What's New in AI/BI - July 2025 Roundup

in Naval Yemul

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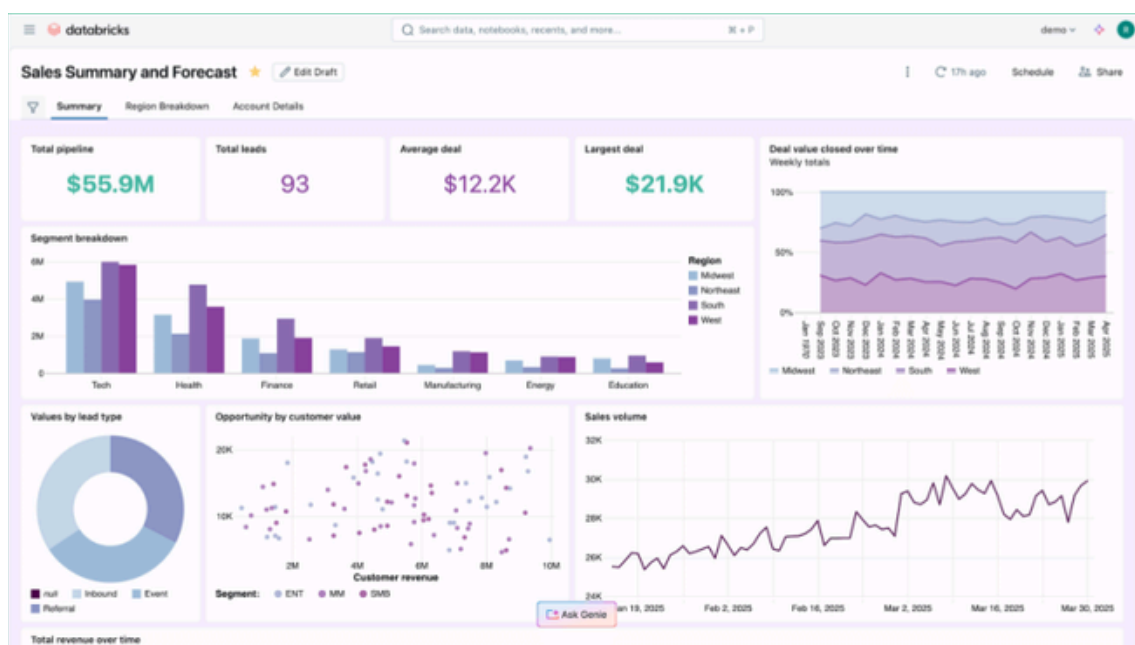
Summary

- Discover the latest AI/BI Dashboard features like customizable themes, global filters, drill-through navigation, and file upload options.
- See how Genie now offers improved accuracy with a smarter knowledge store, broader value dictionaries, and better question handling.
- Get a sneak peek at what's coming next — including Metric Views, Genie API updates, new visualizations, smarter sharing, and deeper semantic integration.

Introduction

Since launching AI/BI Genie and introducing Databricks One at the recent Data + AI Summit, we've continued enhancing how businesses analyze and use their data. This month's update covers the newest features in AI/BI Dashboards and Genie—focusing on improved customization, smarter tools, and a better user experience.

These improvements reflect our goal of making business intelligence more accurate, adaptable, and easy to use. To recap, Databricks AI/BI is a built-in business intelligence suite within Databricks SQL. It allows users to ask questions in natural language, build dashboards, and share insights — all powered by the Databricks Data Intelligence Platform.

What's New?
Here are the latest key updates in AI/BI Dashboards and Genie.

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Summary

Dashboard Themes

One of the most requested features—theme customization—is now live in AI/BI Dashboards. Dashboard creators can now change color palettes and fonts to match their company's branding.

From the dashboard settings panel, users can choose a ready-made theme or create their own—customizing colors for text, backgrounds, widgets, and charts, as well as setting title alignment and fonts.

These theme settings apply across the entire dashboard and are retained when exporting or importing dashboards. This makes it easy to maintain a consistent, professional look across teams.

