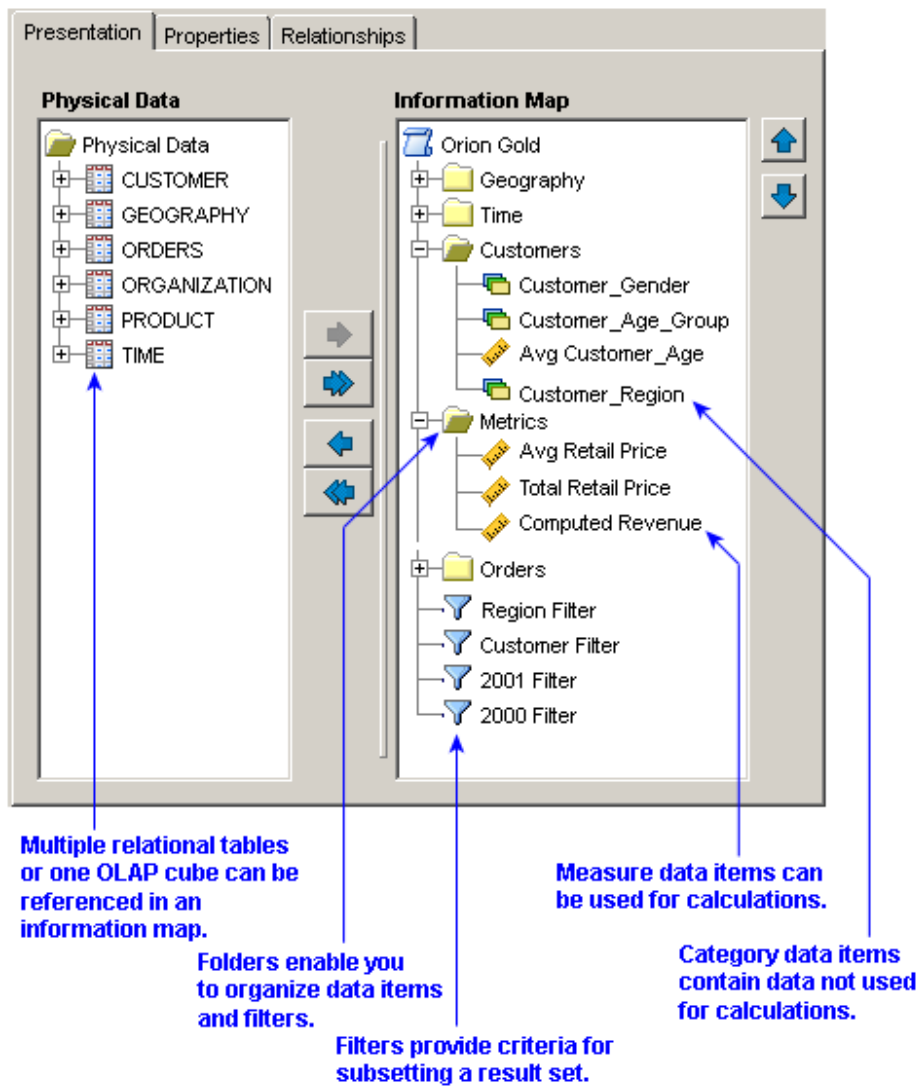**CHAPTER**

1

Overview of SAS Information Maps

What Is a SAS Information Map?

A *SAS Information Map* is business metadata about your data. Information maps are user-friendly metadata definitions of data sources and enable your business users to query data in order to meet specific business needs. *Metadata* is information about the structure and content of data and the applications that process and manipulate that data. Note that an information map does not contain any physical data.

An information map contains data items and filters. A *data item* can refer to a physical data field or a calculation. A *filter* contains criteria for subsetting data. Data items and filters are used for building queries.

Depending on the data source, an information map might have many data items and filters. *Folders* can be used to organize the data items and filters in order to make it easy for business users to find what they want within the information map.

The following figure shows you what an information map looks like from within SAS Information Map Studio, an application that provides a graphical user interface for creating and viewing information maps.

Presentation | Properties | Relationships

Physical Data

Physical Data
- CUSTOMER
- GEOGRAPHY
- ORDERS
- ORGANIZATION
- PRODUCT
- TIME

Information Map

Orion Gold
- Geography
- Time
- Customers
  - Customer_Gender
  - Customer_Age_Group
  - Avg Customer_Age
  - Customer_Region
- Metrics
  - Avg Retail Price
  - Total Retail Price
  - Computed Revenue
- Orders
  - Region Filter
  - Customer Filter
  - 2001 Filter
  - 2000 Filter

Multiple relational tables or one OLAP cube can be referenced in an information map.

Folders enable you to organize data items and filters.

Filters provide criteria for subsetting a result set.

Measure data items can be used for calculations.

Category data items contain data not used for calculations.

Why Are SAS Information Maps Important?

Information maps provide a business metadata layer that enables business users to ask questions and get answers themselves. This frees IT resources from one-time reporting requests and reduces the need to provide training in programming and database structures.

Information maps enable business users to easily access enterprise-wide data by providing the following benefits:

□ Users are shielded from the complexities of the physical data.

□ Data storage is transparent to users, regardless of whether the data is relational or multidimensional or whether the data is in a SAS data set or in a third-party database management system.

□ Business formulas and calculations are predefined, which makes them usable on a consistent basis.

□ Users can easily query data for answers to business questions without having to know query languages.