

Why IT Professionals Choose Tableau for Modern BI and Analytics



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This paper is written for IT and line of business intelligence decision makers to understand what differentiates Tableau from other modern analytics solutions in the market. A growing demand for data means an increasingly competitive business intelligence and analytics market, and we believe a critical aspect in evaluating modern BI solutions is to understand more than the present capabilities of the software. To ensure its longevity as an investment for driving enterprise transformation, you should have confidence in the mission, philosophy, and community that surround your analytics platform and understand the value these bring to end users and IT professionals as you deploy, scale, and support your modern BI efforts.

BI and analytics providers may make similar claims about features, and the end visualizations may even look the same. However, there's more value to your organization through the deeper insights users get when empowered to ask and answer their own questions.

Tableau is the market-leading choice in modern business intelligence platforms, offering the greatest analytical breadth, depth, and flexibility. Everything we do is driven by our mission to help people see and understand data. Our platform is simple to deploy and scale, and as intuitive to learn as it is powerful, helping individuals and organizations get insights and value fast.



*3-year, risk adjusted results for a composite organization created for The Total Economic Impact™ Of Tableau, a December 2019 commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Tableau.



I can tell you that easily it runs into 10,000–20,000 man hours in terms of productivity generated because of the automation and standardization you get out of Tableau. But more than that, to me it's the business value—and you cannot really put a price on it.

—PREETHAM SHANBHAG, SENIOR DIRECTOR,
FP&A OPERATIONS AND TRANSFORMATION, HONEYWELL INDIA

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Tableau offers the greatest choice and flexibility as a complete, modern analytics platform

Your BI platform should not dictate your data and analytics strategy. Choice is a Tableau philosophy, and we give customers the greatest options for how to deploy, what data to connect to, and how to collaborate. With flexible deployment options, you'll not only be able to leverage existing technology investments, you'll be prepared for changes to your technology ecosystem. You can rely on Tableau as a constant as both your data environment and the needs of the business continue to evolve and expand.



We needed a tool that could take all of that great data and information and allow us to turn it into an insight. From a global perspective, it becomes more and more paramount to have all of this information and be able to discern it. Now, with what we've created with our logical data warehouse and Tableau, people can collaborate and all of that information is accessible.

—TIM NALL, CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, BROWN-FORMAN

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Deploy Tableau where you want—on Linux or Windows, embedded in portals and applications, on-premises, in the public cloud, or fully hosted SaaS. Our managed service runs on the exact same technology as what you deploy on your own hardware, so if you change deployment models, you don't have to rebuild a thing. Regardless of your cloud strategy, Tableau supports you and you won't find this much flexibility with any other complete platform. Additionally, you can use existing security and authentication protocols, device management platforms, and more.

Tableau supports the full cycle of self-service analytics from prep to analysis, governance and data management, and sharing. Users can work with any shape, size, and type of data, whether on-premises, in cloud applications, or flat files. Query data directly with a live connection, or create extracts that automatically refresh on any schedule you set. Author new content completely from the web. Interact with Tableau from your Android or iOS mobile device.

Plus, with our Extensions API, developers can create dashboard extensions that enable customers to integrate and interact with data from other applications directly in Tableau. See what other developers and partners have built in the [Extension Gallery](#).

Administration that's simple, yet powerful

Tableau offers the features, integration, automation, and auditability you need to easily track and manage content, users, licenses, and server performance—directly in Tableau or with enterprise-standard monitoring tools. We've made it very easy to see and manage content (with version control), users, groups, and tasks (like extract refreshes, subscriptions, and Active Directory synchronization), as well as maintain row-level security on your data. Additionally, there are default views built right into the administration capabilities, so you can visually monitor traffic to views and data sources, user actions, load times, and many more performance metrics.

Tableau Server Management Add-on

Advanced platform capabilities for security, scalability, and manageability help you more efficiently run a large, mission-critical Tableau Server deployment. Get more from your analytics environment with enhanced agent-based monitoring, simplified content migration, and the ability to host your Tableau Server metadata repository externally with Amazon RDS Postgres.

Please note: The Tableau Server Management Add-on is licensed separately from your Tableau Server deployment. [Learn more](#)

Exactly the security and governance you need

People in your organization are already self-serving their analytical needs. They export data for downstream analysis and collaboration via spreadsheet files and email, often using existing BI reports as ETL for their own, ungoverned analytics. The people who know the data best should ask and answer their questions, but responsibly, without risking governance, trust, or security. You need self-service without chaos or compromise.