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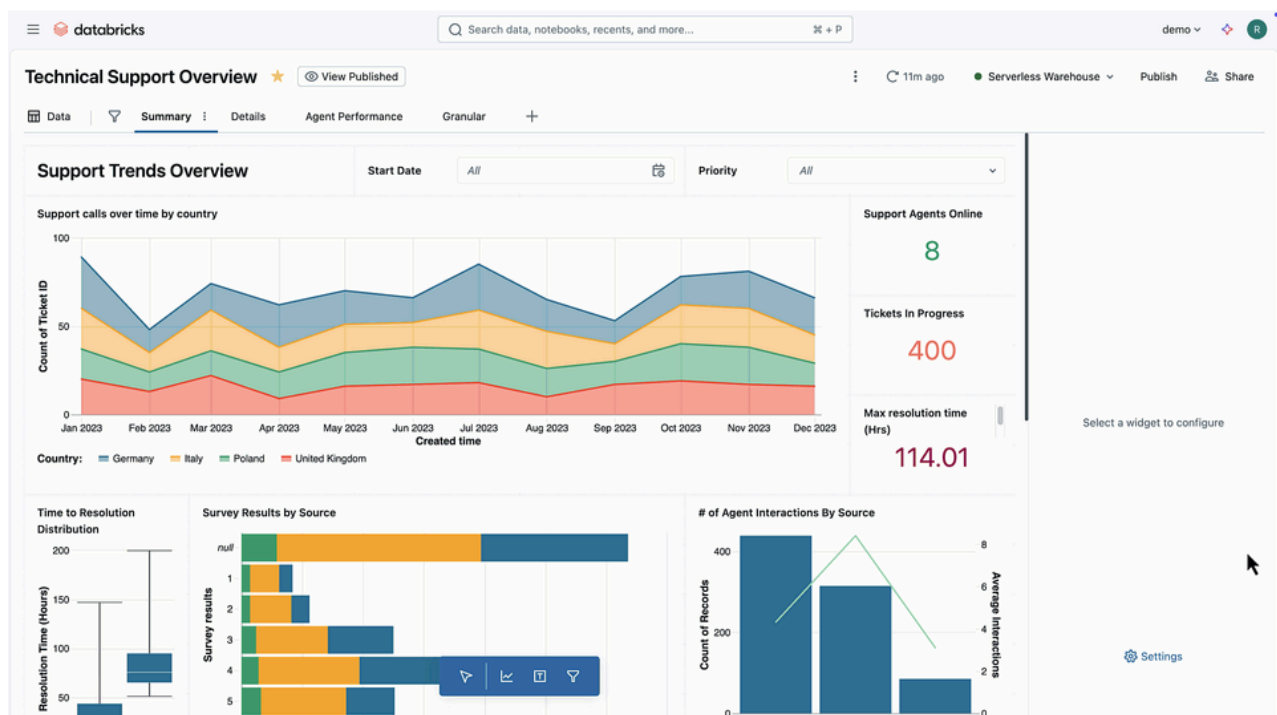
Global Dashboard Filters

Dashboard creators can now set up Global Filters that work across all pages of a dashboard. By clicking the filter icon in the dashboard toolbar, you can open a settings panel to add interactive filter widgets that apply to the entire dashboard.

You can choose from filters based on fields (like date pickers or dropdowns) or use parameter-based filters. You can also set default values to control how the dashboard behaves when it first loads.

This new feature makes it much easier to design multi-page dashboards by ensuring a consistent and user-friendly filtering experience. It also helps avoid repeating the same setup on every page.

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Dashboard Drill Through

Drill Through is a powerful feature that lets users explore data more deeply by carrying selections from one page to another.

With this, users can right-click a data point—like a bar in a chart or a slice of a pie chart—and jump to a different page where that selection is automatically used as a filter.

For example, if you click on "United States" in a sales-by-country chart on a summary page, the detail page will instantly update to show only U.S. data.

