

GPT-4 Sales Report
Contoso, PL vs AC
Prepared: 10 April 2024

This report uses charts designed according to the International Business Communication Standards (IBCS) to ensure clarity, consistency, and information density.

Key elements:

1. **Consistent chart design:** All charts follow a uniform design, making it easier for readers to understand and compare data across different visualizations. This includes consistent use of fonts, sizes, and positioning of elements.
2. **Simplified and focused content:** Charts are designed to be easily readable, with a focus on essential information. Unnecessary decorative elements are avoided to maintain clarity.
3. **Proper labeling and titling:** Each chart includes clear, descriptive titles and labels to ensure that the data is easily understood without additional context.
4. **Standardized notation:** IBCS-compliant charts use standardized notation for elements such as time periods, units, and scenarios, making the information more accessible and comparable.

The following conventions are used throughout the report:

- **Black** represents actual values for the current year
- **Grey** represents data from the previous year
- **Red** indicates negative or "bad" performance
- **Green** indicates positive or "good" performance
- **"PY"** is used to denote the previous year values
- **"AC"** refers to the actual current year values
- **Underscore "_"** is used to represent year-to-date data
- **Tilde "~"** indicates a rolling year or 12-month period

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Overall Sales Performance and Key Risks

Contoso's sales are robust, primarily driven by the Ho-0 and Pu-0 Business Units, which together account for 95% of total sales, with Ho-0 alone contributing 65%. Despite strong sales, there are concerns about declining gross margins across most regions and business units, particularly in the Core and Growth Divisions. The company's heavy reliance on the Ho-0 unit and the Primus product could become a vulnerability if market conditions shift.

Regional and Divisional Insights

While the Core division remains the main profit driver, especially in the North and East regions, the Minor Division is displaying impressive growth, with a 7.0% CAGR, outpacing other divisions. However, specific areas like Illinois and sectors like the Services industry are underperforming, necessitating a strategic reassessment to enhance sales and profitability.

Industry and State Performance

The Services industry, despite leading in sales, shows stagnation in growth, contrasting with the rapid expansion seen in the Paper and Transportation industries. States like New Jersey and Pennsylvania, along with cities like Chicago and Alexandria, are achieving a healthy balance of high gross margins and positive sales growth.

Strategic Recommendations

To address the overall decline in gross margins and ensure sustained profitability, a thorough review of cost structures and pricing strategies is crucial. Insights from the successful Minor Division could inform strategic adjustments in the underperforming Core and Growth Divisions. This strategic review is essential to mitigate risks associated with market changes and dependency on specific products and units.

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At a glance: Contoso's sales are performing well overall, driven by strong management of pricing and product mix, though there are concerns with underperformance in specific areas like Illinois and overall declines in gross margin across most regions and business units. The company heavily depends on the Ho-0 business unit and Primus product, which could pose risks if market conditions change. To address falling gross margins and ensure sustained profitability, a thorough review of cost structures and pricing strategies is essential. Pages 8 to 17.

Sales breakdown: Contoso's sales are primarily driven by the Ho-0 and Pu-0 Business Units, which together contribute 95% to total sales, with the Ho-0 unit alone accounting for 65%. While the Core division is the main profit driver, particularly strong in the North and East regions, the Minor Division, despite its smaller size, is showing a surprising growth rate of 7.0%, outpacing other divisions. However, there's a concerning trend of negative gross margin growth in the Core and Growth Divisions, suggesting a need for strategic adjustments using insights from the successful Minor Division. Pages 19 to 25.

Data insights: The Services industry leads in sales but lacks growth, unlike the Paper and Transportation industries which are smaller but growing rapidly. States like New Jersey and Pennsylvania show a healthy balance of high gross margins and positive sales growth, while cities like Chicago and Alexandria also perform well in these areas. However, the Services industry in Illinois and the Energy sector in lower-ranked regions are underperforming, highlighting the need for strategic reassessment to boost sales and profitability. Pages 27 to 35.

Trends: Sales performance varies across the company, with the Minor Division growing by 7.0% CAGR and outperforming the Core Division, which saw a slight decline. Despite some sectors like Paper and Industrial showing strong growth, overall gross margins are down significantly, with the North region experiencing the steepest drop at -15.2% CAGR. The company needs a strategic review, especially for the Core and Growth Divisions, to address declining profitability and explore successful strategies from the Minor Division. Pages 37 to 47.

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Contoso's sales and profitability are heavily reliant on the Ho-0 business unit and the Primus product, both of which are top performers in their categories. This concentration poses potential risks should market dynamics shift (p.9, p.10). The Core division is central to Contoso's operations, handling a significant portion of sales and contributing the most to the company's gross margin, indicating its strategic importance (p.9, p.10). However, there are challenges as this division, along with the Growth division, has seen declines in gross margin, suggesting issues that could impact overall financial health (p.16).

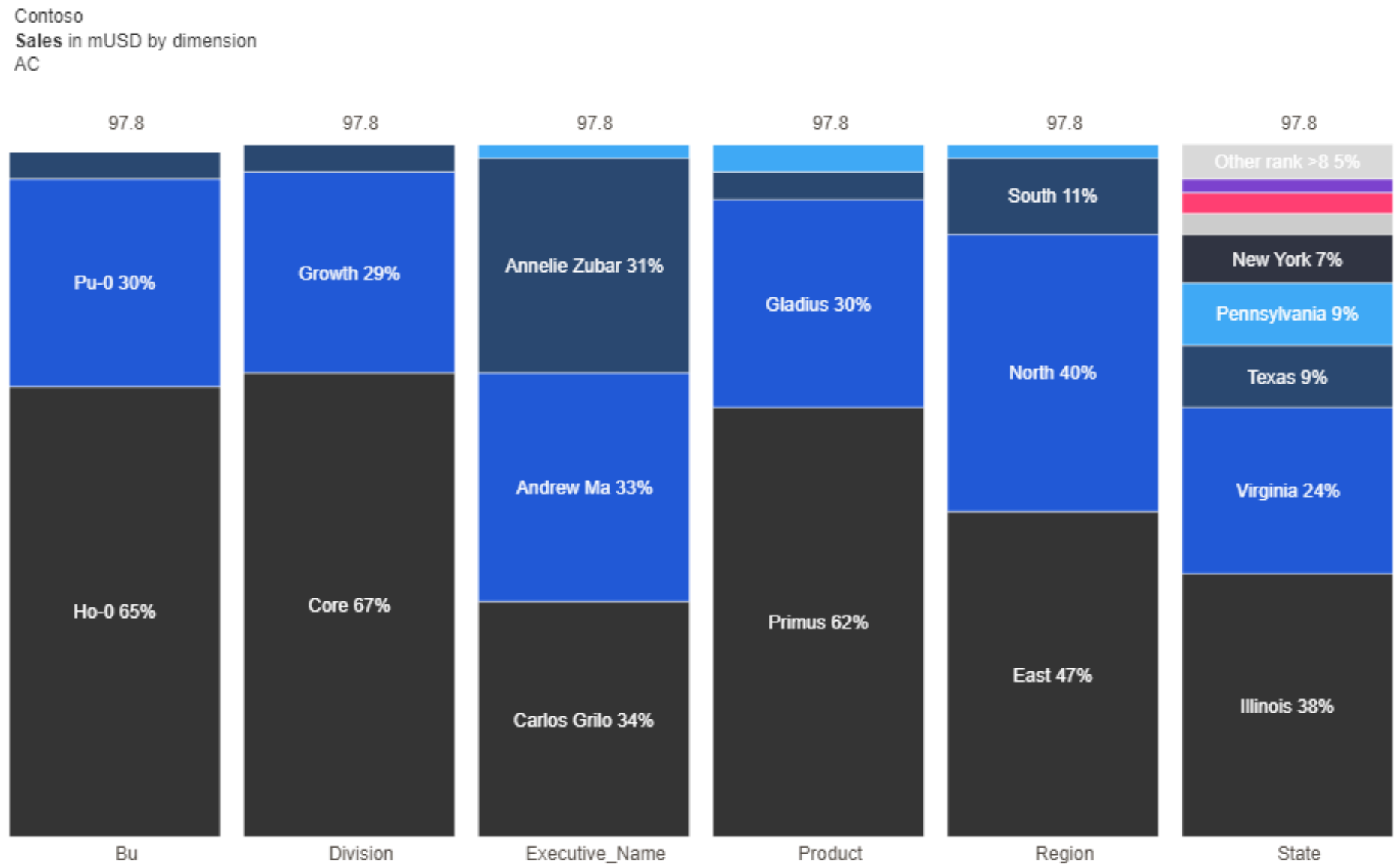
Sales performance has been generally positive with actual sales surpassing planned sales, attributed to effective management of pricing, sales volume, and product mix. This indicates strong operational execution and market responsiveness (p.11). Despite this, there are localized challenges, such as in Illinois, where sales have not met expectations, pointing to potential area-specific issues that need addressing (p.12).

Year-to-year sales comparisons reveal mixed results across different regions and business units. While some areas show growth, others are stable or declining, suggesting the need for strategic adjustments or increased focus in underperforming areas (p.13).

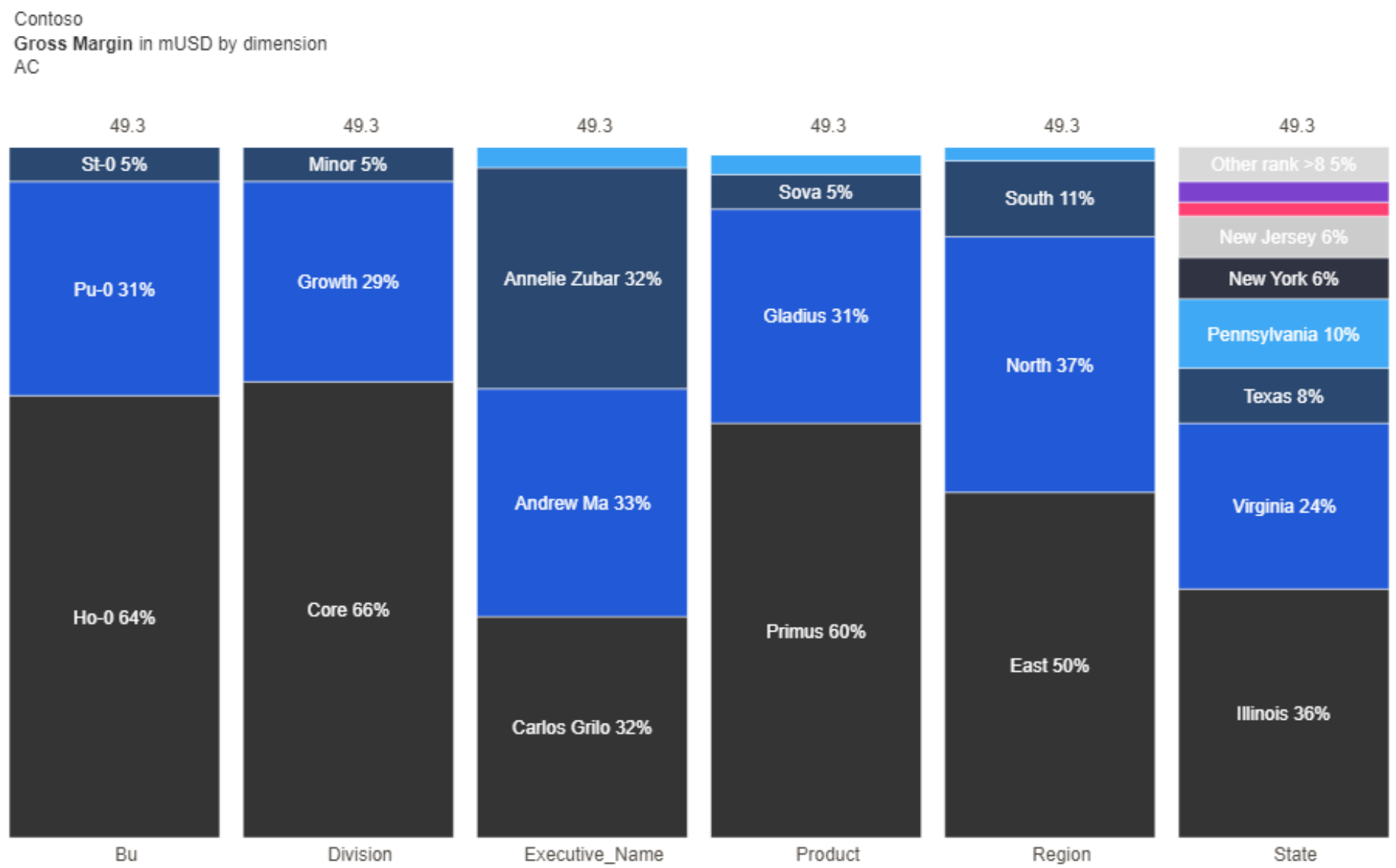
Gross margin analysis indicates a significant shortfall between planned and actual figures, with a general decline across most areas, including key industries and states. This trend is concerning and highlights potential systemic issues related to cost overruns or sales mix changes that are affecting profitability (p.14, p.17).

The drop in gross margin percentage between fiscal periods further underscores challenges in maintaining profitability, likely exacerbated by rising costs or changes in sales mix. This necessitates a detailed review of Contoso's cost structures and pricing strategies to address these profitability challenges (p.15).

Contoso's sales are mainly driven by the Ho-0 business unit and the Primus product, which lead in their categories. This heavy reliance could pose a risk. The Core division handles most of the company's sales, indicating it's the focal point of operations. Sales responsibilities are evenly distributed among the top executives, except for Tina Lassila, who oversees a notably smaller portion.

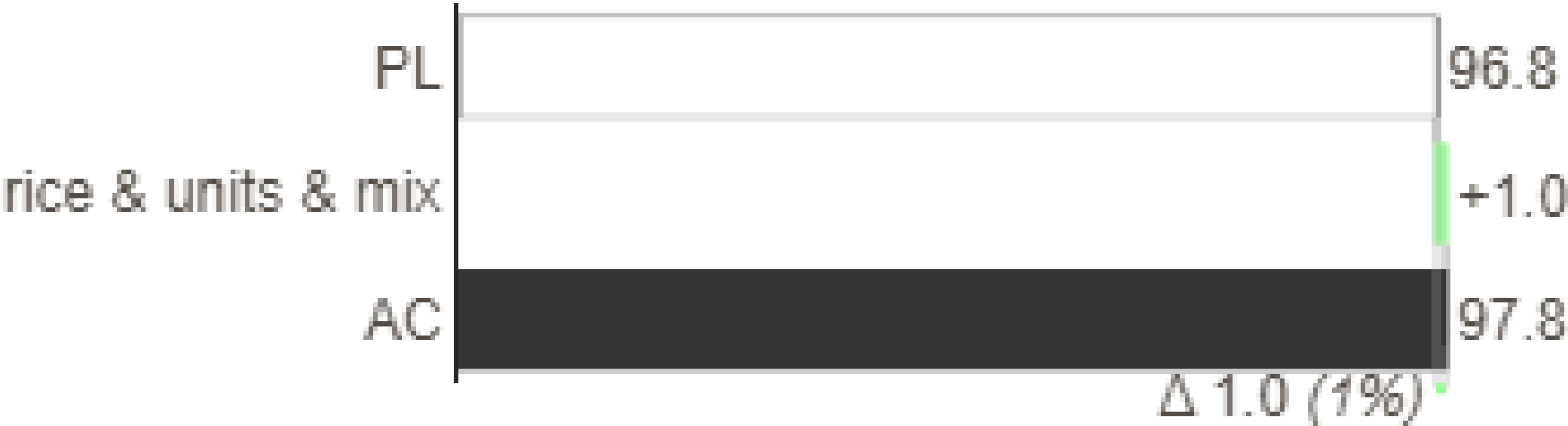


The Ho-0 business unit and the Primus product are not only top sellers but also major contributors to Contoso's profitability, highlighting their strategic importance. Meanwhile, the Core division remains a key component of Contoso's financial health, surpassing other divisions in gross margin contribution.

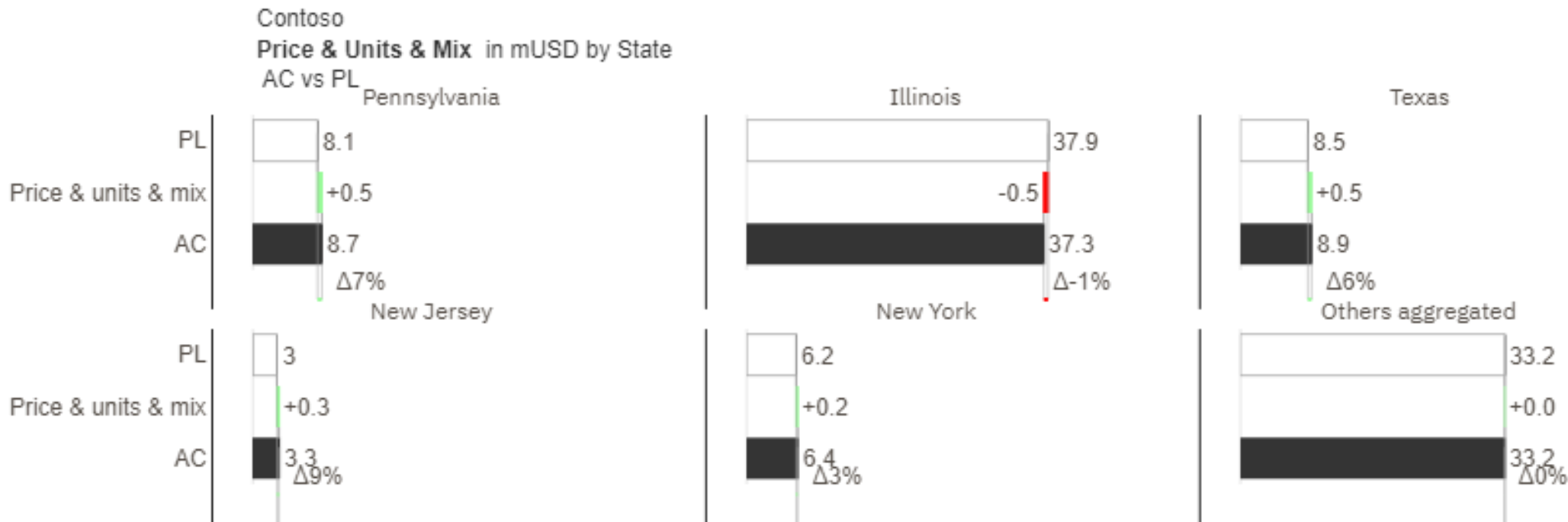


Variance analysis shows that actual sales exceeded planned sales, indicating effective management in pricing, sales volume, and product mix. This success is due to strategic decisions that skillfully managed market dynamics and operational execution.

