

SUMMARY: WINDOWS FUNCTIONS-I

SESSION OVERVIEW:

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Understand the fundamental window analytical functions in a database system.
- Understand the purpose and functionality of each window analytic function.

KEY TOPICS AND EXAMPLES:

Understanding the fundamental window analytical functions:

What are Windows Functions?

Window functions are SQL operations that perform a calculation across a set of rows that are related to the current row. Unlike aggregate functions, they do not cause rows to become grouped into a single output row — the rows retain their separate identities. Window functions can perform a calculation across a set of rows that are related to the current row. They are called window functions because they perform a calculation across a "window" of rows. For instance, you might want to calculate a running total of sales or find out the highest score in a group.

They are particularly useful in data analysis for computing aggregates like running totals, moving averages, ranking, and cumulative sums, which are crucial for gaining insights into patterns and trends within your data.

Industry Uses of Window Functions:

• Financial Services:

- Moving Averages: Calculate moving averages of stock prices over a specified time period to identify trends.
- **Ranking Transactions**: Rank transactions by amount within each account to identify the largest or smallest transactions.

• Sales and Marketing:

- **Running Totals:** Compute cumulative sales totals to date for each salesperson or region.
- **Percentile Ranks:** Determine the percentile rank of each product based on sales to identify top-performing products.

• Healthcare:

- **Patient Readmissions:** Calculate the time difference between hospital admissions to track patient readmissions.
- Rank Patients: Rank patients based on the number of visits or treatments received in a given period.

• Telecommunications:

• Session Analysis: Compute the duration of each call session and the cumulative



- duration of all sessions for a user.
- **Data Usage**: Calculate the rank of users based on their data usage to identify heavy data users.

• Retail:

- Customer Segmentation: Rank customers by their total spend to identify high-value customers.
- Sales Trends: Calculate the difference in sales between consecutive months to identify sales trends.

• Human Resources:

- Employee Performance: Rank employees based on performance metrics within each department.
- Salary Analysis: Compute the difference between an employee's salary and the average salary within their department.

When should you use the Windows function:

Imagine that you have some building blocks, and each building block represents some data. Your task requires you to look at certain groups of blocks or to make new blocks depending on the existing blocks that you have.

• You Want to Compare Blocks Without Mixing Them Up

Imagine you want to see if one block is taller than the blocks right next to it. A Window Function lets you look at each block and its neighbors without mixing them all up, so you can easily compare them.

• You Want to Count or Add Up Blocks in a Row

If you want to count how many blocks TOTAL you have in a column or add up their numbers, a Window Function can do that for you, looking at each block one by one and keeping a running total. It can help you find a running average of those blocks as well!

• You Want to Find the Biggest or Smallest Block in a Section

Let's say you have your blocks sorted in rows by color, and you want to find the biggest block in each row. A Window Function helps you look at each row separately and pick out the biggest block in each one.

• You Want to Give Blocks a Score or a Rank

If you want to give each block a score or a rank based on its size or color, a Window Function can do that too. It looks at all the blocks, sorts them how you want, and then gives each one a number to show its rank in the overall set of blocks.

• You Want to See How Blocks Compare to Their Friends

Maybe you want to see if a block is taller than the average height of the blocks around it. A Window Function can look at a block and its buddies, calculate the average height, and then tell you how that block compares.

Here is the basic syntax of the Windows functions which we will help you understand how Windows



functions work. All the concepts mentioned in the syntax will be covered in detail in the upcoming section of the session.

```
SELECT
window_function() OVER(
          PARTITION BY partition_expression
          ORDER BY order_expression
          window_frame_extent
) AS window_column_alias
FROM table_name
```

Components:

- 1. **Window Function:** The functions being used are ROW_NUMBER(), RANK(), DENSE RANK(), SUM(), AVG(), etc.
- 2. **OVER Clause:** Specifies the window for the function. This is required for a window function to work.
- 3. **PARTITION BY (optional):** If you want to perform your calculations on specific chunks (groups) of your data, this is how you tell SQL to divide things up. If no PARTITION BY is specified, the function treats all rows of the query result set as a single partition. It works similarly to the GROUP BY clause, but while GROUP BY aggregates the data, PARTITION BY doesn't, it just groups the data for the purpose of the window function.
- 4. **ORDER BY (optional):** Defines the logical order of rows within each partition to which the window function is applied.
- 5. **Frame Clause (optional):** Specifies the subset of rows within the partition to be considered for the window function. The default frame is RANGE BETWEEN UNBOUNDED PRECEDING AND CURRENT ROW for functions like SUM() and AVG().

