
Topic

Looker vs. Looker Studio (Pro) – A comparison













By

FELD M – Data Product Team














Date

May 2023

Feature comparison of Google BI Tools

| Criteria |  Looker Studio |  Looker Studio Pro |  Looker | Winner |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  Licensing model / cost | Free | Need to reach out to sales. License is rumored at 7\$/user/month or 6\$/user/month for a one-year commitment with 1000 licenses minimum. | Need to reach out to sales. Usually, multiple thousands of dollars per month. Pricing based on multiple factors like number and types of licenses (developer, explorer & viewer), type of deployment, scale of deployment |  Looker Studio |
|  Organising content | Only one workspace per organization that contains all reports. | Possibility to have multiple workspaces containing sets of reports. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility to have multiple workspaces containing sets of reports. • Possibility to create curated boards, i.e., collections of reports and external resources around a specific topic or department. |  Looker |
|  Report Templates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly available templates in report gallery with a focus on marketing reporting using google products data + community section. • Users can create a template by extending the report's URL and sharing it. Can be added to community section with Google's approval. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly available templates in report gallery with a focus on marketing reporting using google products data + community section. • Users can create a template by extending the report's URL and sharing it. Can be added to community section with Google's approval. | Has "Looker blocks", which are templates for data models and dashboards that help to go from raw data to dashboard quickly. They exist for a variety of data sources (e.g., GA4, Hubspot) and use cases (e.g., retail analytics). Some blocks only work when the data is available in a specific schema, or they are optimized for a specific database. | No clear winner. Depends on needs and technical skill-set |
|  User, permissions and access management | Limited: Access and permission (view vs. edit) can only be set on a report level. Either add individuals or whole organization. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set access and pre-defined roles for workspaces • Set of (non-customizable) default roles. • Possible to manage users and assets within GCP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set access and pre-defined roles for workspaces. • Advanced role and permissions management (create own roles for feature access and permission sets). • Row- and column-level access management and hashing capabilities. • User management via Looker API. |  Looker |
|  Support | Possibility to report bugs on a community forum or contact Google support | Support included with google customer care plan, level of support and SLAs based on packaged | In-app chat support for developers and users with admin roles. Defined SLAs for Looker-hosted instances |  Looker |

Feature comparison of Google BI Tools

| Criteria |  Looker Studio |  Looker Studio Pro |  Looker | Winner |
|--|---|--|---|--|
|  Integrations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates well with Google services and partner connectors. Scheduling via email. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates well with Google services and partner connectors. Scheduling via email. Connect to Cloud SQL for MySQL instances that use private IP connectivity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looker connects to a variety of databases. Integrates well with Google services. Dashboard embedding / API / "Data Actions" (connect Looker to other services). Git version controlled. Scheduling via email/slack. |  |
|  SQL Runner | No, only in GCP | No, only in GCP | Yes, users can write and execute SQL queries directly within the tool. |  |
|  Visualisation | Basic charts and filters with drill-down and cross filtering options. | Basic charts and filters with drill-down and cross filtering options. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All basic visualisations (incl. drill-down, cross-filtering and link to filtered dashboards) one would expect. Possibility to install existing custom visualisations or create your own using JavaScript. |  |
|  Semantic Layer | No | No | Model and describe your data using LookML to tell Looker how to query your data, e.g., how do your tables relate, how is MRR defined in your company, etc. Ensures consistency and accuracy. |  |
|  Usability | Easy-to-use UI | Easy-to-use UI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy-to-use UI. LookML is powerful but needs a couple of days to learn it (SQL knowledge is needed). | All three |
|  Result/Summary | A free and easy to use self-serve BI solution enabling ad-hoc reporting, analysis and dashboarding. Looker Studio integrates well with other Google products. | In addition to all Looker Studio features, the Pro version is designed to support medium and large-scale enterprise environments (support, SLAs, collaboration, corporate security, user/asset management) with a lower price than Looker. | A high-end, but expensive data platform with enterprise features and a powerful semantic layer at its core, enabling business users to create analyses and dashboards in a self-service manner with streamlined metrics and dimensions. | Highly dependant on three factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use cases Size & maturity of company Budget |

Background and Outlook

In 2020, Google bought Looker. Since then, Google downsized Looker's customer support department leading to a decrease in their quality and responsiveness.

In October 2022, Google announced the rebranding of Google Data Studio to Looker Studio as well as the launch of a Pro version.

It is still not clear how Google plans to further develop their now three BI tools going forward:

- Will they only keep Looker's semantic layer to power the Looker Studio tools and Google Sheets?
(On 26.01.2023, the *Looker connector* was announced, which would grant access to Looker data from Looker Studio)
- Will they include other features from Looker into Looker Studio Pro?

Thank you!

Telefon +49 (0) 89 / 55 29 756.0
contact@feld-m.de
Sandstraße 33, 80335 München
www.feld-m.de

FELDM

© Copyright FELD M
This FELD M GmbH document is intended for the addressee and/or client only.
It remains the property of FELD M GmbH until an explicit transfer of the
rights of use. Any adaptation, utilisation, copying and/or distribution of
this document for commercial purposes is possible only with the permission
of FELD M GmbH.

Confidential and Proprietary of FELD M GmbH