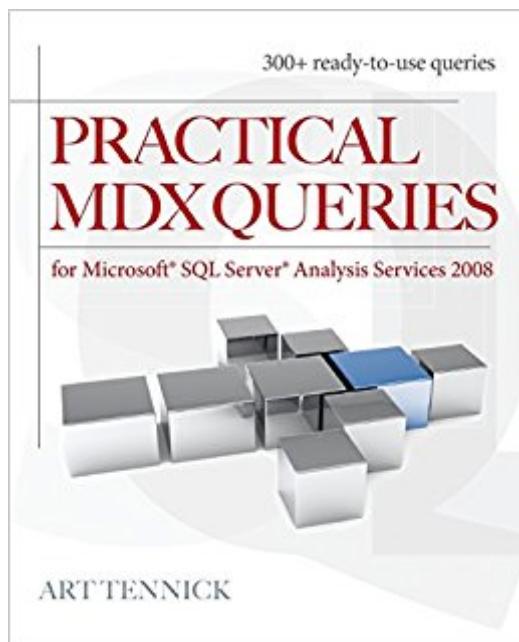


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# Practical MDX Queries: For Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services 2008



## Synopsis

300+ ready-to-use, powerful MDX queries This hands-on guide shows you how to use Multi-Dimensional Expressions (MDX) to extract business intelligence from multi-dimensional cubes. Practical MDX Queries contains more than 300 downloadable MDX queries that can be applied across a wide variety of business intelligence-related problems. The use, syntax, and results of each query are described in detail. The book emphasizes MDX for use with SSAS within SSMS, but the techniques and queries also apply to SSRS, SSIS, MDX in SQL, MDX in DMX, MDX in XMLA, WinForms, WebForms, PerformancePoint Server, ProClarity, and many third-party applications. Work with dimensions, hierarchies, levels, and members Navigate both horizontally and vertically across dimensions and hierarchies Sort the results of your queries Access subsets of dimension members and measure values using the Where clause and Filter function Use MDX query calculations Extract and manipulate dates and times Produce totals, subtotals, and changes cross time using aggregate and other functions Create, visualize, and manipulate sets Work with perspectives, subselects, and subcubes Display and hide empty cells Use, modify, format, and create Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Deliver MDX query results to end users

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am strongly against judging a book by its sample queries only. It's unfair! If you are trying to learn MDX from the MDX solutions book, you will get lost and frustrated and curse all the time. Now save yourself from those uncivil moments and enter the wonderful land of "practical mdx queries", which gently guides you through the treacherous land of MDX. FastTrack MDX is another good book for

beginners, but that book is awfully outdated. The most important thing about learning MDX is that you must get firm understanding of the basics of dimensions, hierarchies, levels and members, which are causally covered by the other books, assuming you have already mastered those concepts. The other books also use the shorthand notation of members without elaborating it, assuming that you are a genius or magician or someone with a lot of knowledge about MDX already. Sure, you can't master MDX by just reading one book. But this book will get you to a concrete start without pulling off all your remaining hairs or beating yourself to a pulp. The best part compared with other MDX book is that it sticks with the AdventureWorks sample while other books invent and re-invent the wheel by their own half-baked database. Here is a summary of the content:

**Chapter 1: Hello World: Easy Yet Effective Queries** This is a short chapter to get you started. It has a few queries so you get a flavor of the power and elegance of the MDX language.

**Chapter 2: Astrophysical: Playing with Dimensions** This chapter shows you how to work with dimensions, hierarchies, levels, and members. It's quite possibly the most difficult chapter in the whole book--especially if you are not familiar yet with the concepts of dimensions and hierarchies. Understanding them is vital if you want to write meaningful and powerful MDX.

**Chapter 3: Families and Friends: Navigating Dimensions** Here we explore moving up, down, and across dimensions and hierarchies. The general term for doing this is navigation. MDX allows you to navigate both horizontally and vertically. MDX (unlike SQL) is positionally aware--it knows where you are in the cube and can help you in your navigation.

**Chapter 4: Bringing Order: Sorting Results** This chapter introduces various ways of sorting the results of your queries. Business intelligence reports often have a requirement to put the information in some kind of order--whether numeric or alphabetic. This chapter shows you how to do this.

**Chapter 5: Slice, Dice, and Filter: Using Where and Filter** Often, you will want only a subset of your dimension members and measure values. This can be achieved by slicing and dicing with a Where clause. An alternative approach involves using criteria with a Filter function. The MDX Where clause is not the same as an SQL one--hopefully, by the end of the chapter you will be proficient at using it in MDX.

**Chapter 6: Using the Abacus: Introduction to Calculations** In general, the measures in your cube are based directly or indirectly on the columns in your fact table in your star schema. However, it's likely your reports will need further metrics. These are often based on the existing measures in some way. One way to devise these new measures is to use MDX query calculations. Here we explore how to do this. In addition, we take a look at creating nonmeasure members and creating our own sets of data.

