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The DAX Language

- Language of
 - Power Pivot
 - Power BI
 - SSAS Tabular
- DAX is simple, but it is not easy
- New programming concepts and patterns



Introduction to the DAX language

Introduction to DAX



What is DAX?

- Programming language
 - Power Pivot
 - SSAS Tabular
 - Power BI
- Resembles Excel
 - Because it was born with PowerPivot, in 2010
- Important differences
 - No concept of «row» and «column»
 - Different type system
- Many new functions
- Designed for data models and business calculations



Functional Language

DAX is a functional language, the execution flows with function calls, here is an example of a DAX formula



If it is not formatted, it is not DAX.

Code formatting is of paramount importance in DAX.

```
=SUMX(FILTER(VALUES('Date'[Year]),'Date'[Year]<2005),IF('Date'[Year]>=2000,[S ales Amount]*100,[Sales Amount]*90)
```

www.daxformatter.com



Calculated Columns



- Columns computed using DAX
- Always computed for the current row
- Product[Price] means
 - The value of the Price column (explicit)
 - In the Product table (explicit, optional)
 - For the current row (implicit)
 - Different for each row



Measures



- Written using DAX
- Do not work row by row
- Instead, use tables and aggregators
- Do not have the «current row» concept
- Examples
 - GrossMargin
 - is a calculated column
 - but can be a measure too
 - GrossMargin %
 - needs to be a measure



Naming Convention

- Measures do not belong to a table
 - Avoid table name
 - [Margin%] instead of Sales[Margin%]
 - Easier to move to another table
 - Easier to identify as a measure
- o Thus
 - Calculated columns → Table[Column]
 - Measures → [Measure]



Measures vs Calculated Columns

- Use a column when
 - Need to slice or filter on the value
- Use a measure
 - Calculate percentages
 - Calculate ratios
 - Need complex aggregations
- Space and CPU usage
 - Columns consume memory
 - Measures consume CPU



Aggregation Functions

- Useful to aggregate values
 - SUM
 - AVERAGE
 - MIN
 - MAX
- Work only on numeric columns
- Aggregate only one column
 - SUM (Orders[Price])
 - SUM (Orders[Price] * Orders[Quantity])



The «X» Aggregation Functions

- Iterators: useful to aggregate formulas
 - SUMX
 - AVERAGEX
 - MINX
 - MAXX
- Iterate over the table and evaluate the expression for each row
- Always receive two parameters
 - Table to iterate
 - Formula to evaluate for each row



Example of SUMX

For each row in the Sales table, evaluates the formula, then sum up all the results Inside the formula, there is a «current row»

```
SUMX (
    Sales,
    Sales[Price] * Sales[Quantity]
)
```



Using Variables

Very useful to avoid repeating subexpressions in your code

```
VAR
    TotalQuantity = SUM ( Sales[Quantity] )

RETURN

IF (
    TotalQuantity > 1000,
    TotalQuantity * 0.95,
    TotalQuantity * 1.25
)
```



Date Functions

- Many useful functions
 - DATE, DATEVALUE, DAY, EDATE,
 - EOMONTH, HOUR, MINUTE,
 - MONTH, NOW, SECOND, TIME,
 - TIMEVALUE, TODAY, WEEKDAY,
 - WEEKNUM, YEAR, YEARFRAC
- Time Intelligence functions will be covered later



Some functions return tables instead of values

Table Functions



Table Functions

- Basic functions that work on full tables
 - FILTER
 - ALL
 - VALUES
 - DISTINCT
 - RELATEDTABLE
- Their result is often used in other functions
- They can be combined together to form complex expressions
- We will discover many other table functions later in the sqlbi

