What's New in TIBCO Spotfire® 7.5

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Introduction

TIBCO Spotfire 7.5 delivers faster, easier-to-use visual analytics for everyone.

Updates are available in many different areas of Spotfire, read about the enhancements in your specific area of interest.
Visual analytics

The visual analytics improvements within Spotfire 7.5 have been focused on enhancing the ability to collaborate on an analysis.

Collaboration can now be done by adding annotations or comments directly in the analysis, and replying to other people’s comments in a conversation. There are also some handy new ways to get the visualizations to look the way you want them, by changing the drawing order of markers or sorting bar segments, and the abilities to use Spotfire visualizations in web mashups are greatly improved.

**Collaboration**

Discuss your findings or ask questions in the context of the analysis. Find out what others have said about visualizations. Bring your colleagues into the decision making process by sending them a link to your question or comment.

With Spotfire Collaboration, it is now possible to add your comment or question in the context of the visualizations where you view the data.

*A comment in the context of the visualization.*

Discover comments on visualizations:
A comments notification icon in the title bar indicates that a comment is available for this visualization.

Review anything that has been said about the analysis:

*Use the Conversations panel to browse comments in the entire analysis.*

Search for comments:
Annotations

In Spotfire Business Author and Spotfire Analyst, it is now possible to add textual descriptions to visualizations in the form of a text box appearing on top of a visualization. Using annotations, you can draw attention to the key points in your visualization.

It is possible to specify the color and width of the text box, as well as the color and size of the text.

**Drawing attention to features with annotations in Spotfire**

Annotations are captured by Spotfire’s bookmarks which allow users to create dynamic stories using the Bookmarks functionality of Spotfire.

**Sort bar segments by size in bar charts**

It is now possible to sort the segments of a stacked bar chart according to their size.

The image below shows a stacked bar chart.
By selecting **Sort bar segments by value** in the Appearance section of the Visualization Properties, as shown in the image below, the bar segments will be ordered according to their size within each bar.

The image below shows the bar chart after sorting the bar segments. By displaying the bar chart this way, it is easier to see how much the largest bar segments contribute to the total of the bar. For example, you can get insights such as "For the consumer non-durables sector, the three largest industries add up to $1500, out of $2300, for the seven industries in the sector in total".
If you are more interested in the smaller segments of the bar and how they contribute to the bar total, it is also possible to reverse the sorting, so that the smallest segments end up in the base of the bar. This is done by setting the **Reverse bar segment order** in the **Appearance** section of the Visualization Properties.

### Configurable drawing order of markers

In a scatter plot or a map chart with markers, it is now possible to define the drawing order of markers by a column or custom expression.

The scatter plot below is drawn using the default drawing order.

By specifying a column to define the drawing order in the Visualization Properties, you can adjust the order the markers are drawn in. In this example, the same column is used to specify the drawing order.
as was used on the coloring axis, which results in red markers being drawn on top of green markers, which in turn are drawn on top of blue markers:

If desired, it is possible to reverse the drawing order. It is also possible to specify the drawing order using a different column than what is used in the visualization, or even use a custom expression to obtain the drawing order you need. Below, the drawing order is defined by a different column than what is used to configure the visualization. This means that any color of markers can be drawn on top of, or below, other colors, depending on the value of the column or expression that is used to define the drawing order.
Create hierarchy from the visualization axis

In both the installed client and the web authoring client it is possible to right-click the column selector and create a hierarchy of the selected columns.

*When there are multiple columns on a categorical axis, you can right-click and select Create hierarchy.*

The hierarchy is represented in the data panel as shown below, and it is also possible to rename or delete the hierarchy from the Data panel.

View an analysis using multiple screens

Spotfire Business Author and Spotfire Consumer users can now analyze data across multiple browser windows and multiple screens. Different pages in an analysis can be viewed in different browser windows, while everything is kept in sync. Interacting with one data visualization will automatically update the other visualizations in a different window.

If you have more than one screen with your computer, you can now view your analysis file with Spotfire Business Author or Spotfire Consumer on all your screens simultaneously. Just right-click the page tab and select **Open page in new window.**
Open page in new window option in Business Author.

