Grouping in SQL is used most often in conjunction with an aggregate condition to make the output of a query shorter and more manageable. Essentially, you would use this feature when you want the database to do the math on a query before displaying the result. This means that the grouping itself allows you to see an easier to read and more succinct output of the data from the table.

For example, if you wanted to see the sales totals of various brands of bicycles sold, grouping will allow you to display the brand and total sales in one command, without having to do all the math on your own. By selecting the brand and sales columns, you can add the sum command to do the math, and then using GROUP BY, we can group by brand. The other important thing to remember when using grouping is that you should always follow the GROUP BY command with the ORDER BY command to sort the output in the expected manner. In the case of this example, we would order by brand to show the sales totals sorted alphabetically by brand. An example of the syntax for this operation and the expected output is below.

Text

Description automatically generated Graphical user interface, table

Description automatically generated (SQLSERVERTUTORIAL.net, 2022)

It is important to remember that you can use multiple instances of this type of operation, combining the outputs in succession by utilizing the UNION ALL command between each select statement. Because each result will need to have the same number of fields however, you would need to add NULL to the select list for the queries for the output to generate properly.

References:

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