Unique Minitab Helper Resource

By Rick Haynes
Master Black Belt | Austin, Texas

eTech Resource

May 2007

What tools do you use to enable optimal performance per your function and more importantly, your business unit or entire organization?

Read and learn how these quick and simple Minitab resources will help you do just that!

**Software:** Minitab Version 14 or 15.

Unique Minitab Helpers

Virtually, all practitioners depend on Minitab for a majority of the weekly analysis work. This may be positive or negative experience depending on which extreme is your viewpoint. Like all software, there is a learning curve to experience as the user transitions from a basic user to Minitab versed. In an effort to accelerate the learning curve, a few advanced tools are discussed below with each addressing specific levels of difficulty and technicality -- or even an "I wish I could…" Most are annotating charts and graphs to include the data source, accessing the data worksheet for a specific chart and building multi-chart graphics.

Source Data Annotation of Graphs and Charts.

During a long running project, a practitioner will create many worksheets of data and generate many charts and graphs. After a few months, new knowledge has been gained and creates a need to change or modify a chart or graph created a few months earlier. However, a problem arises in that you forgot where the original data for the chart exists.

Minitab provides a priceless option, saving you many hours, when you're in need of modifying existing charts. Set up all of your charts to annotate all the charts and graphics with the Minitab project name, worksheet name, and generation date. With this information you can go right to the data to allow another chart to be generated.
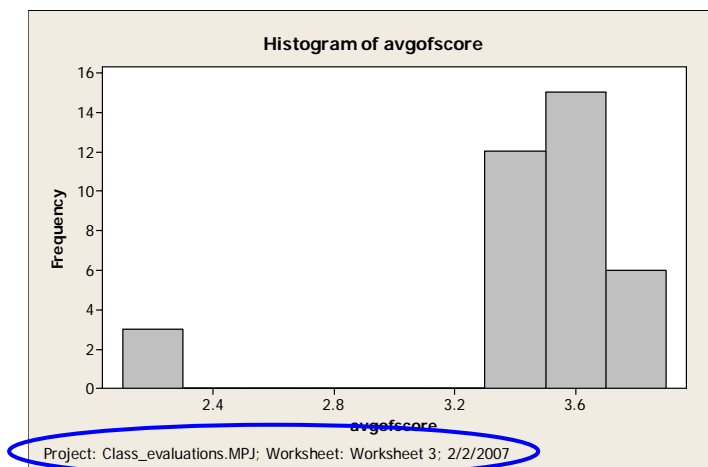
To set up the annotation, select the Mintab Options. **Tools>Options**
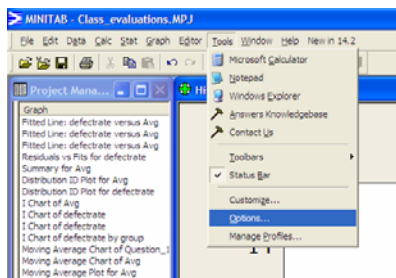
When the options window opens, select the **Graphics>Annotation>My Footnote** menu. With that, select the top 3 check boxes.
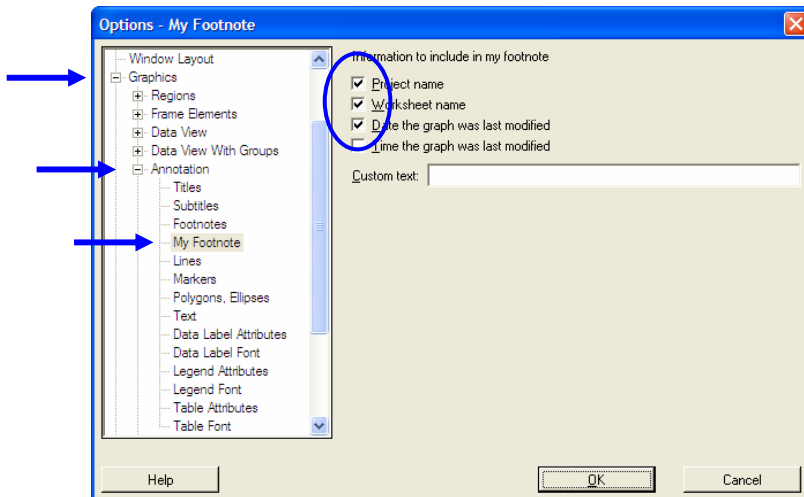

With these options, the charts will all be generated on the bottom of each chart as shown below. I am sure you can see how this would help you remember what you have done.