Now, we will move into understanding the above syntax using some of the examples.

NOTE: Initially we will introduce a small sample dataset where we will understand the concepts and then we will move towards performing similar concepts in our dataset which we introduced at the beginning of the session.

EXAMPLES: (Dataset)

NOTE: Here as we haven't introduced all the Windows functions and their use cases, thus we perform the initial set of examples around the aggregate functions which we have already discussed in our previous session. So, the discussion will be more about how aggregate functions work as Windows functions.

Keeping in mind all the components of the syntax let's proceed ahead.

Let's imagine that we have some simple Sales Data and line items for this sales data.



1. Calculate the running total for the sales:

First, we need to understand what running total means before jumping onto writing and discussing the query for it.

So, a **running total** is a way to keep track of the sum of values as you go along, updating the total each time you add a new value. Think of it like adding money to a savings jar over time and keeping a record of how much you have after each addition.

Here is the way to do so using Windows functions using the sum aggregate function.

```
SELECT SaleID, Salesperson, SaleAmount, SaleDate,
   SUM(SaleAmount) OVER (ORDER BY SaleDate) AS RunningTotal
FROM Sales_sample;
```

Output:

1	sult Grid		er Rows:		Export: \	Wrap Cell Content
	SaleID	Salesperson	SaleAmount	SaleDate	RunningTotal	
•	1	Alice	300	2023-01-01	300	_
	2	Bob	150	2023-01-02	450	
	3	Alice	200	2023-01-03	650	
	4	Charlie	250	2023-01-04	900	
	5	Bob	300	2023-01-05	1200	
	6	Alice	100	2023-01-06	1300	
	7	Charlie	350	2023-01-07	1650	
	8	Alice	450	2023-01-08	2100	
	9	Bob	200	2023-01-09	2300	
	10	Charlie	400	2023-01-10	2700	
	11	Alice	150	2023-01-11	2850	
	12	Bob	250	2023-01-12	3100	
	13	Charlie	300	2023-01-13	3400	
	14	Alice	350	2023-01-14	3750	
Res	ult 1 ×	Roh	100	2023-01-15	3820	

2. Calculating the cumulative total sales by salesperson:

Again jumping onto writing the query we must understand the general concept behind the cumulative totals

A **cumulative total** is the same as a running total. It represents the sum of a series of values over time, where each value is added to the previous total to get the new total. It shows the aggregate amount accumulated up to each point in a series.

Now that we know what cumulative total is, let's discuss why we need to calculate the cumulative total of a particular parameter. So here, we are using a sales dataset that indicates sales made by different salesperson which becomes important at times



for the company to check the details according to the salesperson. How much sales they have made during a particular period.

```
SELECT SaleID, Salesperson, SaleAmount, SaleDate,
SUM(SaleAmount) OVER (PARTITION BY Salesperson ORDER BY SaleDate) AS
CumulativeSalePerPerson
FROM Sales_sample;
```

Output:

Result Grid 11					
	SaleID	Salesperson	SaleAmount	SaleDate	CumulativeSalePerPerson
•	1	Alice	300	2023-01-01	300
	3	Alice	200	2023-01-03	500
	6	Alice	100	2023-01-06	600
	8	Alice	450	2023-01-08	1050
	11	Alice	150	2023-01-11	1200
	14	Alice	350	2023-01-14	1550
	2	Bob	150	2023-01-02	150
	5	Bob	300	2023-01-05	450
	9	Bob	200	2023-01-09	650
	12	Bob	250	2023-01-12	900
	15	Bob	100	2023-01-15	1000
	4	Charlie	250	2023-01-04	250
	7	Charlie	350	2023-01-07	600
	10	Charlie	400	2023-01-10	1000
Res	ult3 ×	Charlie	300	2022-01-12	1300

3. Ranking Sales by Sales Amount:

The ranking of sales will help us rank the sales of the salesperson and will help us identify the salesperson with the highest sales made for the present year. (accordingly, the parameters can be set.