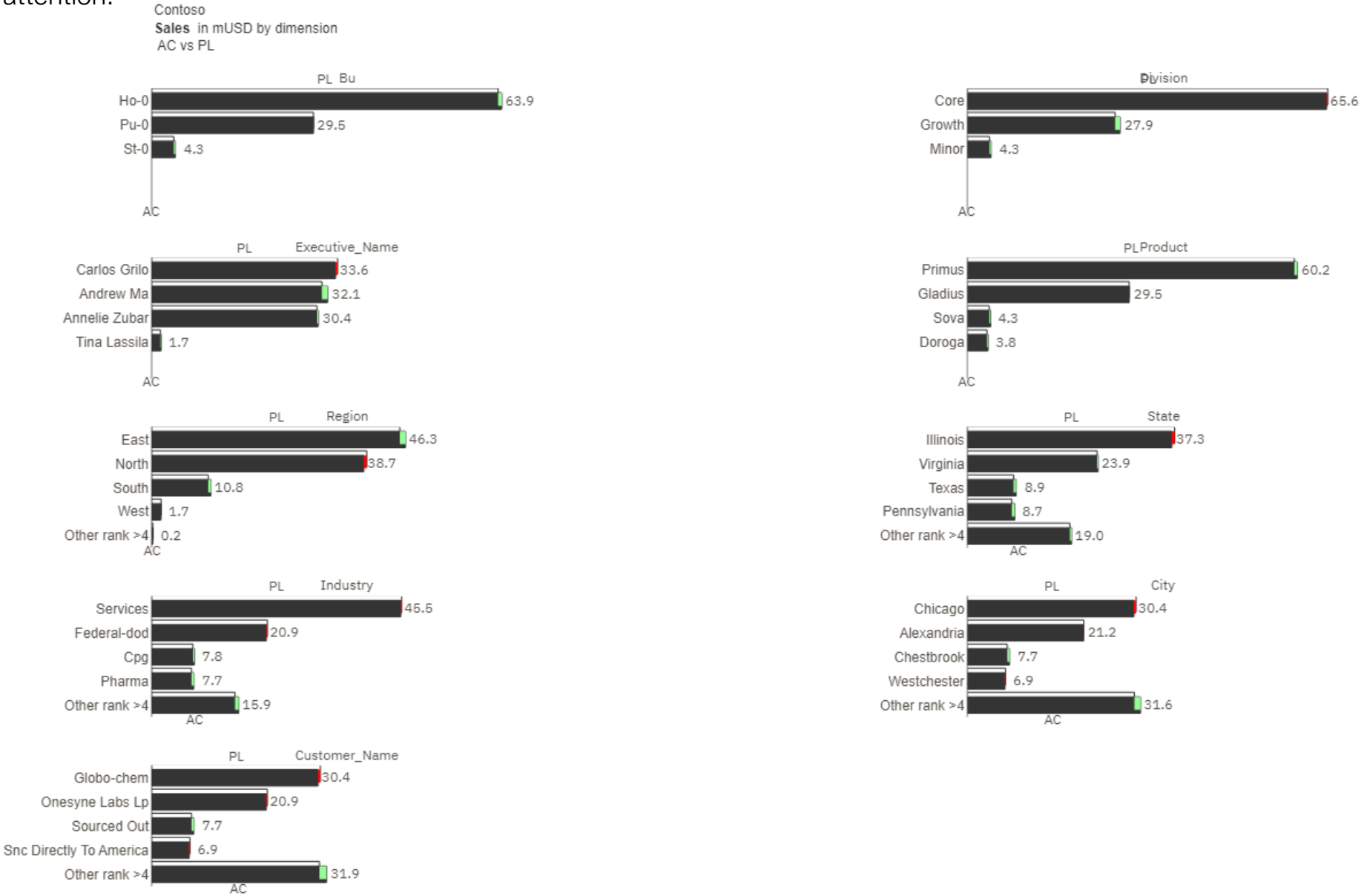
Contoso
Price & Units & Mix in mUSD
AC vs PL



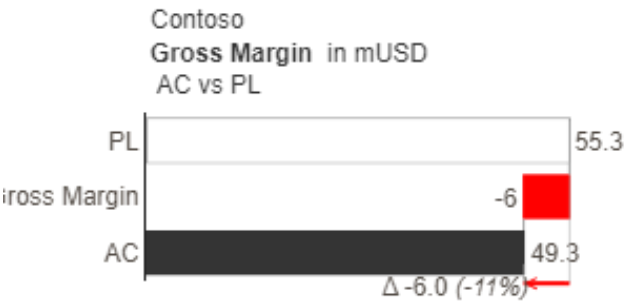
Sales performance across states generally shows positive results due to favorable adjustments in price, units, and mix. However, Illinois is an exception, experiencing a negative variance, indicating localized challenges that may affect its overall performance.



Sales comparisons from year to year show mixed results across different areas. Some business units and regions are growing, while others remain stable or are seeing declines. This uneven performance suggests that certain areas might need strategic changes or more attention.



The analysis of gross margins shows a significant shortfall between planned and actual figures, indicating that our performance fell short of expectations. This suggests potential cost overruns, lower sales, or both, and highlights areas needing operational or strategic review.

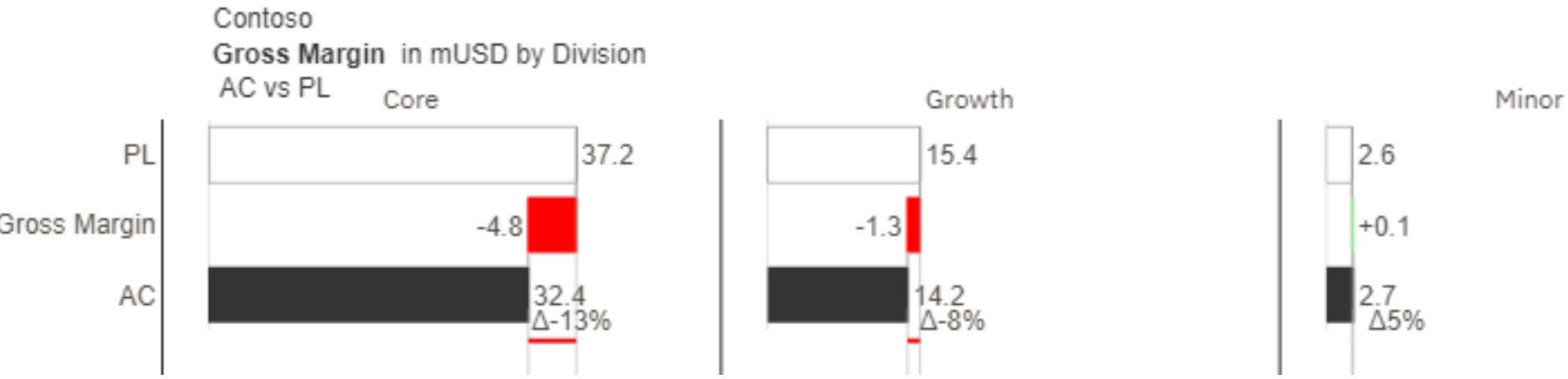


The drop in gross margin percentage between fiscal periods shows challenges in keeping profitability, likely due to rising costs or changes in sales mix. This drop calls for a detailed review of our cost structures and pricing strategies.

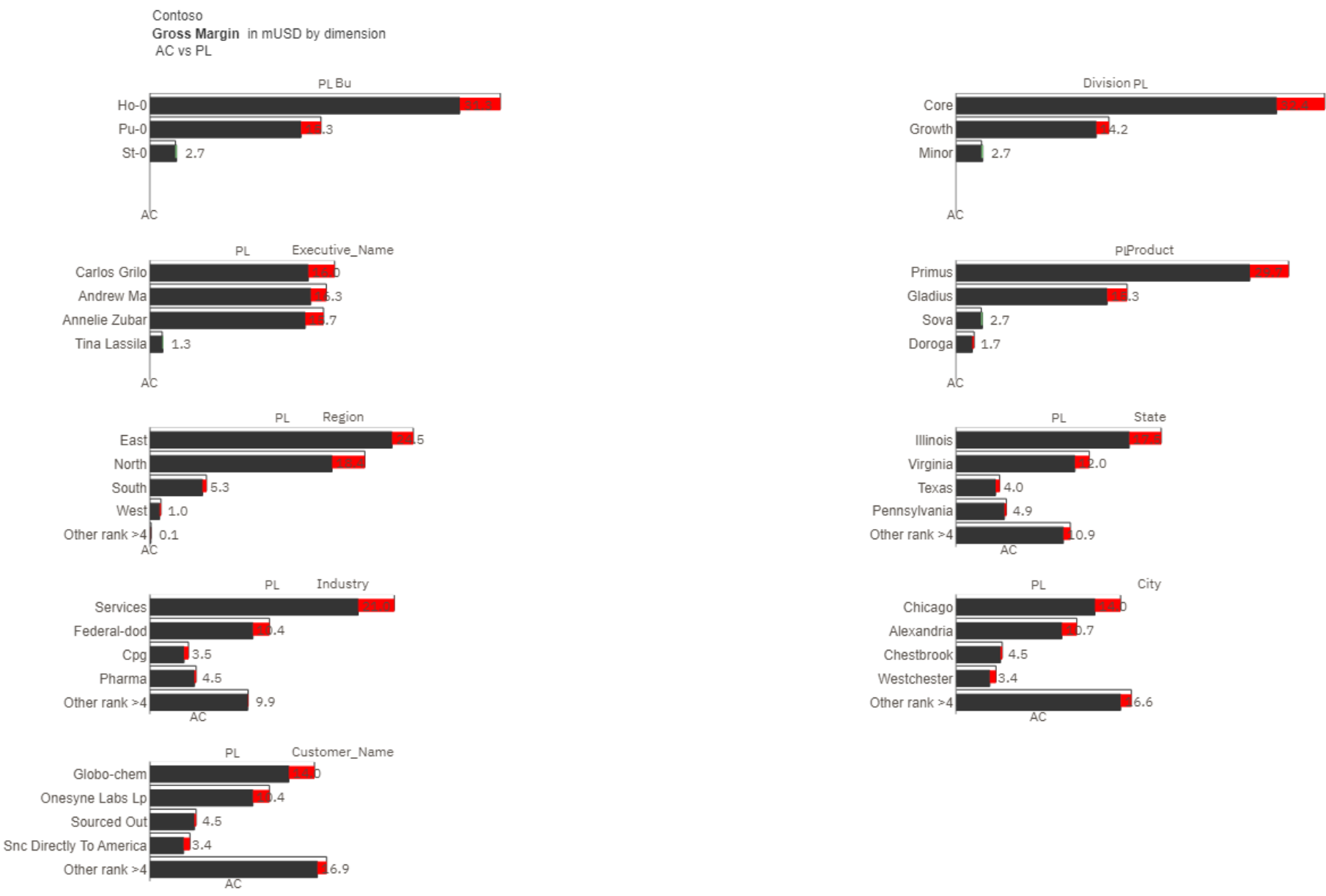
Contoso
Gross Margin in % in USD
AC vs PY



The analysis of gross margin variance across divisions reveals that the Minor division has shown improvement, whereas the Core and Growth divisions have seen declines. This indicates that while smaller segments are performing well, the main revenue-generating divisions are struggling, which could affect the overall financial health.



A detailed analysis shows that gross margin is generally declining across most areas, with significant drops in key industries and states. This trend indicates that Contoso might be facing systemic issues impacting its profitability and operational efficiency.



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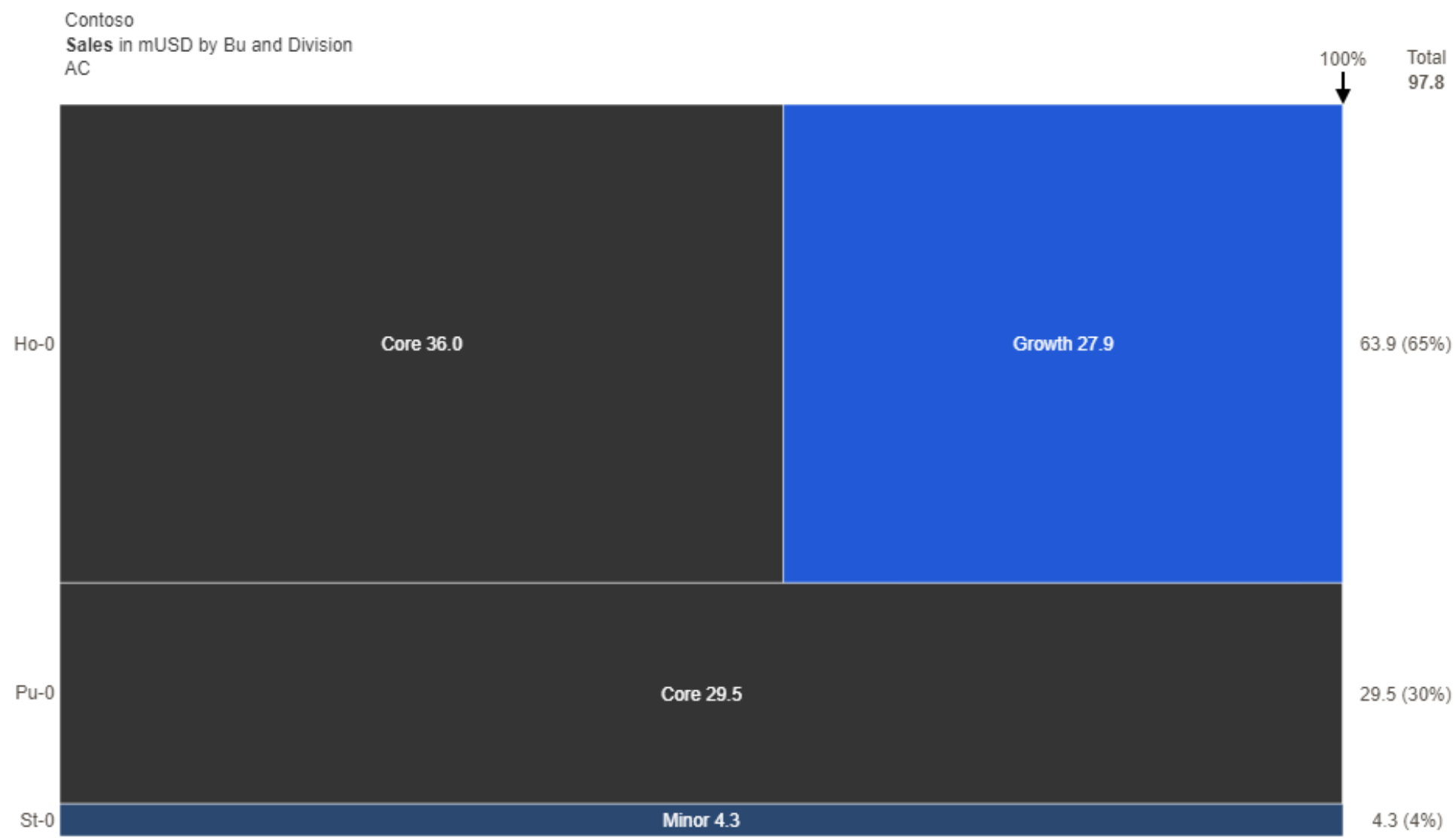
Contoso's sales structure is heavily reliant on its Core and Growth divisions, with the Ho-0 Business Unit being the largest contributor, accounting for 65% of total sales. This unit's significant contribution supports the strategic focus on expanding or introducing new products. The Pu-0 Business Unit also plays a crucial role by contributing 30% to total sales, indicating a solid foundation in established products. The St-0 Business Unit, though contributing the least, serves a niche role within the Minor division (p.20).

Regionally, Contoso's sales strategies are effectively tailored, with the East region leading in growth and the North excelling in core sales. This regional strategy enhances the company's overall growth and stability, despite lesser contributions from the South and Other regions, which still meet local market needs effectively (p.21). The Core division is identified as the main profit driver, especially strong in the North and East, while the Growth division shows significant strides in the East and South. The Minor division, though smaller, has a balanced impact across various regions, suggesting exploration of niche markets or pilot projects (p.22).

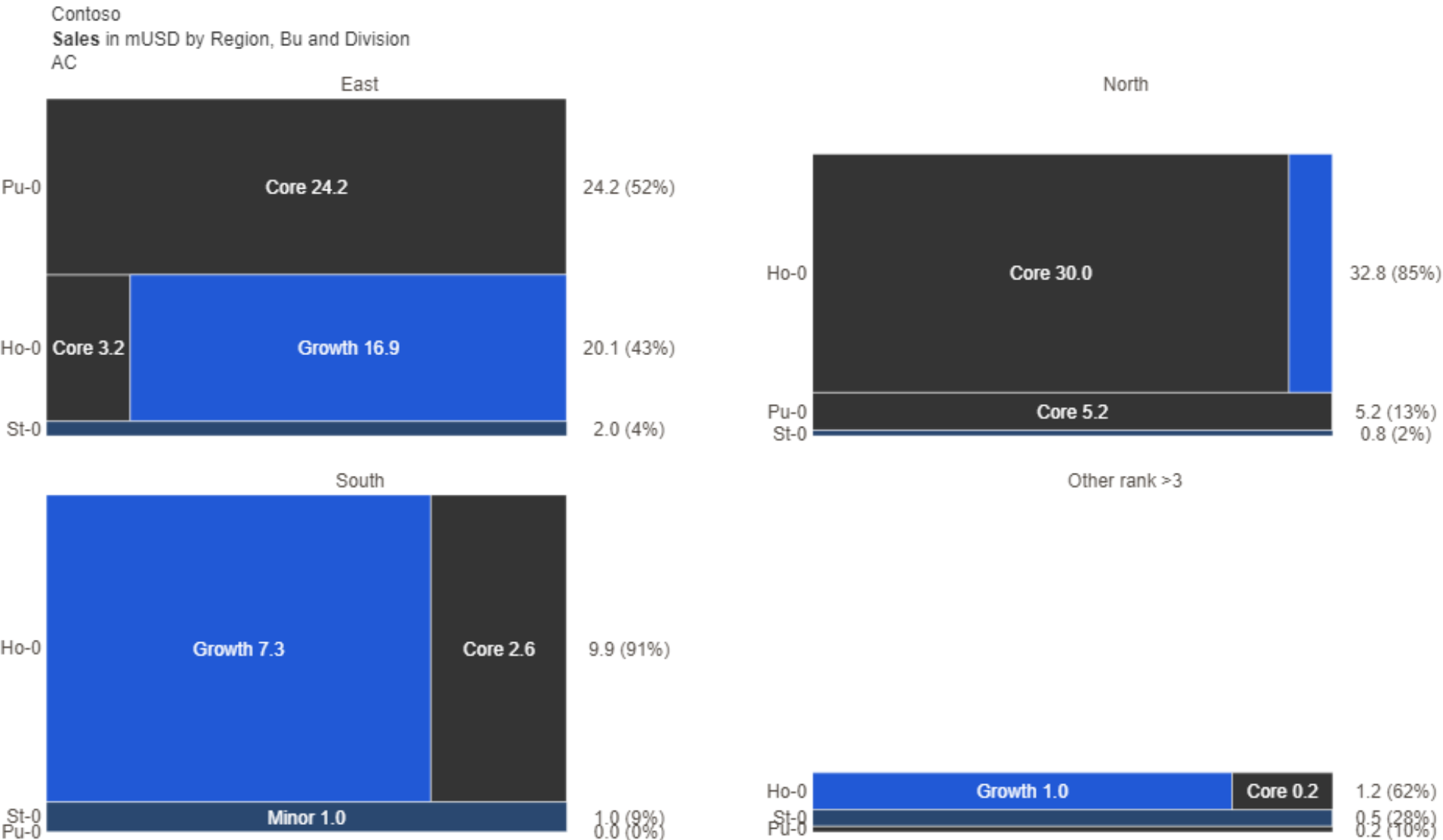
Interestingly, the Minor Division, despite its name, leads with a growth rate of 7.0%, outperforming the Growth Division and significantly boosting Contoso's overall sales performance (p.23). However, the Ho-0 Business Unit has seen mixed results across its divisions, and the St-0 Business Unit's Minor Division has shown strong growth, indicating a need for strategic management to possibly realign or focus more on successful divisions to enhance overall business health (p.24).