This makes it easier to go from high-level KPIs to more detailed analysis—without needing to reset filters or repeat steps manually.
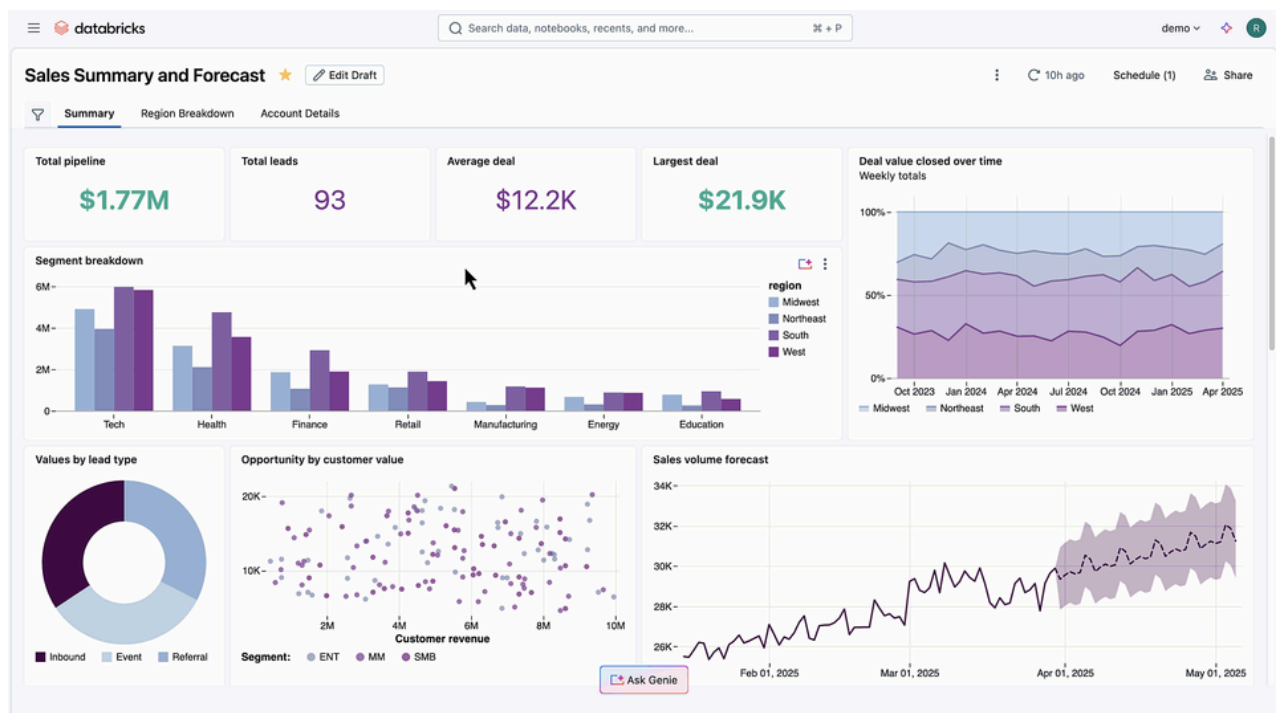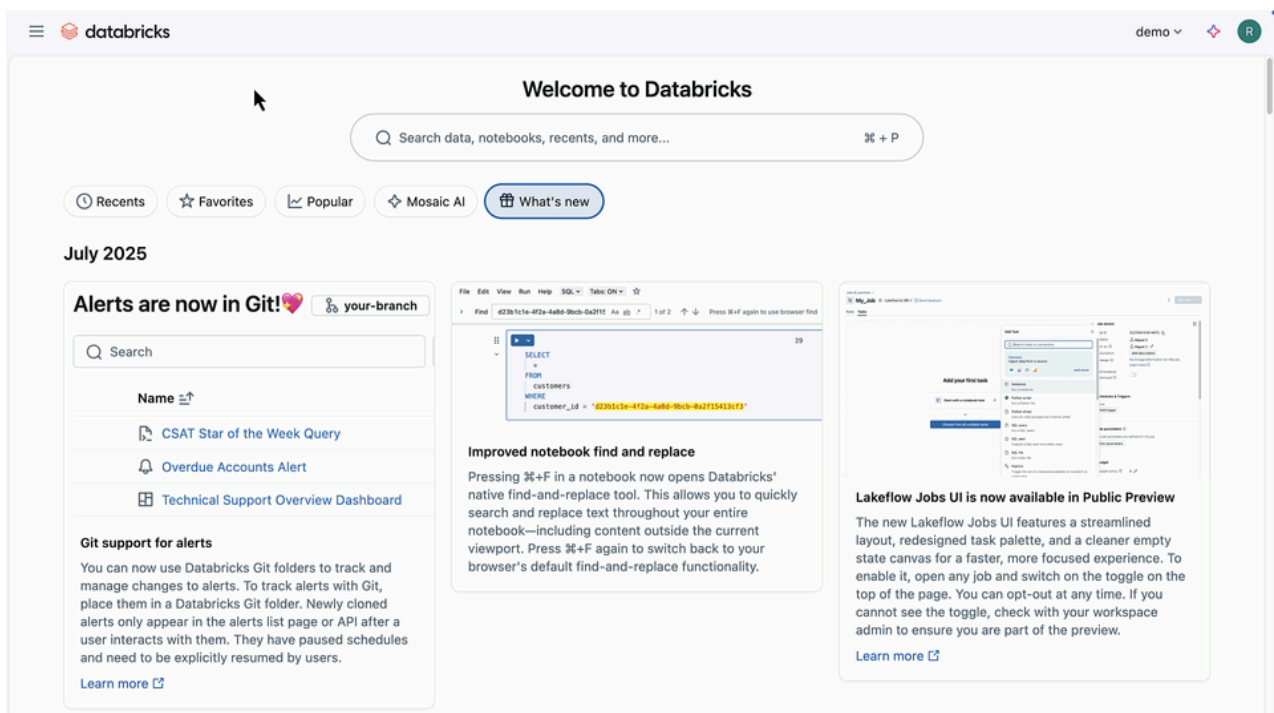
Dashboards File Upload