Here, we will use the RANK() function which will help us rank the salesperson (in this context), decide the rank of the students in a class, etc.

The rank () function decides the rank according to the specified column and allows the same rank to the person who has the same value in the specified column.

Let's see how to rank the salesperson in the example on which we have been working. This will clear the concept of how the rank() function works.

NOTE: In the second half of this session we will introduce some of the Windows functions which is majorly used in the industry. There we will again come across this concept.



```
SELECT SaleID, Salesperson, SaleAmount, SaleDate,
   RANK() OVER (ORDER BY SaleAmount DESC) AS SaleRank
FROM Sales_sample;
```

Re	sult Grid	II 🙌 Filte	er Rows:		Export:
	SaleID	Salesperson	SaleAmount	SaleDate	SaleRank
•	8	Alice	450	2023-01-08	1
	10	Charlie	400	2023-01-10	2
	7	Charlie	350	2023-01-07	3
	14	Alice	350	2023-01-14	3
	1	Alice	300	2023-01-01	5
	5	Bob	300	2023-01-05	5
	13	Charlie	300	2023-01-13	5
	4	Charlie	250	2023-01-04	8
	12	Bob	250	2023-01-12	8
	3	Alice	200	2023-01-03	10
	9	Bob	200	2023-01-09	10
	2	Bob	150	2023-01-02	12
	11	Alice	150	2023-01-11	12
	6	Alice	100	2023-01-06	14
Res	ult 4 ×	Roh	100	2023-01-15	14

In the above output, we can see Charlie and Alice in the third and fourth rows have the same rank because the saleamount is the same. (In the upcoming section we will understand other concepts of handling these issues if you do not want to allot the same rank to the person with the same marks or saleamount)

4. Moving Average (3-Day) of Sales Amount:

Let's discuss the concepts of moving average and then we will move on to the query part.

A moving average (3 days) is a method used to smooth out short-term fluctuations and highlight longer-term trends or cycles. It calculates the average of a subset of data points over a specific period, which in this case is 3 days.

This example will give you a better understanding of how moving averages work and give you a clear picture of how we can get the moving average value.

Here we simply use the avg() aggregate function using some extra conditions.

```
SELECT SaleID, SaleDate, Salesperson, SaleAmount,

AVG(SaleAmount) OVER (

ORDER BY SaleDate

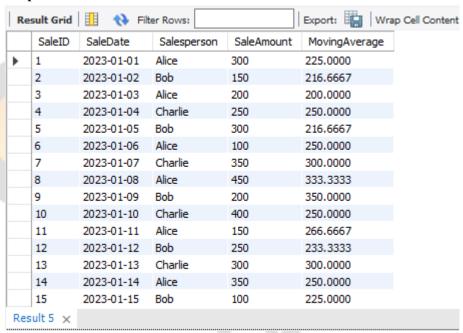
ROWS BETWEEN 1 PRECEDING AND 1 FOLLOWING

) AS MovingAverage
```



FROM Sales_sample;

Output:



For the simplicity of this example, we've used a 3-day WINDOW (3-day Moving Average), but it could just as easily have been a 7-day (Weekly MA), 30-day (Monthly), or any period of time you decide to look at.

Understanding the purpose and functionality of each window analytic function:

1. Aggregate Windows functions:

We have already studied a set of aggregation functions in one of our previous sessions which included some functions like avg(), sum(), min(), max(), and count(). The aggregate windows function also contains these functions. But you might think how is the aggregation functions and the aggregate windows functions different from each other. Here is how:

Difference between aggregate functions and aggregate windows function:

The main difference between Window Functions and GROUP BY Aggregate Functions is that while an Aggregate Function returns a single result per group of rows (like the SUM or AVG of a group), a Window Function will return a result for every row, often in relation to other rows in the window (like the running total at each row).

Here's an analogy to understand the difference:

Imagine you are analyzing the performance of a football team over a season. You want to know the total number of goals scored by the team in each match.



If we use the **aggregation functions**, you get the total goals scored in each match, but you don't see the individual contributions of each player in those matches.

Now, imagine you want to analyze the performance of individual players in each match, while also keeping track of the total goals scored in each match.

