

Author Tip | Concatenate Data Items in a List Column

Wendi Lewis - 2023-11-22 - Comments (0) - Cognos Analytics

Concatenating in Cognos Analytics allows you to combine 2 data items in a list column.

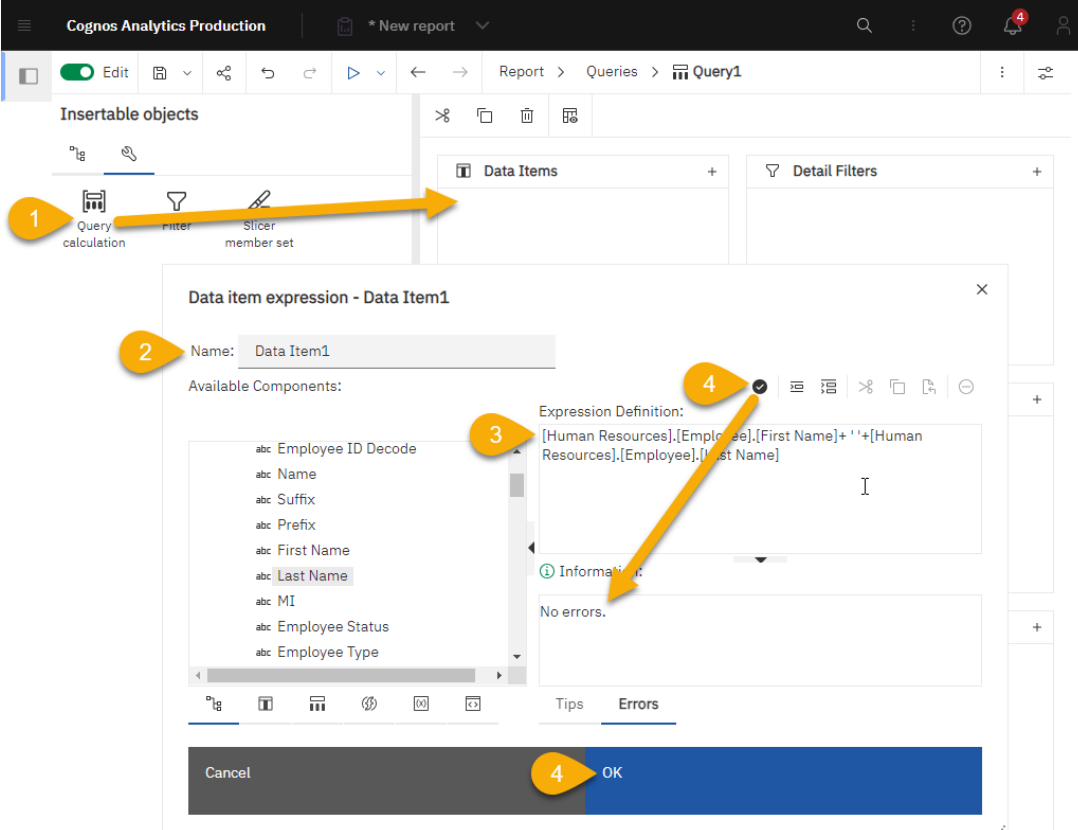
For example, if you have First Name and Last Name data items, you might want them to appear together in a single "Name" column .

There are 2 methods to concatenate data items in a list column. We'll use the name example above to demonstrate these methods.

1. Use a query calculation
2. Unlock page layout and drag multiple data items to a list column

Method 1: Use a Query Calculation

Use the screenshot to follow the steps below.



The screenshot displays the Cognos Analytics interface. In the top left, the 'Insertable objects' panel shows a 'Query calculation' icon highlighted with a yellow circle and the number '1'. An orange arrow points from this icon to the 'Data Items' panel. Below this, a 'Data item expression - Data Item1' dialog box is open. In this dialog, the 'Name' field contains 'Data Item1' (marked with a yellow circle and '2'). The 'Available Components' list on the left includes 'Last Name' (marked with a yellow circle and '3'). The 'Expression Definition' field contains the formula: `[Human Resources].[Employee].[First Name]+' '+[Human Resources].[Employee].[Last Name]` (marked with a yellow circle and '4'). The 'Information' section shows 'No errors.' At the bottom right of the dialog, the 'OK' button is highlighted with a yellow circle and the number '4'.

1. From the **Toolbox** drag a **Query Calculation** to your list.
2. In the **Name** field, give your data item a name.

Since we are creating a concatenation of first and last name, we'll call it 'Name' for this example.

3. Into the **Expression Definition** field:

1. Drag **First Name**.

2. Type + ' ' +

That's: plus, single quote, space, single quote, plus. The plus sign combines data items, and the single quotes before and after a single space adds a space between first and last name values.

TIP: Don't copy and paste from this document. Characters from other applications don't always copy in the same format Cognos Analytics expects.

3. Drag **Last Name**.

4. Validate your expression, and then click **OK**.

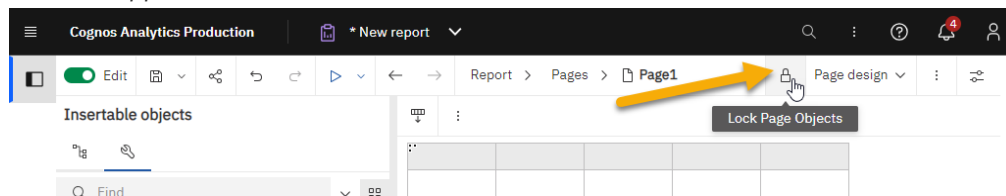
5. Run the report to test your results.