Tableau securely supports as much or as little governance required to balance IT needs and business agility, allowing access to the full spectrum of governance—from a traditional, IT-owned pipeline to an IT-enabled, self-service model. At scale, governed self-service analytics is made possible where flexible controls intersect with well-defined roles, responsibilities, and processes. It's a journey of right-sizing security and governance principles for iterative success.

The Tableau platform satisfies security, governance, and monitoring requirements while hiding the complexity of your data architecture from business users.

Tableau Data Server allows you to centrally manage:

- Data access and permissions in a secure, governed operational model.
- Database drivers—installations aren't required on users' local machines.
- Data sources, including Published and Certified Data Sources.

[Learn more](#)

Tableau Data Management Add-on

Increase transparency and trust to better manage and govern your self-service analytics environment. Understand the impact of changing tables, and communicate data quality to users directly in the flow of their analysis. From data prep to cataloging, search, and governance, you can make sure data is discoverable, fresh, and trusted for making decisions. The Tableau Data Management Add-on includes [Tableau Catalog](#) and [Tableau Prep Conductor](#) and is fully integrated into Tableau Server and Online.

Please note: The Tableau Data Management Add-on is licensed separately from your Tableau Server or Online deployment. [Learn more](#)

Tableau helps people and organizations become more data-driven

In our age of digital transformation, everyone agrees that putting data at the center of conversations can drive change—but it takes more than the right analytics technology to do so. Evaluating a potentially transformational solution shouldn't stop at the software. You should also consider how it will be rolled out, enabled, scaled, and supported to ensure adoption and engagement.

Working with thousands of customers and analytics experts, we've captured best practices and developed a step-by-step guide to creating a data-driven organization. **Tableau Blueprint** helps customers implement a deliberate and holistic approach to developing their enterprise-wide analytics practice.

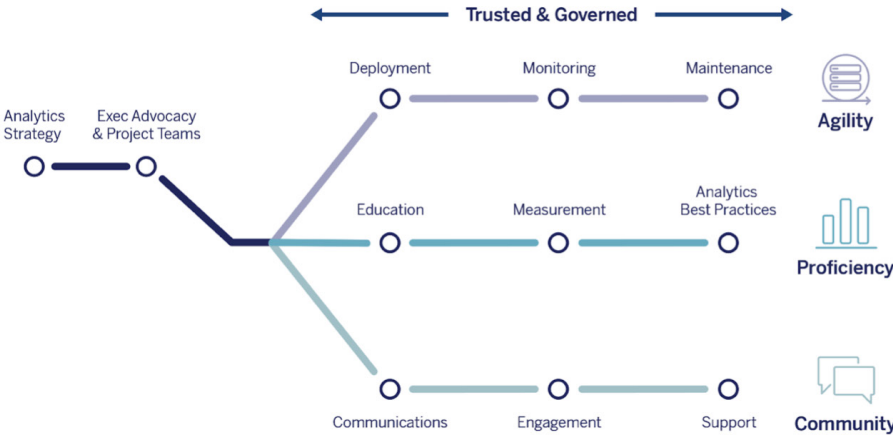


Tableau Blueprint provides concrete plans, recommendations, and guidelines across critical foundational work and three primary workstreams that will turn repeatable processes into core capabilities that build and reinforce a data-driven mindset throughout your organization.



In this moment, we're making data a more powerful asset within the organization, bringing our data to a new level internally. Previously we thought of each track linearly, but Blueprint changed our perspective—that they need to run in parallel.

—PRIANKA NANDY, CHIEF DATA & ANALYTICS OFFICER
UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

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Tableau products are designed to put the user first

Our mission is to help people see and understand data—the most critical word being *people*. We believe that people are your greatest asset, and that data—that you spend millions of dollars capturing, curating, cleaning, and storing—can be used to make your people even more valuable. If you can get the data into the hands of the people who know the business, that’s when the magic happens. We want to give people the ability to think, act, and deliver.

Unfortunately, most business analytics products are built to centralize and control data, not democratize it. What’s more is that there’s too often a high barrier to entry to data-driven insights, as many solutions require deep, technical expertise that limit the benefits of analytics to the specialized few. But we believe data analysis should be about asking questions and not about learning software. Deeply specialized skills are a barrier to satisfying curiosity and unleashing new creative potential at scale—it’s all about empowering people to discover, explore, and share powerful insights with ease.



I think that’s been the biggest contributor to Tableau’s success at JPMC. It evolved from nothing to where we are today because people want to use it, and not because IT went off in a bubble.