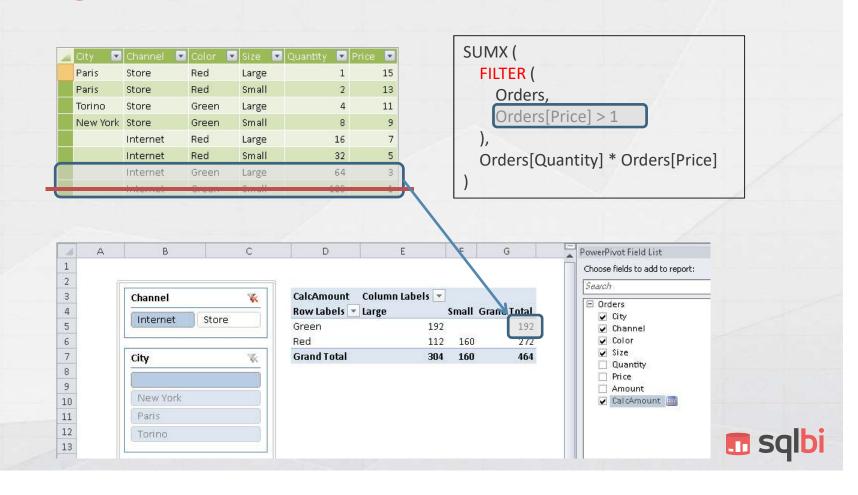
CALCULATED TABLES



- In the newest versions of Tabular (and in Power BI Desktop), you can create calculated tables
- User interface is different in different products



Filtering a Table



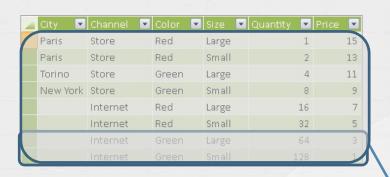
The FILTER Function



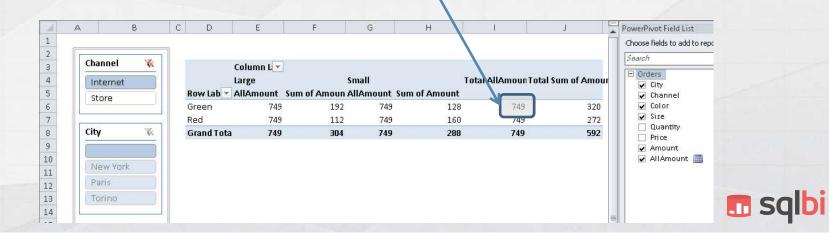
- o FILTER
 - Adds a new condition
 - Restricts the number of rows of a table
 - Returns a table
 - Can be iterated by an «X» function
- Needs a table as input
- The input can be another FILTER



Removing Filters







The ALL Function



- o ALL
 - Returns all the rows of a table
 - Ignores the filter context
 - Returns a table
 - That can be iterated by an «X» function
- Needs a table as input
- Can be used with a single column
 - ALL (Customers[CustomerName])
 - The result contains a table with one column

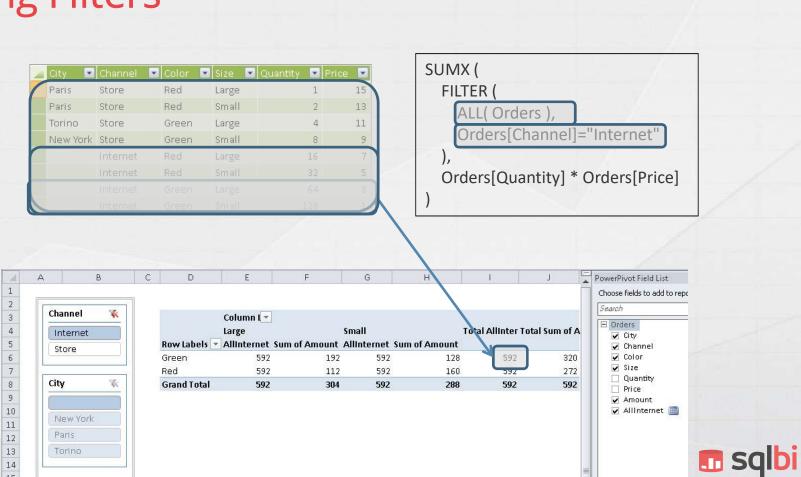


Mixing Filters

- Table functions can be mixed
- Each one requires a table
- Each one returns a table
- FILTER (ALL (Table), Condition)
 - Puts a filter over the entire table
 - Ignores the current filter context