Method 2: Unlock Page Layout and Drag Multiple Data Items to a List Column

In the reporting tool on a report page, in order to insert multiple objects in a single list column, you must unlock the page objects. The page is locked by default to prevent you from accidentally inserting multiple data items to a column.

1. Click the **Lock Page Objects** icon.

The icon appears unlocked.

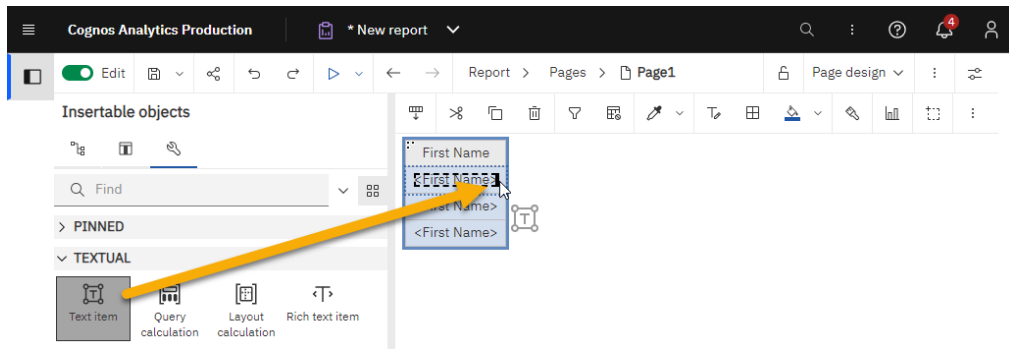


2. Drag the **First Name** data item to your list.

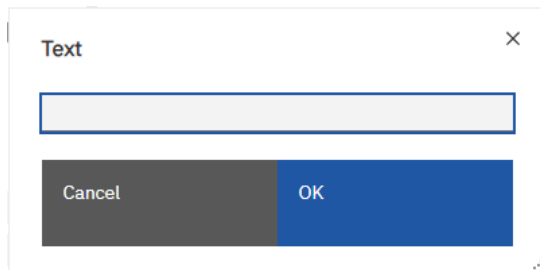
NOTE: If you want to arrange your data items in a table (for example to format a mailing address), insert a table into the list column, and then insert data items into the table.

3. To add a space after **First Name**, from the **Toolbox**, drag a **Text item** to the **First Name** column and drop it to the right of the First Name data item.

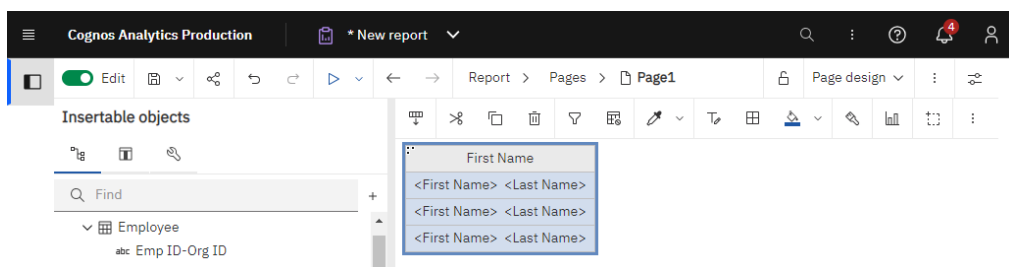
NOTE: As an alternative, you can add a space with the Padding property, by adding padding to the right of the First Name data item.



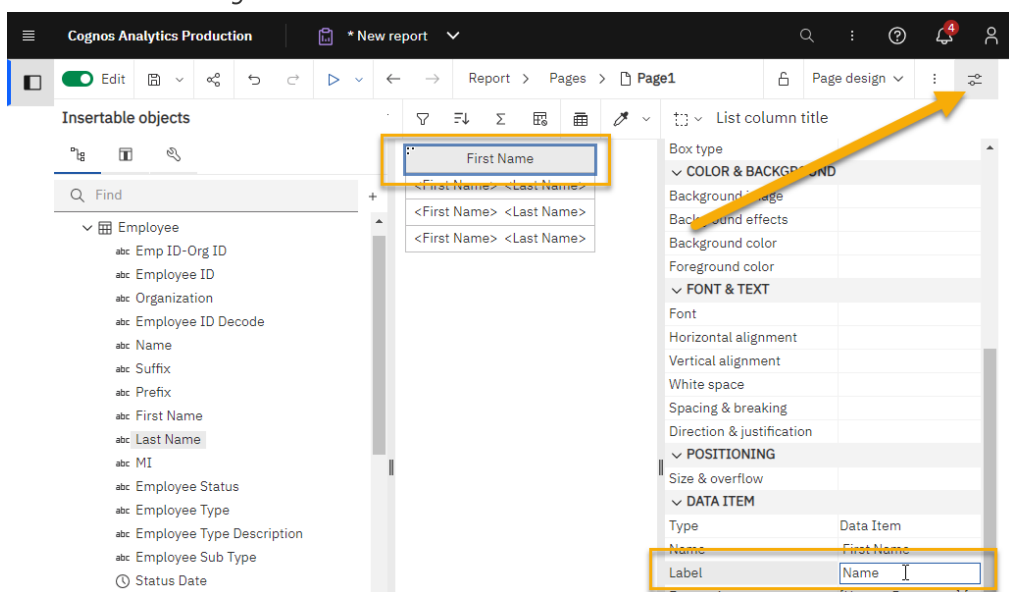
- In the **Text** box, type a space and then click **OK**.



- Click and drag the **Last Name** data item to the right of the space you just added in the First Name list column.



- Select the **First Name** column heading, and then in the **Properties** pane, in the **Label** field, type **Name**.
The column heading is renamed.



- Click the **Lock Page Objects** icon.
The page is locked.

8. Run your report to test the results of your concatenation.