Welcome to the third installment of Birst Pronto introductory blogs. In the previous blog I connected to data sources using the Connect page, and got access to the base data I’ll use in my reports. Now all of the important data is in Birst and ready for a few final touches to prepare the source for reporting.

But first, a little orientation. Pronto has the concept of a “prepared source”, that is a view of the data that Birst updates on a regular basis, so that your reports and dashboards are always up-to-date.

You can create multiple prepared sources from the “raw” or base sources that you extracted in the Connect page. If you to need merge tables from multiple raw sources, you can. Prepared sources are an efficient way to manage your report data, especially when you have different uses for the same tables. To get to the Prepare page, select it from the main Pronto menu.
The Prepare page lists all your tables and has a work area for preparing sources.

Since every prepared source is based on a raw source, first select the raw source by clicking its Create button.
Birst Pronto: Prepare Data in Pronto

Then name the prepared source.

The new source is listed with the raw sources. Note the difference in the icons for raw and prepared sources.

Pronto displays the columns from the base source in the work area. These are the columns you chose in the Connect page.
Underneath the preview is the transformation pipeline. This is a visual history of how you create the prepared source. The first event in the history is the name of the raw source.

There are many transformations you can perform on the data, to make it better suite your reports. Some transformations apply to the table as a whole, and some to individual columns. In this example I’ll show a simple one on a Date column. This column includes the timestamp along with the date, and the timestamp is really not needed for the reports.

I first select the Date column, then select the Date transform. I want to take out the Time element.
Pronto adds a column to the end of the series, and here you see the Date without the Time. Also, notice that the data type changed from DateTime to Date.
In the transformation pipeline there’s a new node for this Data change. If you don’t like the results of a transform, you can select its node and edit it again.
You may wonder why Pronto created a new column and didn’t just change the existing one. That’s because you may want to do another transformation on the original column. Plus, it’s easy to get rid of a column you don’t want… just select it, and click the Ignore transform.

And now the name of the new column needs to change…

Great! I’ll save this prepared source by clicking Publish.
Pronto’s indicator shows it’s working and lets you know when it is done.

Click the X button in the Transforms menu to go back to the list of tables and make more prepared sources.

If you ever need to go back and change it, you can. Pronto saves the whole history of changes. Just select its transform button from the list.

There’s a lot of power and flexibility in the Prepare page and its transforms and pipeline. The specified item was not found. goes into these capabilities.

In the next post of this series, you’ll see how to go to Visualizer to create reports from your prepared sources.

In some cases you want to do more sophisticated work with sources, to establish relationships between them.