Mixing Filters



DISTINCT



Returns the distinct values of a column, only the ones visible in the current context

```
NumOfProducts :=

COUNTROWS (
    DISTINCT ( Product[ProductCode] )
)
```



RELATEDTABLE

Returns a table with all the rows related with the current one.

```
NumOfProducts =
COUNTROWS (
    RELATEDTABLE ( Product )
)
```



Example of RELATEDTABLE

Compute the number of red products for a category. Build a calculated column in the Categories table:

```
NumOfRedProducts =

COUNTROWS (
    FILTER (
         RELATEDTABLE ( Product ),
         Product[Color] = "Red"
    )
)
```



Let us take a look at how DAX works

Evaluation Contexts



What is an Evaluation Context?

TotalSales := SUM (Sales[SalesAmount])

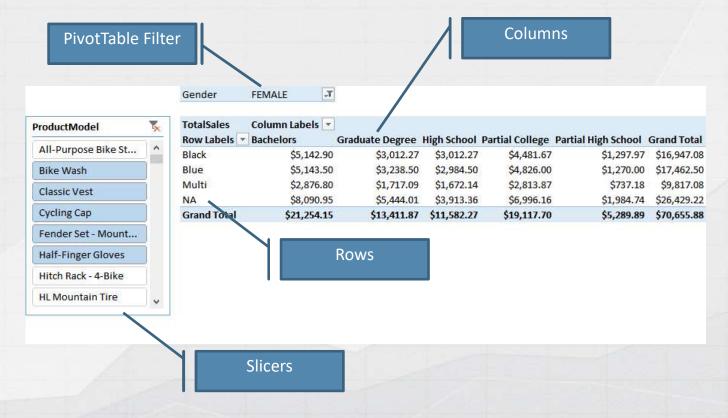


Numbers are sliced by color, i.e. the formula is NOT computing sum of sales, it is computing it for only a subset of the data model

The value of a formula depends on its context

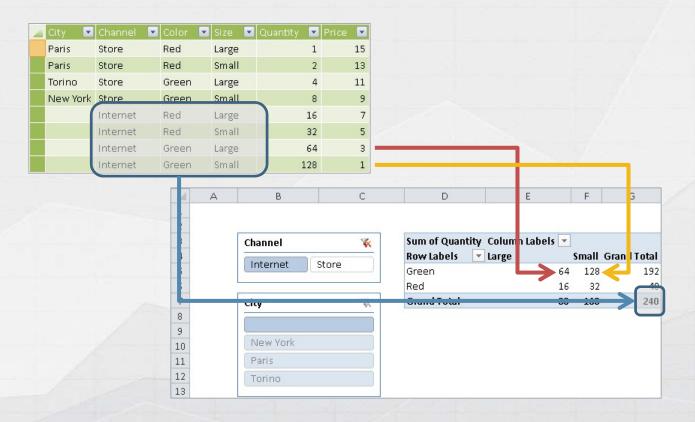


Sources of the Context





Example of a Filter Context





Filter Context

- Defined by
 - Row Selection
 - Column Selection
 - Report Filters
 - Slicers Selection
- Rows outside of the filter context
 - Are not considered for the computation
- Defined automatically by PivotTable, can be created with specific functions too