Now if you do not want this footnote on the final report graphic, you just select the footnote and delete it before copying it to the report.

Finding the Source Data used in the Selected Graphic.

You have a graph open, right click the chart and select "Switch to: Worksheet 3". The worksheet that was used for the chart is brought to the top and is now active for use.
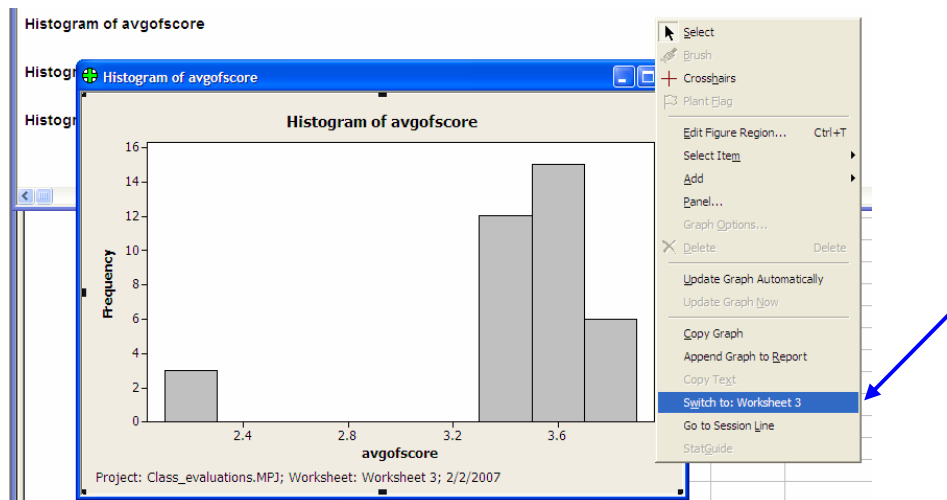
Creating Custom Graphics.

Many times a project message is best demonstrated with multiple charts. The layout tool allows you to create a place holder for multiple graphics. You can insert any graphic that has already been created in the open project. Select the **"Show Graphs Folder" (Ctrl+Alt+G)** icon.
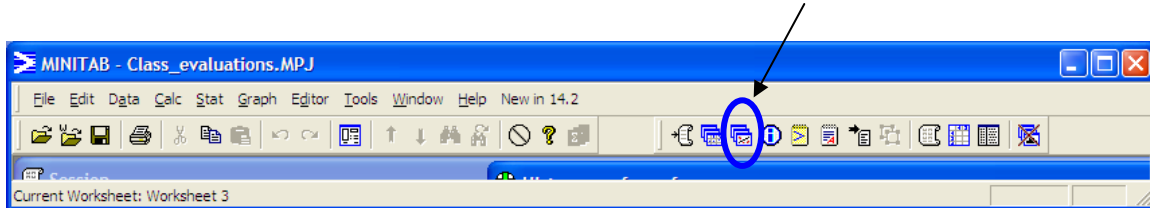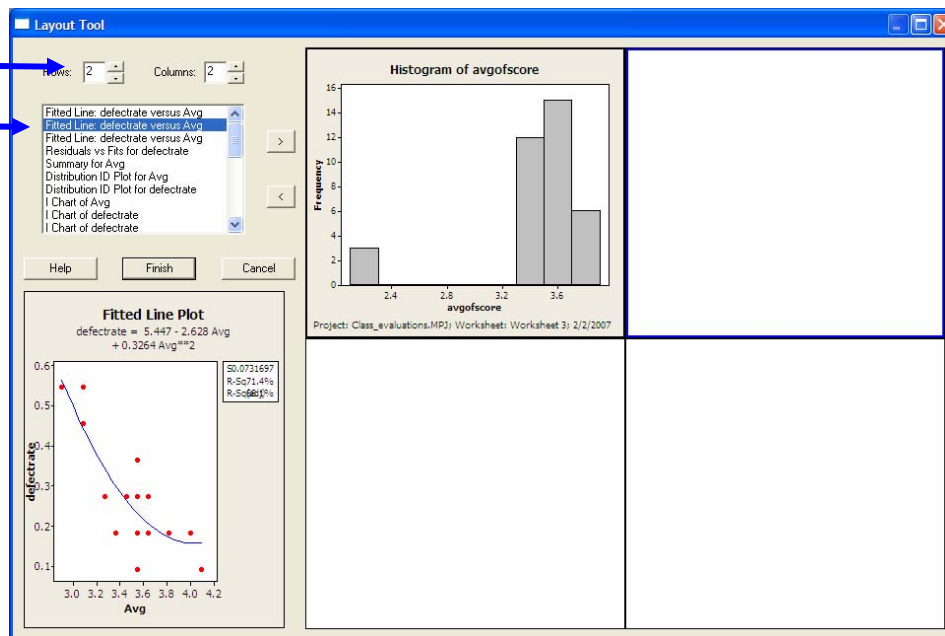