—JASON MACK, DIRECTOR OF ANALYTICS, JPMORGAN CHASE

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It’s not just about the dashboard

We make data easy to explore by using the visual as an interface for the data, not simply as a way to display the result. While a dashboard can be powerful, the transformative value to the business lies within exploration and interactivity, allowing users to answer question after question in an uninterrupted flow. A dashboard or report may help to answer known unknowns, but exploration through visual analysis is how people discover unknown unknowns and arrive at impactful insights beyond initial questions.

VizQL is our patented, visual query language that translates drag-and-drop actions into data queries and then expresses that data visually. VizQL abstracts the underlying complexities of query and analysis, letting people answer questions as fast as they can think of them.

Tableau enables the greatest breadth and depth of self-service, visual analysis

Interactive, visual analytics are the new norm in business intelligence. Visual analysis makes it easier for users of all skill sets to gain insight from their data. Yet, many BI solutions retain antiquated, code-heavy processes that rely on a set of predetermined criteria to create reports and dashboards—only to limit the insight users can glean without the specific, technical expertise to modify the visualization. What happens when they have follow-up questions or need to pivot their analysis? Do they go back to IT and wait in a queue of requests? Or do they export data to spreadsheets, sacrificing information governance?

In Tableau, immediate visual response allows limitless visual data exploration without interrupting the flow of analysis. There's no “build” vs. “view” mode, and with unlimited “undo,” there is no wrong path. Tableau also visualizes all data points—not a sample or subset of your data—so you're able to make the most informed decisions with your analysis.

Powerful analytics for everyone—no coding or deep expertise required

- Automatically group and replace similar data points while preparing data in Tableau Prep.
- Join tables from different vendors and databases, then save them as a new, single data source. Bring additional data into analysis, automatically linking fields to your existing data.
- Model data in the midst of analysis. Create groups, sets, and calculated fields in a few clicks. Hide or exclude rows, columns, or outliers in a couple clicks.
- Select multiple data points with a lasso or other selection tools—no holding Control with repeated clicks.
- Drag and drop to create reference and trend lines, distribution bands, clusters, and more.
- Perform level of detail and quick table calculations to manipulate aggregated data with a few clicks, simplifying otherwise challenging database work.

Maps

Built-in mapping abilities include display data by country, state, city, and more without latitude or longitude. Tableau automatically recognizes geographic fields, and supports spatial files, linear geometries, dual-axis maps, custom maps, and more.

Dates and time

Tableau automatically recognizes date and time formats and creates date hierarchies, making it easy to quickly move through years, quarters, months, weeks, or days during analysis.

We don't stop at making end-user self-service possible. We're building on the intuition of the pioneers and the conclusions of decades of dedicated, scientific research to make analysis faster, easier, and more intuitive. Tableau builds visual best practices into the software—from hand-selected color palettes that remove the natural bias of the human eye to automatic suggestions for effective chart types based on the data you're analyzing.

And we're continuously investing in augmented analytics innovations that help anyone from data scientists to business users get to answers faster and uncover unanticipated insights through machine learning, statistics, natural language, and smart data prep.

Ask Data

Type a question with natural language and instantly get a rich data visualization as a response. Refine your question as you explore. Customize the semantic model to your organization's definitions and calculations. Fully integrated in the Tableau platform, Ask Data works with existing published data sources—no additional deployment needed.

[Learn more](#)

Explain Data

Leverage the power of AI to explain specific points in your data. Behind the scenes, hundreds of potential explanations are checked with advanced statistical models. The most likely ones are surfaced as focused, interactive vizs. Dive deeper into an explanation while staying in your analytical workflow.

[Learn more](#)

Get to “aha” moments even faster

- Surface popular and Certified Data Sources as recommendations to users, as well as recommended tables and smart joins, backed by machine learning.
- See optimal visualization types based on the data you're using with Show Me.
- Customize how dashboards are viewed on tablets and mobile devices with the Device Designer.
- Filter published content and save a personalized view as your default. Additionally, leverage user permissions to automatically create custom filtered views of content.
- Configure event-driven alerts and subscribe yourself and others to content on any desired notification schedule.

Built-in statistical algorithms are embedded into Tableau, allowing business users to leverage powerful functions like k-means clustering, predictive analytics, and regression analysis. Data scientists can leverage Tableau to communicate the results of their analytic models: Tableau not only connects to file outputs from MATLAB, R, SAS, and SPSS as data sources, but supports direct integration with R and Python. You can run code directly inside Tableau—including custom scripts in Tableau Prep flows—as well as visualize and manipulate model results from predictive services such as Rserve and TabPy.