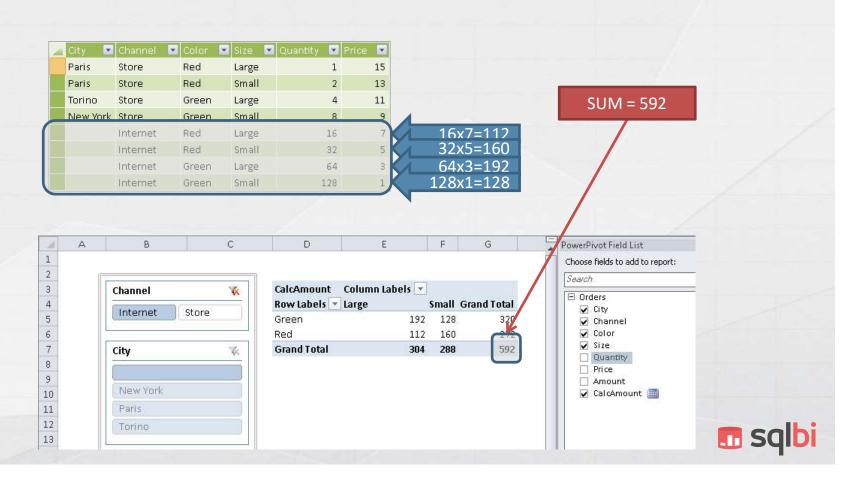


Row Context

- Defined by
 - Calculated column definition
 - Defined automatically for each row
 - Row Iteration functions
 - SUMX, AVERAGEX ...
 - All «X» functions and iterators
 - Defined by the user formulas
- Needed to evaluate column values, it is the concept of "current row"



SUMX (Orders, [Quantity]*[Price])

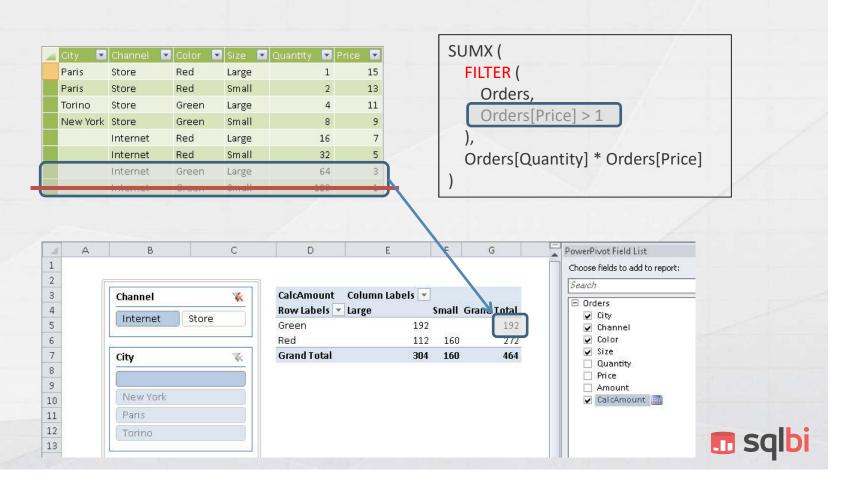


There Are Always Two Contexts

- Filter context
 - Filters tables
 - Might be empty
 - All the tables are visible
 - But this never happens in the real world
- Row context
 - Iterates rows
 - For the rows active in the filter context
 - Might be empty
 - There is no iteration running
- Both are «evaluation contexts»



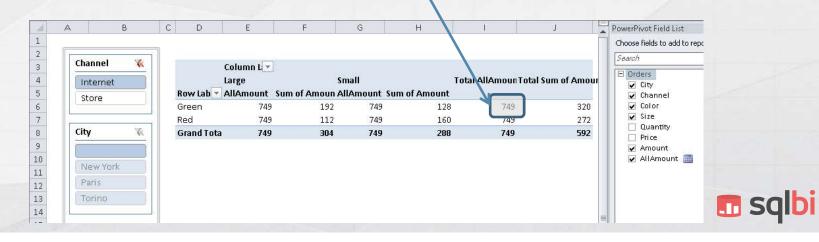
Filtering a Table



Removing Filters







The queen of all DAX functions $\ensuremath{\odot}$

CALCULATE



CALCULATE Syntax

Filters are evaluated in the outer filter context, then combined together in AND and finally used to build a new filter context into which DAX evaluates the expression

```
CALCULATE (
Expression,
Filter1,
...
Repeated many times, as needed
Filtern
)
```