This will be accomplished by **aggregate window functions** where each player sees their own goals and the total goals scored by the team in each match, retaining the details of each player's contribution.

Let's look into some of the examples related to aggregate windows functions:

Example 1:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, annualincome,
    annualincome - AVG(annualincome) OVER () AS
income_difference_from_avg
FROM customers;
```

Output:

	customerkey	firstname	lastname	annualincome	income_difference_from_avg
•	11000	JON	YANG	90000	32743.6647
	11001	EUGENE	HUANG	60000	2743.6647
	11002	RUBEN	TORRES	60000	2743.6647
	11003	CHRISTY	ZHU	NULL	HULL
	11004	ELIZABETH	JOHNSON	80000	22743.6647
	11005	JULIO	RUIZ	70000	12743.6647
	11007	MARCO	MEHTA	60000	2743.6647
	11008	ROBIN	VERHOFF	60000	2743.6647
	11009	SHANNON	CARLSON	70000	12743.6647
	11010	JACQUELYN	SUAREZ	70000	12743.6647
	11011	CURTIS	LU	60000	2743.6647

Example 2:

```
SELECT customerkey, prefix, firstname, lastname, annualincome,
    MAX(annualincome) OVER (PARTITION BY prefix) AS
max_income_within_prefix
FROM customers
where prefix is not null;
```





Example 3:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, annualincome,
    (annualincome * 100.0 / SUM(annualincome) OVER ()) AS
income_percentage
FROM customers;
```

Output:



Example 4: (Using CASE WHEN statement in window function)

```
SELECT ProductSubcategoryKey, ProductName, ProductCost,

CASE

WHEN ProductCost = MAX(ProductCost) OVER (PARTITION BY

ProductSubcategoryKey) THEN 'Highest'

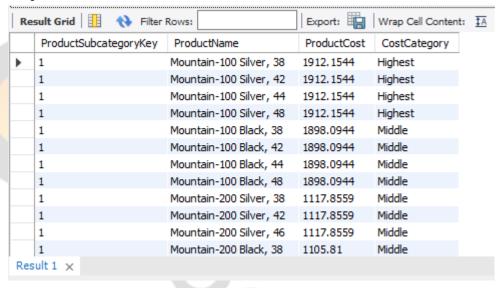
WHEN ProductCost = MIN(ProductCost) OVER (PARTITION BY

ProductSubcategoryKey) THEN 'Lowest'

ELSE 'Middle'
```



```
END AS CostCategory
FROM products;
```



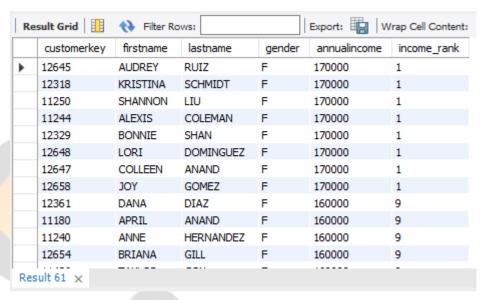
2. Ranking functions:

• RANK(): This function assigns a unique rank to each distinct row within the partition of a result set. The ranks are assigned in the order specified in the ORDER BY clause of the OVER() clause. If two or more rows tie for a rank, each tied row receives the same rank, and the next rank(s) are skipped.

Example 1:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, gender, annualincome,
RANK() OVER (partition by gender ORDER BY annualincome DESC) AS
income_rank
FROM customers;
```



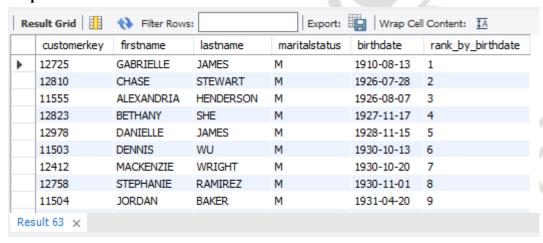


Here we can observe that the first rank has been allotted to 8 customers as they have the same annualincome and the next person in the list has been allotted rank 9. It identifies the number of same entries and the next number is allotted according to the number of entries. At times, this ranking system might create doubt while analyzing data. To remove this ambiguity we will be using DENSE Rank() function. (we will discuss about it in the nxt section of this session)

Example 2:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, maritalstatus, birthdate,
RANK() OVER (PARTITION BY maritalstatus ORDER BY birthdate) AS
rank_by_birthdate
FROM customers;
```