You can now upload Excel, CSV, or TSV files directly into Unity Catalog from the Dashboards data tab.

To upload a file, open a dashboard draft, go to the Data tab, click Upload file, and select the target Catalog, Schema, and Table name. You can choose to either create a new table or overwrite an existing one—just make sure you have MANAGE privileges for the selected schema.

Once uploaded, the file becomes a fully usable dataset. You can run SQL queries on it, visualize it instantly, or combine it with other data in Unity Catalog—all without leaving the dashboard.

This feature makes it easy to work with ad hoc or external data, helping users move faster and more smoothly through their analysis.

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Forecasting for Dashboard Line Charts

Now in Public Preview, AI/BI Dashboards let you generate forecasts directly from line charts using the ai_forecast function. This turns past trends into forward-looking insights.

To use it, just select a line chart that has a time-based x-axis and a numeric y-axis. Then, click the "+ Forecast" button in the visualization editor and choose Add AI Forecast. A new chart will appear with a forecasted trend line added on top of your existing data.

The ai_forecast function calculates predictions based on the data range and aggregation method you select. This makes it easy to spot future trends—like sales, website visits, or performance metrics—and bring predictive insights right into your dashboards.

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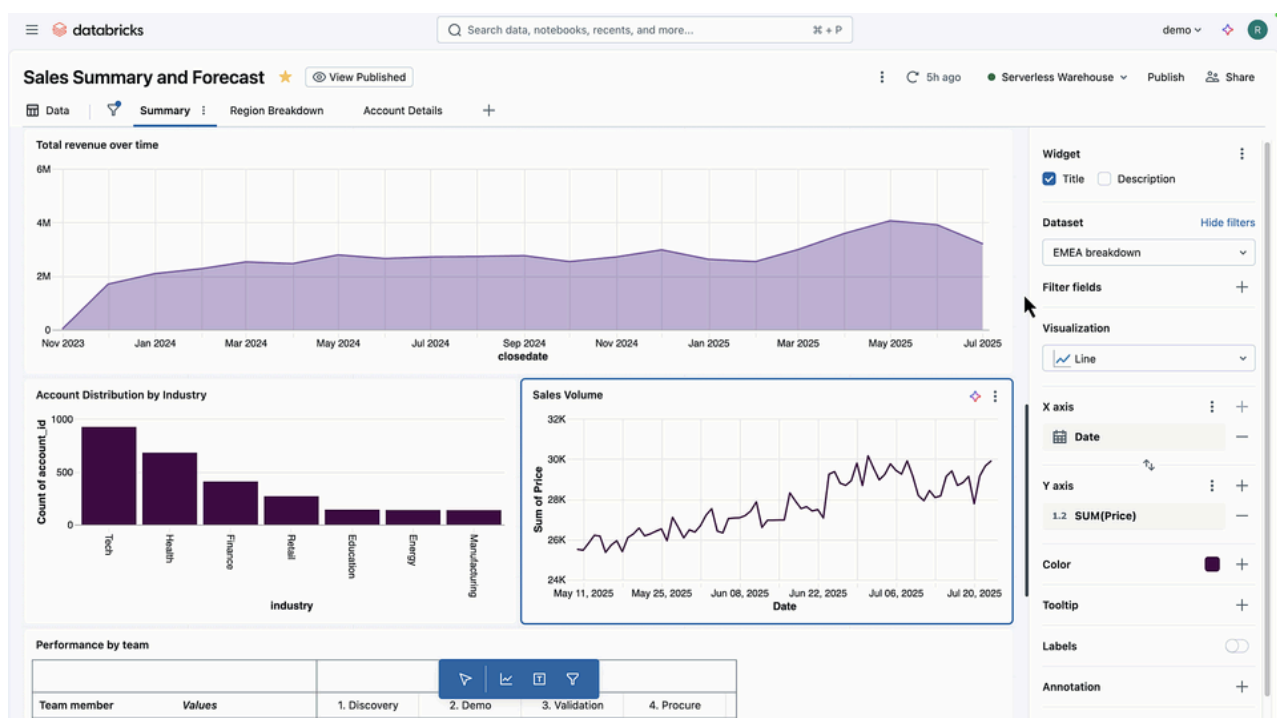
Enhanced Genie Knowledge Store

The Genie Knowledge Store is a key upgrade that improves the accuracy, relevance, and clarity of the answers Genie provides.

Available in every Genie space, the knowledge store gives analysts tools to better guide how Genie understands data—without needing to change anything in the upstream Unity Catalog. This makes it easier to fine-tune natural language interactions and build trust in the responses Genie gives.

Now, when new tables are added, commonly used queries are automatically suggested. This gives business users quick access to helpful Example SQL based on frequently used queries the author can access.

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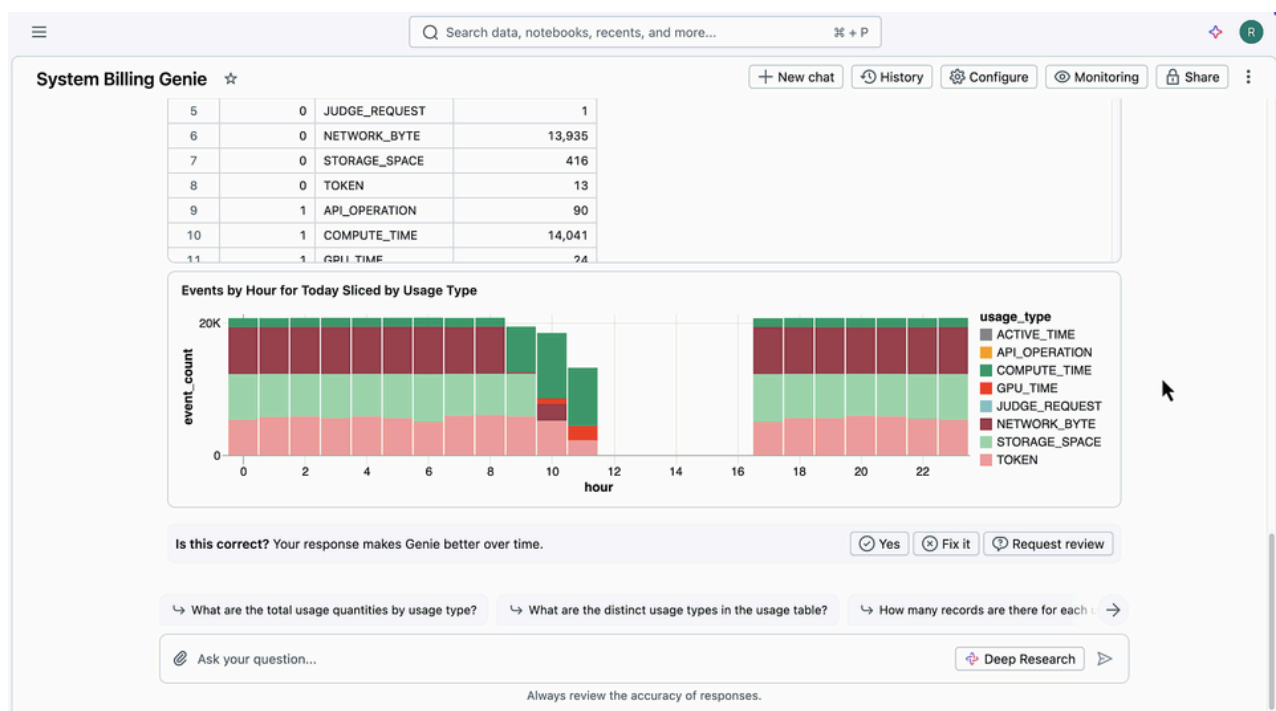
Authors can now manage and edit dataset metadata within their Genie space using new features:

- **Local table and column descriptions** let authors update metadata directly in a Genie space without changing anything in Unity Catalog. This is especially useful when: The author doesn't have permission to modify Unity Catalog assets. They want to test out different descriptions before making permanent changes. They need custom descriptions to improve Genie's understanding, but that aren't suitable as official definitions

These updates make it easier to fine-tune how Genie interprets data—quickly and independently.

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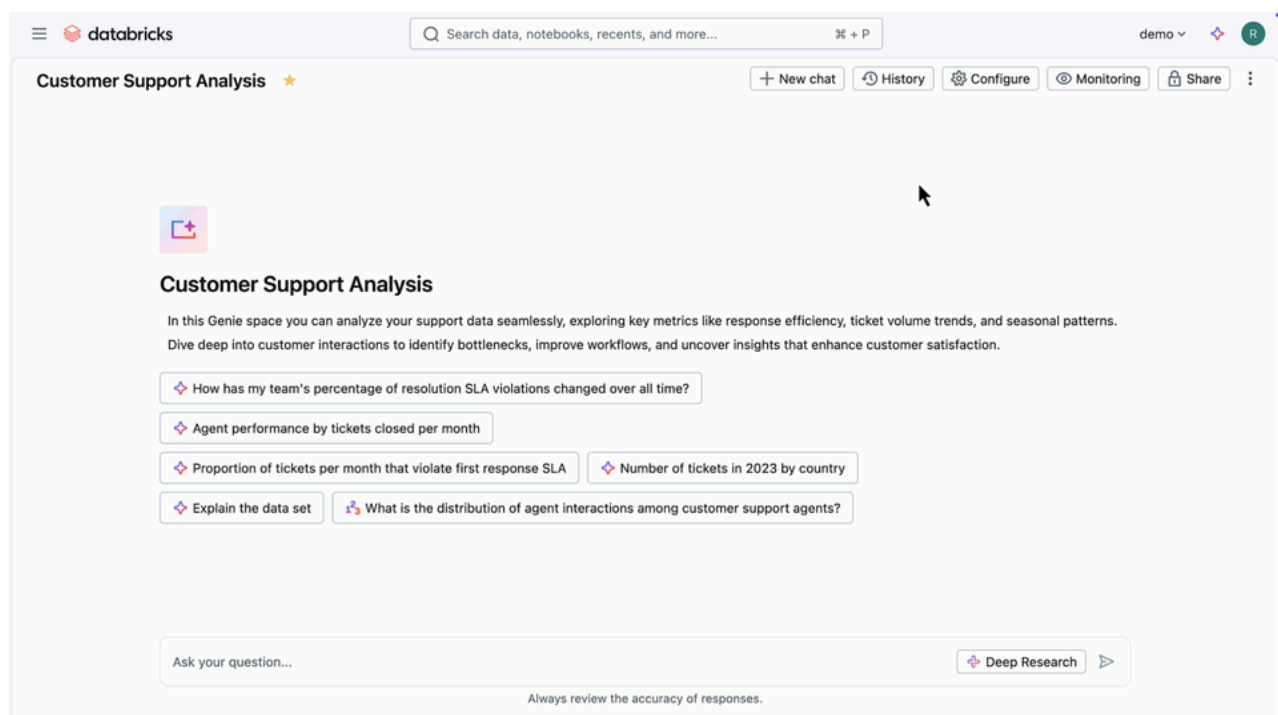
- **Column synonyms** make it easier for Genie to map varied business terms to the correct technical fields.
- **Column show/hide** lets authors declutter the semantic surface by excluding duplicate, irrelevant or overly technical fields, without requiring new tables or views.
- **Example values** help Genie better understand how your data is formatted across all different column types (strings, numerics, dates, etc).
- **Value dictionaries** help Genie map user prompts to unique string values in your data (e.g. mapping a user prompt for "UK" to "country = United Kingdom"). Genie space authors can now add value dictionaries for up to 60 columns and 1,024 unique values per column.
- **Join relationships** can now be declared for any dataset to specify joinable datasets, SQL JOIN expressions, and join types to be used. This helps authors who lack permissions to set Primary/Foreign Keys in Unity Catalog or are working with views that don't support Primary/Foreign Keys. Existing Primary/Foreign Keys from Unity Catalog will automatically sync to reduce risk of duplication/conflict.