CALCULATE Examples



Compute the sum of sales where the price is more than \$100.00

```
NumOfBigSales :=

CALCULATE (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    Sales[SalesAmount] > 100
)
```

Filter and SUM are on the same table.
You can obtain the same result using FILTER



Filters are tables

Each filter is a table. Boolean expressions are nothing but shortcuts for table expressions

```
CALCULATE (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    Sales[SalesAmount] > 100
)

Is equivalent to

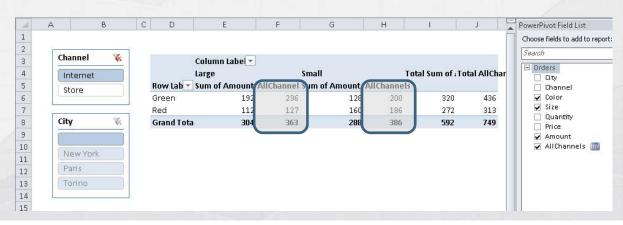
CALCULATE (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    FILTER (
        ALL ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
        Sales[SalesAmount] > 100
    )
)
```



Clear filter on one column only

```
CALCULATE (
SUMX (
Orders,
Orders[Amount]
),
ALL (Orders[Channel])
```

ALL used with a single column table





CALCULATE Tasks

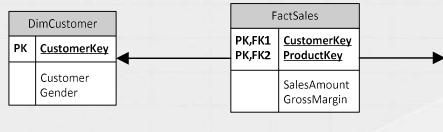
- Partially replaces the filter context
- Conditions
 - Can replace a whole table
 - Can replace a single column
- CALCULATE works on the filter context



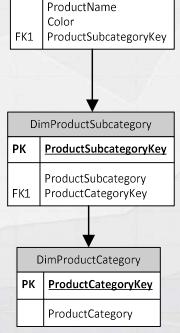
Evaluation Contexts And Relationships



Filters and Relationships



- Do contexts interact with relationships?
- Row Context
- Filter Context
- One side
- Many side



DimProduct

ProductKey

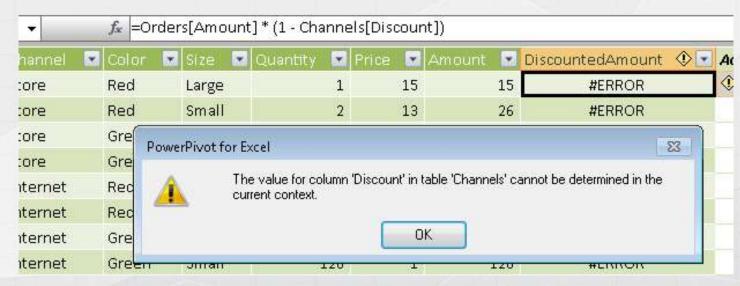
PΚ



Row Context - Many Tables



- Row Context
 - Does not propagate over relationships





RELATED

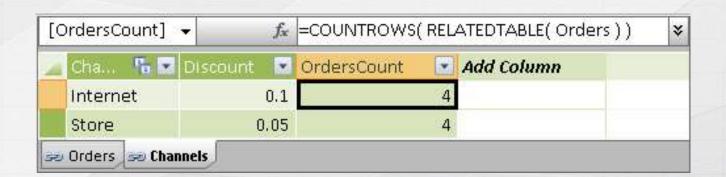
- RELATED (table[column])
 - Opens a new row context on the target table
 - Following relationships