This opens a new page tab in the browser which you can drag to your other screen. You can now view several pages of your analysis at the same time, using more than one screen. Naturally, the pages are connected as with any Spotfire analysis – if you mark or filter on a page on one screen, that action affects visualizations on the other screen as well. With more screen real estate to work with, it is easier to analyze your data.

Examples:

- Create a details visualization and put it on a separate screen.
- Brush over several screens – See how marking items in one view affects the other views. This works just as before in Spotfire, but now over more than one screen.
- Make several pages of a dashboard visible at once.
Using two browser windows to view the same analysis. Notice the brush linking between the visualizations.

Improved web mashups – multiple analysis views

It is now possible to embed interactive Spotfire visualizations into any website by using the web mashup API. This interface allows you to freely mix HTML with Spotfire data visualizations, providing an interactive data analysis experience embedded on a web page.

As an example, it is now much easier to create a web mashup that displays some Spotfire visualizations, and, based on a click, pops a window with another Spotfire visualization in it. In the example below, the floating table on top of the map is in fact a Spotfire visualization presented on top of a third party map service. The floating table visualization can be moved around or resized as needed.
A web mashup that integrates Spotfire visualizations and a third party map service.

In some cases, it is also beneficial for the user experience to be able to present visualizations in a popup in response to a mouse click. With a little bit of mashup code, this is now possible.

When clicking on the physician names in either the table or the map, a Spotfire details visualization is popped in a separate window.

**Recommendations improvements**

Recommended visualizations can now also show combination charts as possible options.

When selecting suitable columns, the Recommended visualizations dialog now provides the combination chart as one of the options. Combination charts can be useful when visualizing more than one continuous variable.
Performance improvements

The ability of Spotfire to handle visualizations with many graphical elements has been improved. Spotfire is known for leading performance when visualizing large data sets. With this improvement, when many Spotfire web users are analyzing data in visualizations with many graphical elements, performance is even better than in earlier versions. Below is an example of a visualization with many graphical elements.
Copy cell value in web clients

You can now copy the contents of a table cell to the clipboard from the web clients.

Right-click and select **Copy cell value** to open the cell value in a new window, from which it can be copied.
This functionality is available both in Spotfire Consumer and Spotfire Business Author.

**Configurable margin when exporting to PDF**

It is now possible to specify the desired margin when exporting to PDF. This feature is available both in the installed client and in the web clients.
Map chart improvements

The map chart has been improved with a new map chart projection, as well as some improvements to the WMS handling when using the British National Grid reference system.

- The EPSG:4413 - NAD27 / BLM 13N (ftUS) projection (the Carthage coordinate reference system) is now supported by the map chart.
- Previous issues causing layer offset when using WMS with British National Grid reference system have been resolved.
Predictive analytics

The TERR (TIBCO Enterprise Runtime for R) engine embedded in Spotfire Analyst and TIBCO Spotfire Statistics Services has been updated to TERR 4.0, with several new features.

**TERR engine improvements**

- Expanded support for core R functions and CRAN packages (for example, improved compatibility with many key R packages such as dplyr, plyr, reshape2, lubridate and RPostGresSQL). For a full list of R Package Compatibility and other enhancements for TERR 4.0, review the TERR 4.0 documentation at [https://docs.tibco.com/products/tibco-enterprise-runtime-for-r-4-0-0](https://docs.tibco.com/products/tibco-enterprise-runtime-for-r-4-0-0).
- The documentation now includes much more detailed and useful information on package compatibility to help determining how compatible various CRAN packages are with TERR.
Data management

There have been several improvements to the way you can manage your data within Spotfire.

To mention some of the data management updates; the new expanded data panel provides the business user with easy access to simple data preparation tools, the custom expression editor in Business Author has been improved, and the expression language has been enhanced with new functions.

Prepare data directly from the data panel

Spotfire Business Author users now have easy access to some data preparation capabilities using the new, expanded data panel. Here, you can change the data type or formatting of columns, replace empty values, add calculated columns, etc., as well as get an overview of your current data. The expanded data panel is also available in Spotfire Analyst.