Together, these new features give authors significantly more control over Genie's behavior and enable more accurate, context-aware responses—marking an important step toward delivering governed, reliable, and business-aligned conversational analytics. These local versions of table metadata let space authors quickly iterate and define context useful for Genie without needing to update Unity Catalog globally. For more information on Genie's knowledge store, please check out the product documentation.

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Other Notable Features

We're always working to make AI/BI Dashboards and Genie better, adding new features to make your experience more powerful, intuitive, and effective. These ongoing updates reflect our commitment to helping organizations make smarter, data-driven decisions. Below are a few highlights. For the full list of updates and fixes, please check the AI/BI product release notes.

AI/BI Dashboards

- **Choropleth Maps**

Choropleth maps let you display data on a map by using colors to represent values across different regions. This is perfect for showing trends like revenue by state or incidents by country. The new map type supports both U.S. and international locations, adding a valuable visual layer to help make better decisions through geographic insights.

- **Parameterized Dashboard Schedules**

Dashboard authors can now set up named schedules with custom filter parameters. This means you can deliver targeted reports to different regions, teams, or customer segments—all from a single dashboard.
No need to duplicate dashboards, which keeps things simple and reduces the time spent on maintenance. For step-by-step guidance, check the product documentation.

- **Schedule Without Embedded Credentials (Run as Viewer)**

You can now run scheduled dashboard deliveries using the viewer's own permissions, instead of embedding the author's credentials.
This improves security by making sure each recipient sees only the data they're allowed to see, and it aligns with enterprise compliance and access control policies.

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- **Define Custom Calculations Over a Range**

Custom calculations now support AGGREGATE OVER measures, making it easier to create things like rankings, running totals, and moving averages—without needing to write SQL window functions manually.