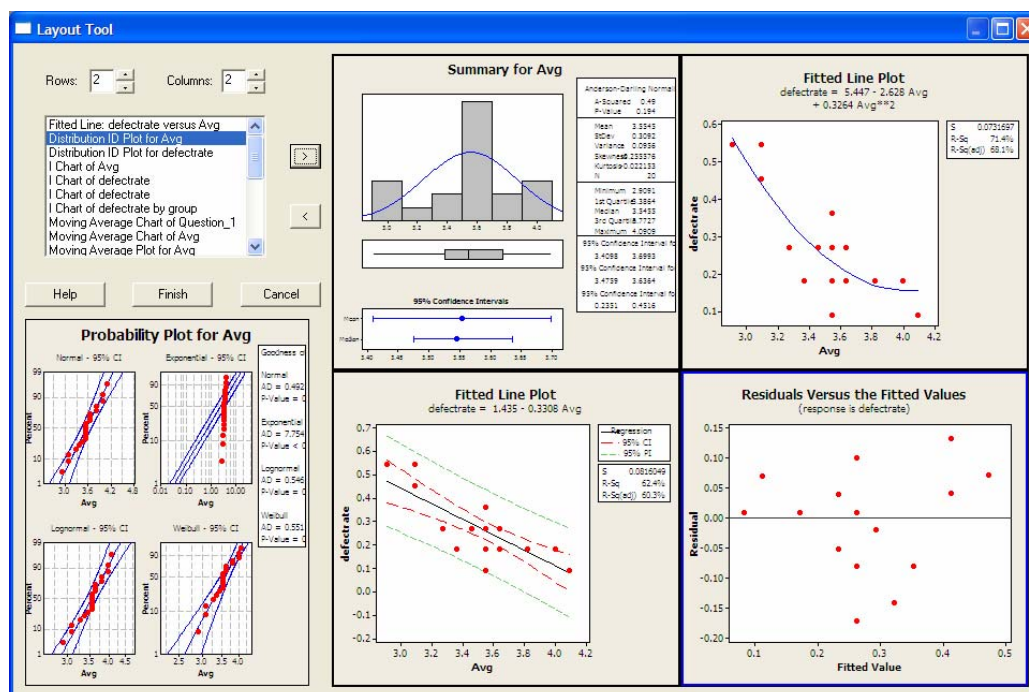Start by select the layout option from the Minitab editor menu **Editor>Layout Tool**

