Anaplan XL Reporting

Quickstart guide

Anaplan

Contents

Background

Anaplan XL Reporting helps business users in all aspects of reporting and analytics. It connects Excel to Anaplan and other corporate data sources, which avoids the issues associated with Excel as a data store, while extending the Excel flexibility business users love. Anaplan XL Reporting also addresses many of the common pain points users find with Excel pivot tables, providing a richer and a more productive reporting experience.

A key aspect of Anaplan XL Reporting is that the data itself is not held in Excel but in a central database. Anaplan XL Reporting connects to a wide range of sources including Anaplan, Microsoft Analysis Services (Tabular, Multidimensional, and Azure), Power BI, SAP HANA, IBM TM1, Oracle Essbase, Atoti and Kyvos. Anaplan XL Reporting can also connect directly to relational databases.

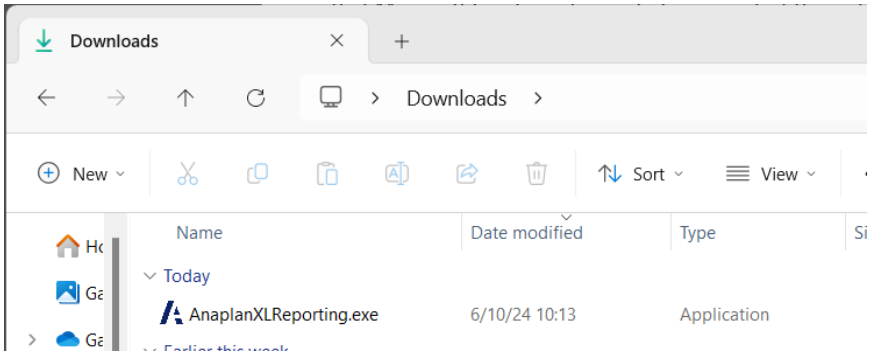
Reports and dashboards developed in Excel can easily be shared with portal and mobile users through Anaplan XL Reporting Web. Web published reports remain data-connected and are fully interactive, secured, and governed.

Installation

Once you have downloaded the installer, you will need to install Anaplan XL Reporting on your device to start using it. Anaplan XL Reporting requires Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Excel. Please ensure that Microsoft Excel is not open before you start the installation process.

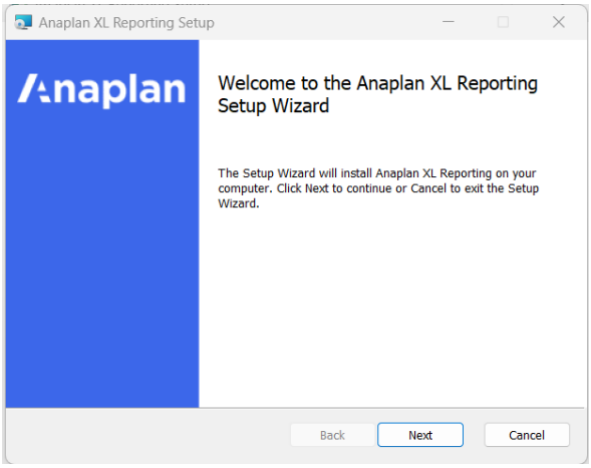
To centrally deploy the product to all users, please see Appendix 1 Corporate Deployment.

Firstly, locate the Anaplan XL Reporting installer file in your downloads and double-click on it.

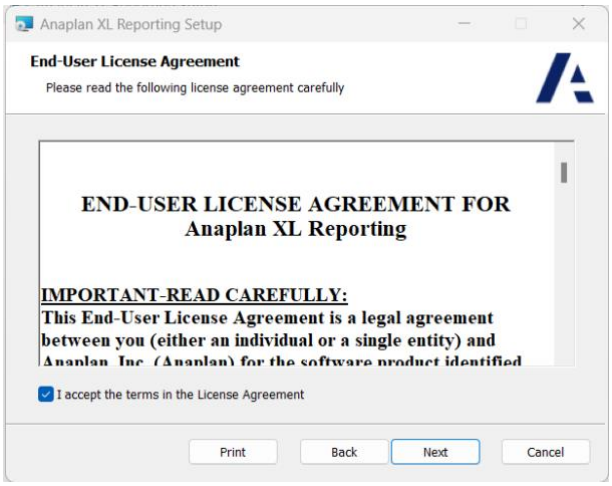


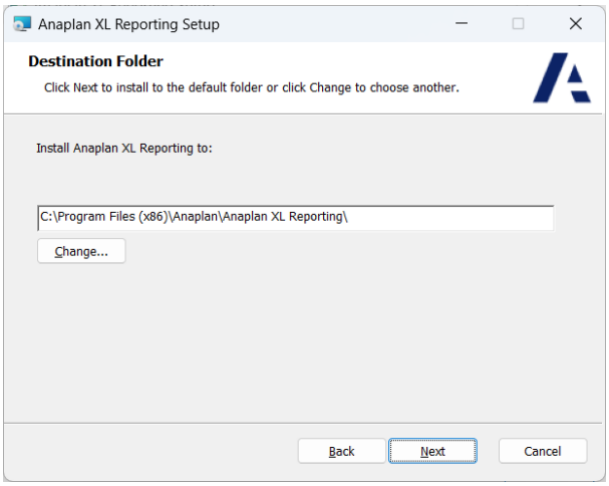
To install Anaplan XL Reporting, double-click on the application to launch the installer.

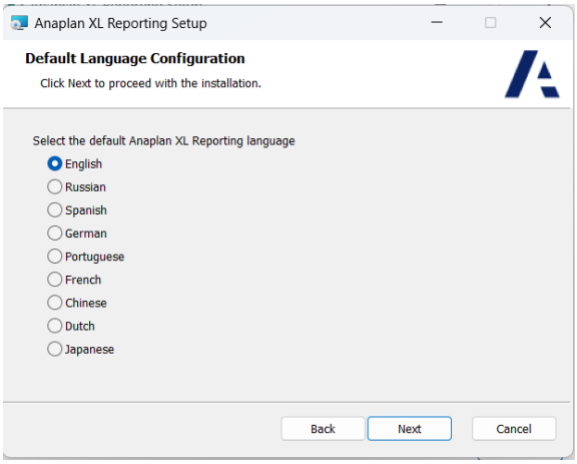
The Anaplan XL Reporting Setup will open. Click install to get started, and you will be prompted by windows to allow the installer to run. Click “Yes” and then confirm yes on the next screen when prompted “Do you want to allow this app to make changes to your device?”.

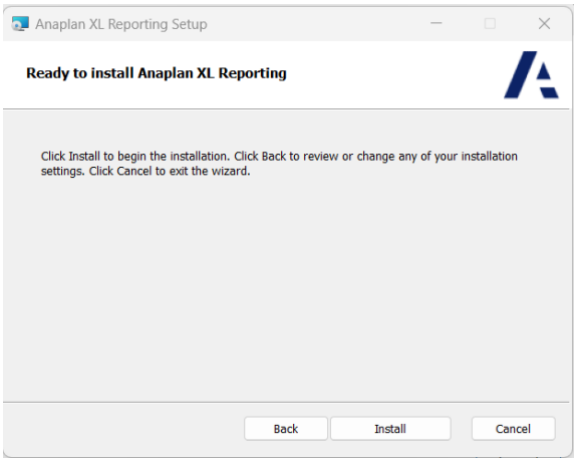


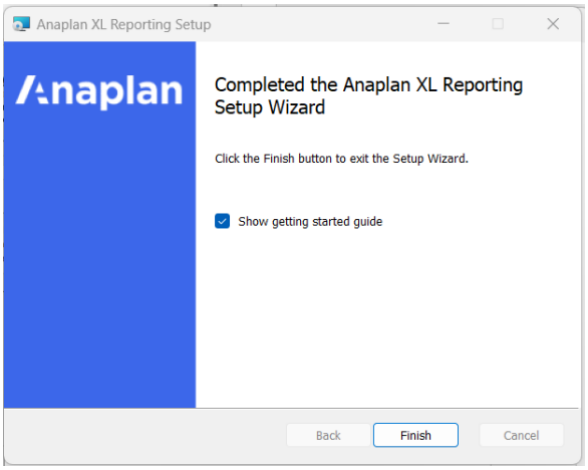
Click next through on each of the subsequent screens to agree to the license agreement, choose your language, and specify the installation folder, and then launch the installation.



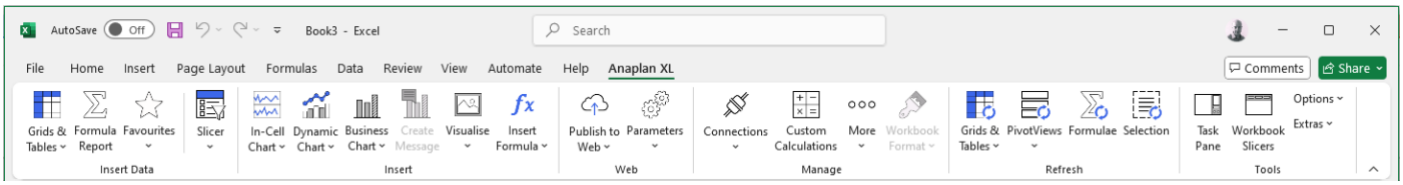








The software is now installed. If you now open Excel, you will see Anaplan XL as a new tab on the ribbon.



Applying a license key

The evaluation version of the product is fully functional and includes a 14-day evaluation license, which allows you to connect to your own data.

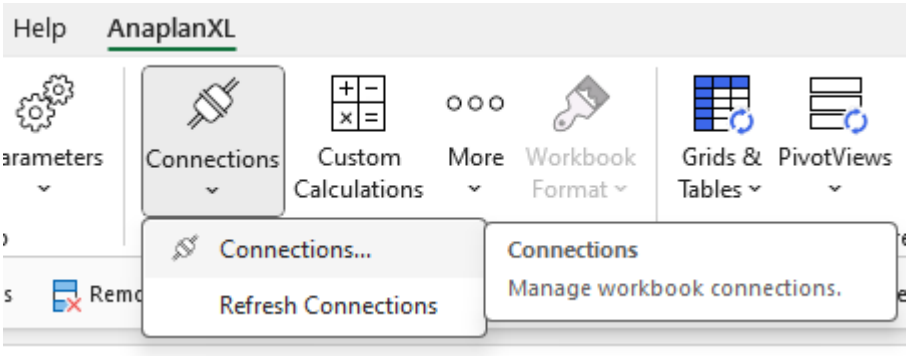
Once the product has been installed an individual user can apply a full license key supplied by Anaplan following the steps below:

1) Copy the provided license key file to ‘my documents’.
2) Open Excel, use the ‘apply license’ button in the Anaplan XL – Extras – Licensing form to browse to and select the license file.

Connecting to your data

The evaluation version is fully functional and includes a 14-day evaluation license, which allows you to connect to your own data.