A concerning trend is observed in the Gross Margin Growth Rate data, where the Core and Growth Divisions are experiencing negative growth, while the Minor Division is seeing positive growth. This trend indicates significant challenges in the main revenue-generating areas of the company, necessitating a strategic review to pinpoint causes and potentially adopt successful strategies from the Minor Division in other areas (p.25).

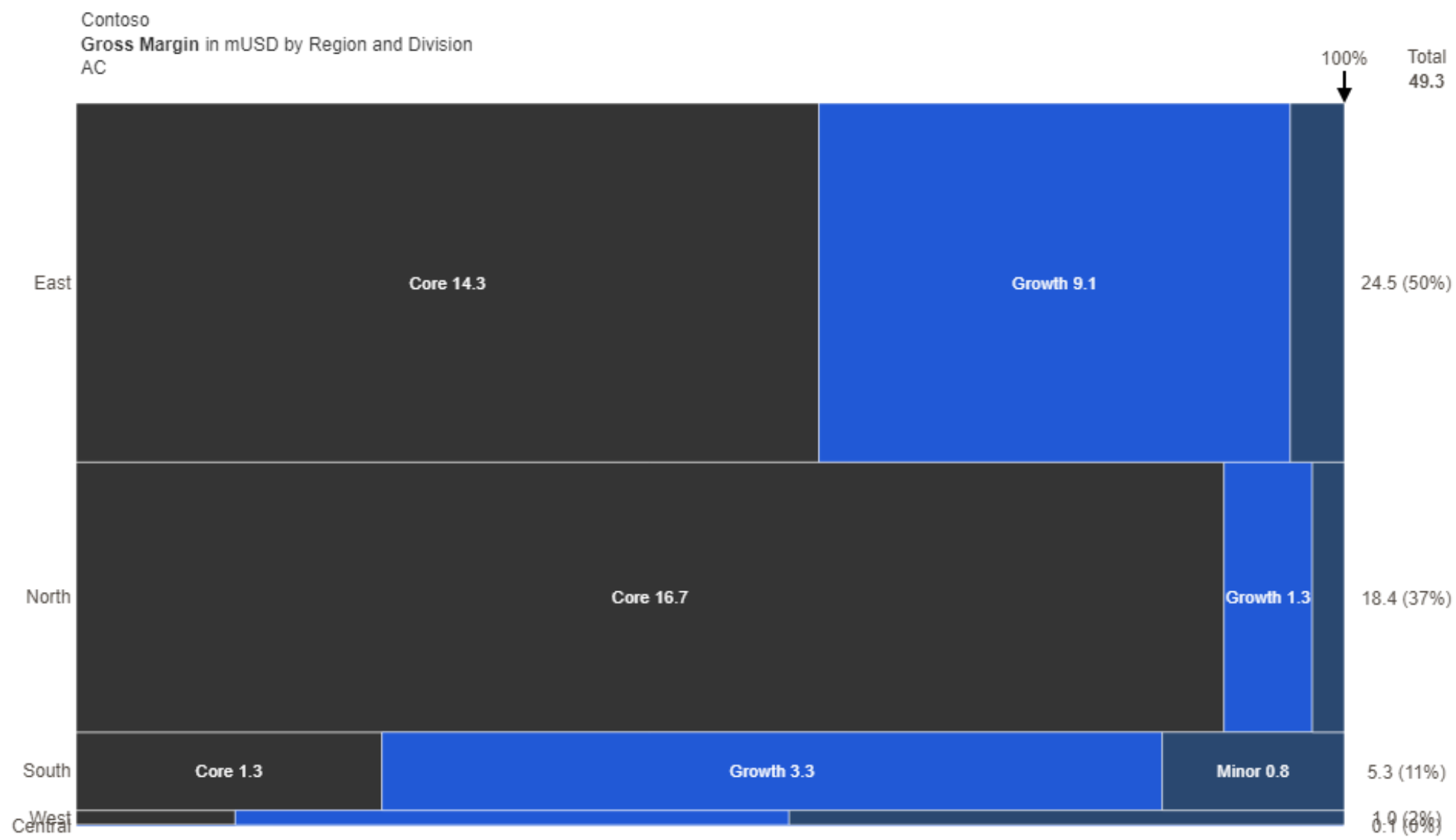
Contoso's sales are mainly driven by its Core and Growth divisions. The Ho-0 Business Unit is the largest contributor, accounting for 65% of total sales, which supports the strategic focus on expanding or introducing new products. The Pu-0 Business Unit contributes 30% to total sales, indicating a solid foundation in established products. The St-0 Business Unit, contributing the least, plays a niche role in the Minor division.



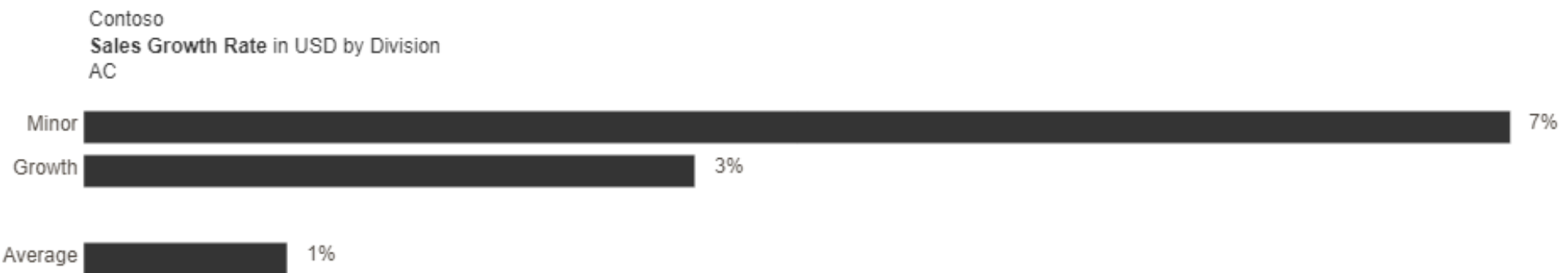
Contoso's sales strategies are tailored to regional strengths. The East region leads in growth, while the North excels in core sales. These strategies enhance the company's overall growth and stability. Although the South and Other regions contribute less, they are vital in specific areas, meeting local market needs effectively.



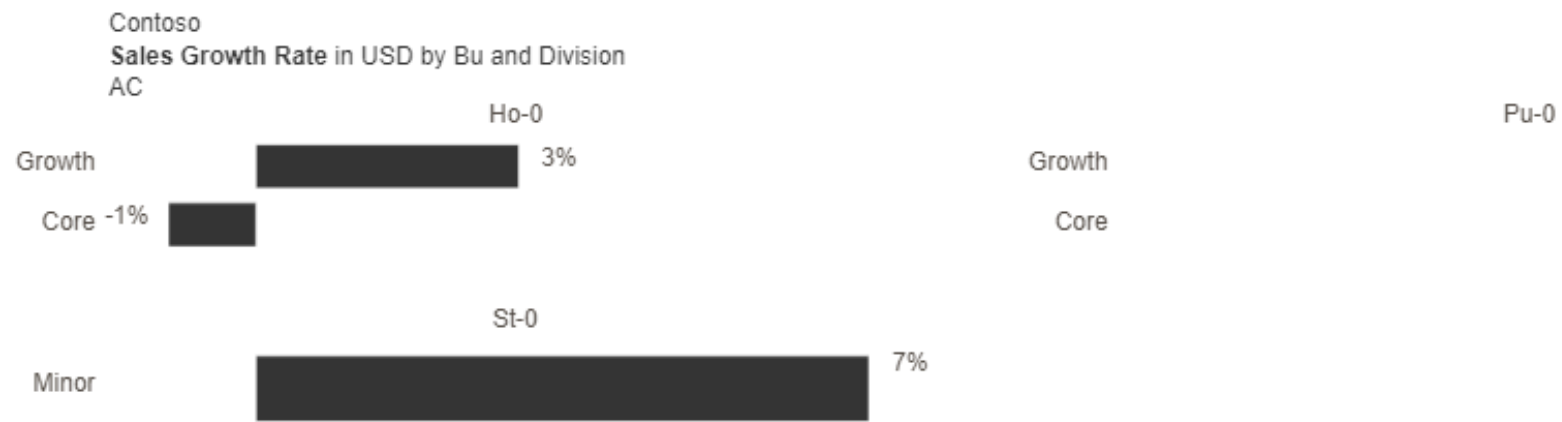
The Core division is the main profit driver for Contoso, performing exceptionally well in the North and East regions. This underlines the company's strong financial health, primarily fueled by its core operations. Meanwhile, the Growth division is also making significant strides, particularly in the East and South, highlighting effective expansion strategies. The Minor division, though smaller, has a balanced impact across various regions, suggesting it might be exploring niche markets or pilot projects.



Despite its name, the Minor Division leads with a growth rate of 7.0%, outshining the Growth Division. Both divisions are performing well above the average, boosting Contoso's overall sales performance significantly.



The Ho-0 Business Unit has seen mixed results, with some divisions declining and others growing, while the St-0 Business Unit's Minor Division has shown strong growth. This underscores the need for strategic management to possibly realign or focus more on successful divisions to boost overall business health.



The Gross Margin Growth Rate data shows a worrying trend: the Core and Growth Divisions are experiencing negative growth, while the Minor Division is seeing positive growth. This indicates significant challenges in the main areas that generate revenue for the company. A strategic review is necessary to pinpoint the causes and consider adopting the successful strategies from the Minor Division in other areas.



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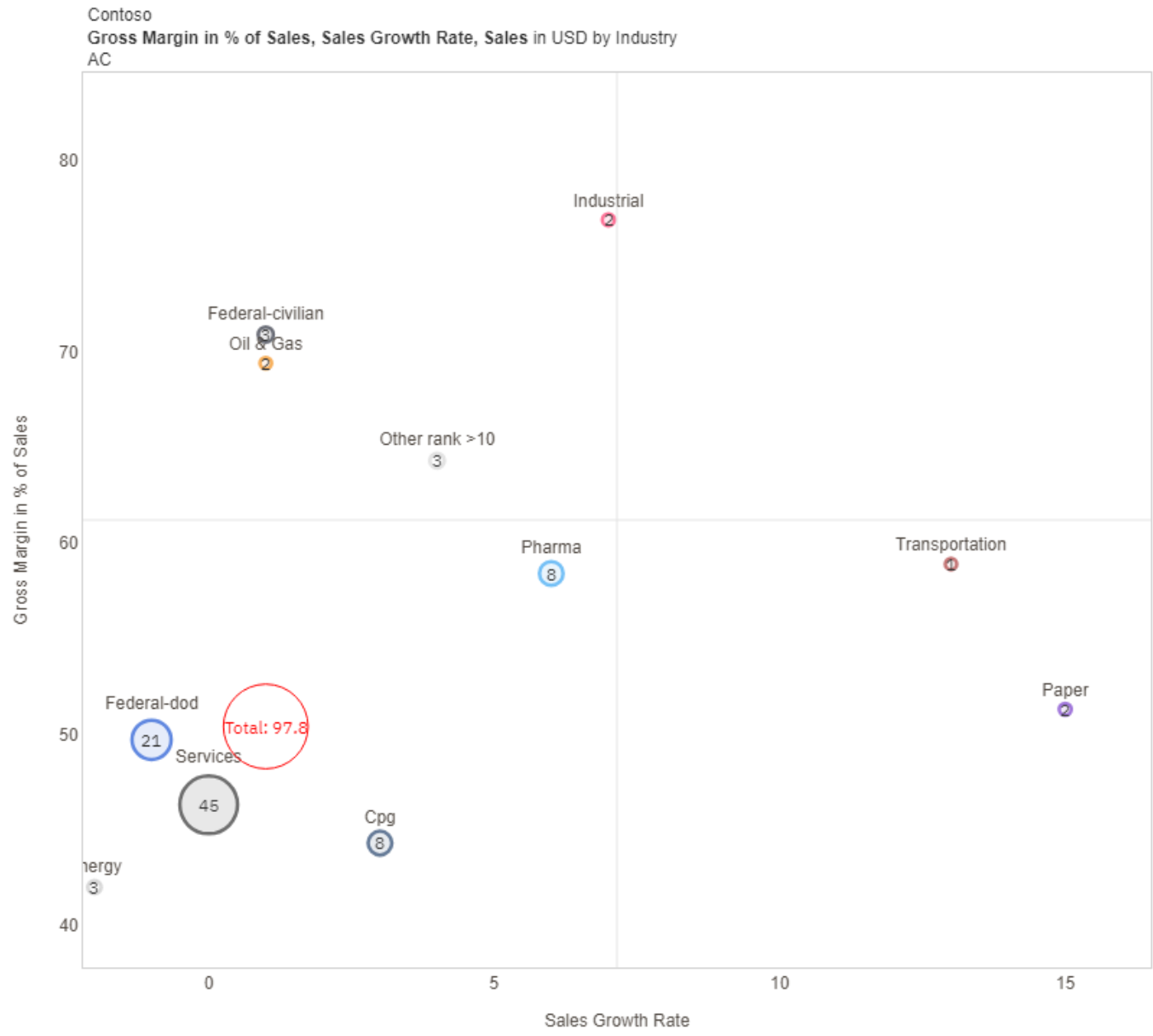
The Services industry, while leading in sales volume, has not shown growth, contrasting with the Paper and Transportation industries which, despite smaller sales volumes, are experiencing high growth rates (p.28). In terms of profitability, the Services industry in Virginia and the Federal-civilian sector across various states are noted for exceptionally high gross margins, suggesting efficient operations or premium pricing strategies. However, the Services industry in Illinois and the Energy sector in lower-ranked regions are struggling with sales growth, indicating areas needing strategic reassessment (p.29).

States like New Jersey and Pennsylvania are highlighted for having both high gross margins and positive sales growth, demonstrating a balanced economic environment. Conversely, Illinois shows a discrepancy with high gross margins but negative growth rates, underscoring the importance of fostering environments that support both profitability and sales expansion (p.30). In city-level analysis, Chicago and Alexandria align well with sales and gross margin contributions, whereas Plano, despite having the most customers, does not lead in sales or gross margins, pointing to potential improvements in sales strategies or customer relationship management (p.31).

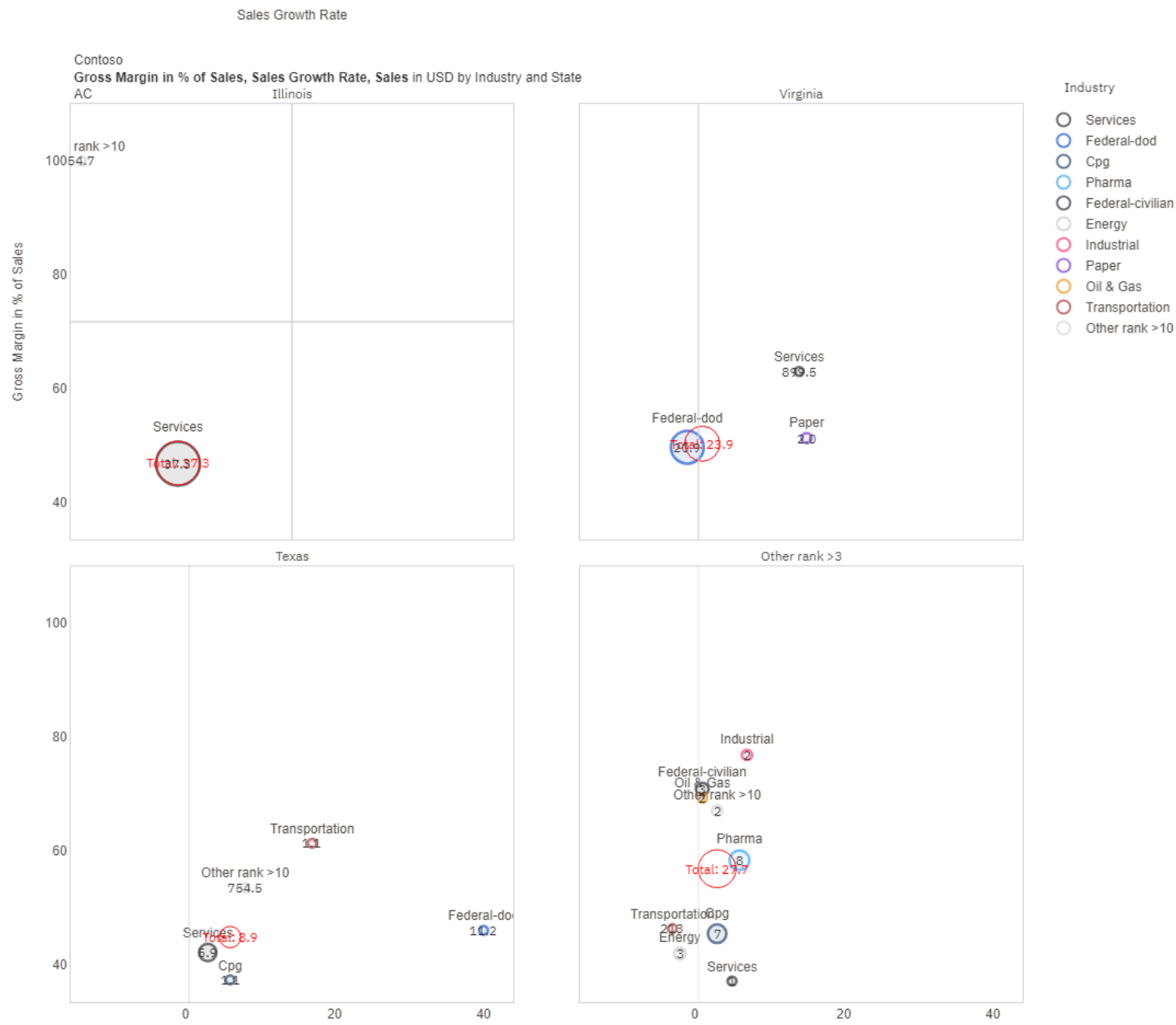
Industry classification based on gross margin contributions reveals that Class A industries, though few, significantly enhance both gross margin and sales, proving their efficiency and critical role in driving profitability. In contrast, Class C industries, being more prevalent, contribute minimally, indicating possible underperformance or competitive pressures (p.32). The customer analysis shows a concentration in the lower left quadrant of the scatter chart, representing lower gross margin percentages and growth rates. However, companies like 'Sharper Bends' and 'DnD' excel in the upper quadrants, achieving higher profitability and growth through effective strategies (p.33).