Output:



Example 3:

```
SELECT

ProductSubcategoryKey,

ProductName,

ProductCost,
```



```
RANK() OVER (PARTITION BY ProductSubcategoryKey ORDER BY ProductCost

DESC) AS ProductRank,

CASE

WHEN RANK() OVER (PARTITION BY ProductSubcategoryKey ORDER BY

ProductCost DESC) = 1 THEN 'Top'

WHEN RANK() OVER (PARTITION BY ProductSubcategoryKey ORDER BY

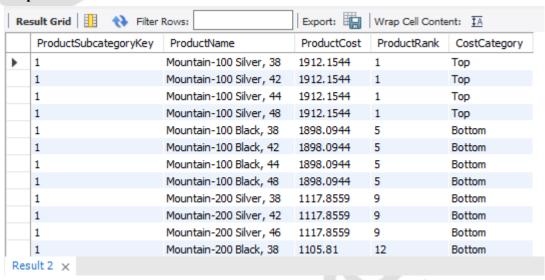
ProductCost DESC) <= 3 THEN 'Middle'

ELSE 'Bottom'

END AS CostCategory

FROM

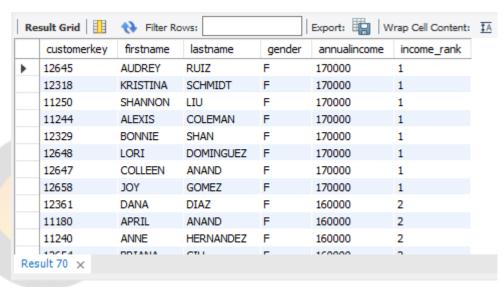
products;
```



• **DENSE_RANK():** This function works similarly to RANK(), but when two or more rows tie for a rank, the next rank is not skipped. So if you have three items at rank 2, the next rank listed would be 3.

Example 1:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, gender, annualincome,
    dense_RANK() OVER (partition by gender ORDER BY annualincome DESC)
AS income_rank
FROM customers;
```



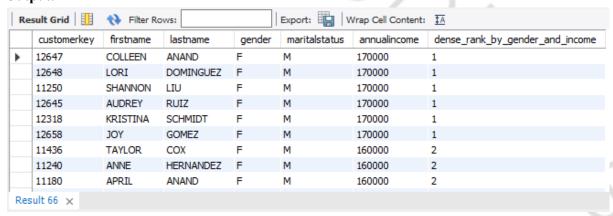
If you notice this particular example is similar to one of the examples we have done in the rank() function part. So the ambiguity that we were talking about in that section will be fixed using the dense_rank() function. This function helps us maintain continuity while ranking the data on your desired column.

In the output above we can see that the top-rank holders are 8 in number and the next rank allotted is not 9, rather it is 2 which follows the desired ranking.

Example 2:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, gender, maritalstatus,
annualincome,
    DENSE_RANK() OVER (PARTITION BY gender, maritalstatus ORDER BY
annualincome DESC) AS dense_rank_by_gender_and_income
FROM customers;
```

Output:



Example 3:

```
SELECT

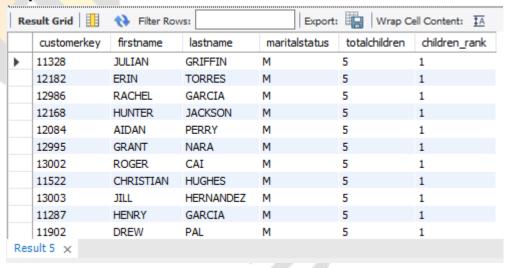
customerkey,

firstname,

lastname,
```



```
maritalstatus,
  totalchildrens,
  DENSE_RANK() OVER (PARTITION BY maritalstatus ORDER BY
totalchildrens DESC) AS children_rank
FROM
  customers;
```