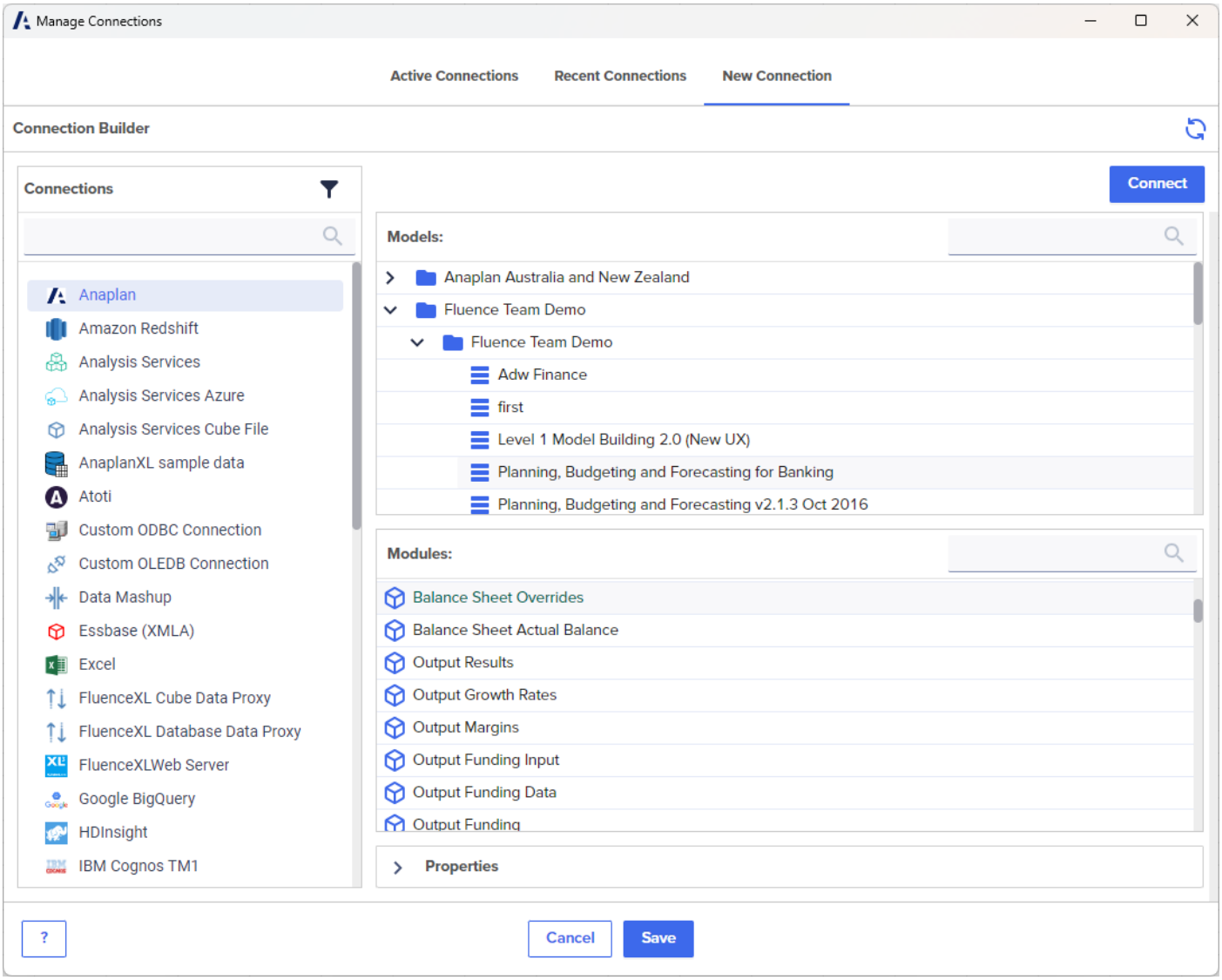
To connect to your own data, go to the connections dialog in the Anaplan XL ribbon.



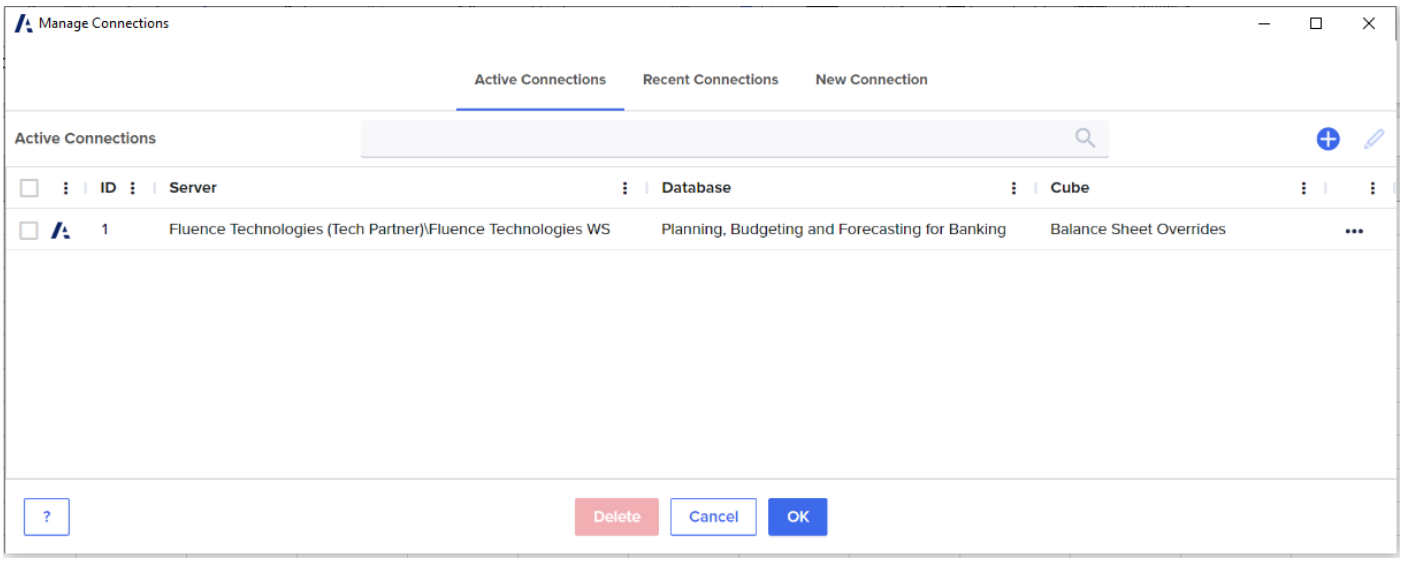
In the new menu, navigate to the “New connection” tab.

There are some differences depending on the connection type, but the basic steps are detailed below.

Choose your connection type from the menu on the left, type your server address and press Connect. You may then eed to authenticate to validate your access to the data. You can then choose from the available models and modules what you want to connect to, and press “SAVE” to add the connection.

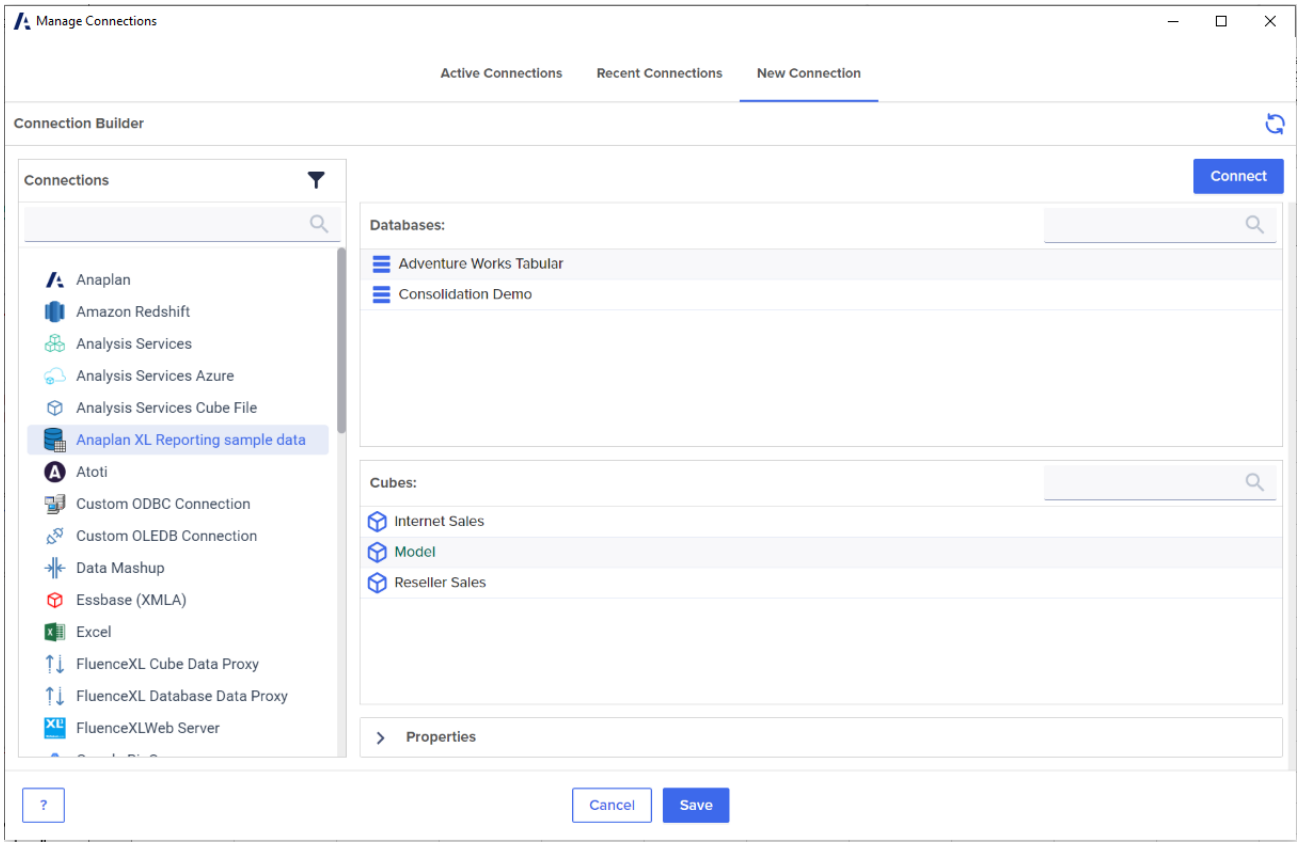


Once the connection is added, you will see it in the “Active connections” tab. If you are using multiple connections, you will see them all in this tab.

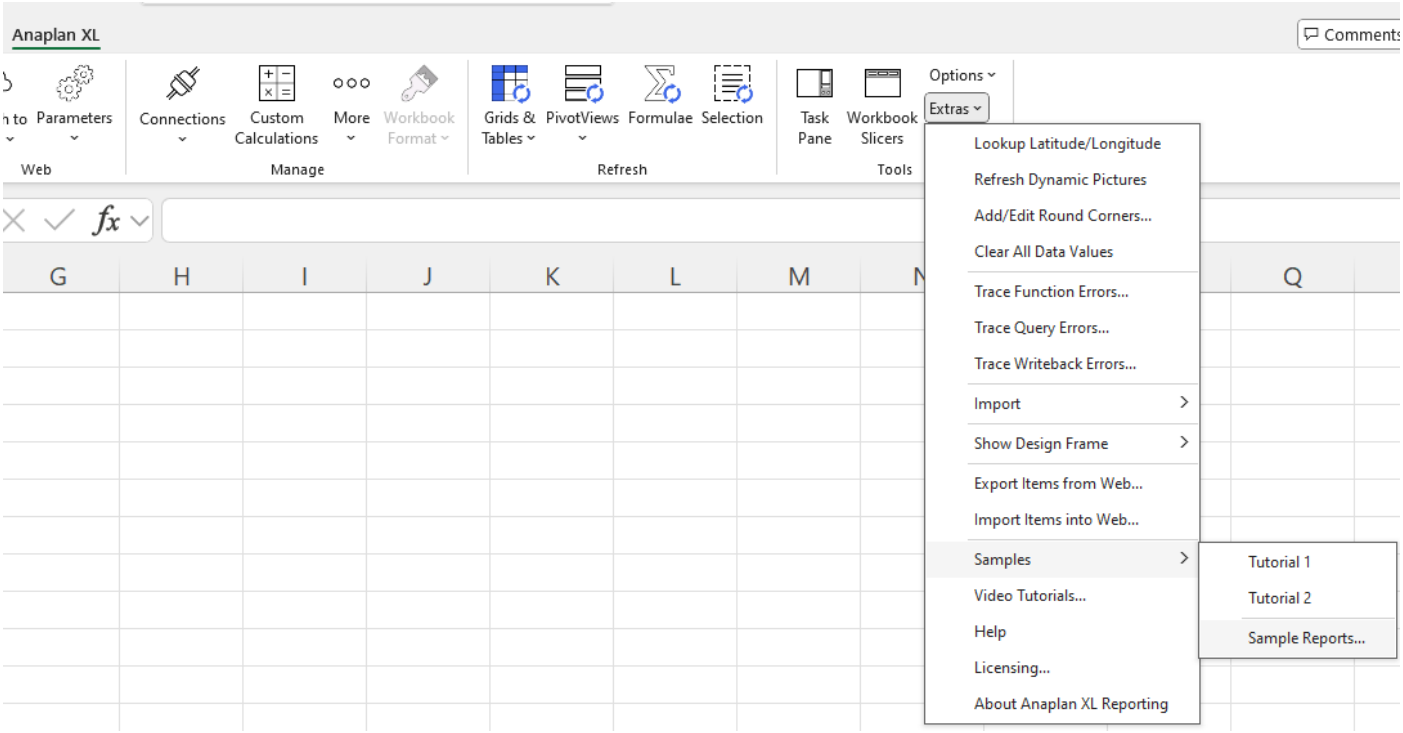


Sample data connection

We also provide a sample dataset that you can use to familiarise yourself with the product. To connect to it, simply choose the “Anaplan XL Reporting sample data” connection from the list of available connections.