Finally, a Pareto analysis underscores that a few key customers substantially drive the company's profitability and sales, emphasizing the importance of sustaining strong relationships with these top contributors to maintain a competitive edge in the market (p.35). This comprehensive analysis across various dimensions—geographical, industry, and customer levels—provides a nuanced understanding of the company's operational dynamics and areas ripe for strategic enhancement.

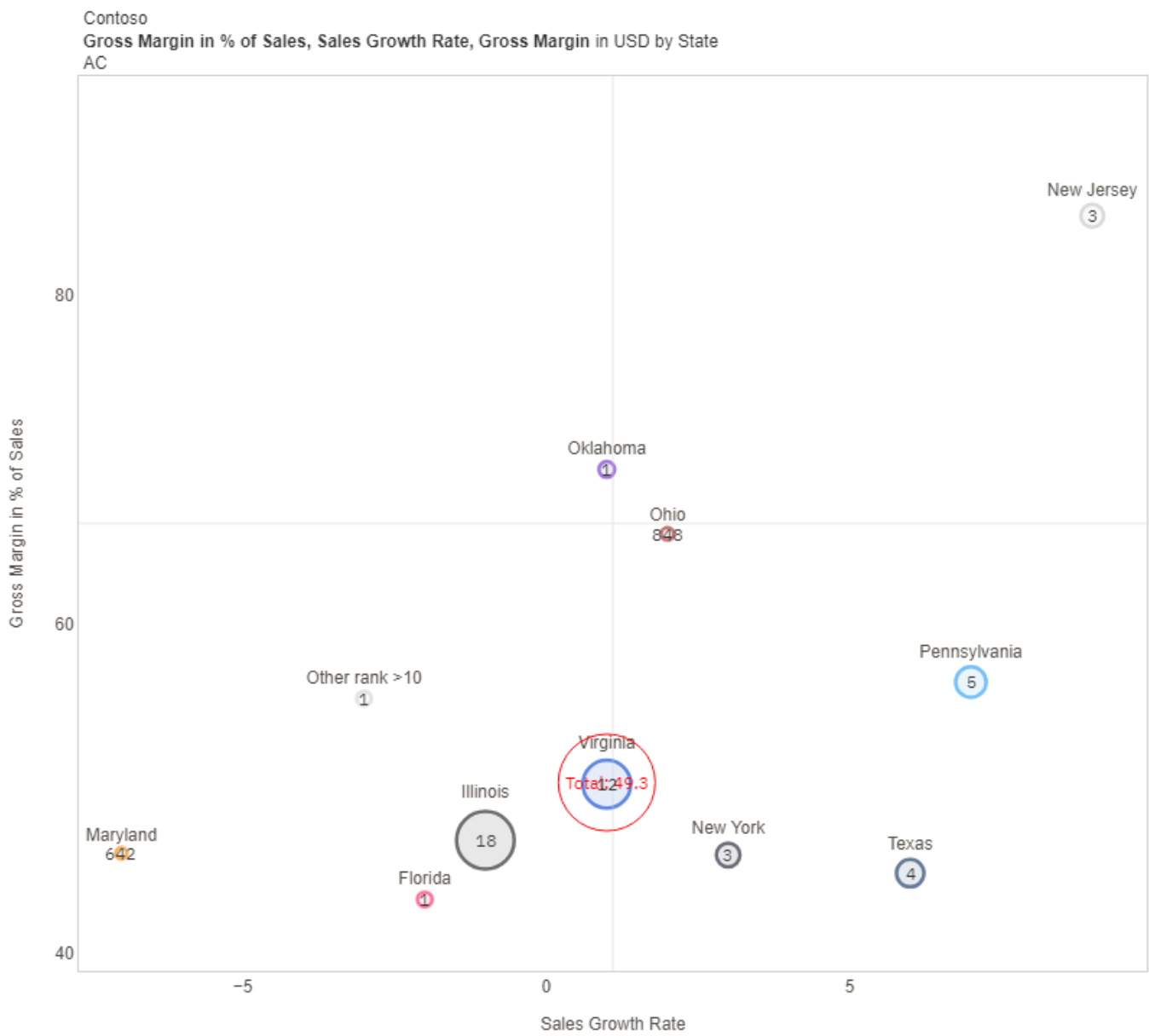
The Services industry, despite leading in sales volume, has not grown. In contrast, the Paper and Transportation industries, though smaller in sales, are experiencing high growth rates. This highlights that while some sectors maintain steady sales, others are rapidly expanding and could be key areas for strategic focus.



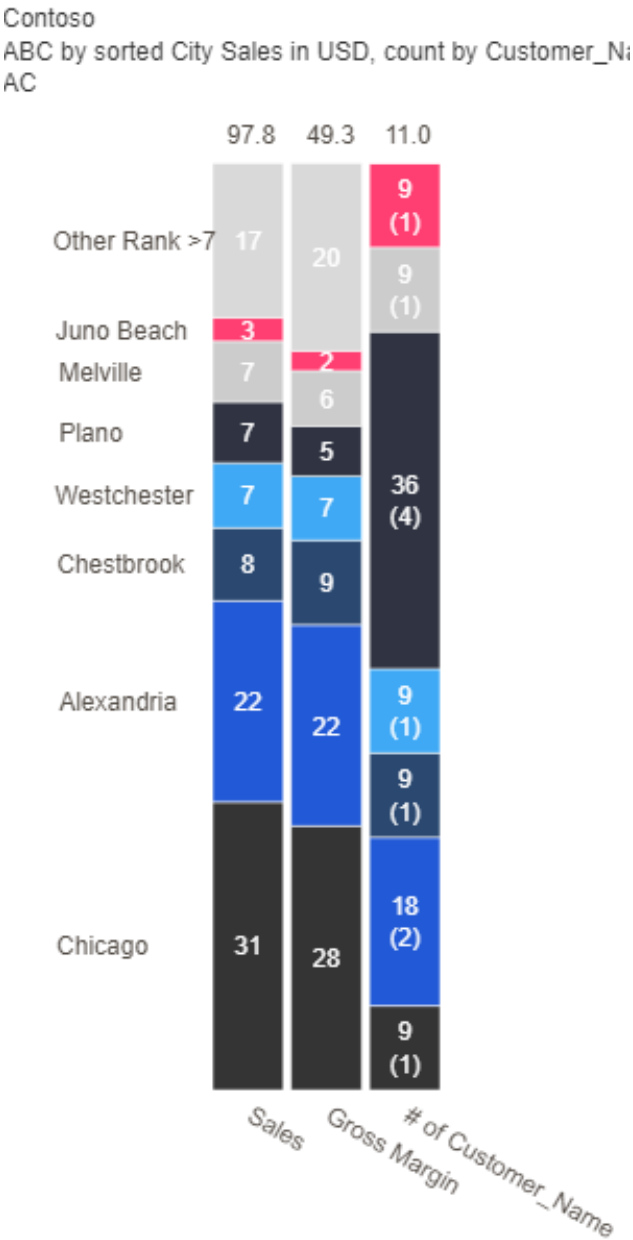
In Virginia, the Services industry and the Federal-civilian sector across various states are showing exceptionally high gross margins, suggesting they either operate efficiently or use premium pricing strategies. On the other hand, the Services industry in Illinois and the Energy sector in regions ranked lower than third are struggling with sales growth, indicating a need for strategic reassessment.



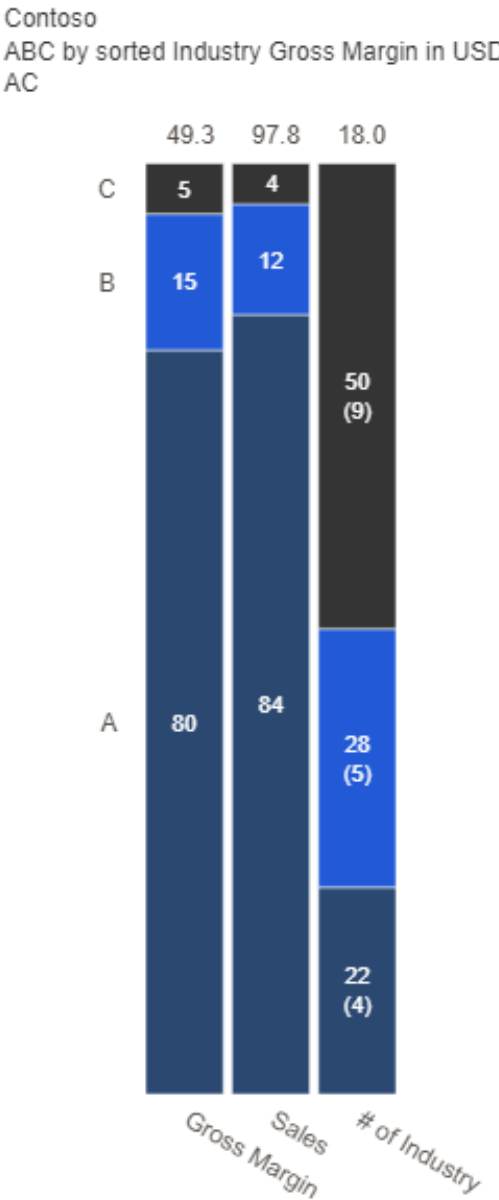
Gross margin analysis shows that states like New Jersey and Pennsylvania not only have high gross margins but also enjoy positive sales growth. However, states like Illinois, despite having high gross margins, struggle with negative growth rates. This highlights the need for not just high gross margins but also creating environments that support sales growth.



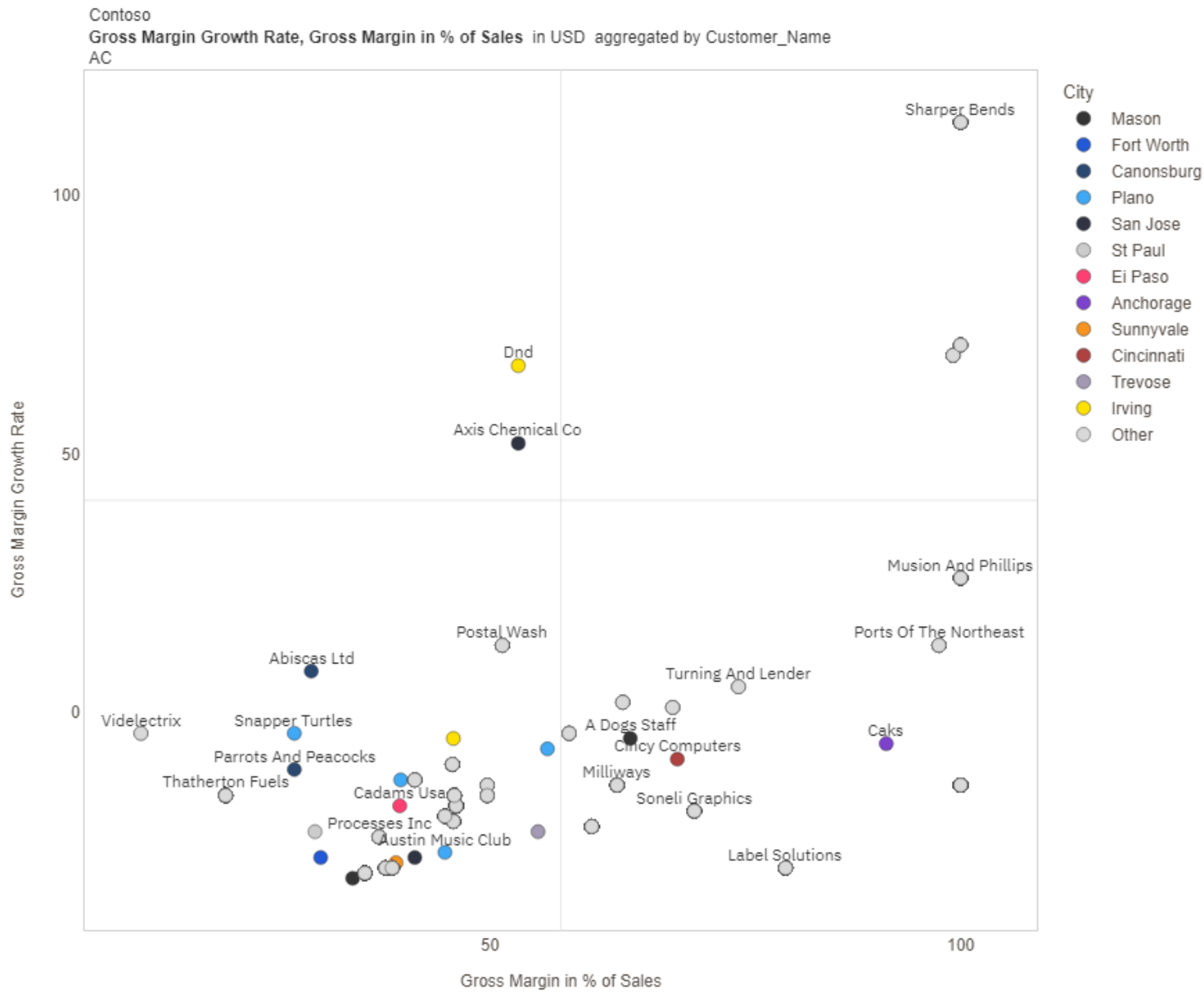
Pareto analysis reveals that cities like Chicago and Alexandria align well with sales and gross margin contributions. However, Plano, despite having the most customers, doesn't lead in sales or gross margins, highlighting potential areas to enhance sales strategies or customer relationship management.



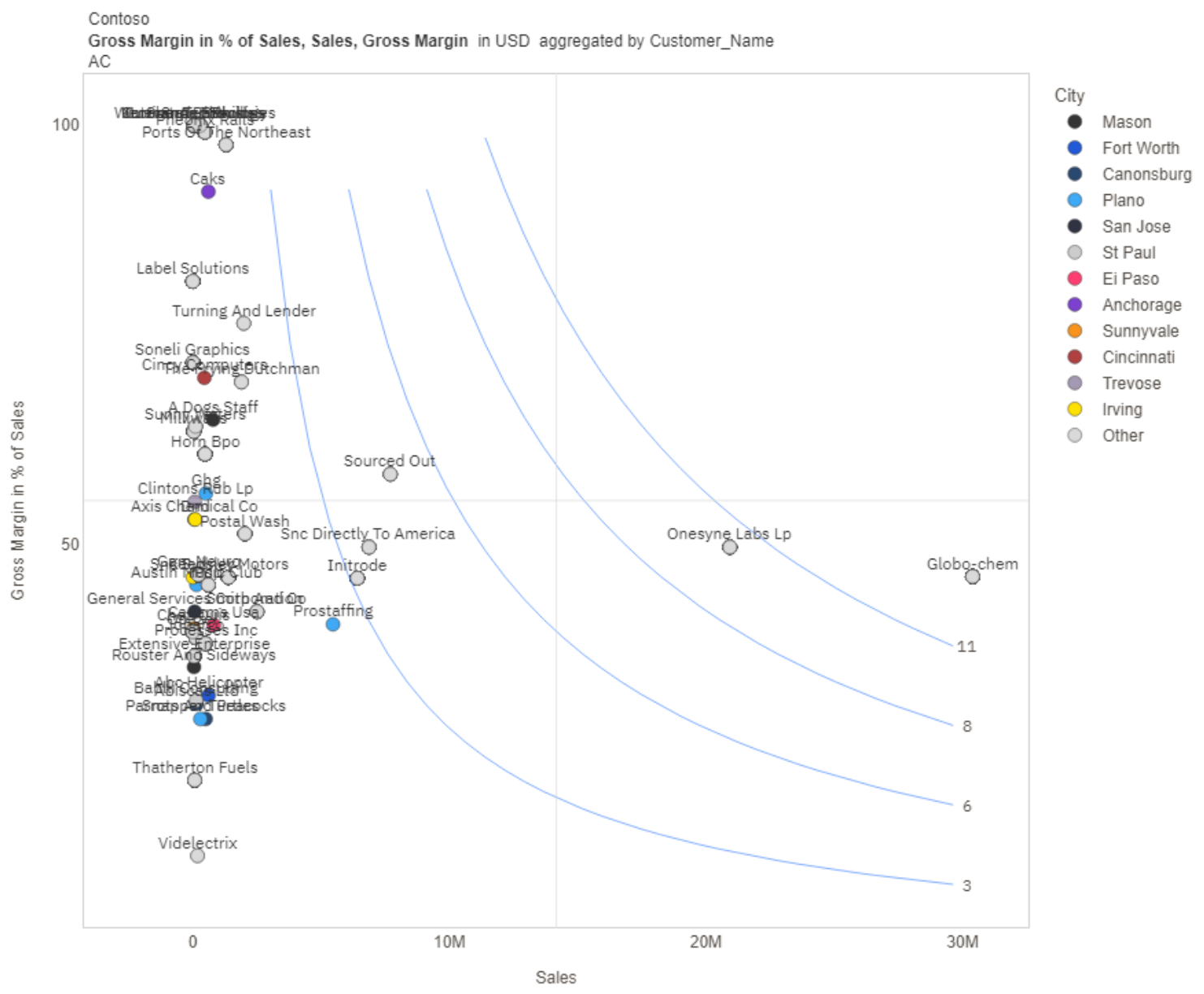
Industries are grouped into classes based on their gross margin contributions. Class A industries, though limited in number, significantly boost both gross margin and sales, showcasing their efficiency and importance in driving profitability. On the other hand, Class C industries, which are more common, contribute very little, suggesting they might be underperforming or facing competitive challenges.