Tableau helped position Allstate Special Investigation Unit as an industry leader. We use advanced data analytics to fight against insurance fraud and protect Allstate customers.

—MARTA MAGNUSZEWSKA, SENIOR ANALYTICS LEADER, ALLSTATE

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From the individual analyst to your entire organization, Tableau delivers the most value with powerful analytics tailored to meet users' needs across all skill levels.

Tableau users are the most passionate and empowered

Our mission to help people see and understand data means we are focused on customer success. Tableau is focused exclusively on the BI market and since our foundation in 2003, we've continuously invested in research and development at an unrivaled pace. At the same time, we recognize that our customers are smarter and more knowledgeable about what they need than we ever will be. Much of our innovation is driven by customer feedback so we can continue to release features that are deeply impactful instead of just shiny or trendy.

A community that will not allow you to fail

One of the most valuable assets that differentiates Tableau, speeds up time to market, and ensures lasting engagement is the [Tableau Community](#). The unmatched passion and enthusiasm are a direct indication of the success these users have had with the product, and this type of support is incredibly useful to all types of Tableau customers.

We often hear from our customers, “the community will not allow you to fail.” The Tableau Community has more than one million members, spanning more than 500 user groups worldwide and active participation in our online forums. The Tableau Community is active, diverse, creative, and supportive of one another on and offline. These people are committed to helping others see the value in Tableau they’ve personally experienced, and love to share their experiences and best practices. One of the greatest opportunities to do so is at our annual Tableau Conference, where more than 18,000 live attendees (and growing!) gather to learn and network.

Standout members receive special recognition for their skills, participation, and contributions to the community as Tableau Ambassadors or Tableau Zen Masters. Individuals can also pass a Certification exam for professional recognition. Certifications have helped our expert users differentiate themselves, master new skills to progress their careers, and build credibility and equity with clients and coworkers alike.

Of course, Tableau also offers a host of support resources like online help articles and how-to videos, live training opportunities, and more. We’re committed to helping you deepen the value of your modern analytics investment—from building a center of excellence to fostering an internal community.



The exponential growth in Tableau adoption required us to rethink our capacity planning and support model. We developed an approach that supports both the experienced analysts as well as novice business users, advancing our data-driven culture.

—ANDREW SALESKY, GLOBAL DATA OFFICER, CHARLES SCHWAB

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Doing good with data

People all over the globe are using Tableau—not just for business analytics, but to grow and learn, to help others, and for passion projects that aim to improve the world through data. It’s proven that those with higher degrees of data literacy are in great demand, having more choices for employment opportunities.

Organizations are also exercising choices in which technologies and other businesses to partner with, increasingly guided by environmental, social, and governance criteria and responsibilities. From disease research, education patterns, and industrial efficiency to patient care and government spending, the opportunities to do good with data are endless.

Tableau Foundation

Tableau Foundation matches employee donations dollar for dollar, and matches community volunteering time with financial support to the nonprofits they work with.

Our grants combine our two most valuable resources—our people and our products—with financial support to non-profits reshaping our world.

Through the Tableau Service Corps, non-profits can connect with Tableau staff and partners looking to volunteer their data skills to help organizations have a greater impact.

Tableau Academic

To date, *Tableau Academic Programs* have helped more than 1 million students and instructors use Tableau in classrooms worldwide.

Tableau Public

Each week on *Tableau Public* more than 13,000 new visualizations are shared with the world by nonprofits, journalists, bloggers, political enthusiasts, and more.

Try Tableau to experience the difference



We started off with a very narrow business use-case and then it just quickly spread. Everyone wants to talk about big data analytics but Tableau simplifies it.

—ASHISH BRAGANZA, DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE, LENOVO INDIA

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Now you have a better idea of what makes Tableau the market-leading choice in modern business intelligence. If you ask us, we think the number one reason customers choose Tableau is because they try it out with their own data and experience the difference themselves. We don't just want you to take our word—or our customers' word—for it.

Start your trial of Tableau today.

[Get started](#)

About Tableau

Tableau is a complete, integrated, and enterprise-ready visual analytics platform that helps people and organizations become more data driven. Whether on-premises or in the cloud, on Windows or Linux, Tableau leverages your existing technology investments and scales with you as your data environment shifts and grows. Unleash the power of your most valuable assets: your data and your people.

Additional resources

[Tableau for the Enterprise: IT Overview](#)

[Total Economic Impact of Tableau](#)

[2020 Gartner Magic Quadrant](#)

[Value of Tableau](#)

[Tableau Blueprint](#)

[Compare Tableau](#)

[Customer Stories](#)

[Tableau Free Trial](#)