Some example reports which connect to the sample dataset are available to download through the Anaplan XL ribbon by choosing the Extras – "Sample Reports…" option. This will open a web page with the report pack.

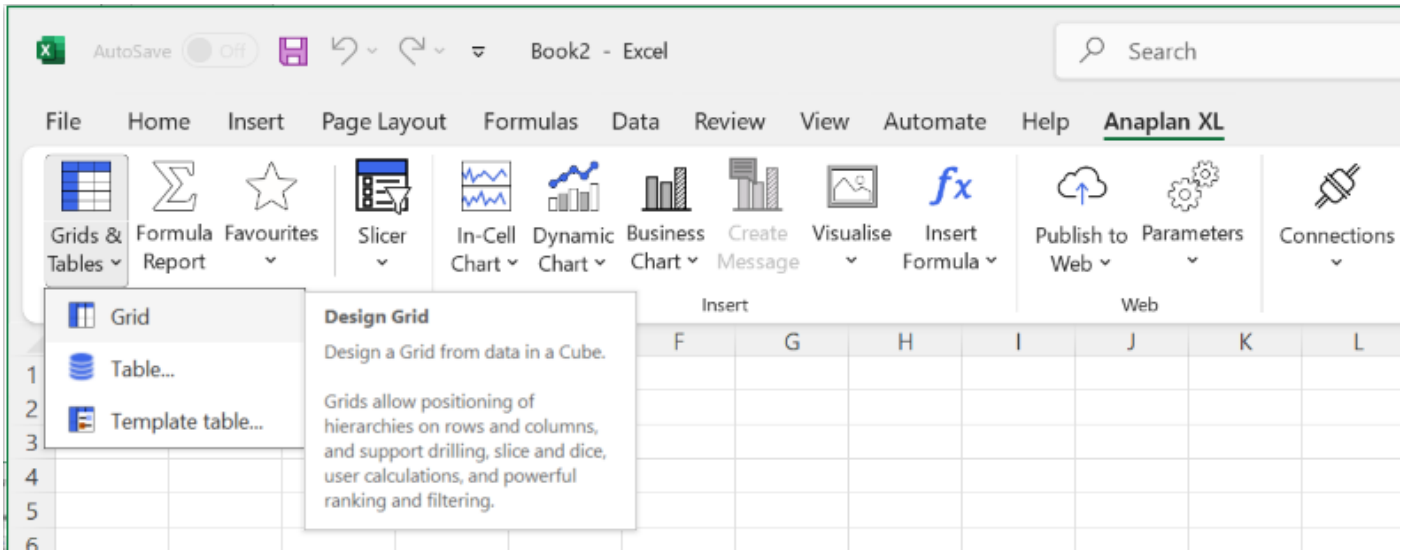


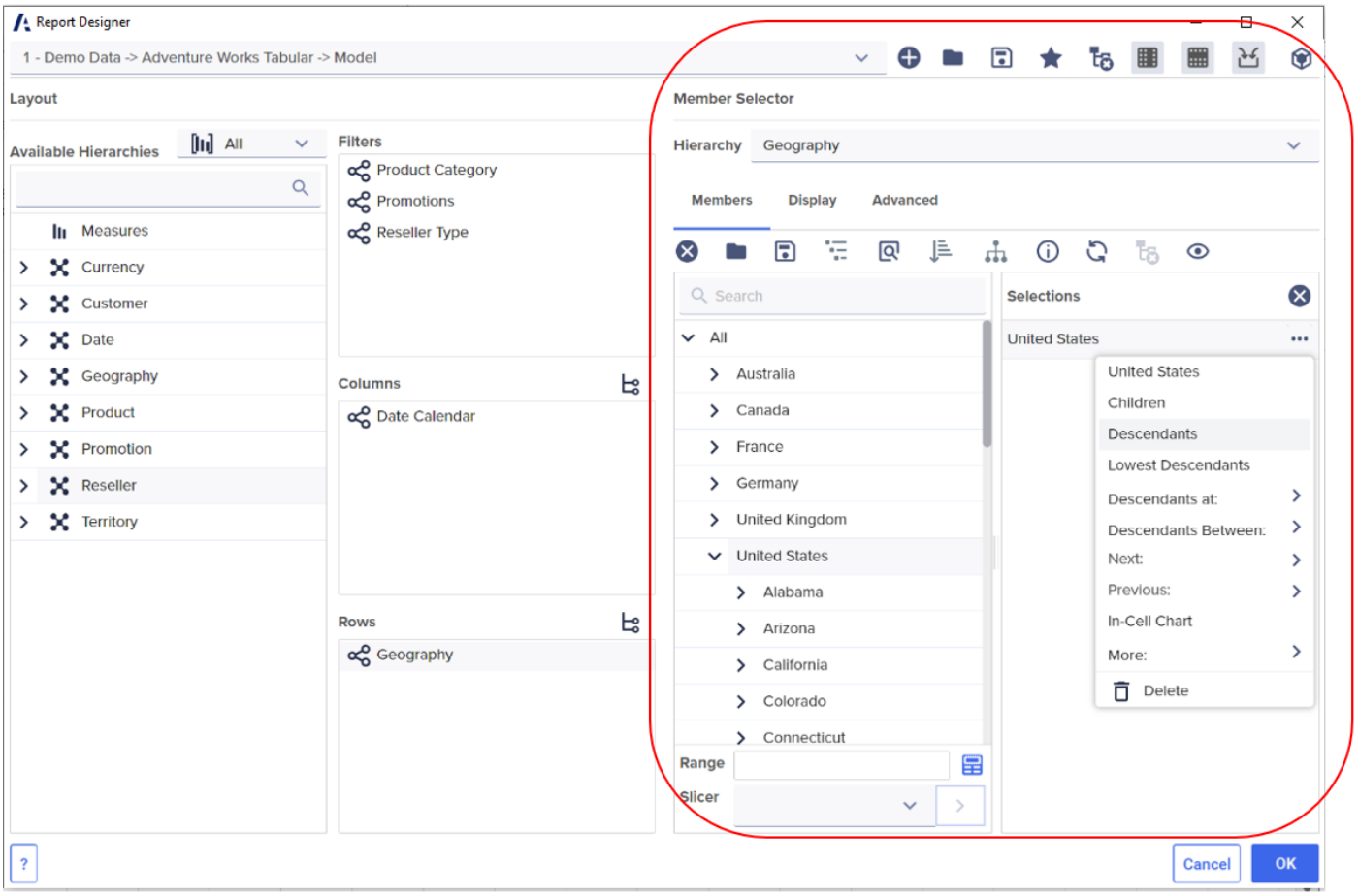
Building a report

If you are very familiar with using pivot tables when connecting to Analysis Services cubes, we suggest reading this section first to highlight some key differences and enhancements in Anaplan XL Reporting. Otherwise, read on.

Anaplan XL Reporting has two main reporting modes, grids and formula. Grids are similar to a pivot table but optimised for data-connected BI. Grids are what most Anaplan XL Reporting users primarily use. Formula are well suited to highly formatted reports with a specific layout, which are relatively small in terms of the number of cells retrieved. The product also provides report slicers and a number of data visualisations and charts, which work well in business-focused dashboards and scorecards.

To add a new grid, on the Anaplan XL ribbon, choose ‘Grids and Tables’ and then ‘Grid’, to bring up the report designer screen below.





Report designer

The report designer is separated into 5 main areas:

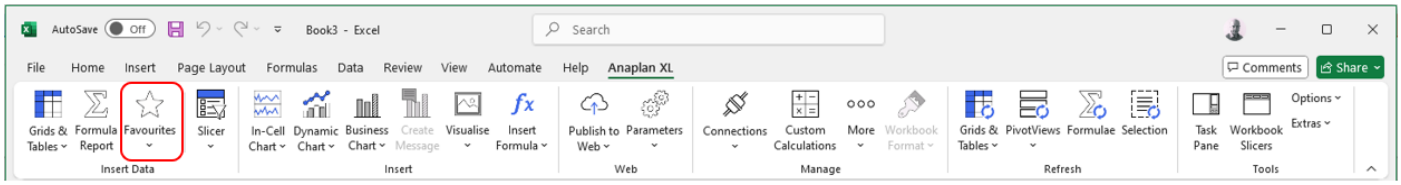
1) **Available hierarchies**
   Lists the available dimensions and hierarchies in the current model. Expand the dimension to view the available hierarchies. Drag the hierarchies you want to use from here into filters, columns or rows as needed.
2) **Filters**
   A set of hierarchies for user selections, which will be displayed at the top of the grid. User selections made in the filter area determine the numbers displayed in the report body.
3) **Rows and Columns**
   Containers for hierarchies to be positioned on rows and columns respectively.
4) **Member selector**
   Surrounded in red in the screenshot above, the Member Selector displays the content of the selected hierarchy. The hierarchy tree can be expanded and members selected by dragging to the right. For a selected member, the drop-down menu enables selection of related sets of data such as children, lowest descendants or descendants at a level.

Range: Selections can also be based on the content of an Excel cell, or range of cells.

Slicer: Selections can also be based on an Anaplan XL slicer selection.

Press ‘OK’ to insert the report.

Note that if you regularly set up similar grids, you can add the report definition as a favourite ( ) from the toolbar above ‘Available Hierarchies’, which can then be easily accessed from the main Anaplan XL ribbon.

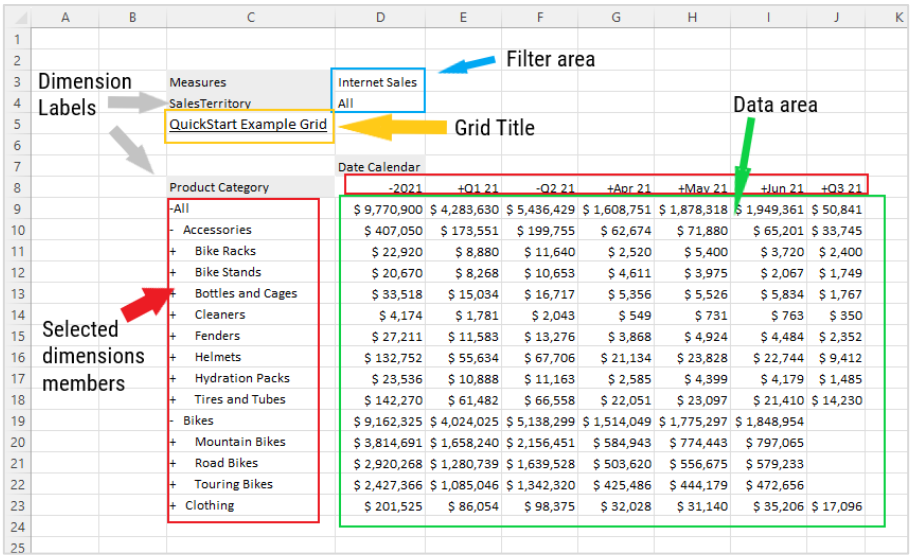


Working with grids

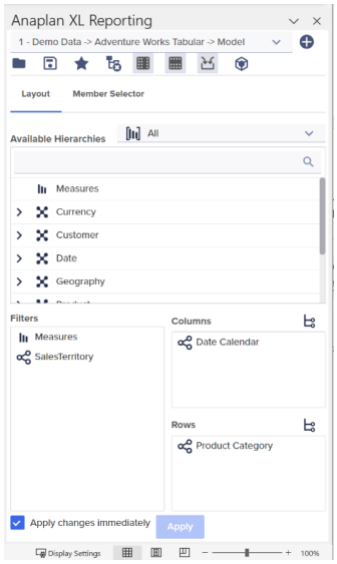
Multiple grids can exist in the workbook, and in individual worksheets. Each grid is an Anaplan XL object, and is manipulated through the grid designer, the task pane, the grid ribbon or the Anaplan XL right click menu.