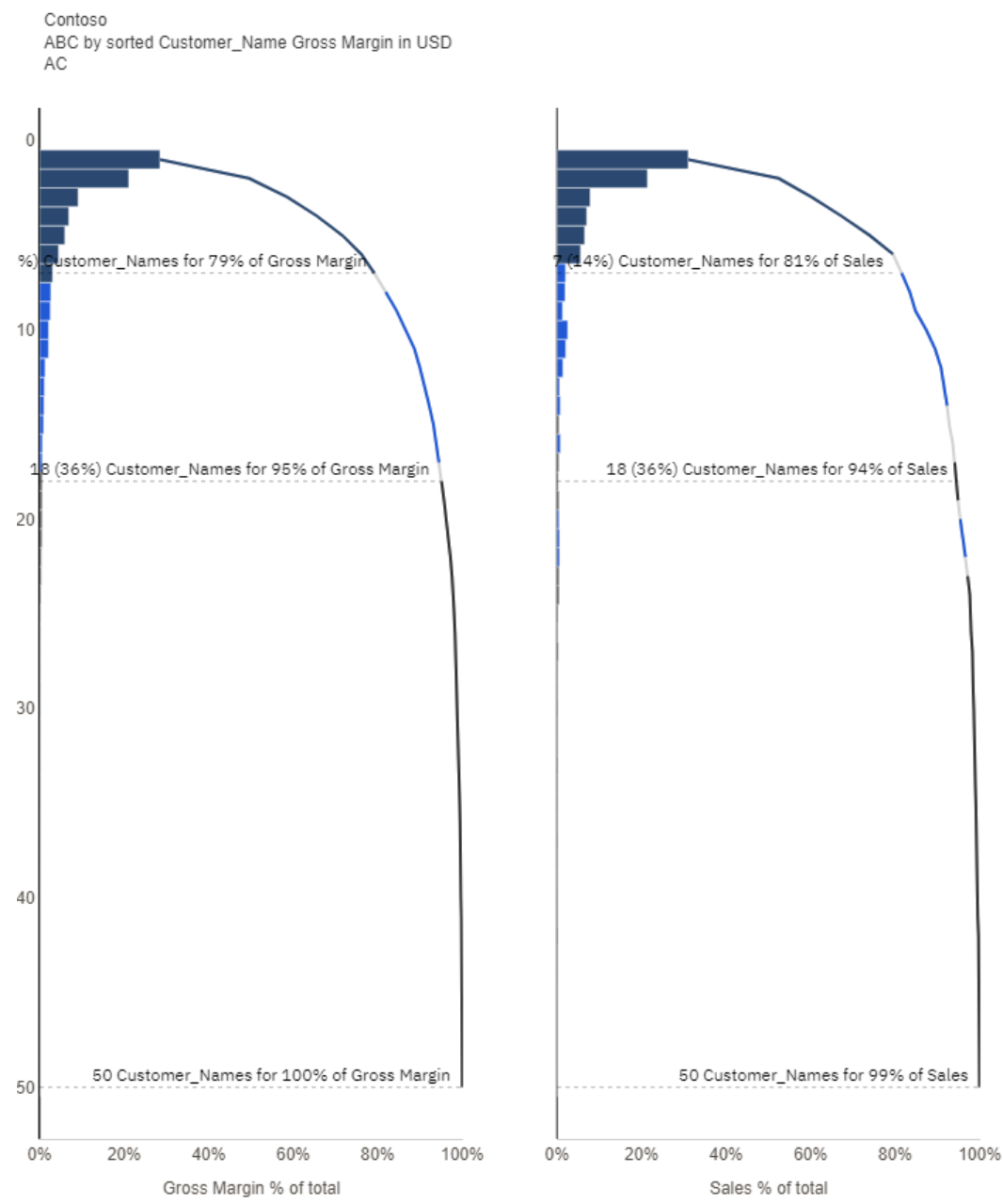
Most customers cluster in the lower left quadrant of the scatter chart, showing lower Gross Margin percentages and growth rates. In contrast, companies like 'Sharper Bends' and 'DnD' stand out in the upper quadrants, demonstrating higher profitability and growth through effective strategies.



The relationship between Gross Margin as a percentage of Sales, Sales, and Gross Margin in USD across various customers shows that while some achieve high sales volumes with lower gross margin percentages, others maintain high profitability per sale. This reflects a diverse range of business strategies and customer engagements within the company.



Pareto analysis shows that a few key customers significantly drive our company's profitability and sales. This highlights the importance of maintaining strong relationships with these top contributors.



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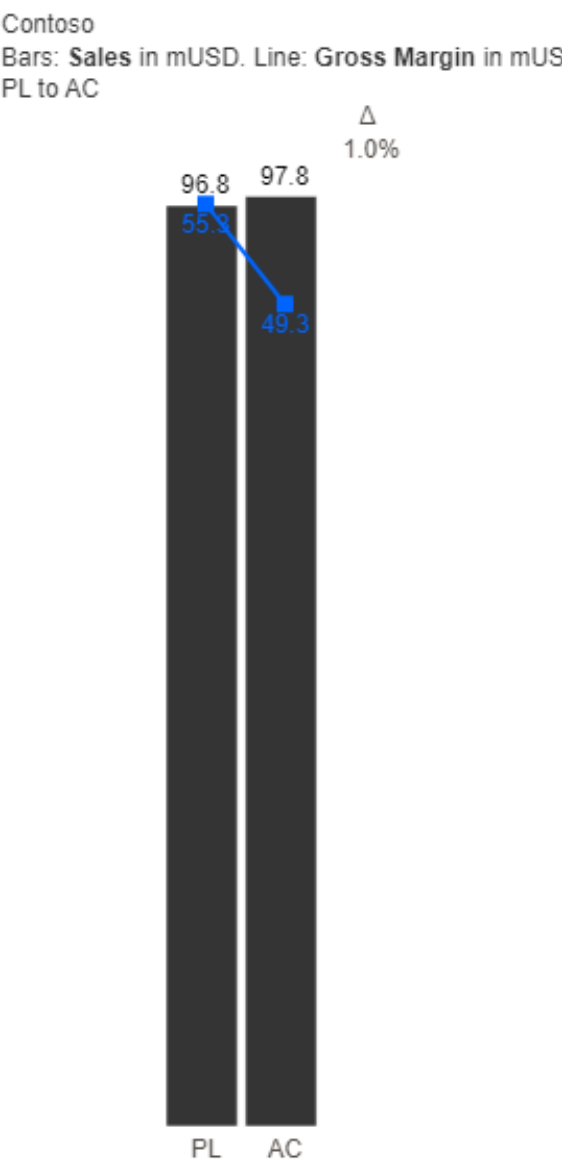
Sales performance across the company shows varied trends, with some divisions and sectors experiencing growth while others face declines. The Minor Division has demonstrated a notable growth with a 7.0% CAGR, outperforming the Core Division, which saw a slight sales drop of 0.3% CAGR (p.40). Similarly, sales trends across industries reveal strong growth in the Paper, Industrial, and Pharma sectors with CAGRs of 15.2%, 7.1%, and 5.6% respectively, contrasting with declines in the Energy and Federal-DoD sectors (p.39).

Gross margin trends are concerning across the board, with a significant decrease noted from period PL to AC, showing a negative CAGR of -10.9% (p.46). This decline in profitability is particularly severe in the North region, which faced the most substantial drop in gross margin at -15.2% CAGR (p.44). Both the Core and Growth Divisions are struggling with profitability, witnessing declines of 13.0% and 8.2% respectively, although the Minor Division shows an improvement with a profit increase of 4.6% (p.45).

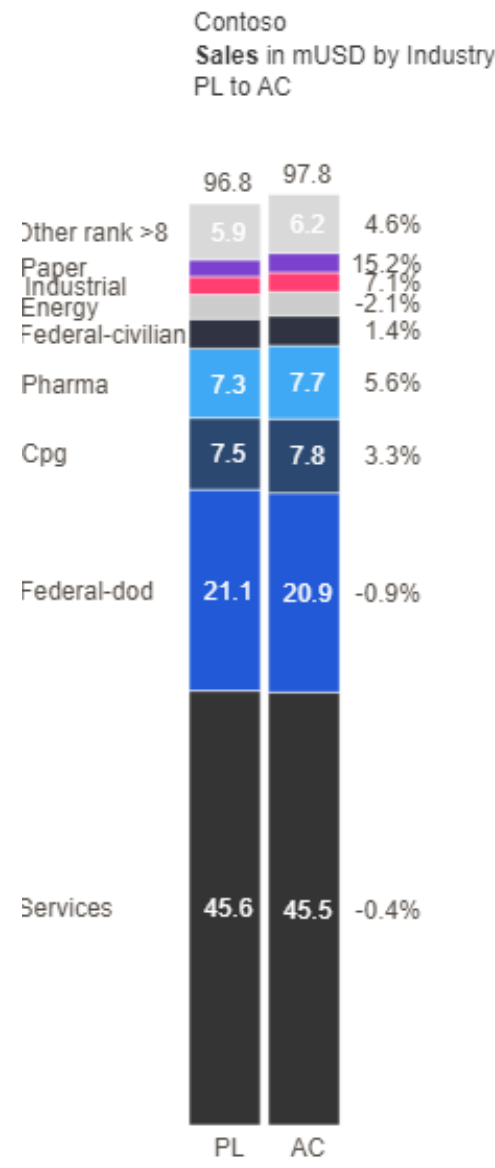
The company's sales dynamics indicate a shift towards smaller divisions, with the Growth and Minor Divisions now growing at a higher rate than the traditionally larger Core Division (p.42). This suggests a successful strategic push into new areas or products. However, the Pu-0 dimension's sales are almost static, showing negligible growth and might require a strategic overhaul (p.43).

Overall, the contrasting trends across different divisions and sectors highlight the need for a strategic review, particularly within the Core and Growth divisions. The success seen in the Minor Division could potentially guide improvements in other areas (p.47). The company needs to address the overarching issue of declining gross margins and evaluate its operational and financial strategies to enhance profitability and sustainability.

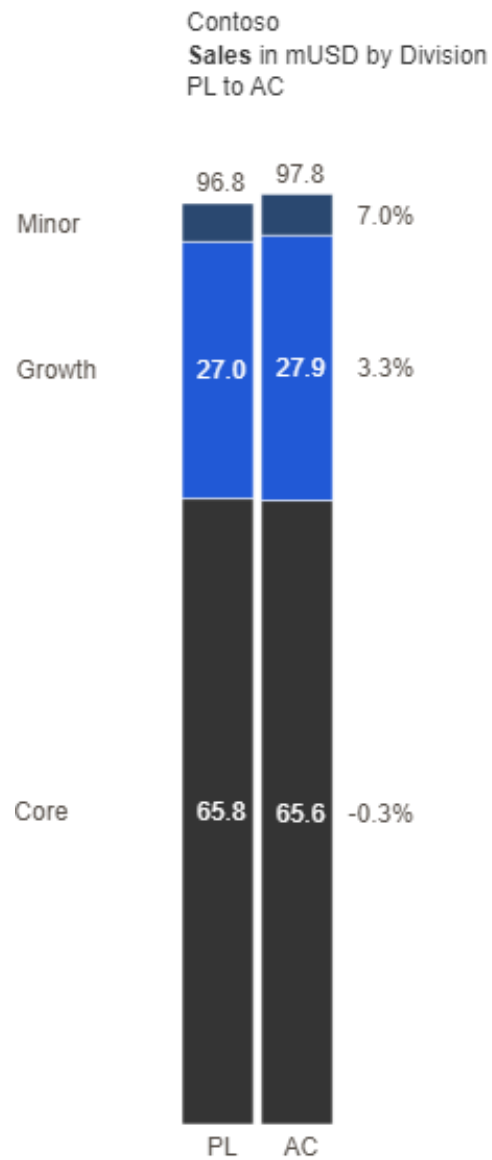
Sales have slightly increased, showing a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 1.0% from the PL to the AC period. However, there's a concerning drop in Gross Margin both in absolute terms and as a percentage of sales, indicating higher costs or production inefficiencies.



Sales trends vary across different industries. The Paper, Industrial, and Pharma sectors are growing strongly, with compound annual growth rates (CAGRs) of 15.2%, 7.1%, and 5.6% respectively. On the other hand, the Energy and Federal-DoD sectors are seeing sales declines and negative growth rates, indicating they are contracting.



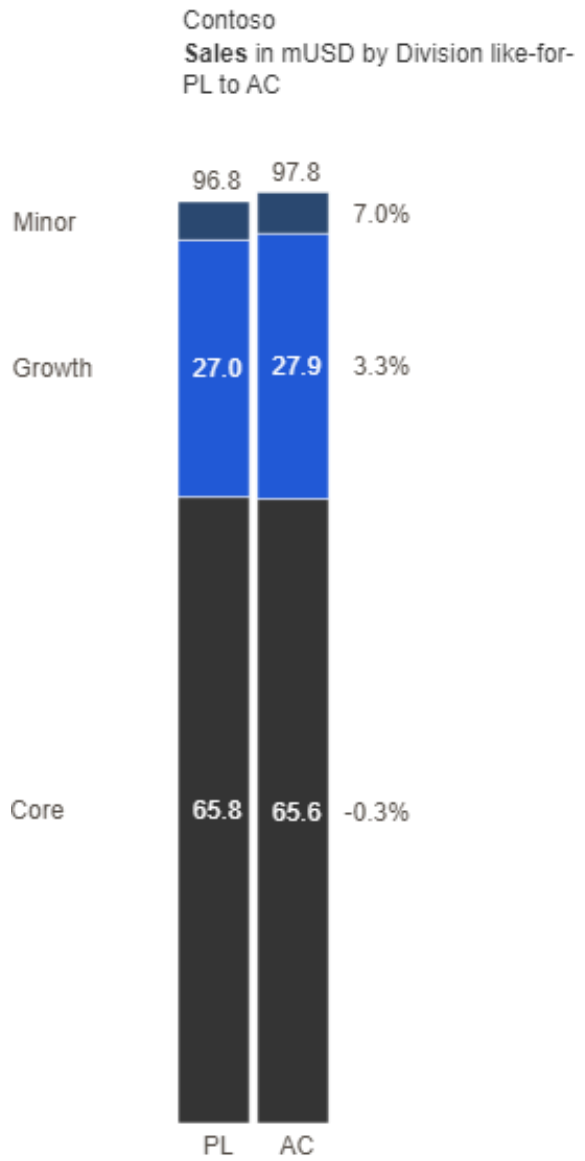
The Minor Division led the company's growth with a 7.0% CAGR, despite being smaller. In contrast, the Core Division experienced a slight drop in sales, declining by 0.3% CAGR.



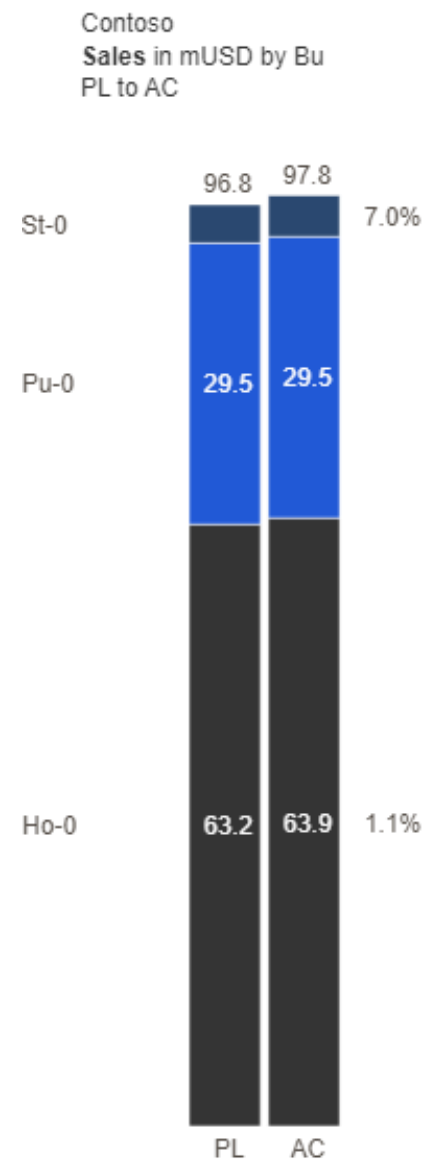
Sales for each product have shown stable market performance, with a modest growth rate of 1.0% from PL to AC, indicating either effective sales strategies or favorable market conditions.



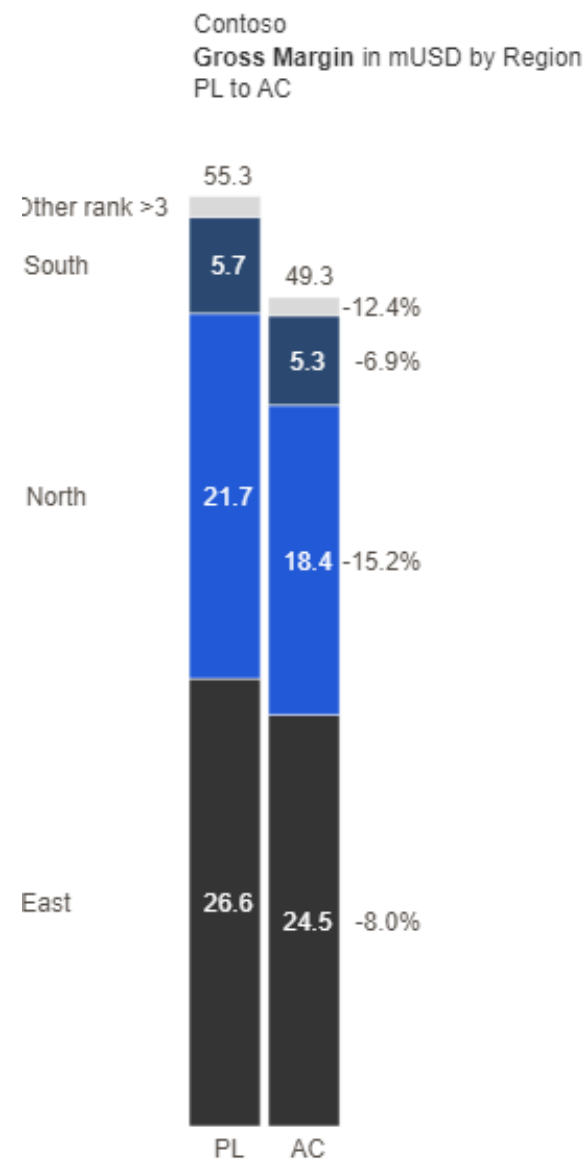
Sales dynamics at the company are changing. The smaller Growth and Minor Divisions are now growing at a higher rate than the traditionally larger Core Division, indicating a successful push into new areas or products.



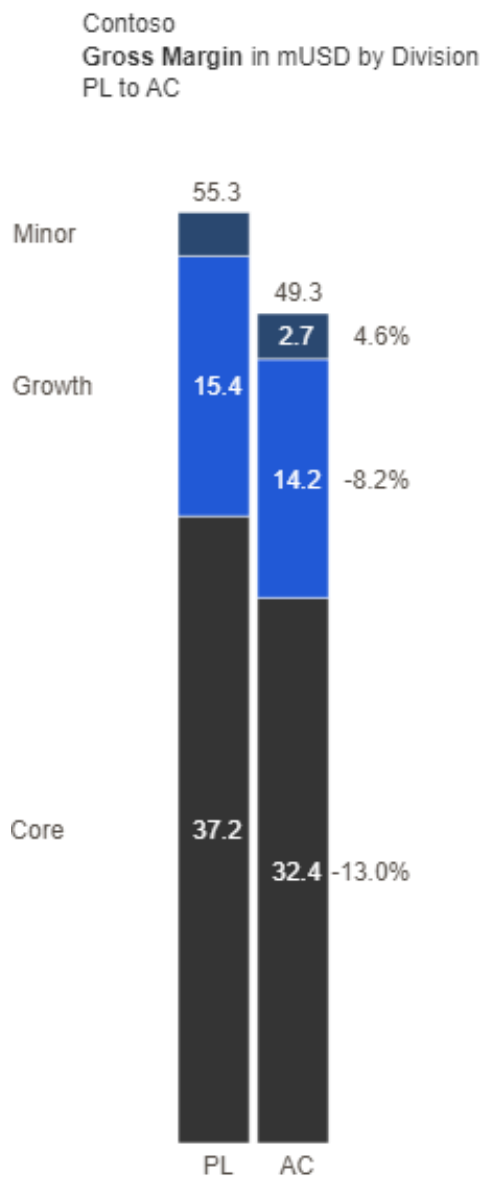
The St-0 dimension is growing robustly at 7.0%, indicating a rapidly expanding segment. In contrast, the Pu-0 dimension's sales are almost static, showing negligible growth and might need a strategic review.