- See your visualizations automatically being perfected, in real time, as you fix issues in your data.
- Change column data types whenever you need to, without the risk of destroying the precision of your underlying data.
- When you import data into Spotfire, columns sometimes get assigned a data type which isn't the one you wanted. You can now change the data type of a column after import into the Business Author. Changing the data type is a non-destructive operation. You can easily switch between different data types and it doesn't matter in which order you perform data type conversions. An incorrect data type might have been assigned for many reasons:
  - A numeric column might contain both measures and also comments on why a number is missing, or, a missing number might be indicated by something like 'NA'. In these cases, the data is typically imported as a string, but you might like to change it to a numeric column, to be able to perform aggregations and calculations in visualizations.
  - You might have dates in some particular date format that is not automatically recognized, or, the data might use a different locale than your current locale. For example, if you have a Swedish locale but want to analyze US dates, you might want to convert the automatically interpreted strings into dates.
  - You might have numbers with a decimal point which doesn't match the current locale. For example, your locale uses points, but the data you are analyzing uses commas for decimal points. In some of those cases the data is imported as a string but you might want to convert it into some numeric data type.
  - You might have numbers imported into the Currency data type that you would rather see as Real or some other numeric format.
  - You might have accidentally gotten some "junk" prefix/postfix in your column and you want to remove that. For example, you might have gotten a semicolon at the end of each number "12.321321;", or something similar, that should be removed to be able to use the numbers in visualizations.
- Build expressions to create new values from other columns directly from the data panel.
Calculated column added in the data panel.

- Replace empty values so that aggregations of your data become more accurate.
  Empty values replacement in the data panel.

- Change column sorting whenever you need to. Text-based columns (strings) can be sorted differently, depending on whether you want digits in the texts to be treated as numbers or to be
sorted strictly alphabetically. You may also want to define a custom sort order, if the strings in the column has a hierarchical structure that is not alphabetical.

- Change column formatting whenever you need to. The formatting of a column defines how the data in the column will be presented. For example, depending on how you format a date column, the dates therein can be shown as "01/12/2015" or "January 12th, 2015".

*Change column formatting in the data panel.*
**Improved custom expression editor in Business Author**

The built-in editor for custom expressions is now enhanced with syntax highlighting that makes it easier to create and maintain expressions and scripts.

In addition, the expression editor supports context sensitive autocomplete functionality.
Expression language improvements

The Spotfire expression language has been enhanced with several new functions. They are available both in Spotfire Analyst and Spotfire Business Author.

Two new binning methods have been added to the expression language, to make it easier to get nicer limits when binning numeric columns. AutoBinNumeric is used to group the values in the specified column into the defined number of bins (or possibly more bins), using natural limits such as even tens or hundreds. BinByEvenDistance is used to group the values in the specified column so there is an even distance between all bins. You can optionally define where to start counting and you will define the interval length when you apply the method.

There are also other new methods that have been added:

- FromEpochMilliseconds – Converts the column or value to a datetime, where numbers are interpreted as the number of milliseconds that have passed since 1970-01-01.
- FromEpochSeconds – Converts the column or value to a datetime, where numbers are interpreted as the number of seconds that have passed since 1970-01-01.
- ToEpochMilliseconds – Converts the column or value from a datetime to a number representing the number of milliseconds that have passed since 1970-01-01.
- ToEpochSeconds – Converts the column or value from a datetime to a number representing the number of seconds that have passed since 1970-01-01.
- ParseReal – Parses a string to a Real value.
- ParseTimeSpan – Parses TimeSpan information from a string to a TimeSpan format.
- FirstValidAfter – Substitutes null values in a column with the first valid value after the missing value.
- FirstValidBefore – Substitutes null values in a column with the first valid value before the missing value.

Improved auto-bins for numeric columns

The default bins created when auto-binning numeric columns now use natural limits.

For example, auto-binning of an age distribution can now automatically result in bins with ten years in each bin (the result is depending on the values in the distribution).
Change column category in the data panel

If the suggested category for a column is not your preferred category, you can change it using drag-and-drop within the Data panel, or by right-clicking the column and selecting a different category from the pop-up menu.

In some cases, a column with numbers might represent categorical values rather than continuous; for example, for columns such as "SalesOrderID" or "NumberOfCylinders". In such cases it makes more sense to use the column as a categorical column (often on the X-axis or the Color axis) rather than as a continuous column (which is often used on the Y-axis or Value axis).