Grid components

- Filter area (C3:D4)
- Dimension labels (C3:C4, D7, C8)
- Selected dimension members (C9:C23, D8:H8)
- Data area (D9:J23)



Anaplan XL Reporting grid



Anaplan XL Reporting task pane

Basic navigation

You can interact with the grid in a number of ways:

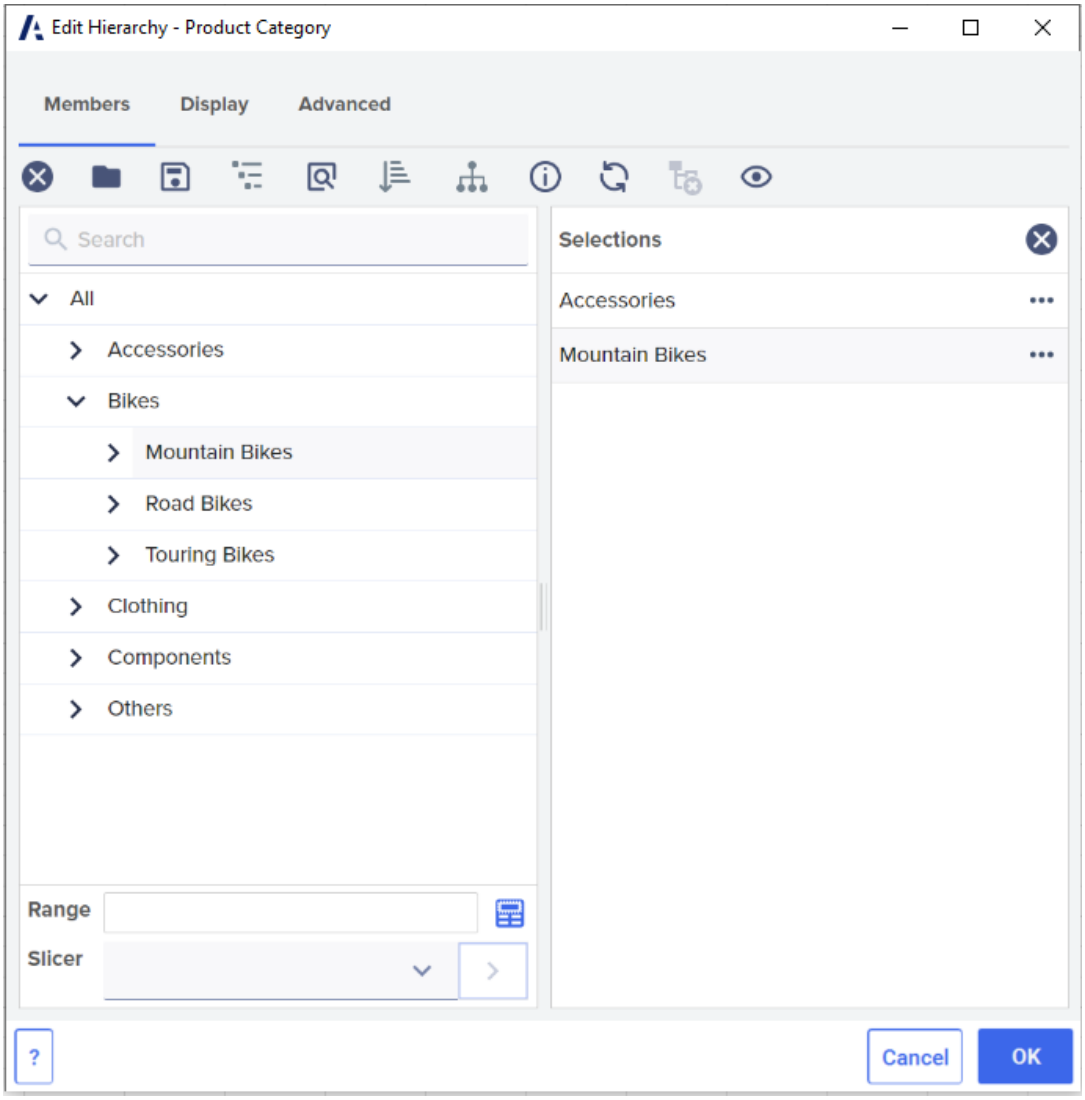
- **Design grid (report designer)**
  - To bring up the report designer for the current grid you can choose design grid from the grid ribbon, or the right click menu, or can alternately double click one of the numeric cells in the grid.
- **Task pane**
  - You can turn on the grid task pane from the Anaplan XL ribbon and can then position and make selections in hierarchies here.
- **Changing selections directly on the grid**
  - For filters, double click on the filter selection or dimension label for the required hierarchy (C3:D4). For rows or columns, double click on the dimension label (C8/ D7). This brings up the Member Selector for the selected hierarchy.

- **Drilling** applies to members located on either rows or columns.
  - Drill up/down by double clicking on a member.
  - "Drill all" currently selected members by right clicking on a member and selecting the 'Drill all' option from the Anaplan XL menu.

- **"Keep Only" / Quick selections**
  - To quickly select only certain member/s which are currently shown in a grid
    - Click on the cell or cells containing the members, and right click and select Anaplan XL:
      - Keep Only (all selected members)
      - Keep all other Members (all unselected members)

Member Selector

The Member Selector is used in many of the Anaplan XL Reporting forms, including the report designer. By double clicking the hierarchy label in a grid, the user can bring up the 'Edit Hierarchy' window on its own for that particular hierarchy.

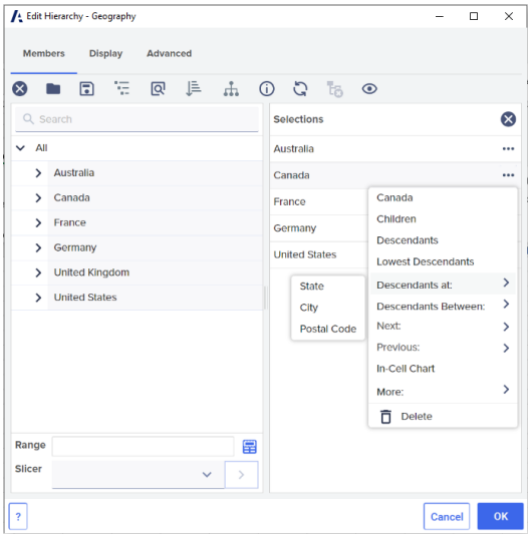


To select a member, drag or double click it to the right-hand pane of the window. Shift and ctrl keys can be used for multi-select.

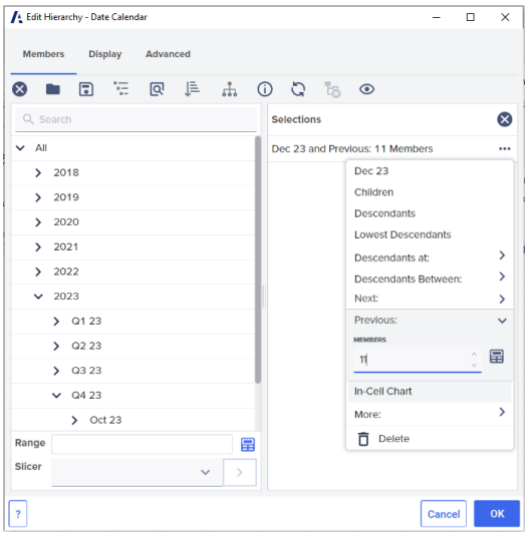
The other main features of the Member Selector include:

- Member searching 

- Member lists can be saved and loaded  for repeated use or distribution.
- Dynamic selection options to select related sets of data.



Member Selection drop-down menu



Next and previous: useful in date hierarchies

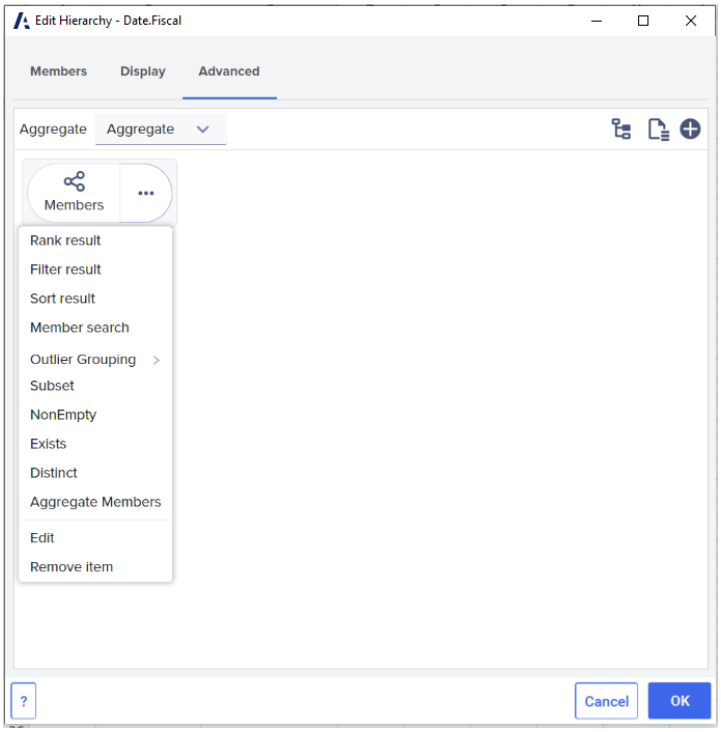
- ‘Children of’, or ‘Descendants at’ a chosen level, or ‘Previous ‘x’’ which can be useful to create ‘rolling period’ date selections.

- Members can also be selected based on an Excel Range 

- Or an Anaplan XL Reporting Slicer 

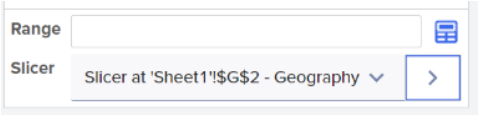
.

- Filtering, ranking and sorting are available on the Advanced tab.



- Member properties are available on the Display Tab

Range selection (base selection on an Excel range)



Using this method the user can specify a cell or a range of cells that will drive the Member Selection for a grid. This can be populated by any means, such as manual entry, copy paste, formulas, drop down lists, Anaplan XL Reporting Slicers etc. This is supported for hierarchies in the Filter, Column or Row areas of the Grid.

This approach can be used:

- In the report header area to allow the user to quickly type well known codes or names into a cell and have the grid refresh based on this input.
- On rows or columns, to cause the grid to refresh based on a range of cells held elsewhere in the workbook, and potentially populated by copy-paste, or by another application
- **Note**: Once the Excel range is chosen, related sets of data can still be specified (i.e. Children of or Descendants at a specified level).

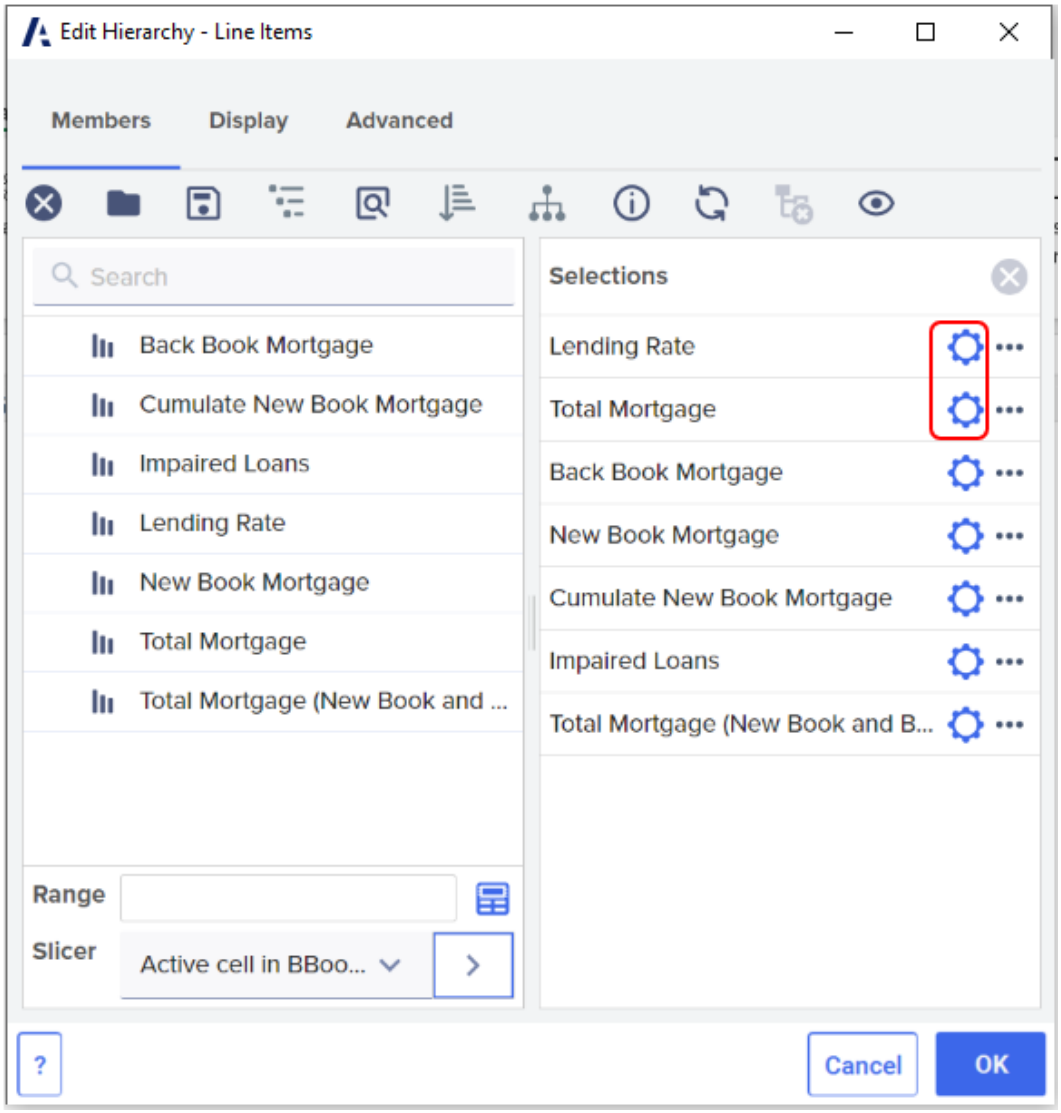
Slicer (User makes selections using an Anaplan XL Reporting Slicer)

(See page 16 for slicer creation) Here the user can choose an Anaplan XL Reporting Slicer which will drive the selection. The drop-down menu will list any slicers which exist in the workbook for the current hierarchy.

