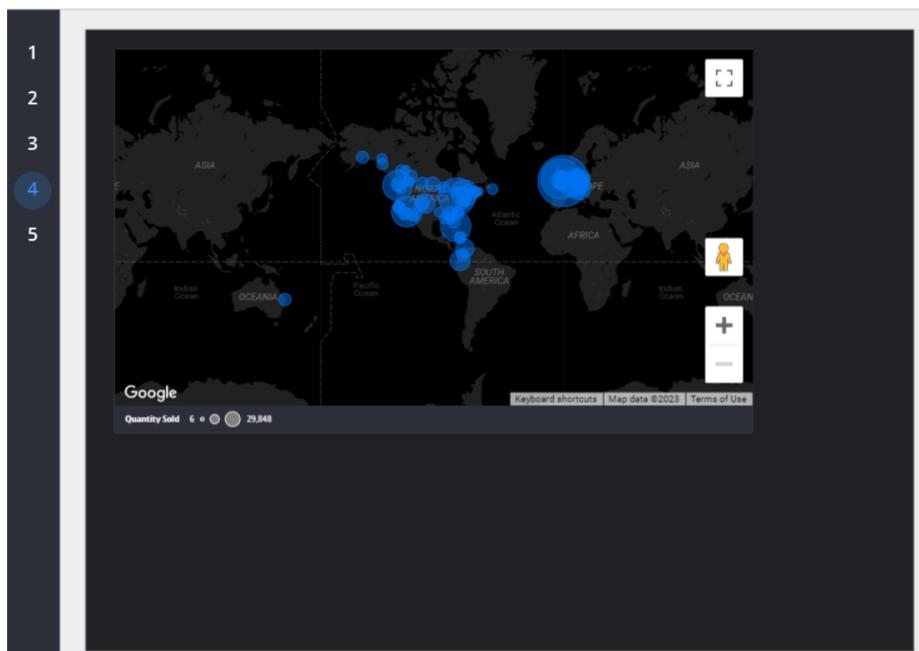
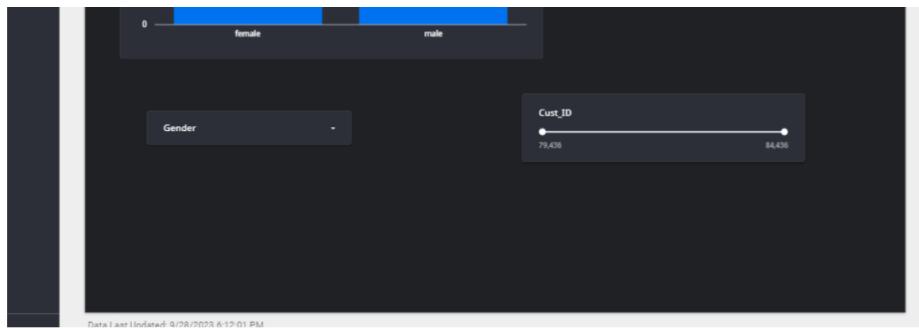
Insight

1 2 3 4 5

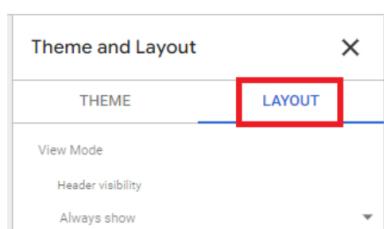
Quantity Sold

200K  
150K  
100K  
50K

First Name	Record Count
Paris	51
Norman	49
Sydney	47
Daryl	47
Jamey	47
Loren	45



On the **LAYOUT** tab, you can modify elements of the canvas, such as where the page navigation should be, the display mode, the canvas size, and guides and grid settings.



Navigation type

Left

Respect report theme

Display mode

Fit to width  Actual size

Has margin

Canvas Size [?](#)

US letter (4:3) - Landscape

Width (px) Height (px)

1200 900

Snap to

Smart guides  Grid

[Go to next item](#)

 Completed

 Like

 Dislike

 Report an issue