When you have the charts selected, you select the **"Finish"** button and the new graphic is completed and will be listed on the graph list.
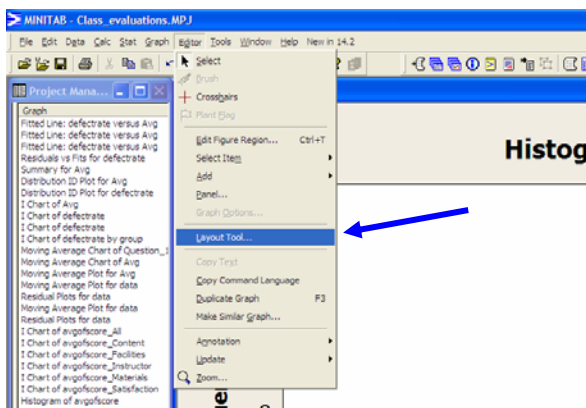
This opens a window that shows the lists of all graphics in the current project that are available for inclusion into the new graphic. You choose the layout with the Rows and Columns selections in the upper right corner.

The list of graphs allows you to see each graphic preview as it is selected. The preview is below the list. If you like a graphic, you use the **>** & **<** buttons to transfer it the layout section highlighted to the right.

© Smarter Solutions Inc., www.smartersolutions.com

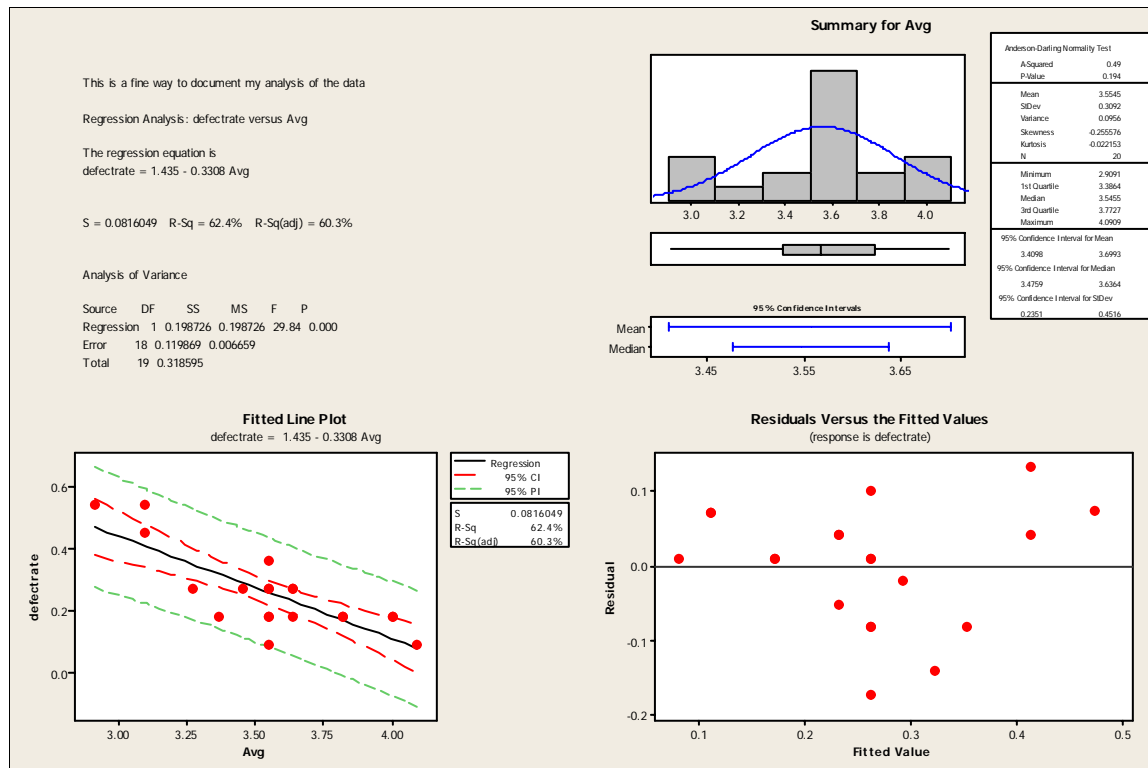When you have the charts selected, you select the **"Finish"** button and the new graphic is completed and will be listed on the graph list. It will be named **"Layout"**. You will probably want to rename the graphic to a name that will represent the message in the graphic. You rename the graphic by selecting it on the graph list, right click and select rename. Now type the new name. A shortcut for this action is to select the graph name on the list and press the **F2** key, now you can retype the name.
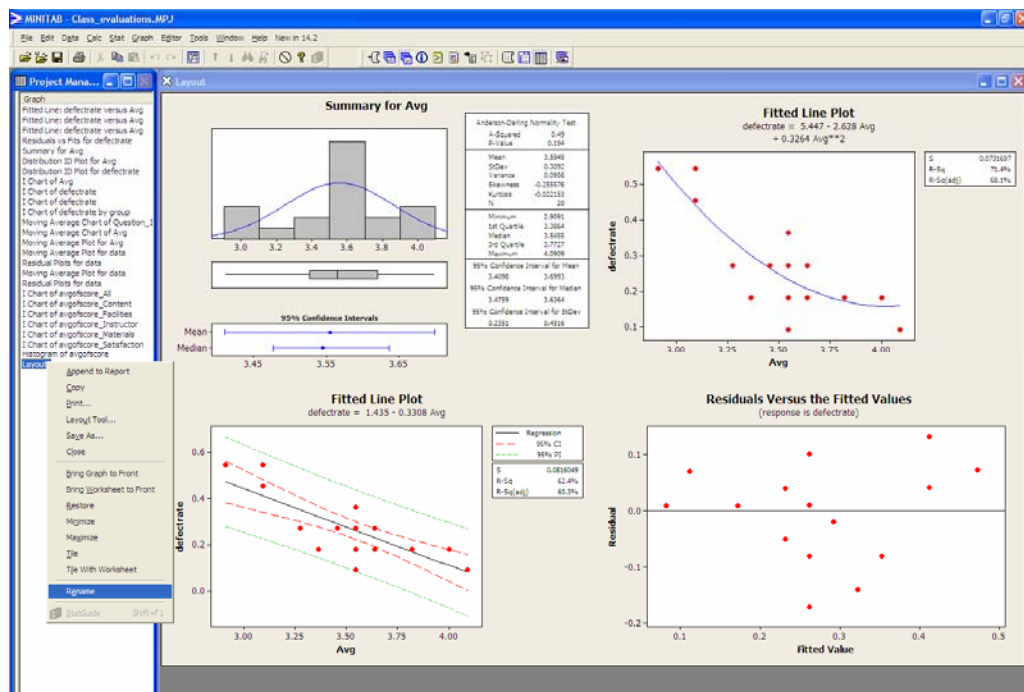