Once selected, related sets of data can still be specified if required (i.e. Children of, or descendants at a specified level). This is typically used to drive multiple grids from one Anaplan XL Reporting Slicer.

Formatting grids

Formatting a line item or measure: Open the Member Selector and select the element you wish to format, and then use the formatting button, shown below to set the Excel numeric format required for each element.



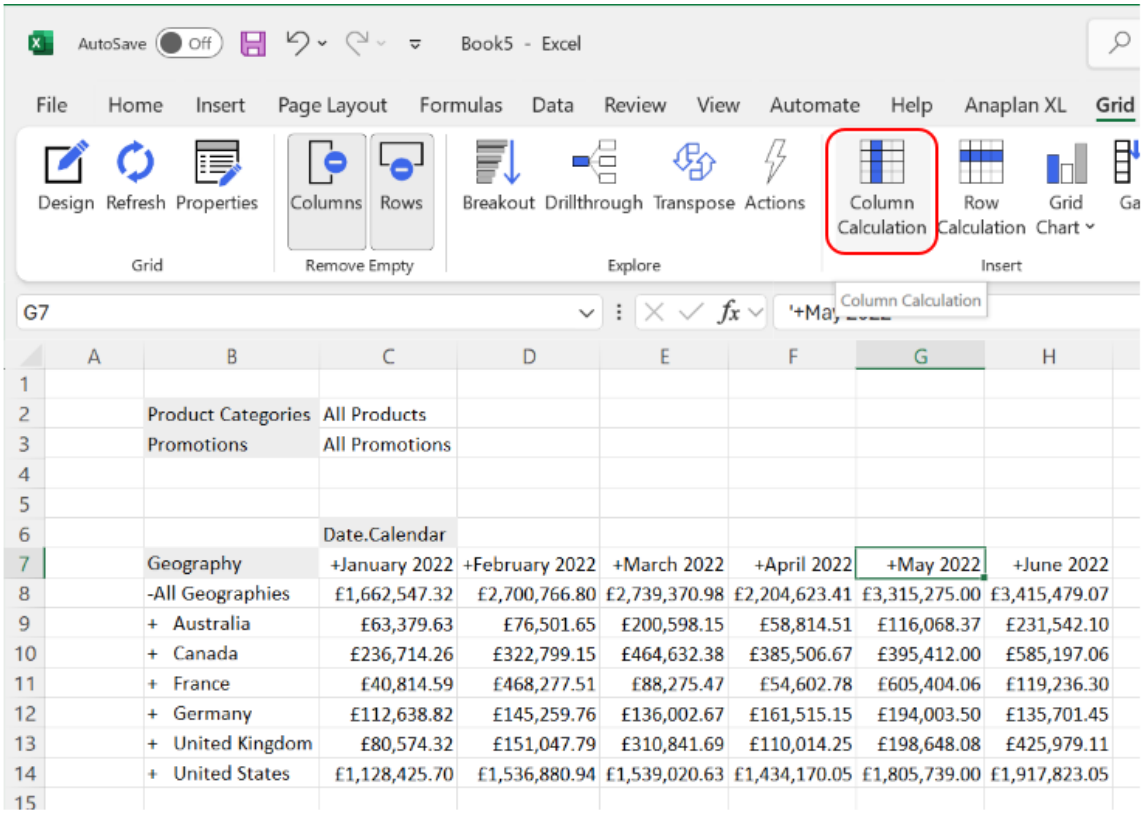
For more detail see our Wiki. Alternatively, see the section on **Grids > Formatting Grids** in the **Anaplan XL Reporting User Guide.** You can download the latest version from**:** User Guide

User calculations

There are two main types of dynamic user calculations in Anaplan XL Reporting - Grid Calculations and Workbook Calculations.

Grid calculations

Users can easily add calculations into a grid using an Excel formula. These calculations exist only in the current grid. This is done by right clicking on a member name in columns or rows, and selecting Anaplan XL – Add Calculation, or from the Grid Ribbon as highlighted below. This adds an additional column to the right (or beneath if on rows).



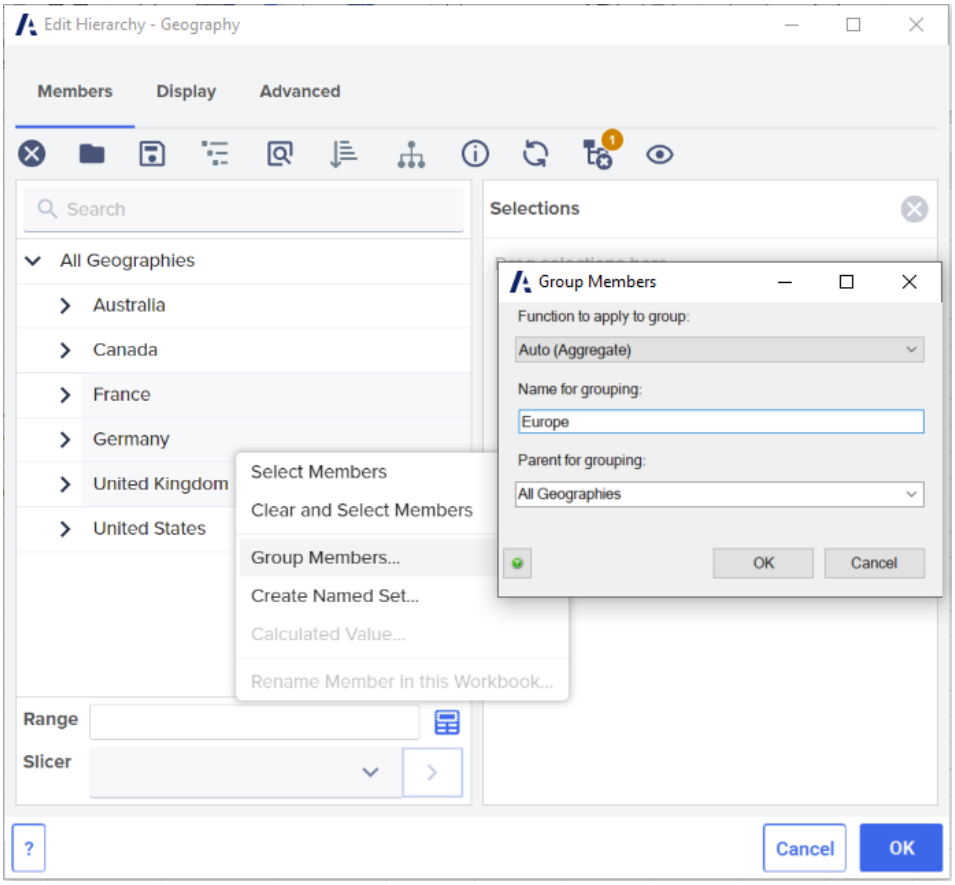
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1								
2		Product Categories	All Products					
3		Promotions	All Promotions					
4								
5								
6			Date.Calendar					
7		Geography	+January 2022	+February 2022	+March 2022	+April 2022	+May 2022	+June 2022
8		-All Geographies	£1,662,547.32	£2,700,766.80	£2,739,370.98	£2,204,623.41	£3,315,275.00	£3,415,479.07
9		+ Australia	£63,379.63	£76,501.65	£200,598.15	£58,814.51	£116,068.37	£231,542.10
10		+ Canada	£236,714.26	£322,799.15	£464,632.38	£385,506.67	£395,412.00	£585,197.06
11		+ France	£40,814.59	£468,277.51	£88,275.47	£54,602.78	£605,404.06	£119,236.30
12		+ Germany	£112,638.82	£145,259.76	£136,002.67	£161,515.15	£194,003.50	£135,701.45
13		+ United Kingdom	£80,574.32	£151,047.79	£310,841.69	£110,014.25	£198,648.08	£425,979.11
14		+ United States	£1,128,425.70	£1,536,880.94	£1,539,020.63	£1,434,170.05	£1,805,739.00	£1,917,823.05
15								

- The title can then be typed in the column header area (default name is [Calc])
- The formula itself is typed into the first data row, using Excel
- The formula will then be propagated down through the other rows
- The row or column is now formatted in the same manner as the rest of the grid.
- The Calculation can be managed by using the options on the Anaplan XL Menu
- To change the calculation just overtype the formula
- To delete it, right click on the row/column title and choose Anaplan XL – Calculation – Delete Calculation

The calculation can be contained purely within the grid or bound to a cell(s) outside the grid. It can also incorporate Excel functions such as VLOOKUP etc, or Anaplan XL Reporting formula.

Workbook calculations (custom groupings / MDX)

These calculations are available throughout the current workbook. Users can quickly add custom groupings or sets into their reporting, from the right click menu in the Member Selector as shown below:



Then name the grouping as required and choose the parent element which the group is to appear under.

The new element will appear as a custom calculation in the member selector. Creating a set of members is handled in a similar way.

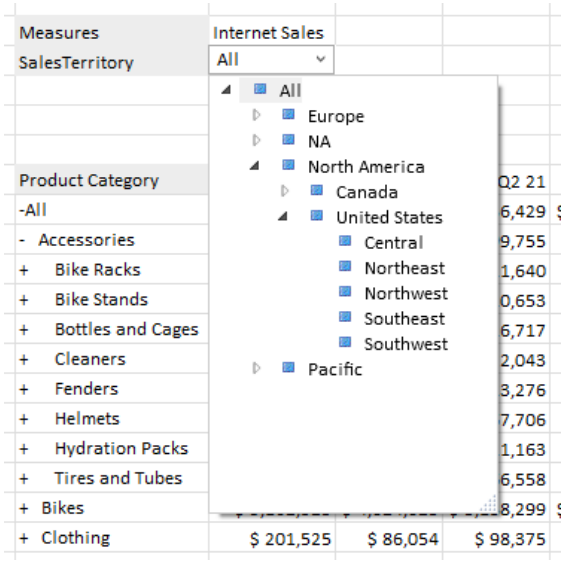
To amend or delete a grouping or set created in this way, or to create a more complex MDX calculation select the custom calculation tab on the Anaplan XL ribbon.