If a column is properly categorized in the Data panel, Spotfire Recommendations will be better and Spotfire will provide better default configurations for new visualizations.

For more information, see Expression language improvements.
Data access

Within the data access area, many great updates are available in Spotfire 7.5.

To mention a few of the updates; it is now possible to access data from Apache Spark SQL, Databricks Cloud, and Salesforce.com via new connectors, parameters and prompting is now supported, the SAP HANA connector has been improved in numerous ways, and several functionalities have been added for OLAP cubes.

OLAP

TIBCO Spotfire 7.5 includes a range of new OLAP functionality, making it easier, faster, and possible to realize more use cases based on data from OLAP cubes.

Analyze cube data by using value keys

It is now possible to configure relations and column matches using unique keys instead of values.

Sometimes creating relations and column matches using values is not enough to show the data in the best way. It is great as long as you are only working with unique values, such as unique product codes or oil well IDs, but if the values in the cube are not unique, like employee names or names of cities, then matching by value will not be sufficient. TIBCO Spotfire 7.5 exposes the unique key behind each value so that a relation and column match can be created between keys instead of values.

This means that

- Data relations can now be configured to relate on key in addition to value.
- On-demand data tables can now be fetched based on keys in addition to values.
- Visual joins and column matches can now be configured based on keys in addition to values.
- Custom expressions can utilize the new KeyOf function, enabling, for example, visualization of keys.
What's New in TIBCO Spotfire® 7.5
Analyze cube data in the table visualization

It is now possible to manually add columns, one by one, from an in-database cube data source, to a table visualization.

This means that it is possible for Spotfire to query the cube for row level data and visualize a few columns of cube data in columnar format. For example, this enables use in details visualizations.

![2 columns from Adventure Works](image)

Working with large OLAP hierarchies in hierarchy filters

TIBCO Spotfire 7.5 allows you to analyze and navigate the largest cubes and cube hierarchies.

Simply let TIBCO Spotfire load the largest hierarchies level by level as you navigate the hierarchy filter. More modest sized hierarchies are automatically loaded into TIBCO Spotfire up front to allow rapid navigation at any time.

If you notice that a hierarchy’s filter is not loading data as expected you can edit the data connection and, in the Data Selection in Connection dialog, specify that the hierarchy should load values on request.
Improved presentation of OLAP hierarchies in the data panel

The Data panel has a new view showing the underlying source structure of the cube, together with improved tooltips with some of the metadata available in the OLAP data source.

It's now also possible to drag and drop single hierarchy levels to visualizations.
Parameters and prompting

It is now possible to define prompts when working with connectors.

By defining prompts you can narrow down the data set to be analyzed, and limit large data volumes. This provides faster response times, and a data discovery session on personalized or relevant data only. Prompts can be defined on named parameters (for example in custom queries or information views in SAP HANA) and on columns. Manual single-valued input fields, ranges, single selection, and multi selection prompts are available. Prompting is currently not supported for OLAP connectors.
Add data from data connections shared in Spotfire library

It is now possible for Business Author users to add data from data connections that have previously been shared in the Spotfire library.

It has already been possible to create, publish, and share data connections to external data sources using the Manage Data Connections tool. With the possibility to add data from data connections in the library, you can now create a new analysis in Business Author, based on a shared data connection, by just double-clicking on the connection name in the Business Author library browser.
TIBCO Spotfire® Connectors

There are several updates to the data connectors. Highlights are multiple SAP HANA connector improvements and a new connector for Salesforce.com.

Custom primary keys

If a data table does not have primary key columns specified in the data source, one or more columns can now be marked as primary key columns.

This will enable marking in non-aggregated visualizations based on the data table. A primary key column is indicated with a yellow key symbol.
**Connector import row limit**

To protect Web Player services from running out of memory due to imports of large amounts of row level data, an administrator can now set a limit on how much data connectors are allowed to import.

**Preview**

When working with the Views in Connection dialogue it is now possible to preview data tables before making the decision to add them to the data connection.
New Salesforce.com connector

With the new Salesforce.com connector, it is now possible to load data from both reports and data tables on Salesforce.com into Spotfire for further analysis.