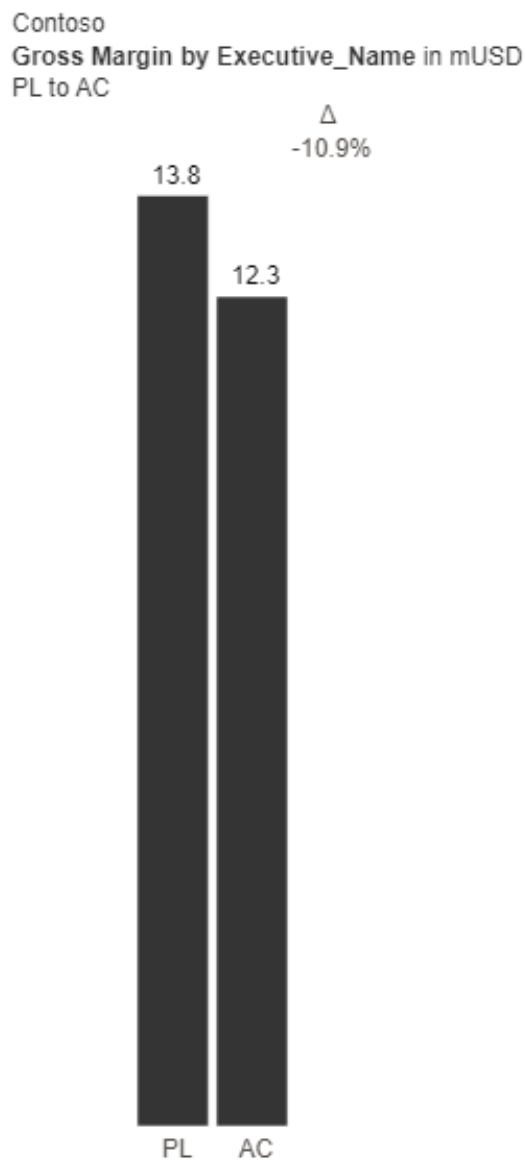
All regions saw a decrease in Gross Margin, with each affected differently. The North region faced the most significant drop, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of -15.2%, while the South region had a smaller decline.



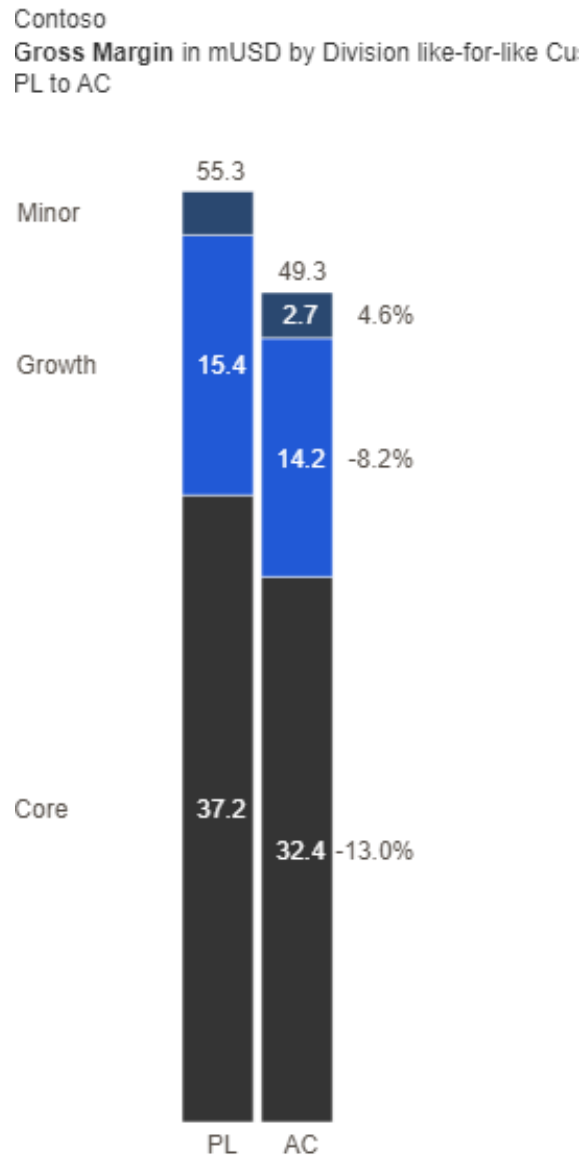
The Core and Growth Divisions are struggling to stay profitable, with their profits declining by 13.0% and 8.2% respectively. On the other hand, the Minor Division is improving, showing a profit increase of 4.6%.



Gross margin has fallen significantly from period PL to AC, showing a negative compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of -10.9%. This suggests a need to strategically review and possibly adjust our business operations or financial strategies.



The contrasting trends across the divisions highlight the need for a strategic review, especially within the Core and Growth divisions. The success seen in the Minor Division could guide improvements in other areas.



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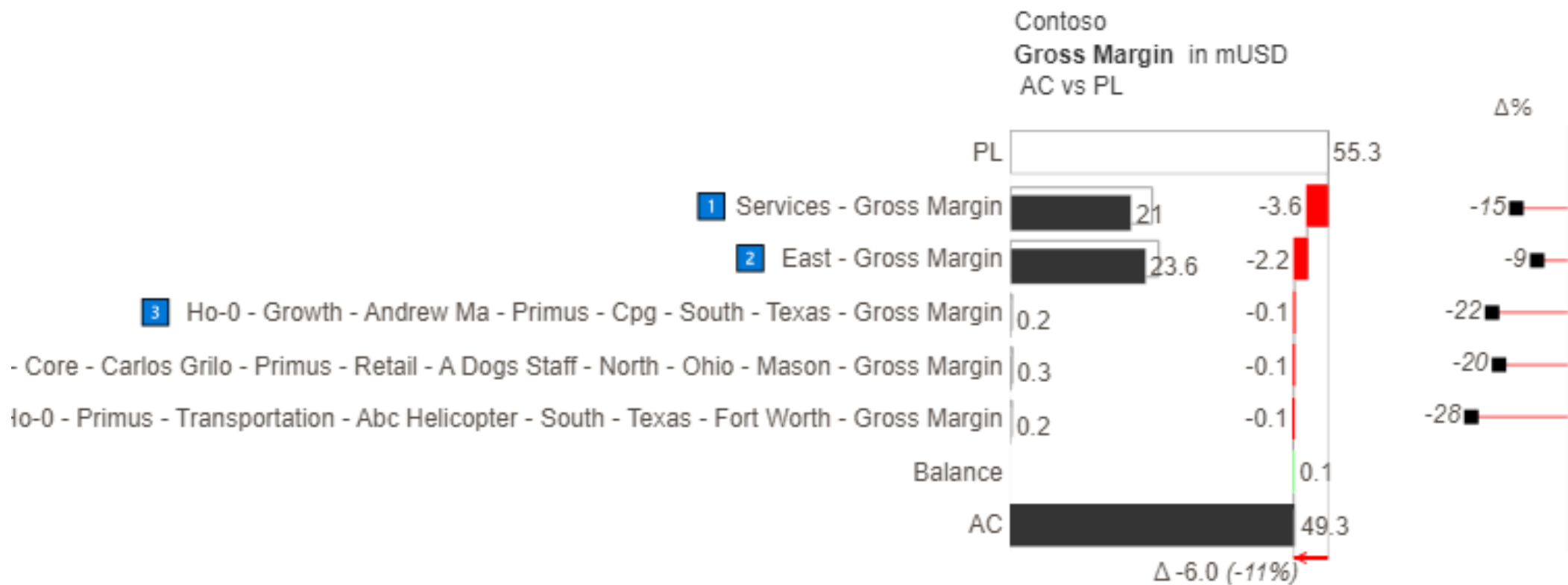
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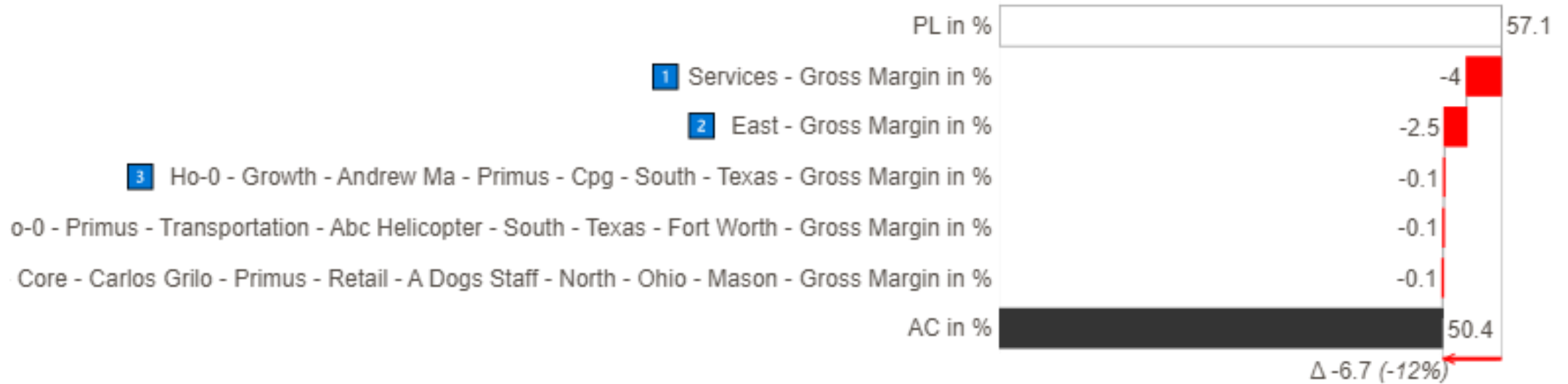
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Contoso
Price & Units & Mix in mUSD
AC vs PL

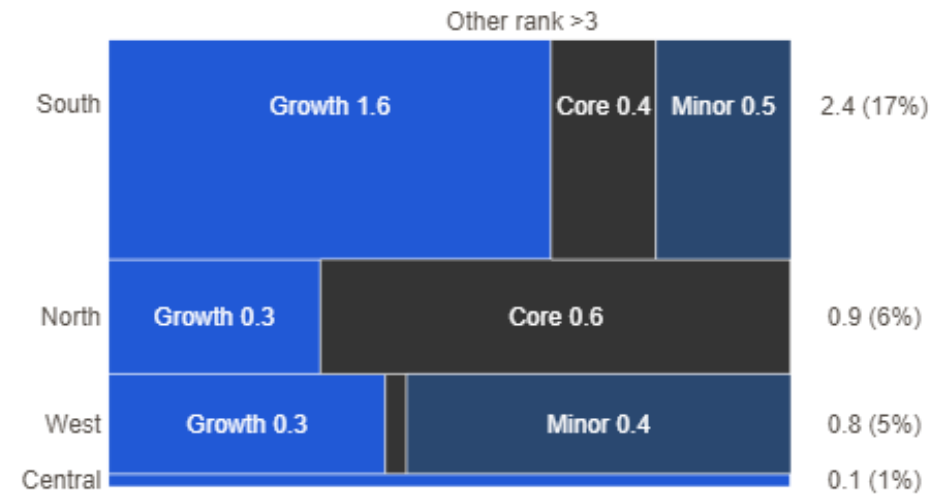
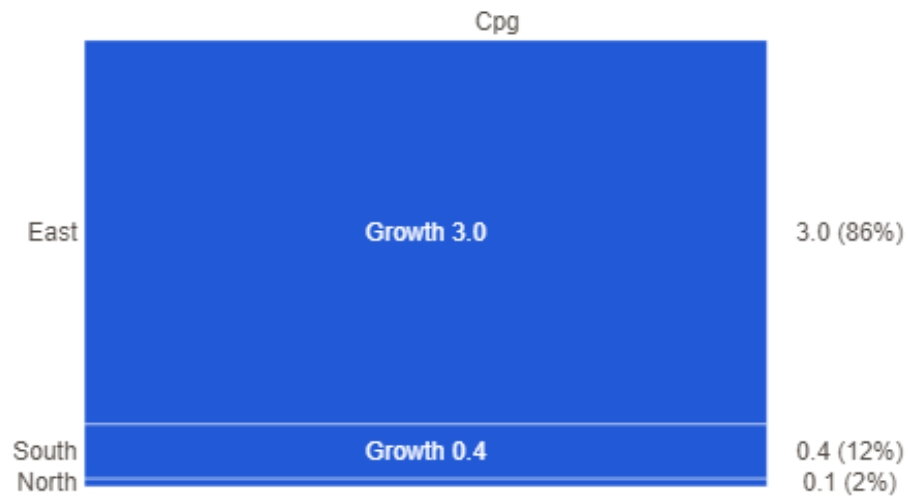
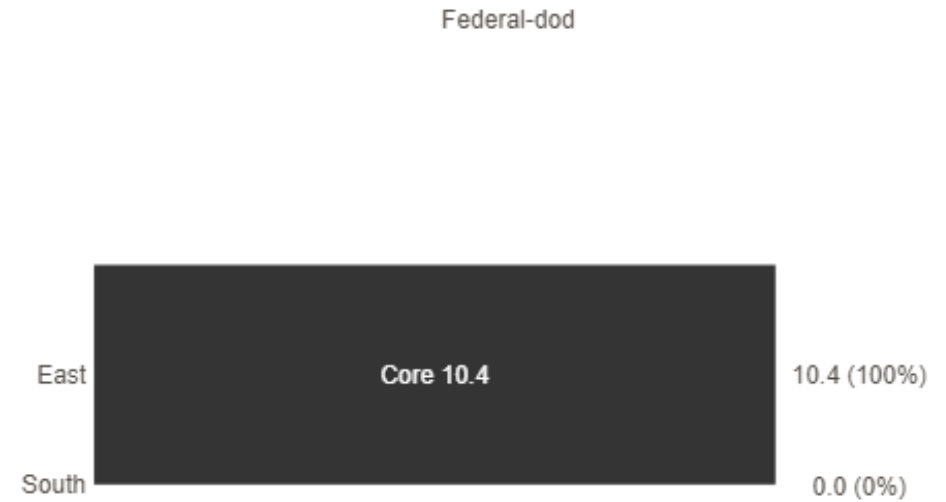




Contoso
Gross Margin in % in USD
 AC vs PY



Contoso
Gross Margin in mUSD by Industry, Region and Division
AC

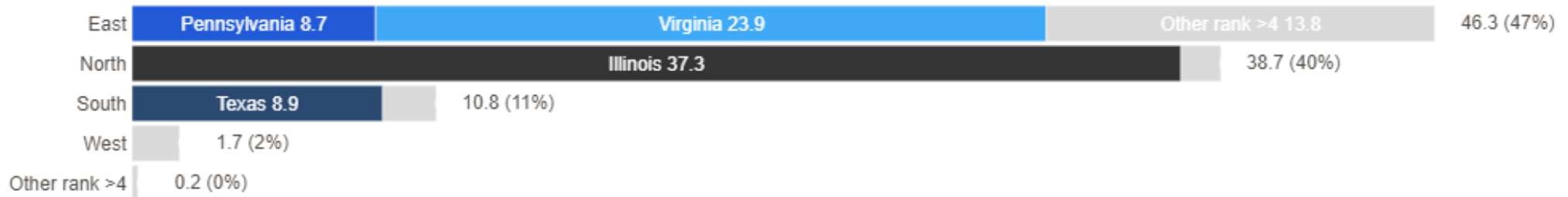


Contoso

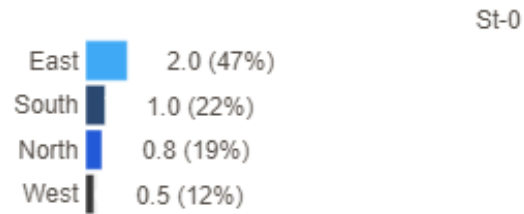
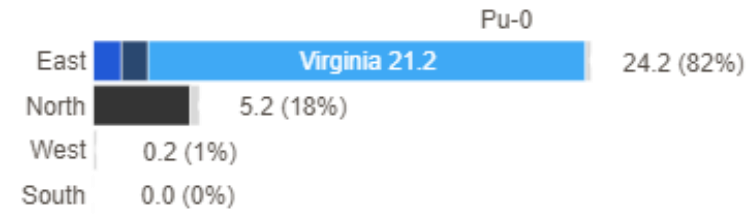
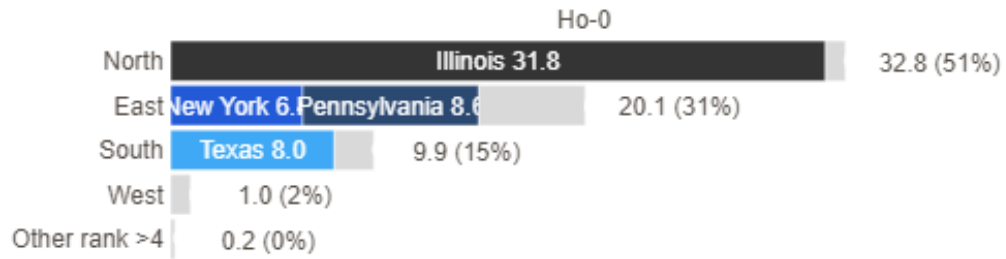
Sales in mUSD by Region and State

AC

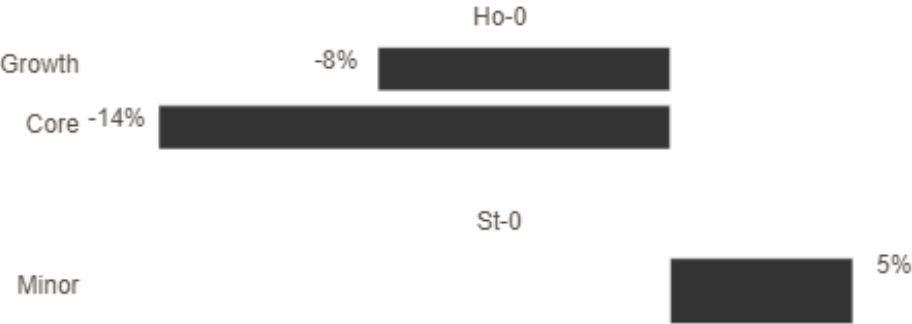
Total
97.8



Contoso
Sales in mUSD by Bu, Region and State
AC



Contoso
Gross Margin Growth Rate in USD by Bu and Division
AC

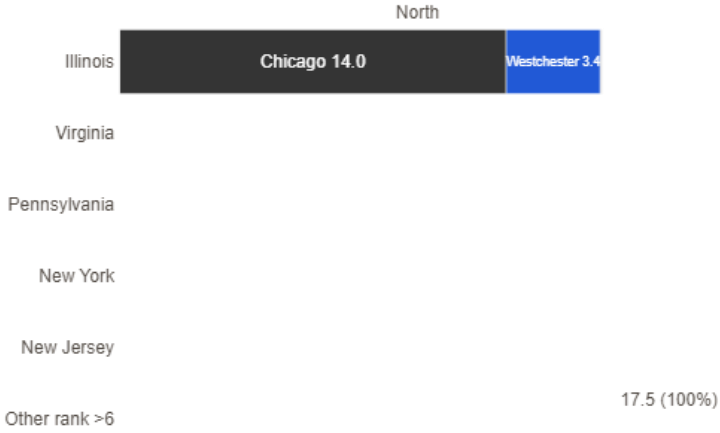
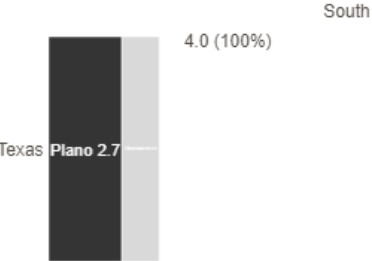
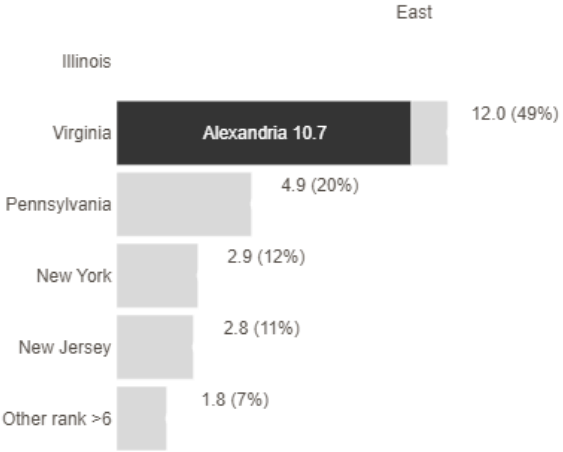