For more detail, see the section on **Grids > Grid Calculations** in the **Anaplan XL Reporting User Guide.**

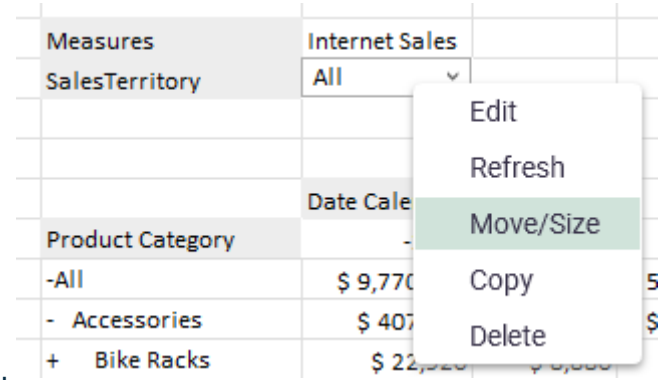
Slicers

Slicers in Anaplan XL Reporting offer more display options and flexibility in selection than those available in native Excel. They have 5 different display types and can contain members from different levels of the hierarchy, support cascading and filtering between slicers, and can incorporate ranked and filtered results. This section covers the basics of usage. Alternatively, see the section on **Slicers** in the **Anaplan XL Reporting User Guide.**

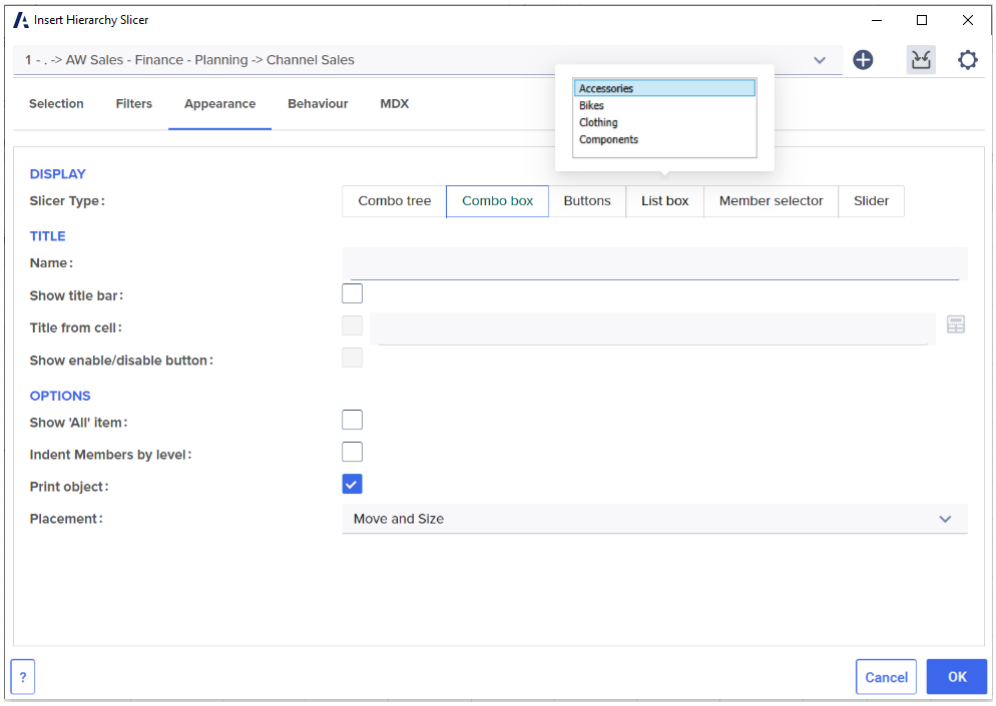
To add a slicer to a grid, right-click on the relevant hierarchy member in the filter area and choose Anaplan XL –> 'Add Slicer'. The default will be an in-cell tree view with the default or last active member selected.



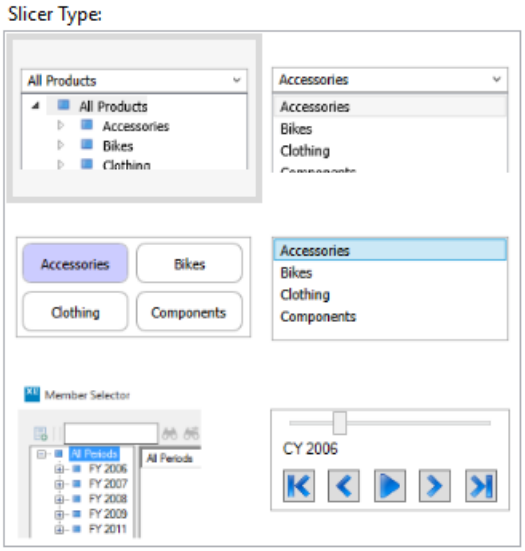
Note that once inserted, grid slicers can be positioned where required, they are not restricted to the grid area. This is done by right-clicking, and selecting 'Move/Size' then dragging the control to the desired position



Once inserted, right click on the slicer and choose 'Edit' for configuration and design options.



Dimension Slicer – Edit

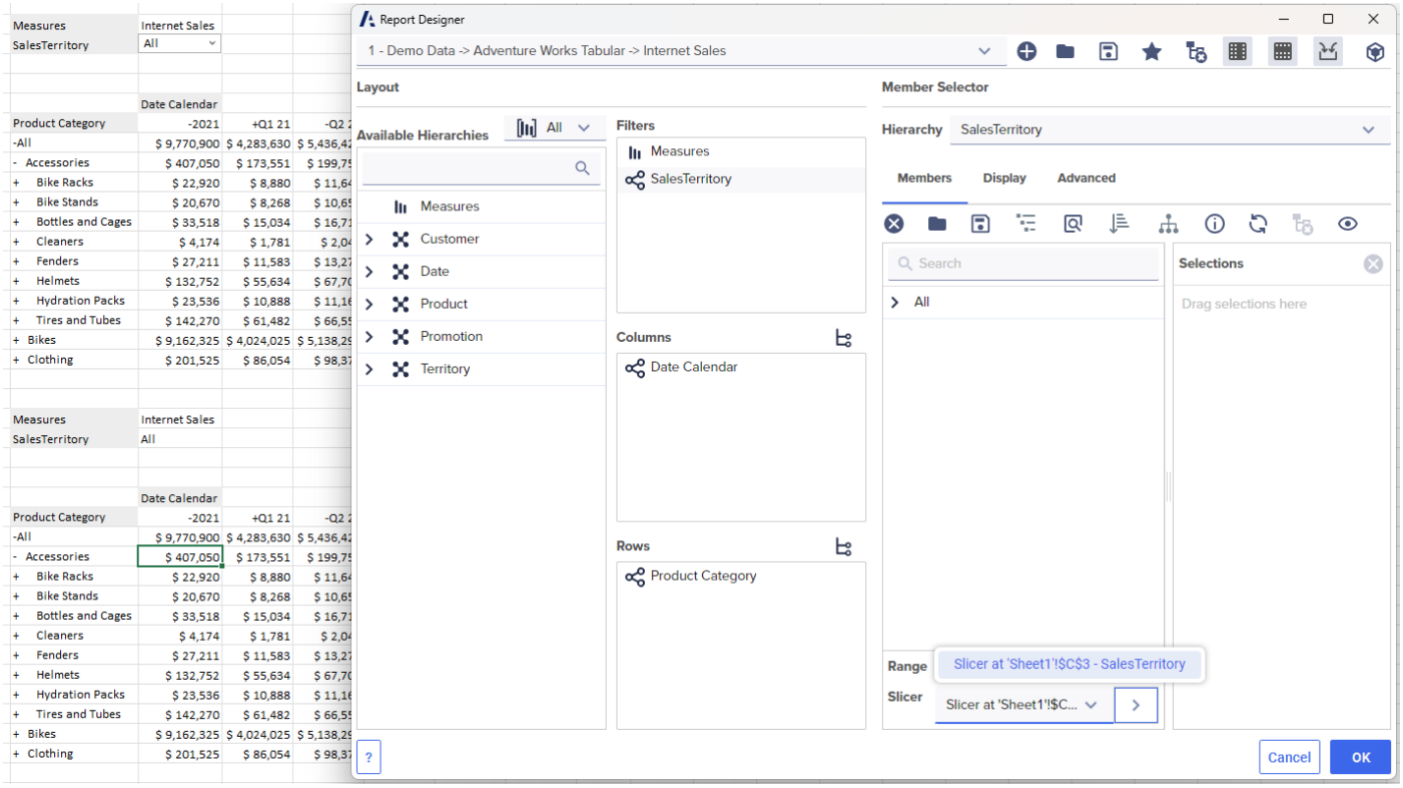


Choose the required slicer display type in the “Appearance” tab and then using the Member Selector in the “Selection” tab, choose the set of members to enable selection from.

For a tree view, no set of members need be chosen, as the user can navigate the hierarchy. For the other display types it is important to choose the set to be used. These can be either static lists of members, or dynamic selections such as children or/descendants at level, Level ‘x’ or even ranked lists etc. Note that the slicer content can also be driven from an Excel cell, by using the Range selector (e.g. Children of E11’), or from the result of another slicer.

Slicers can also update a specified range which could be used as the argument for XL3Lookup formula or for a report title. This is enabled by checking the ‘Update range with selection’ option which is in the “Behaviour” tab and specifying the output cell. It can be either the Unique Name or the caption.

A slicer can be used to drive one or several grids. The easiest way to do this is to simply select the slicer within the Member Selector for the relevant hierarchy for the secondary grids.

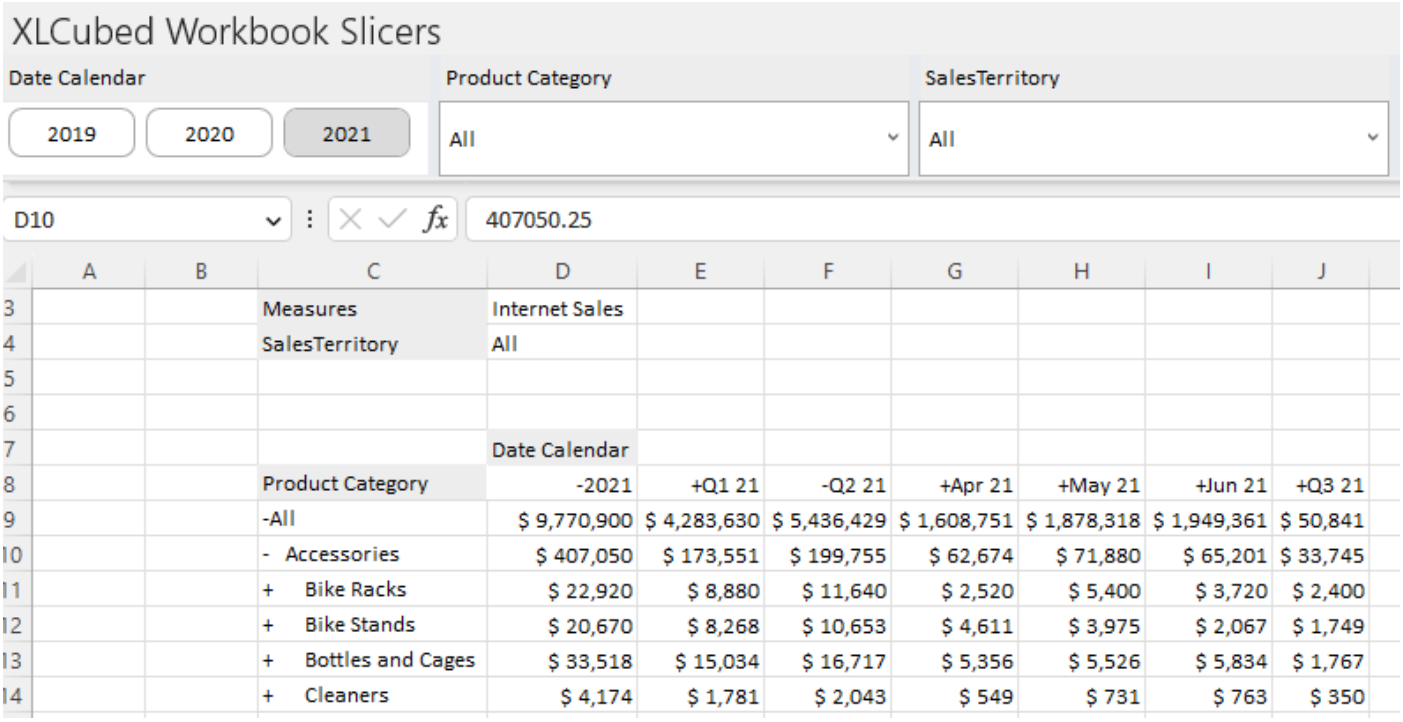


'Slicer' is an additional selector at the bottom of the Member Selector which will make available any slicers which exist in the workbook for the current hierarchy, as shown. Pick the required slicer and use the "." to select it. Once the slicer is selected, any related set of data is then available, for example 'children of', or 'descendants at level x'.

Workbook slicers

Slicers can also be created at the workbook level – these can then be displayed for all sheets in the workbook.