*Salesforce.com tables selected with prompts defined on two columns.*

A Salesforce.com report selected.
New Apache Spark SQL connector

Spotfire now has native and certified support for Apache Spark SQL and Databricks Cloud via the new Apache Spark SQL connector.

*The Apache Spark SQL connector login dialog.*

Microsoft SQL Server connector now supports stored procedures

It is now possible to import data that is the result of executed stored procedures in Microsoft SQL Server.

If there is a required parameter in a stored procedure, you will be prompted for it. Our ambition is to add stored procedures support for more connectors over time.
Improved SAP HANA connector

The SAP HANA connector has been improved in multiple ways.

- SAP HANA Information Views hierarchies are now automatically replicated to Spotfire.
- SAP HANA text joins are now supported. This enables selection of the language your data should be represented in.
- SAP HANA column descriptions can now be visualized in Information Views.
- SAP HANA Attribute Views are now supported.
- SAP HANA metadata is now loaded on demand to speed up the definition of Spotfire views.
- By defining the key column in Spotfire, marking in visualizations is now enabled even when no primary key column is defined in SAP HANA.
- Variables and input parameters defined in SAP HANA can now be handled in Spotfire using prompts.
**Improved Teradata connector**

New settings for Teradata connections are now available.

- Teradata character sets are now supported, enabling analysis of for example data in Chinese.
- Additional connection parameters are available, such as connection and command timeout, and query banding settings.
Support for Redshift ODBC driver
Amazon has introduced their own Redshift ODBC driver. TIBCO Spotfire's native data connector now supports this driver.

New supported version for PostgreSQL connector
Spotfire now supports PostgreSQL version 9.4.

TIBCO Spotfire Drivers – now available
ODBC drivers for Salesforce.com, Apache Spark SQL, and Amazon Redshift are now available to all customers with no extra licenses.

The fastest way to connect to data is to use a connector. Connectors do however need to be paired with database drivers, and sometimes it can be cumbersome to obtain the correct driver to install. To make it as quick and easy as possible, TIBCO Spotfire Drivers is now available, containing drivers for Salesforce.com, Apache Spark SQL, and Amazon Redshift. Our ambition is to add more drivers over time.
The TIBCO Spotfire Server has gone through massive changes to allow easier scalability and growth. An entirely new topology, with a service oriented architecture and a single place to handle all nodes and services available, including any Web Player and Automation Services instances, will greatly improve the way the administrators work with the Spotfire environment.

There are several benefits to the new and improved topology:

1. Centralized, web-based, administrative user interface.
2. Easier functionality and usability for all types of users, not just for engineers.
3. Better and centralized control over the nodes and services in the system.
4. Overhauled user experience of the web-based administrative user interface.
5. New icons.
6. New notification functionality.
7. Tooltips providing more information on most user interface elements.
8. Contextual menus for easy access, available where applicable.

Screenshot of home page.
deployments & packages

the deployments & packages page is used by the administrator to support the creation of multiple end user environments.

with the new deployments & packages page, administrators can configure new or specialized environments within seconds, and deploy them out to thousands of users at a time. the improved workflow is scalable and easy to manage. it is now possible to multi-select, copy directly from one deployment to an existing, or to a new deployment, created on the fly.

users & groups

the new users & groups page now has a cleaner layout and a clearer, self-servicing, workflow.

the users & groups page is used by the administrator to handle users and groups in the spotfire environment.
Nodes & services

The **Nodes & Services** page provides administrators the ability to deploy, configure, manage, and run services. Server management allows an enterprise to have multiple Web Player services, or instances of Automation services. This centralizes access to all services in the topology.

The **Nodes & Services** page allows the administrator to manage scalability quickly and easily; particularly for large companies with many users. In the past, the administrator needed to login to multiple servers to manage the rules or scheduling updates but now all nodes and services are handled in one place. Resource pools also allow grouping of Web Player services, to simplify scheduling updates and routing of users to specified locations.

How Nodes & Services work together with Scheduling & Routing

- Using Nodes & Services functionality:
  - The administrator create as many Web Player services they want and manages them from one central location (which addresses scalability).
Administrators can group the services into "Resource Pools" to manage who has access to them and schedule things specific to that resource pool. The management of resource pools is also done from one place.