Contoso

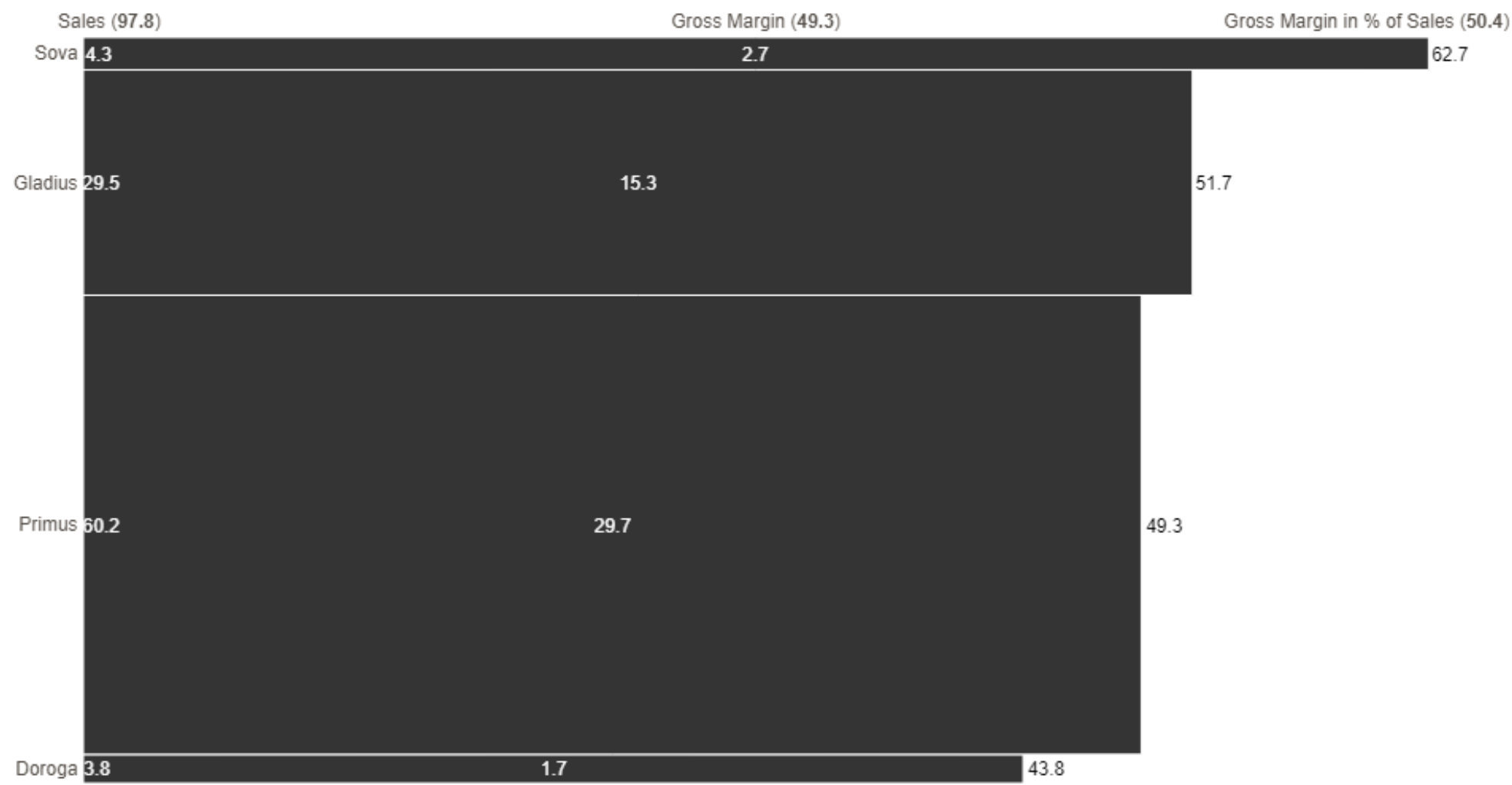
Gross Margin in mUSD by State and City
AC

Total
49.3





Contoso
Bar length: **Gross Margin in % of Sales** by Product. Bar width: **Sales** in mUSD. Bar area: **Gross Margin** in mUSD
AC



Contoso

Bar length: **Gross Margin in % of Sales** by Division and Product. Bar width: **Sales** in mUSD. Bar area: **Gross Margin** in mUSD

AC

Core

Growth

Gladius 29.5 15.3 51.7

Primus 36.0 17.1 47.5

Primus 24.1 12.5 52

Doroga 3.8 1.7

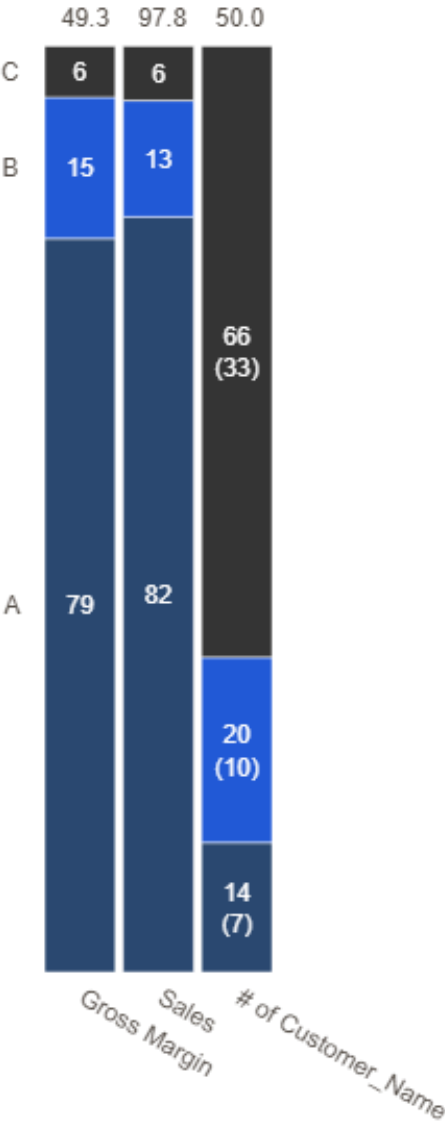
Minor

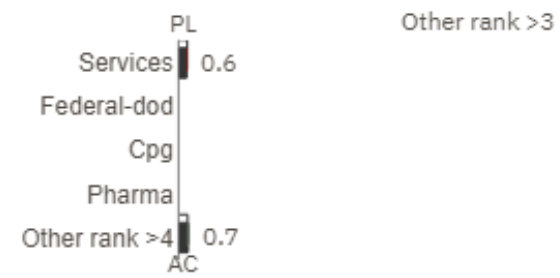
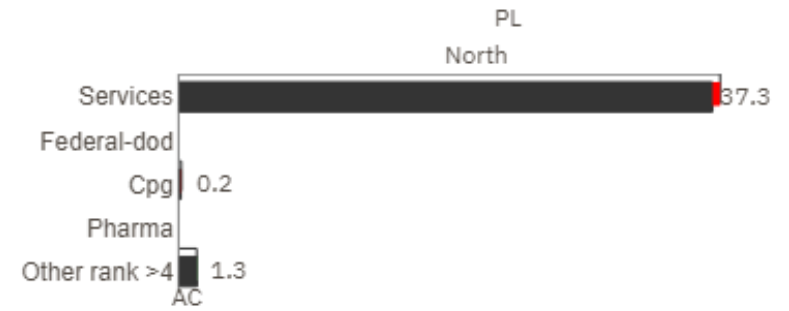
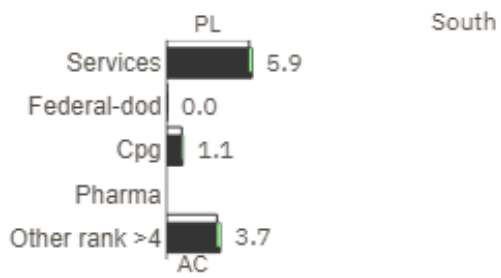
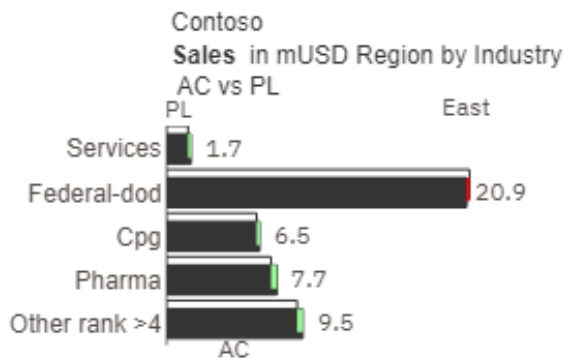
Sova 4.3 2.7 63

Primus 0.1 0.0

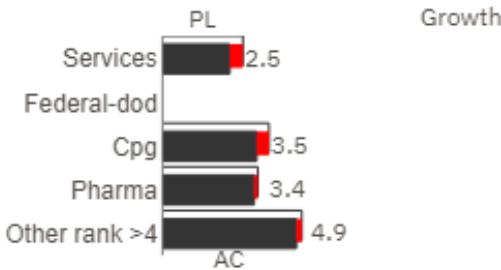
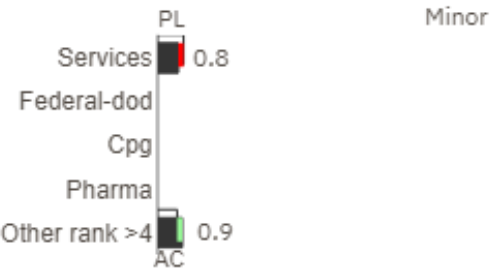
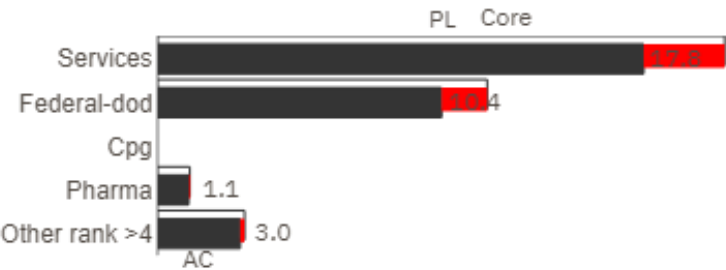


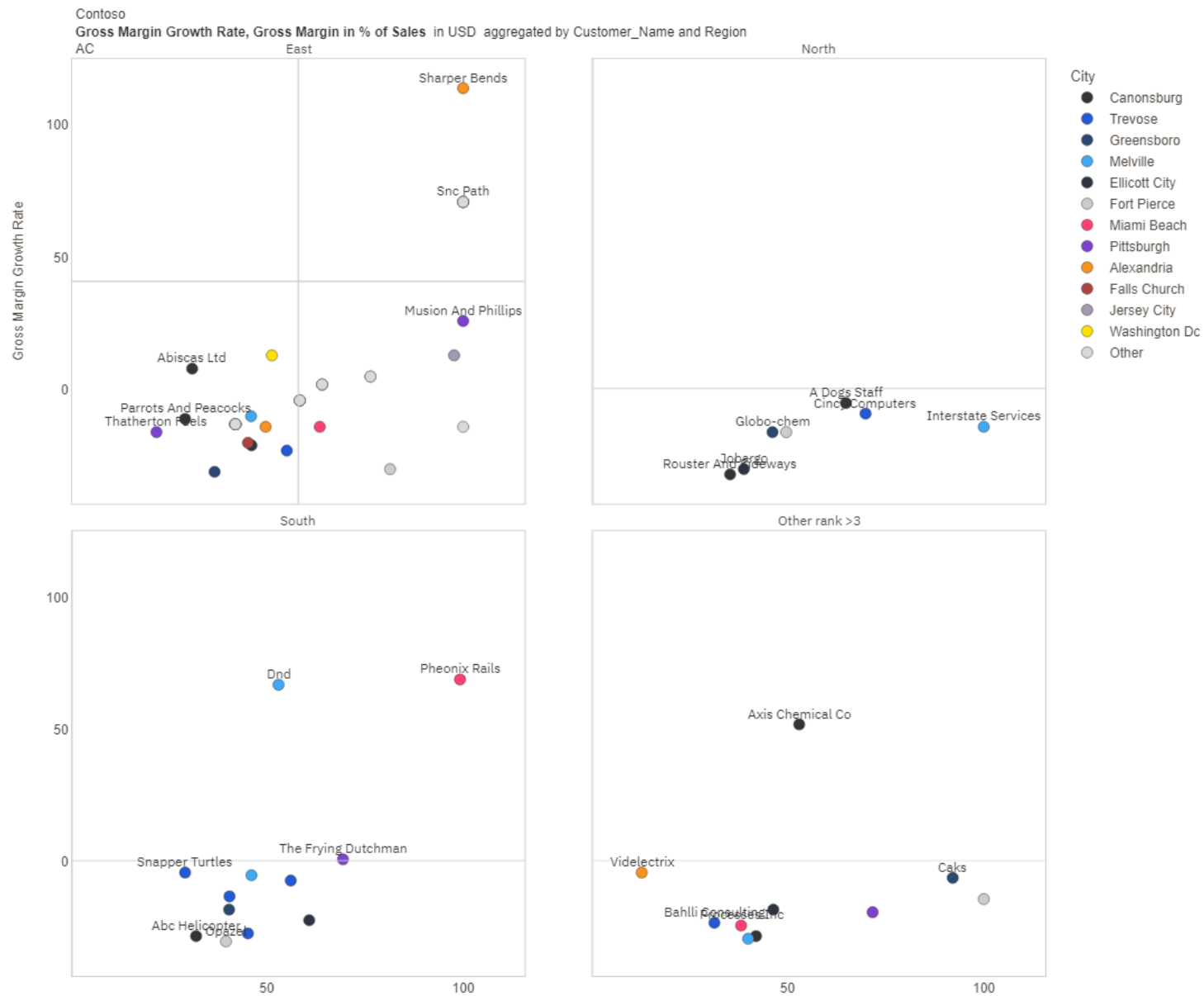
Contoso
ABC by sorted Customer_Name Gross Margin in USD
AC