The slicers are displayed in a pane which stays in place when the sheet is changed. In a multi-sheet workbook, you need to only define one set of slicers. These can then be configured to be shown or hidden for individual sheets as needed.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
3			Measures	Internet Sales						
4			SalesTerritory	All						
5										
6										
7				Date Calendar						
8			Product Category	-2021	+Q1 21	-Q2 21	+Apr 21	+May 21	+Jun 21	+Q3 21
9			-All	$ 9,770,900	$ 4,283,630	$ 5,436,429	$ 1,608,751	$ 1,878,318	$ 1,949,361	$ 50,841
10			- Accessories	$ 407,050	$ 173,551	$ 199,755	$ 62,674	$ 71,880	$ 65,201	$ 33,745
11			+ Bike Racks	$ 22,920	$ 8,880	$ 11,640	$ 2,520	$ 5,400	$ 3,720	$ 2,400
12			+ Bike Stands	$ 20,670	$ 8,268	$ 10,653	$ 4,611	$ 3,975	$ 2,067	$ 1,749
13			+ Bottles and Cages	$ 33,518	$ 15,034	$ 16,717	$ 5,356	$ 5,526	$ 5,834	$ 1,767
14			+ Cleaners	$ 4,174	$ 1,781	$ 2,043	$ 549	$ 731	$ 763	$ 350

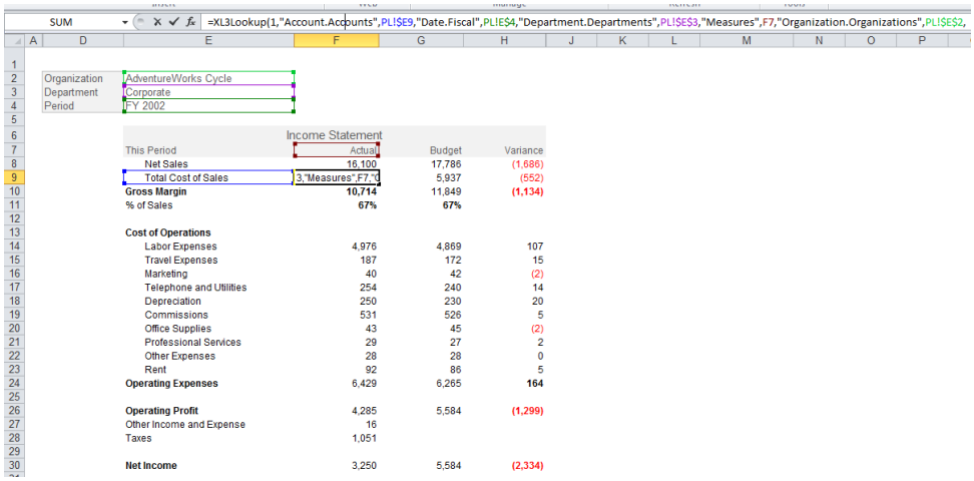
Formula reporting

In Formula mode, the data is returned via a collection of Anaplan XL Reporting Formula. Each cell contains a formula rather than just the data itself. Each cell is self-sufficient and using this approach it is possible to put any value in any cell, and therefore to have fully disjoint reports. Formula reports will often be preferred where the required formatting is complex, or where existing 'static' financial reports are being replaced.

Most formula reports are built primarily using two Anaplan XL Reporting formula.

XL3Lookup - the key formula which retrieves the cube value from a specified slice, and will normally reference several XL3Member formula, or text cells in Excel which specify valid member names.

XL3Member - returns the caption for a specified member, and these are then referenced by xl3lookups



Formula versus grid based reporting: key differences

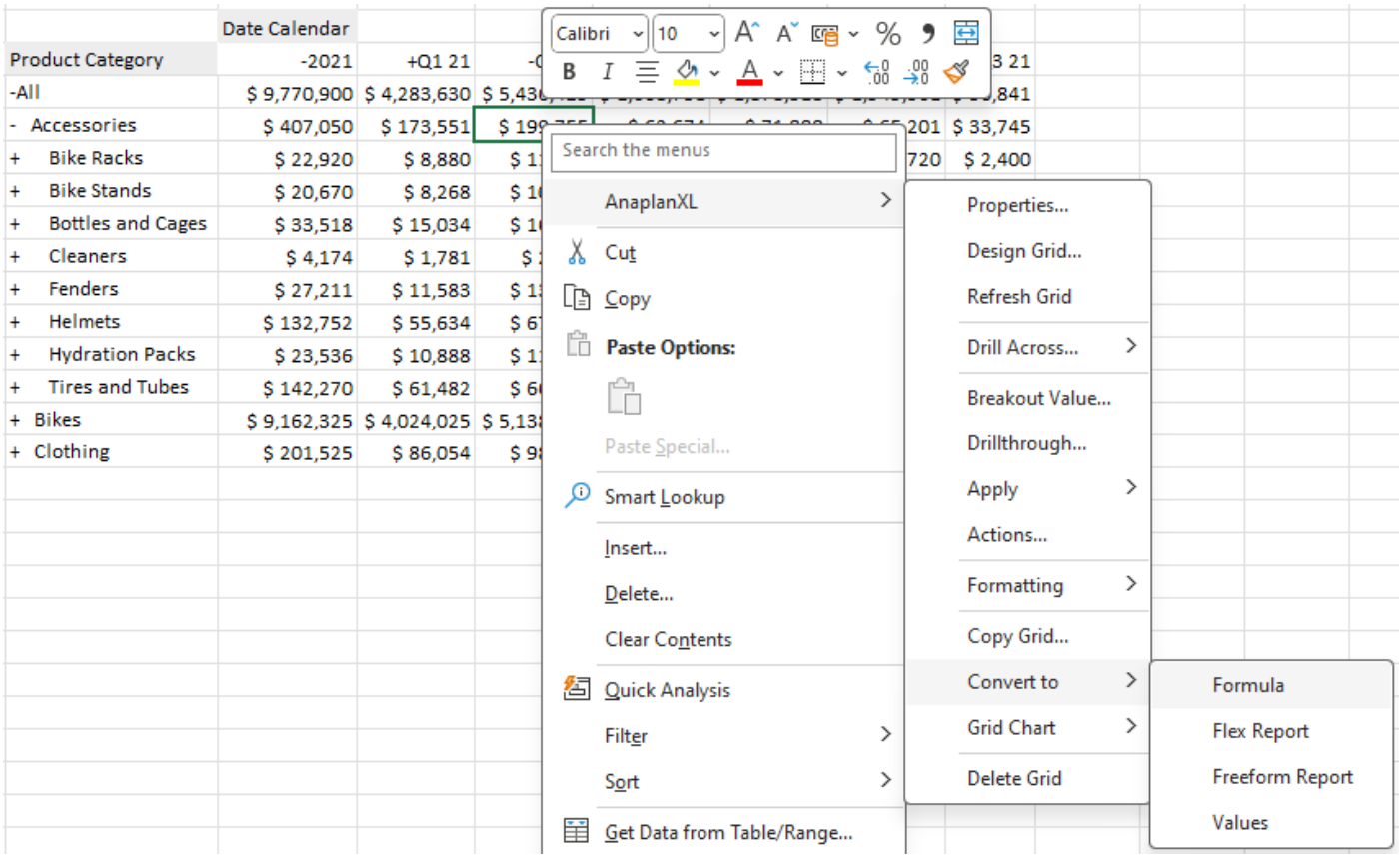
- Formula mode supports ‘any value in any cell’ – reports need not be rectangular in shape.
- One block of a report can include data from several cubes, as the first formula parameter is the connection id.
- In formula mode Excel functionality is used for all formatting etc.
- In formula mode, you cannot return to ‘Report Designer’ to change the report structure or to slice and dice by another hierarchy – this is only available at the initial design.
- Formula reports do not handle row-dynamic reporting, where the number of rows varies by a filter selection or with underlying data changes.
- For large reports in terms of the number of cells returned, a grid will always be faster than the equivalent formula report as it does not have the overhead of additional formula to fire.

Creating formula reports

There are several ways to create Formula reports, but the most common is to convert a grid.

1) Convert to Formula from a Grid

- Create a grid using the Grid option to get the initial layout.
- Then right click anywhere in the data area of the grid, select the Anaplan XL -> Convert To… -> Formula menu option.



2) Insert Formula manually

- This approach can be useful for small sections of a report, for the main body of a report converting a Grid will typically be faster. From the Anaplan XL main menu 'Insert Formula', there are several options for inserting different types of Formula.
- A combination of 'Insert Member' and 'Insert Value', along with copy formula down and across means it is also fairly simple to create reports using this approach.

3) Design Formula Report

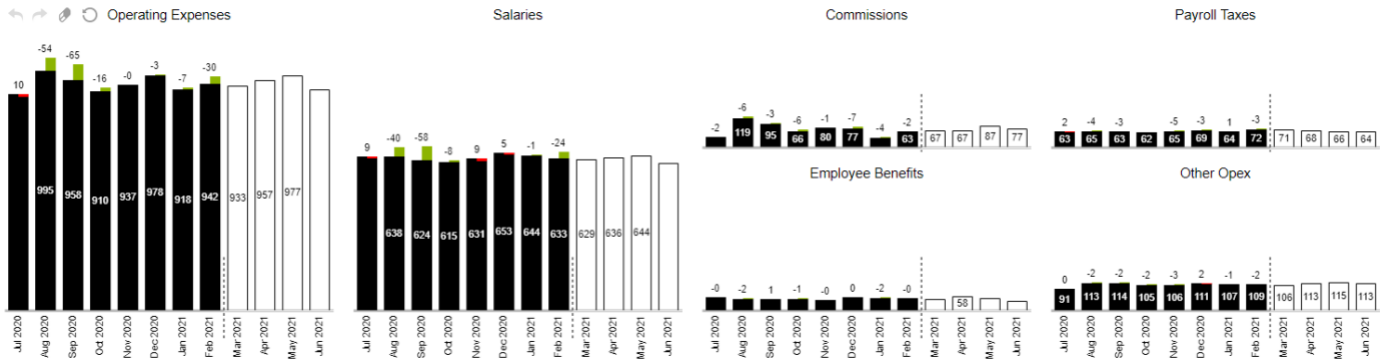
- Selecting 'Formula Report' option from the Anaplan XL ribbon directly inserts a formula report. Generally converting a grid to Formula is a better option, as the initial layout can be quickly verified and/or changed while it is a grid prior to conversion.

Once inserted, formula can easily be copied around and re-referenced to create the exact report format required. The standard Excel rules apply, so pay careful attention to the correct pinning ($) of cell references when copying formula.

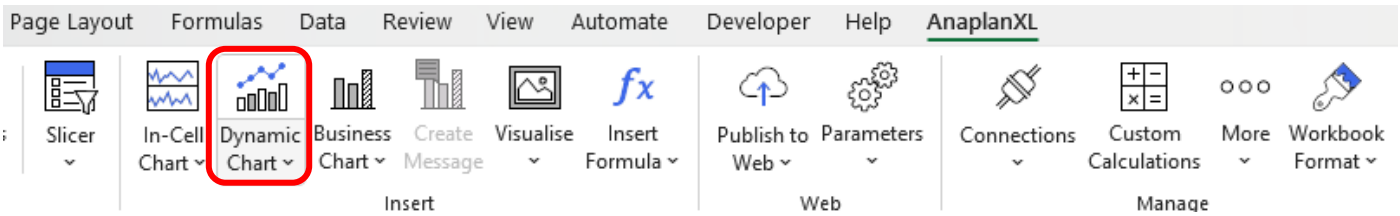
Charting and data visualization

Dynamic charts (small multiples)

