Free Training Transcript:
Date Calculations

Welcome to this Date Calculations Video. You can download the Exercise workbook to follow along in your own copy of Tableau.

Calculate Time between Dates

A common question in analysis is "How long did something take?" We can easily create a date calculation to tell us. Here, we want to know the average time it takes for an order to ship for each country. Right click in the data pane and select Create Calculated Field. Let's call this our "Time to Ship". We'll use a function called DATEDIFF to get the amount of time between Order Date and Shipping Date. The DATEDIFF function needs to know what date part we want to consider. We'll use day. Note that the date part, in this case 'day', needs to be lowercase, in single quotes, and singular. We also have a comma. Next, bring out our start date, or Order Date, another comma, and our end date, or Ship Date, and close parentheses. DATEDIFF('day', [Order Date], [Shipping Date]). We see this calculation is valid and we'll click OK.

Let's color our countries by using Time to Ship. We'll change the aggregation to Average. We can edit the colors to a red-black diverging palette and we'll reverse it because more time is bad. Now we can quickly see the countries that the longest shipping times and we can focus on those areas.

Creating Tableau Dates

Tableau works very well with dates once it recognizes the data is a date. However, in this dataset, our dates aren't in a common format. We have our dates stored separately as Day, Month, and Year. We want to create a calculated field that combines these fields into one that Tableau can recognize. Right click, create calculated field. And we'll name this Tableau Date. In the calculation editor, we'll use the MAKEDATE function. The MAKEDATE function lets us combine separate fields into a date by. We simply need to bring in each piece in the right order. We'll drag in Year, add a comma, then Month, a comma, then Day, and close parentheses. The calculation is valid, and we'll click ok. Now we have a date that Tableau can recognize. And we have all the drill down and functionality that we expect with dates.

Conclusion

Thank you for watching this Date Calculations Training Video. We invite you to continue with the Free Training videos to learn more about using Tableau.