Now you have seen how to make a multiple chart graphic, you have the ability to make a real custom graphic that mixes text output and graphics. An example is shown below. To make this work, you leave one of the layout panels blank when you press the finish button. Open the graph annotation toolbar **Tools>Toolbars>Graph Annotation Tools**. Create a text box in the graphic space without a graphic. Now copy and paste Session window output or your comments into the text box.

This is a fine way to document my analysis of the data

Regression Analysis: defectrate versus Avg

The regression equation is
defectrate = 1.435 - 0.3308 Avg

S = 0.0816049   R-Sq = 62.4%   R-Sq(adj) = 60.3%

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	1	0.198726	0.198726	29.84	0.000
Error	18	0.119869	0.006659		
Total	19	0.318595			

Now you have created a graphic that can be added to your report or presentation that the text output will not have formatting issue as it is re-sized and moved around.

Rick Haynes
Master Black Belt
Smarter Solutions, Inc. | **Rick.h@smartersolutions.com**

Rick Haynes is a Master Black Belt at Smarter Solutions. Haynes holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the University of Idaho in Idaho Falls, Idaho, and a Master of Science in Statistics from the University of Texas in Austin, Texas. With more than 20 years' experience in project management, training programs, applications, systems, engineering, and customer support, Haynes is responsible from providing consulting, coaching, and training to Smarter Solutions' clients.