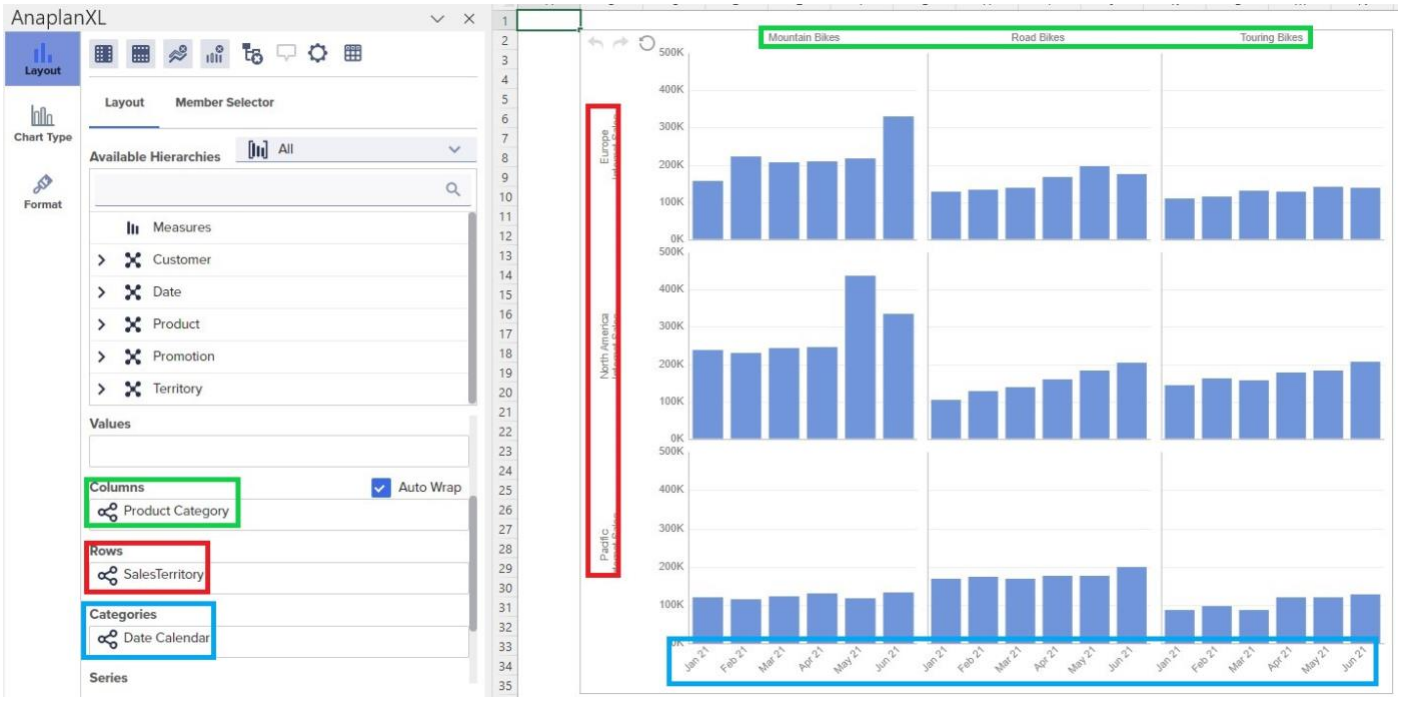
Anaplan XL Reporting dynamic charts are highly interactive visual tools. They can be setup to use individual charts to display each slice of a data set. The axes are on a common scale and the only variable is the data set slice being changed. They make it easy to see shared trends, patterns or outliers across the data set.



Dynamic charts can be built from the Anaplan XL ribbon.

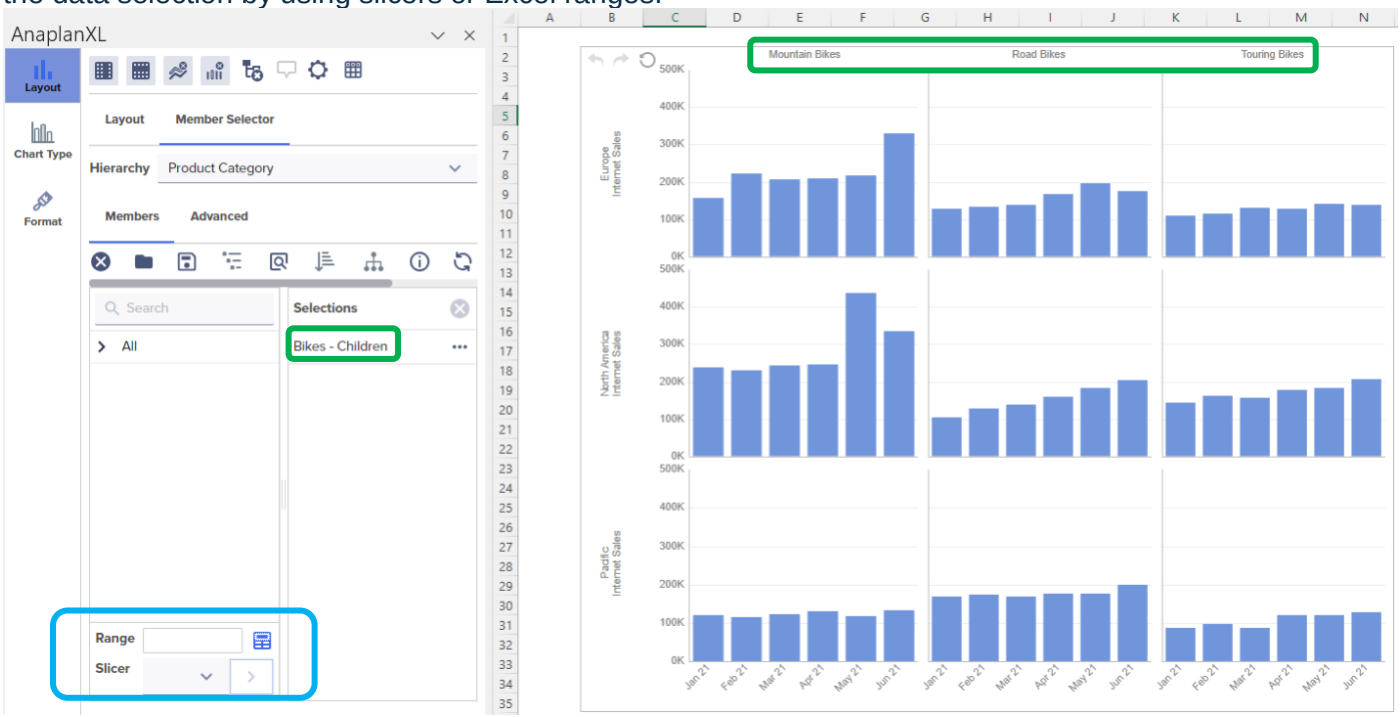


A task pane for the chart will appear where selections can be made to define which series and members will be displayed. Categories defines the x-axis within each individual chart. Series defines the of data series to be charted.



The data can be split into separate charts at any level by dragging and dropping the desired hierarchies into columns and rows.

Clicking on a hierarchy takes you to the member tab to select members/levels. Additionally, you can drive the data selection by using slicers or Excel ranges.



Moving a hierarchy to Filters will apply a filer to the data. By moving the Measures to the Filters you can add to and or change the currently charted measure.

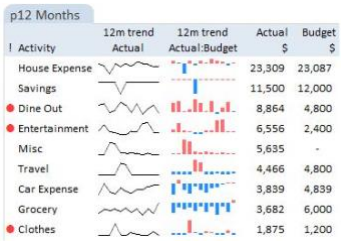
For more detail see our Wiki or YouTube tutorial. Alternatively, see the section on **Charting & Data Visualisation > Dynamic Charts (Small Multiples)** in the **Anaplan XL Reporting User Guide.**
You can download the latest version from**:** User Guide.

Standard Excel charts

Anaplan XL Reporting operates within Excel and as such any data retrieved into the workbook using Anaplan XL Reporting can be charted using any standard Excel chart type. If the data being plotted is static in shape and you need very fine grain control over the chart formatting, this is likely the best approach.

In-cell charts

In-cell charts are small, focused charts which each fit within one Excel cell. They are designed to be used within tables of data and allow the mixing of numbers and charts together in tables. They are often a very space-efficient way to give context to or highlight outliers in a data table.



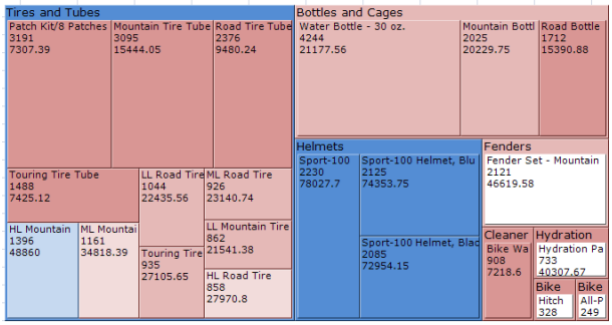
In-cell Charts can be used in two ways within Anaplan XL Reporting:

Formula-based: where an Anaplan XL Reporting formula controls the chart and the data being plotted must first be returned into Excel.

Embedded in grids: where the charts are generated directly as part of the gird and support data growth.

Treemaps

A Treemap is a way to display hierarchical information using nesting rectangles or tiles. They are most often set up where the size of the rectangle depicts one metric and the colour depicts another. They can often help identify patterns which would otherwise be difficult to see.



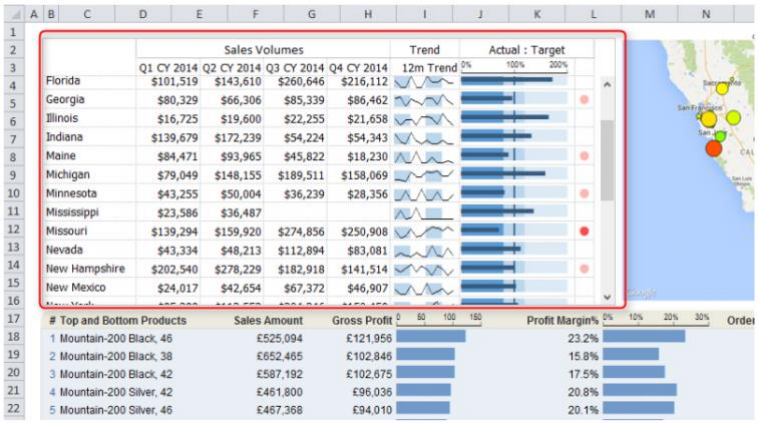
For more detail see our Wiki. Alternatively, see the section on **Charting & Visualisation >Treemaps** in the **Anaplan XL Reporting User Guide.** You can download the latest version from**:** User Guide

Mapping

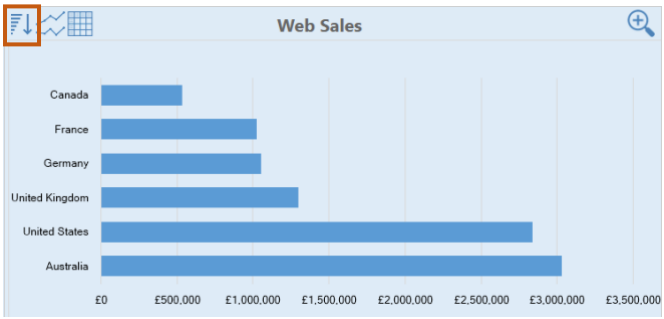
Anaplan XL Reporting provides point and shape-based geospatial mapping. The maps can be zoomed and panned as needed and can be used as a selector for a report as well as just a display.

Viewports

Viewports are a dynamic view of another part of a workbook. They can be used to produce a consolidated view of a complex workbook and can be useful in dashboards and in handling some of the layout challenges of variable length or width reports. For example, you can present a range of data held on one worksheet within a much smaller area on another worksheet. They are scrollable and retain interactivity. If the viewport contains a grid, that will still be drillable and editable even through the viewport.



Viewports can also reference Excel charts directly or as part of a range. Paged Viewports allow for simple icon-led navigation between several Viewport. Users can click an icon to change the viewport currently being displayed within the paged viewport as shown below by the highlighted icon.



Viewports, Paged Viewports and Popup Viewports are inserted from the Visualise ribbon item.

Appendix 1 – Corporate deployment

Anaplan XL Reporting can be deployed silently by IT to the user base using standard desktop deployment tools. For more information on silent installation, see here: https://help.anaplan.com/anaplan-xl-reporting-silent-installation-92c87d07-ae25-49d3-bd4b-2f0709a1ecd1

Anaplan XL Reporting has the following pre-requisites, however, if your scripting team prefer to pre-install the pre-requisites you can extract the .MSI installer as described on the second link below.

- https://help.anaplan.com/anaplan-xl-reporting-excel-edition-prerequisites-64c7efb7-78db-47f9-adf5-bdc8030ba67e
- https://help.anaplan.com/anaplan-xl-msi-installation-45a17574-e7f9-4507-b39b-ad4e840f99c7

The product license key can be deployed to all users as a final step in the scripted installation by copying the provided license.license file to one of the locations below:

- the user's roaming profile (equivalent of %appdata%\Roaming\XLCubed Ltd\XLCubed Excel Edition)
- the installation folder C:\Program Files (x86)\Anaplan\Anaplan XL Reporting. (Note this approach means it is valid for all users on the machine, so generally not applicable for Citrix.)

If the product has been installed by an administrator id, but the user has a different id the steps below will enable the add-in for the end user.

For more information, see here: https://help.anaplan.com/administrative-anaplan-xl-installation-6198933c-7c72-4536-be32-1e7f15f7f51b