**Chapter 7: Is Time a Dimension? Working with Dates and Times** Nearly every cube in the world has a date or time dimension. MDX provides many rich features that help you to analyze your data across history.

In this chapter, you are introduced to lots of functions for manipulating dates and times. These will help you produce brilliant business intelligence reports! Chapter 8: Clockwork: Calculations Using Dates and Times The previous chapter introduces the MDX to extract and manipulate dates. This chapter combines the MDX you learn there with aggregate and other functions. Here you get to use these aggregate and other functions to produce totals, subtotals, and changes across time. This is a big part of business intelligence reporting. Chapter 9: Venn Diagrams: Visualizing and Manipulating Sets Here's a wide-ranging chapter on working with sets and members of sets. By the end of the chapter, you'll be able to create, visualize, and manipulate sets. Chapter 10: Views on Cubes: Working with Subcubes If you are familiar with SQL, you may use views. One use of a view on a relational table is to present only a part of the table. Often, you will want to work on only a part of a cube. The SSAS versions of SQL views are called perspectives, subselects, and subcubes. Here we get to exploit those perspectives, subselects, and subcubes. Chapter 11: Not All There: Dealing with Empty Cells Cubes are often pretty big. They contain lots and lots of data. However, there will also be many gaps. For example, it's unlikely that every customer bought every product on every single day. There will be missing or null data. Sometimes, you want to see null values--maybe zero sales are of interest. Sometimes, the null values are a distraction and you will want to hide them. This chapter concentrates on displaying and hiding empty cells. Chapter 12: Smiley Faces: Working with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Key performance indicators (KPIs) are a vital part of business intelligence. At a glance, you can see how well you are doing without having to dig down and analyze individual metrics. They are a high-level overview of results--and of results against targets. Here we explore using, modifying, formatting, and creating KPIs in MDX. Chapter 13: Hodgepodge: A Chapter of Miscellaneous Techniques This is a catchall chapter for topics that do not fit easily into earlier chapters. Formatting and conditional formatting are investigated. There are also queries to drill through and drill down on the cube.

I learned more practical MDX in an hour with this book than I did struggling for weeks several with other texts and MS BOL. If you need results now, start here. You won't regret it. Tennick presents concise, clear, usable examples that not only give you a leg up on coding, but also lucidly illustrate some of the more difficult to grasp aspects of MDX queries. Yes, by all means, get a comprehensive text to look up arcane syntax rules, function classes, etc.. However, when it comes to writing queries, this hands down the most useful text I've found, and I searched long and hard. It had examples for almost everything I needed. Relative date ranges? Check. Percent of parent? Check. Hierarchy navigation? Check. Cumulative sums? Check. Custom sets? Check. Calculated

members? Check. Rolling averages? Check. Complex filtering? Check. When I first opened the box, I was concerned because compared to other texts, this one seemed pretty thin. However, I only had to skim a page or two to develop an appreciation for the author's lean, "cut to the chase" analyses and explanations of functions. His economical presentations are one of the key strengths of the book. My only minor quibble is his somewhat informal query formatting style, which can make the query text a bit harder to grasp immediately. Still, a perfect starting point for anyone who needs to start writing MDX queries right now. Great work!

I am a Database/BI Developer by trade and have spent 5+ years designing and building data warehouses with SQL Server. Although I have experience building cubes in SSAS, I never had much reason to go beyond the 'drag and drop' building of MDX queries in the cube browser and SSRS. Finally I wanted to add more MDX to my skill set so I looked at a number of books on and this one looked like the level I was interested in. It's probably not for anyone with a year+ of MDX writing experience (though you might pick up a few things), but it is a great start if you only have minimal exposure to the MDX language itself. I started with an understanding of Data Warehousing and how to design cubes, and felt this book wasted no time jumping right into actual MDX syntax that I wanted. If you don't have a knowledge of DWes and cubes, you might be a bit lost. Within the first several dozen pages I felt I had a better understanding of MDX than many hours of perusing articles on the internet. Though the book is a bit 'short' compared to many other IT books, it gets right to the important stuff. It very concisely lays out Concept > Query > Results > Analysis, which is a very effective way to teach this topic. I would have liked if had been a bit longer and went into some more complex real world applications (it has real world applications, I just would have liked even more) - but its only billed as an intermediate book anyway. Very happy with the purchase.

Best book to start learning MDX query, I've been working on tsql for few years and recently my work requires working with cube so I bought this book as my first MDX material , it explains in detail and step by step . Will recommend this book for a beginner

If you are an "MDX-Hacker"... someone familiar with SSAS/cubes but relies heavily on google/stackoverflow/SQLforums when it comes to writing custom MDX...and you wish to become proficient, this book is the perfect FIRST STEP. The clear example/explanation format used by this book to cover all the topics listed in the table of contents allows the reader to zip through at an amazing pace. For me personally, it helped to connect the dots on a few concepts which I had

previously struggled with.

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