This lets you apply filters and calculations on the same dataset across multiple widgets more efficiently.
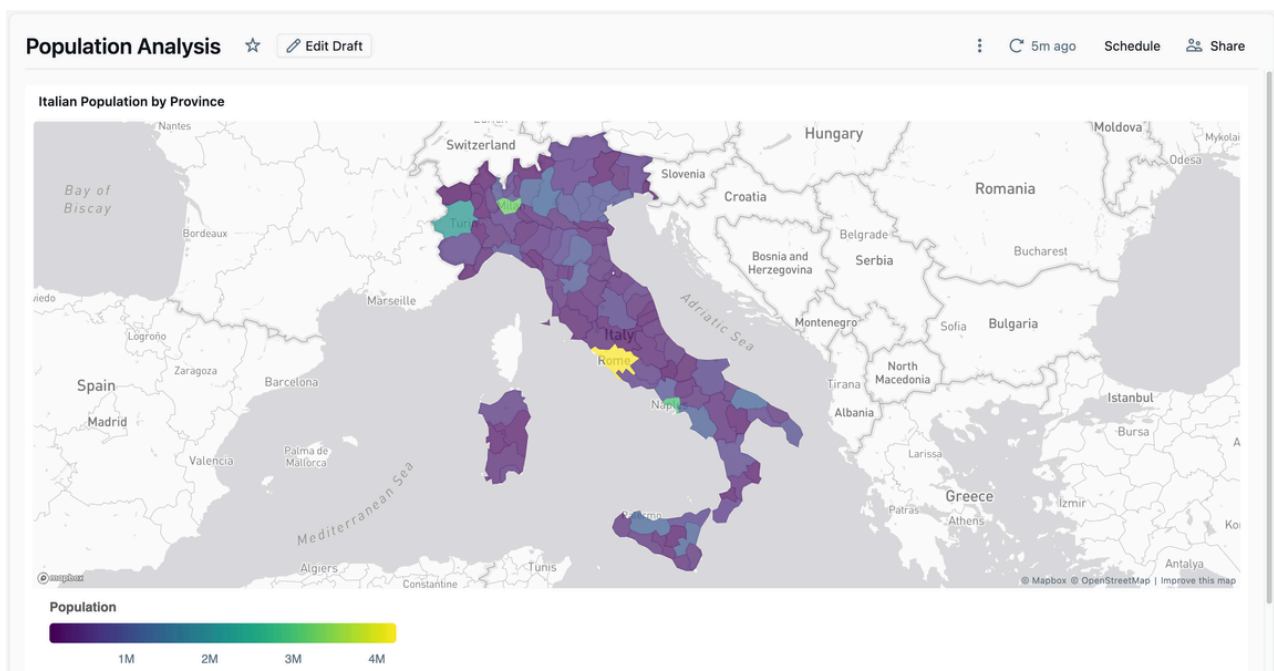
AI/BI Genie

- **Editable Results Filters**

Genie users can now fine-tune their results by editing filters directly in the results panel.

For example, if Genie provides an answer filtered by a specific region or product, you can easily change the filter values and regenerate the results. This helps users fix queries quickly and get insights faster.

- **Point Maps Now Supported**

Genie now includes support for point maps in visual responses. This allows users to see geographic data plotted as individual points using coordinates.

It's a great way to add location-based insights to your analysis—making it easier to visualize things like store locations, service requests, or delivery routes within a conversation-driven experience.

- **Follow-up Questions for Text Responses**

Genie now suggests follow-up questions even when the response is just text —like explanations or descriptions without SQL or data output.

Previously, these suggestions only appeared after responses that included data. Now, if you ask something like "Explain the dataset," Genie will offer helpful follow-up questions to guide further exploration and help you ask smarter, more meaningful questions within your Genie space.

- **Genie API List and Delete Operations**

New API endpoints now allow developers to list and delete Genie spaces and conversations programmatically.

This helps organizations automate content management, improve governance, and scale Genie usage across teams. These APIs also make it easier to integrate Genie with existing tools and workflows—especially important for large enterprises rolling out Genie company-wide.

What's Next?

They're continuing to enhance Databricks AI/BI to create a smarter, more unified, and user-friendly analytics experience. Here's a preview of what's coming:

- **Business Semantics for Genie and Dashboards**

Metric Views, now in Public Preview for Dashboards, will soon be available in Genie too. This will bring trusted KPIs into natural language workflows—connecting visual and conversational analytics more seamlessly.

- **APIs for Embedded Genie Experiences**

New APIs will let you export and import Genie spaces and collect feedback on answers. This makes it easier to scale Genie and integrate it into your apps and workflows.

- **Smarter Dashboards & Easier Sharing**

Soon, you'll see improvements like a redesigned counter visualization, a new "Apply" button for filters, and support for CSV attachments in email subscriptions. These updates aim to improve usability and make sharing insights easier across teams.

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