scountedAmo →		fe =Orders[Amount] * (1 - RELATED(Channels[Discount]))					
City 🔽	Cha 🖷 🐷	Color 🗷	Size 💌	Quantity 🗷	Price 🗷	Amount 🔄	DiscountedAmount
Paris	Store	Red	Large	1	15	15	14.25
Paris	Store	Red	Small	2	13	26	24.7
Torino	Store	Green	Large	4	11	44	41.8
New York	Store	Green	Small	8	9	72	68.4
	Internet	Red	Large	16	7	112	100.8
	Internet	Red	Small	32	5	160	144
	Internet	Green	Large	64	3	192	172.8
	Internet	Green	Small	128	1	128	115.2



RELATEDTABLE

- RELATEDTABLE (table)
 - Filters the parameter table
 - Returns only rows related with the current one
- It is the companion of RELATED



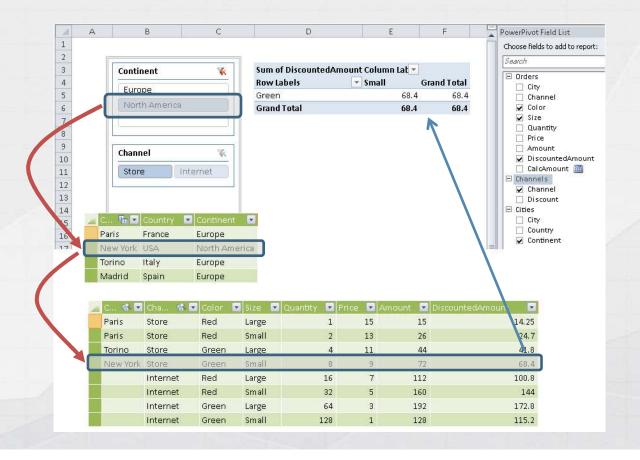


Filter Context - Many Tables

- Filter Context and Relationships
 - Relationships affect filter context
- Orders → Products
 - Filter context on Orders
 - Follows the relationship
 - Shows only products of the selected orders
- Different from Row Context