Example 4:

```
SELECT

ProductSubcategoryKey,

ProductName,

COALESCE(ProductPrice, 0) AS ProductPrice,

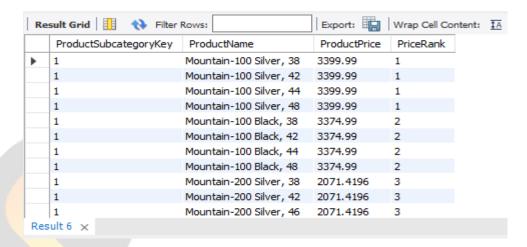
DENSE_RANK() OVER (PARTITION BY ProductSubcategoryKey ORDER BY

COALESCE(ProductPrice, 0) DESC) AS PriceRank

FROM

products;
```



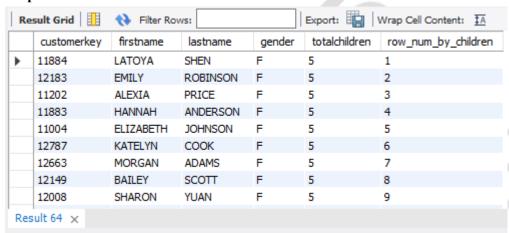


• **ROW_NUMBER():** This function assigns a unique row number to each row within the partition, regardless of duplicates. If there are duplicate values in the ordered set, it will still assign different row numbers to each row.

Example 1:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, gender, totalchildren,
    ROW_NUMBER() OVER (PARTITION BY gender ORDER BY totalchildren DESC)
AS row_num_by_children
FROM customers;
```

Output:

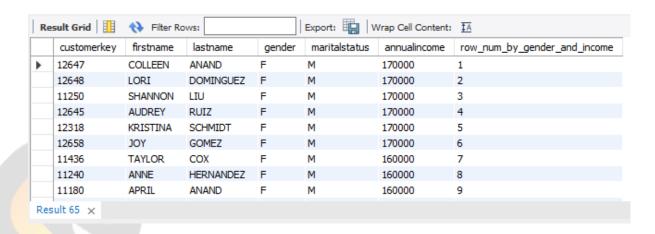


Example 2:

```
SELECT customerkey, firstname, lastname, gender, maritalstatus, annualincome,

ROW_NUMBER() OVER (PARTITION BY gender, maritalstatus ORDER BY annualincome DESC) AS row_num_by_gender_and_income
FROM customers;
```





When to use which kind of ranking function:

1. RANK():

Use the RANK() function when you want to assign ranks to rows within a partition, and you want to handle ties by giving the same rank to tied rows, leaving gaps in the ranking sequence for the next distinct value.

Imagine you have a group of runners in a race, and you want to rank them based on their finishing times. If multiple runners finish at the exact same time, they would be considered tied. In this scenario, the RANK() function would assign the same rank to all the tied runners, and then it would skip the next rank value(s) in the sequence to account for the tie.

2. DENSE_RANK():

Use the DENSE_RANK() function when you want to assign ranks to rows within a partition, and you want to handle ties by giving the same rank to tied rows, but without leaving gaps in the ranking sequence.

In contrast to the previous example in RANK(), if you don't want any gaps in the ranking sequence when handling ties, you would use the DENSE RANK() function instead.

3. ROW NUMBER:

Use the ROW_NUMBER() function when you want to assign a unique sequential number to each row within a partition, even if there are ties. The row numbers are assigned based on the ordering specified, and ties are handled by assigning the same row number to tied rows.

For instance, if you have a dataset of orders and want to assign a unique sequential number to each order within a customer, even if multiple orders have the same order date, you would use ROW_NUMBER(). Tied orders (with the same order date) within a customer will be assigned the same row number.

Lastly, we can have a section that will help us understand how Windows functions are helpful to us. Let's look into the example.

16



Without window functions:

```
SELECT t1.order_id, t1.order_date, t1.order_amount,
SUM(t2.order_amount) AS RunningTotal
FROM orders t1
JOIN orders t2 ON t1.order_date >= t2.order_date
GROUP BY t1.order_id, t1.order_date, t1.order_amount
ORDER BY t1.order_date;
```

With window functions:

```
SELECT order_id, order_date, order_amount,
SUM(order_amount) OVER (ORDER BY order_date) AS RunningTotal
FROM orders;
```

NOTE: The window functions module hasn't yet been covered completely. In the next session, we will continue with some of the important window functions and deep dive into critical queries which will help us generate different sets of insights using Windows functions.