- Using Scheduling & Routing functionality:
  - The administrator can assign users, groups, or files to a specific Web Player service. This means that if certain people, such as executive users, need access to certain or specialized reports, the administrator can manage this here.
  - The administrator can schedule updates by file type.
  - Administrators can create as many scheduling rules they need and are able to assign them to specific resource pools.

**Scheduling & routing**

The Scheduling & Routing page is used to easily manage the platform, make sure data is up-to-date, that the correct people receive correct data, via self-service.

In a continued effort to create a holistic place for the administrator, this functionality has been moved to the joint administrative user interface, allowing administrators the ability to schedule updates to the data in the library from one place. The Scheduling & Routing page allows you to create rules to direct specific users or groups to certain areas.
Monitoring & diagnostics

The Monitoring & Diagnostics page is used to easily manage the platform as well as identifying and resolving problems using self-service.

The new Monitoring & Diagnostics page includes added capabilities to view a high level overview, diagnostics on the network, analysis routing, instance routing, etc. It has an updated user interface for troubleshooting and monitoring of installed services.
Overview

Server Diagnostics

Network
Troubleshooting

Automation Services

Server tools

The Server Tools page allows administrators to open up the graphical configuration tool in which it is possible to set up LDAP, etc.

This feature was previously accessible to the administrator by selecting "Tools". Now, this feature is accessible through the web-based administrator user interface.
System requirements

There are changes regarding system requirements.

32-bit version

Spotfire Analyst is now available in a 32-bit version.

No dependency on Internet Explorer

Spotfire Analyst and Spotfire Desktop no longer require Internet Explorer 10 or 11 to be installed on the system.

Spotfire Consumer supported on iPhone

Spotfire Consumer is now supported on iPhone, using Safari. Please refer to the following document for guidelines: Designing Spotfire Dashboards for small screens.

Windows 10 support

Spotfire is now supported on Windows 10.

Edge browser support

Spotfire 7.5 is supported with the Edge browser.

Citrix XenApp 7.6

Spotfire 7.5 is supported on Citrix XenApp 7.6.
Developer tools and APIs

Spotfire 7.5 also contains some news for developers.

Developer tools

It is now possible to display a set of developer tools under the Tools menu in Spotfire. You can also run IronPython scripts without wrapping them in a transaction.

Developer tools in the Tools menu

Tools for developers and power users can now be exposed in a new menu option: Tools > Development.

Development Tools enables you to:

- Reload the browser user interface (Alt+Shift+Ctrl+F5).
- Launch the browser debugger (Alt+Shift+Ctrl+F12).
- Copy the URL.

To enable the Development Tools menu option, select Tools > Options, go to the Application page and select the Show development menu check box.

IronPython scripts running without being wrapped in a transaction

For IronPython scripts, it is now possible to configure them not to be wrapped inside a transaction when they execute. This setting is available for scripts triggered by clicking a button (or using any other action control) or by a click in a graphical table. However, scripts executed when a document property changes will always be wrapped in a transaction.

New APIs

There are several new APIs or API updates available for Spotfire developers in version 7.5.

Read Current Style API

The new Read Current Style API enables you to adapt the look and feel of extensions to the theme currently used in Spotfire. The API enables you to read style attributes set by the current theme, such as colors, fonts, borders, and so on, of visuals and panels, and apply the same style in your extension.

New capabilities in the web mashup API

It is now possible to embed interactive Spotfire visualizations into any website by using the web mashup API. This interface allows you to freely mix HTML with Spotfire data visualizations, providing an interactive data analysis experience embedded on a web page.

As an example, it is now much easier to create a web mashup that displays some Spotfire visualizations, and, based on a click, pops a window with another Spotfire visualization in it.

Build Web Mashups from Spotfire Cloud

It is now possible to create a web mashup using a DXP file created using Spotfire Cloud.

API to support multiple document views in web mashups

There is now an API to create web mashups with multiple document views as described in the topic Improved web mashups – multiple analysis views.

IronPython scripts running without being executed in a transaction

For IronPython scripts, it is now possible to configure them not to be wrapped inside a transaction when they execute.
This feature is available for scripts triggered by clicking a button (or using any other action control) or by a click in a graphical table. However, scripts executed when a document property changes will always be wrapped in a transaction.