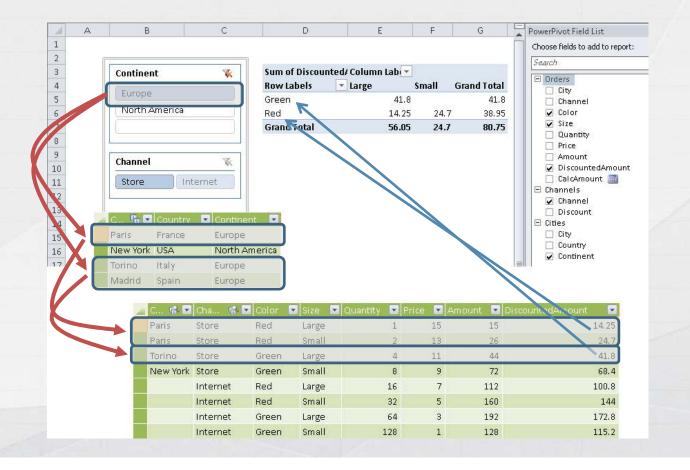


Filter Context - Many Tables



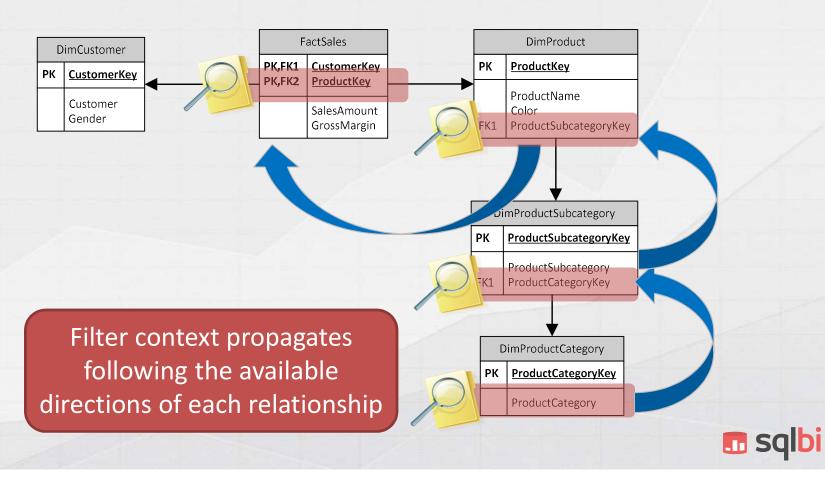


Filter Context - Many Tables





Filters and Relationships



Context Transition



- Calculate performs another task
- If executed inside a row context
 - It takes the row context
 - Transforms it into an equivalent filter context
 - Applies it to the data model
 - Before computing its expression
- Very important and useful feature
 - Better to learn it writing some code...



Automatic CALCULATE

Whenever a measure is computed, an automatic CALCULATE is added around the measure

```
SUMX (
Orders,
[Sales Amount]
)

SUMX (
Orders,
CALCULATE ( [Sales Amount] )
)
```



Time intelligence functions

Time Intelligence in DAX



Date Table

- Time intelligence needs a date table
 - Built in DAX
 - Or in a SQL Table
- Date table properties
 - All dates should be present
 - From 1° of January, to 31° of December
 - No holes
 - Otherwise time intelligence will not work



CALENDAR

Returns a table with a single column named "Date" containing a contiguous set of dates in the given range, inclusive.

```
CALENDAR (
    DATE ( 2005,  1,  1 ),
    DATE ( 2015, 12, 31 )
)

CALENDAR (
    MIN ( Sales[Order Date] ),
    MAX ( Sales[Order Date] )
)
```



CALENDARAUTO

Automatically creates a calendar table based on the database content. Optionally you can specify the last month (useful for fiscal years)

```
---
-- The parameter is the last month
-- of the fiscal year
--
= CALENDARAUTO (
6

Beware: C
```

Beware: CALENDARAUTO uses all the dates in your model, excluding only calculated columns and tables



Set Sorting Options

- Month names do not sort alphabetically
 - · April is not the first month of the year
- Use Sort By Column
- Set all sorting options in the proper way
- Beware of sorting granularity
 - 1:1 between names and sort keys



What is Time Intelligence?

- Many different topics in one name
 - Year To Date
 - Quarter To Date
 - Running Total
 - Same period previous year
 - Working days computation
 - Fiscal Year
- In short: anything related with time
 - Handled in an intelligent way



Aggregations Over Time

- Many useful aggregations
 - YTD: Year To Date
 - QTD: Quarter To Date
 - MTD: Month To Date
- They all need a Calendar Table
- And some understanding of CALCULATE



Year To Date (Time Intelligence)

DATESYTD makes filtering much easier

```
SalesAmountYTD :=

CALCULATE (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    DATESYTD ( 'Date'[Date] )
)
```



Handling Fiscal Year

The last, optional, parameter is the end of the fiscal year Default: 12-31 (or 31/12 - locale dependent)

```
SalesAmountYTD :=
TOTALYTD (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    'Date'[Date],
    "06-30"
)

SalesAmountYTD :=
CALCULATE (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    DATESYTD ( 'Date'[Date], "06-30" )
)
```



Same Period Last Year

Same period in previous year. CALCULATE is needed Specialized version of DATEADD

```
Sales_SPLY :=

CALCULATE (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    SAMEPERIODLASTYEAR ( 'Date'[Date] )
)
```



Running Total

Running total requires an explicit filter

```
SalesAmountRT :=

CALCULATE (
    SUM ( Sales[SalesAmount] ),
    FILTER (
        ALL ( 'Date' ),
        'Date'[Date] <= MAX ( 'Date'[Date] )
    )
)</pre>
```





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