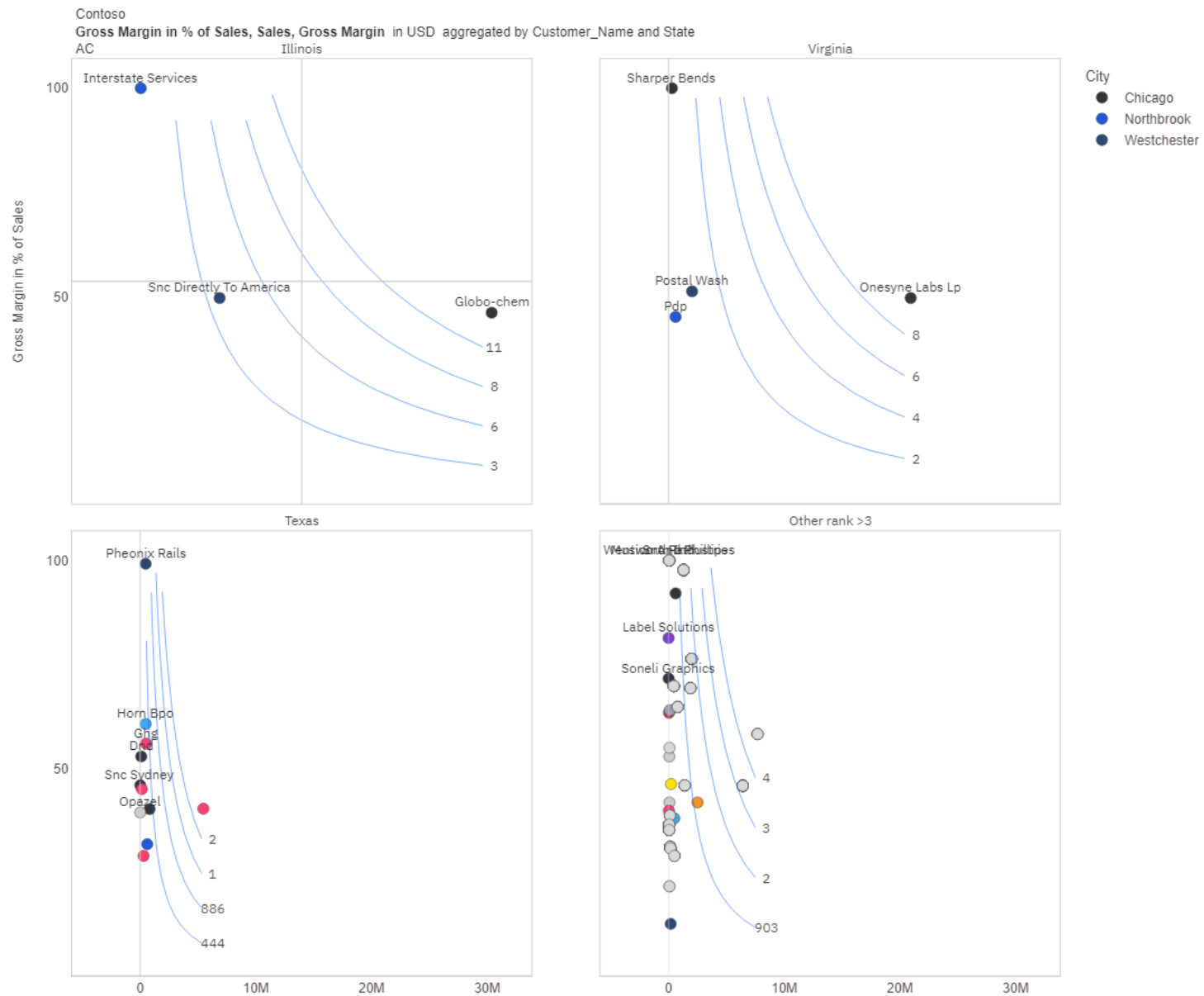




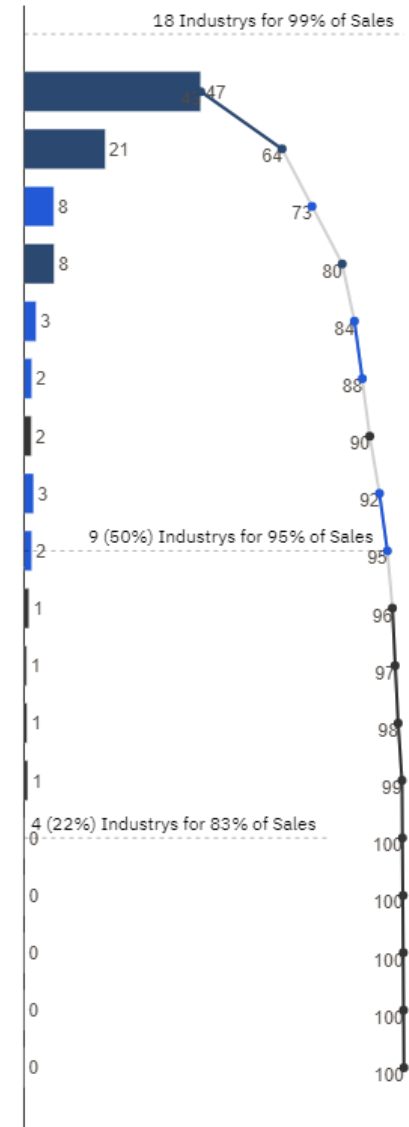
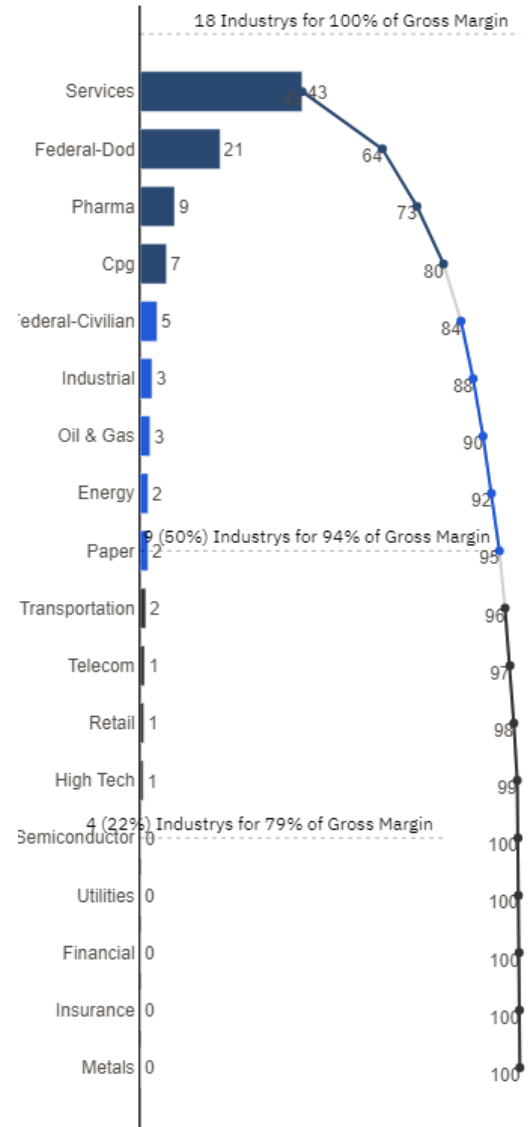
Contoso
Gross Margin in mUSD Division by Industry
AC vs PL



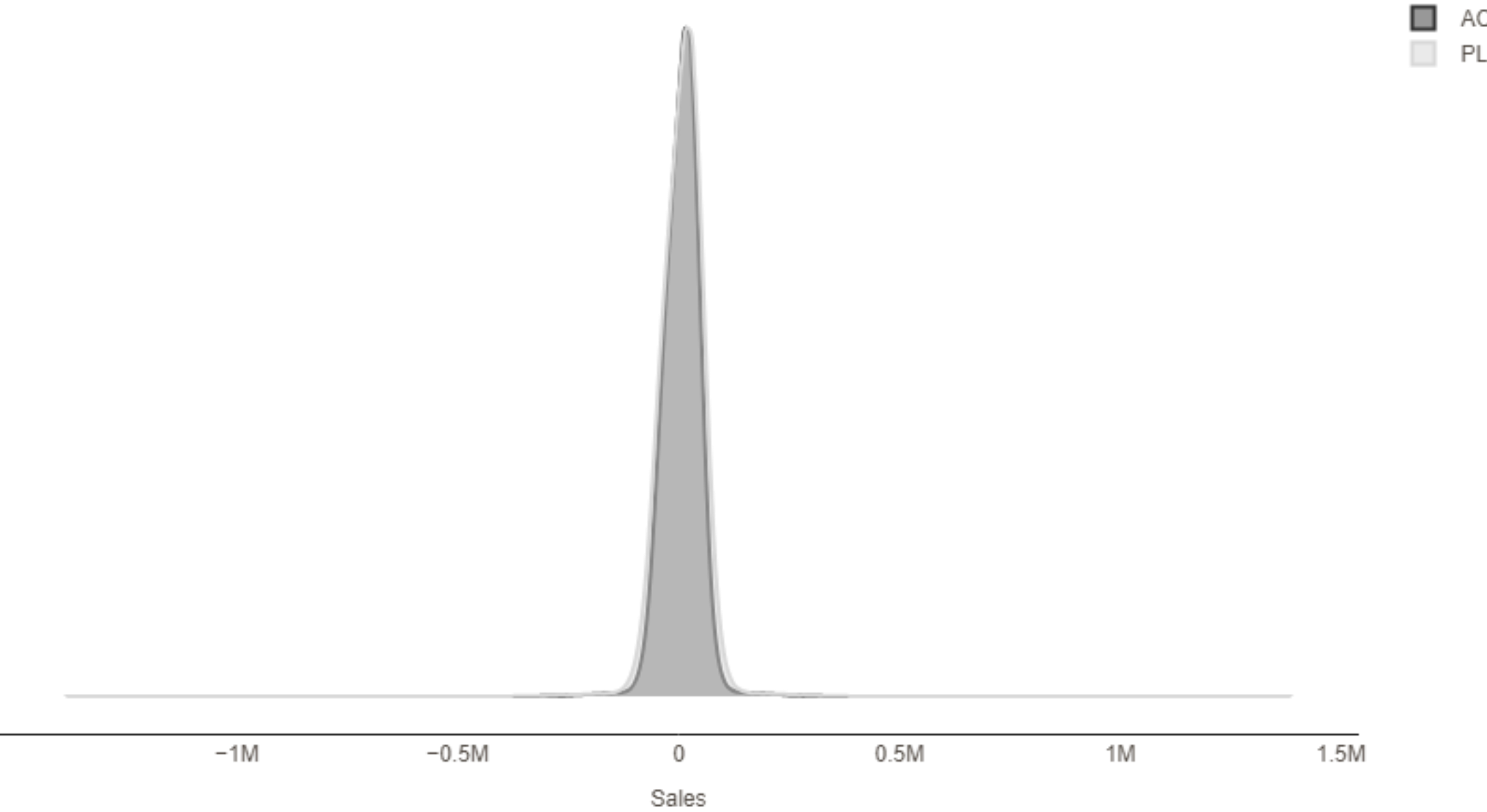


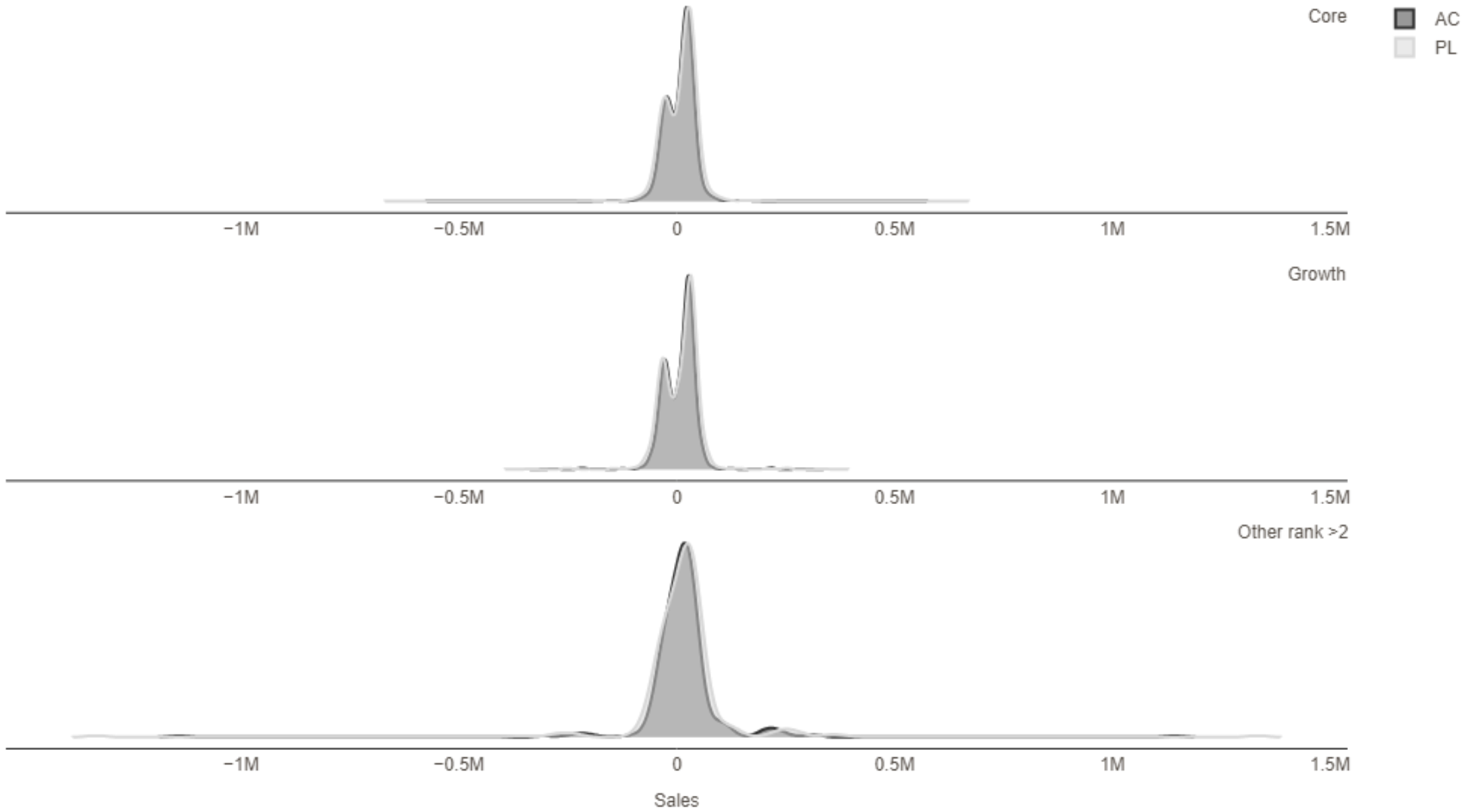


Contoso
ABC by sorted Industry Gross Margin in USD
AC

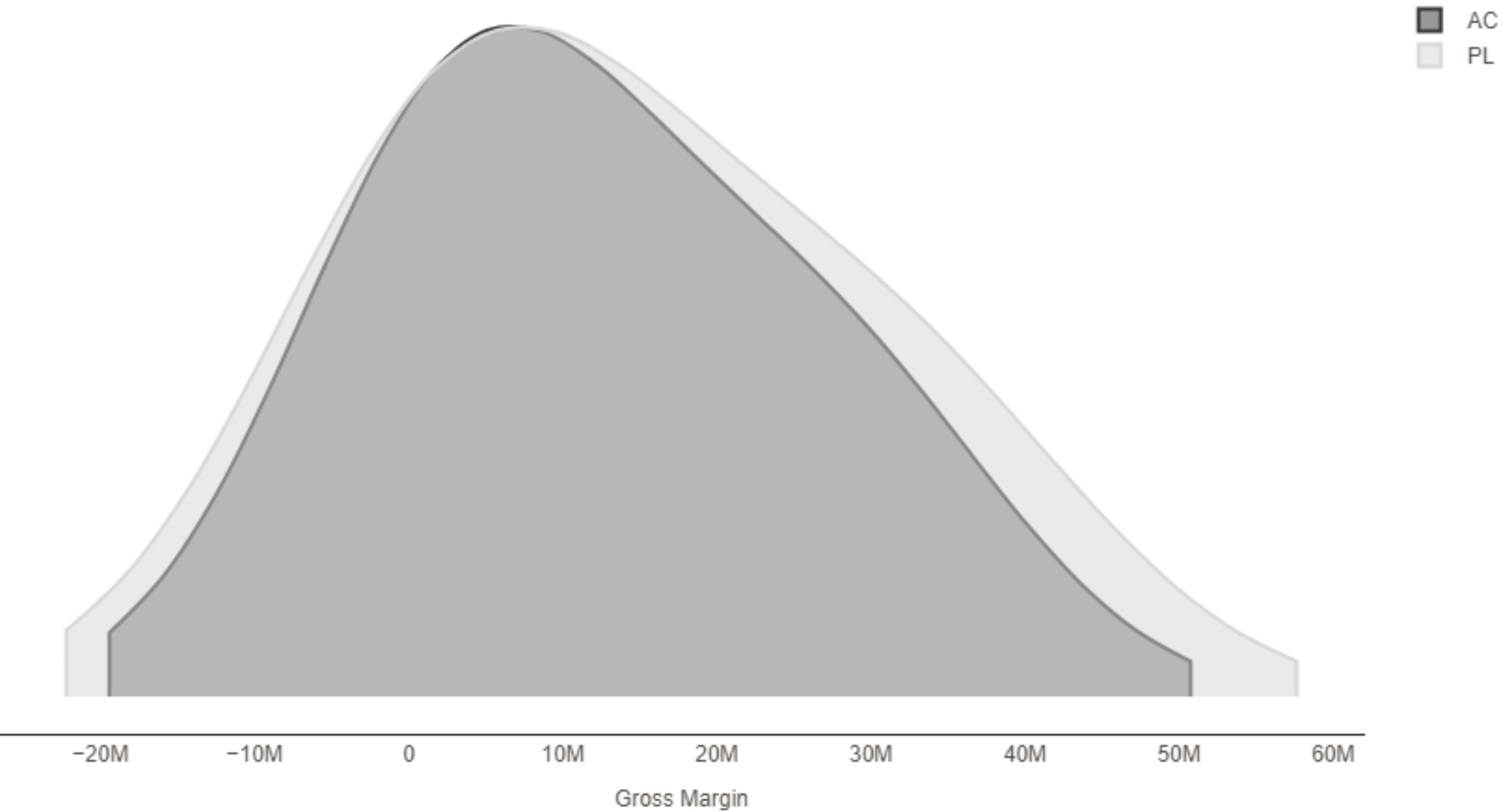


Contoso
Sales in USD, by observation
PL vs AC

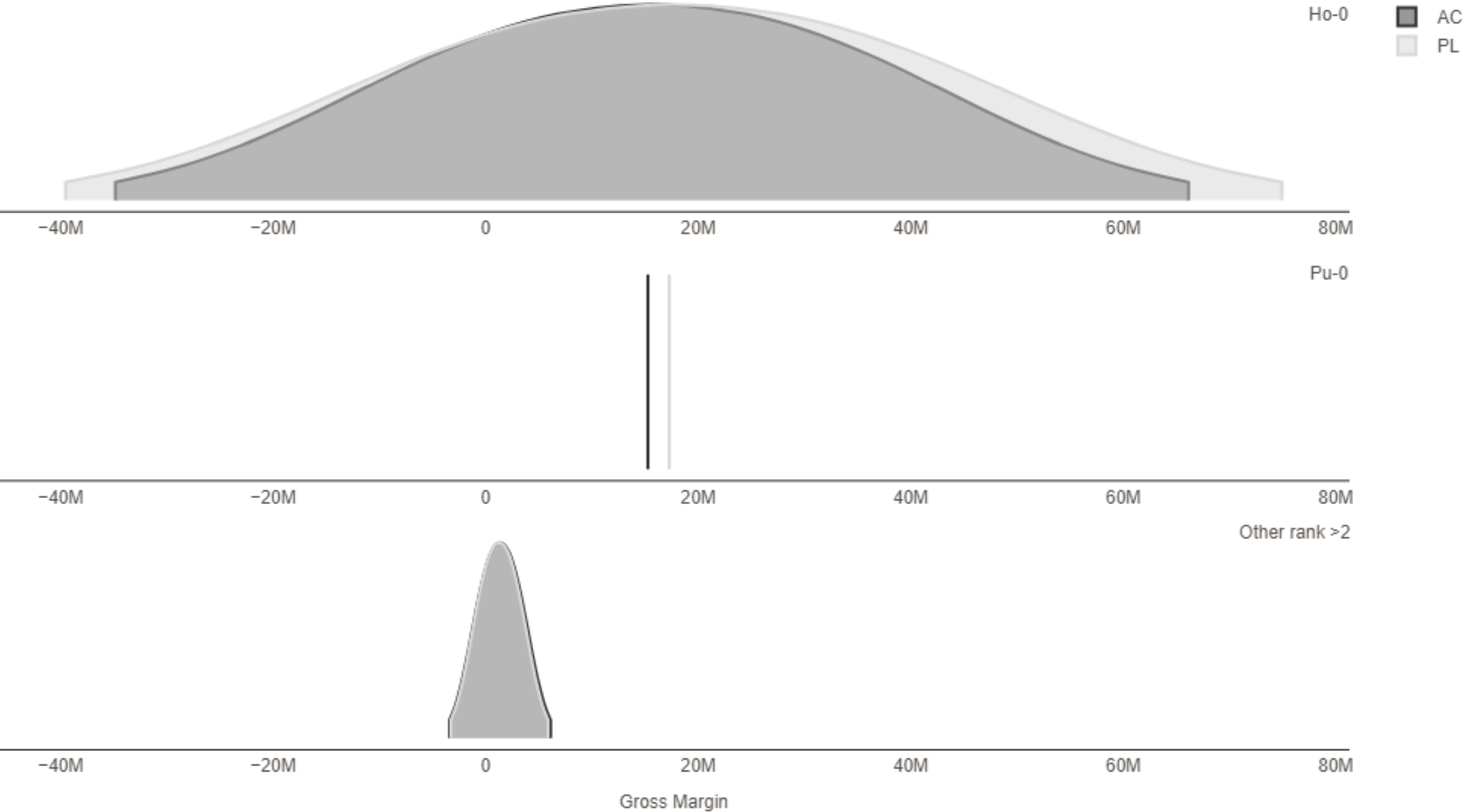




Contoso
Gross Margin in USD, aggregated by Product
PL vs AC



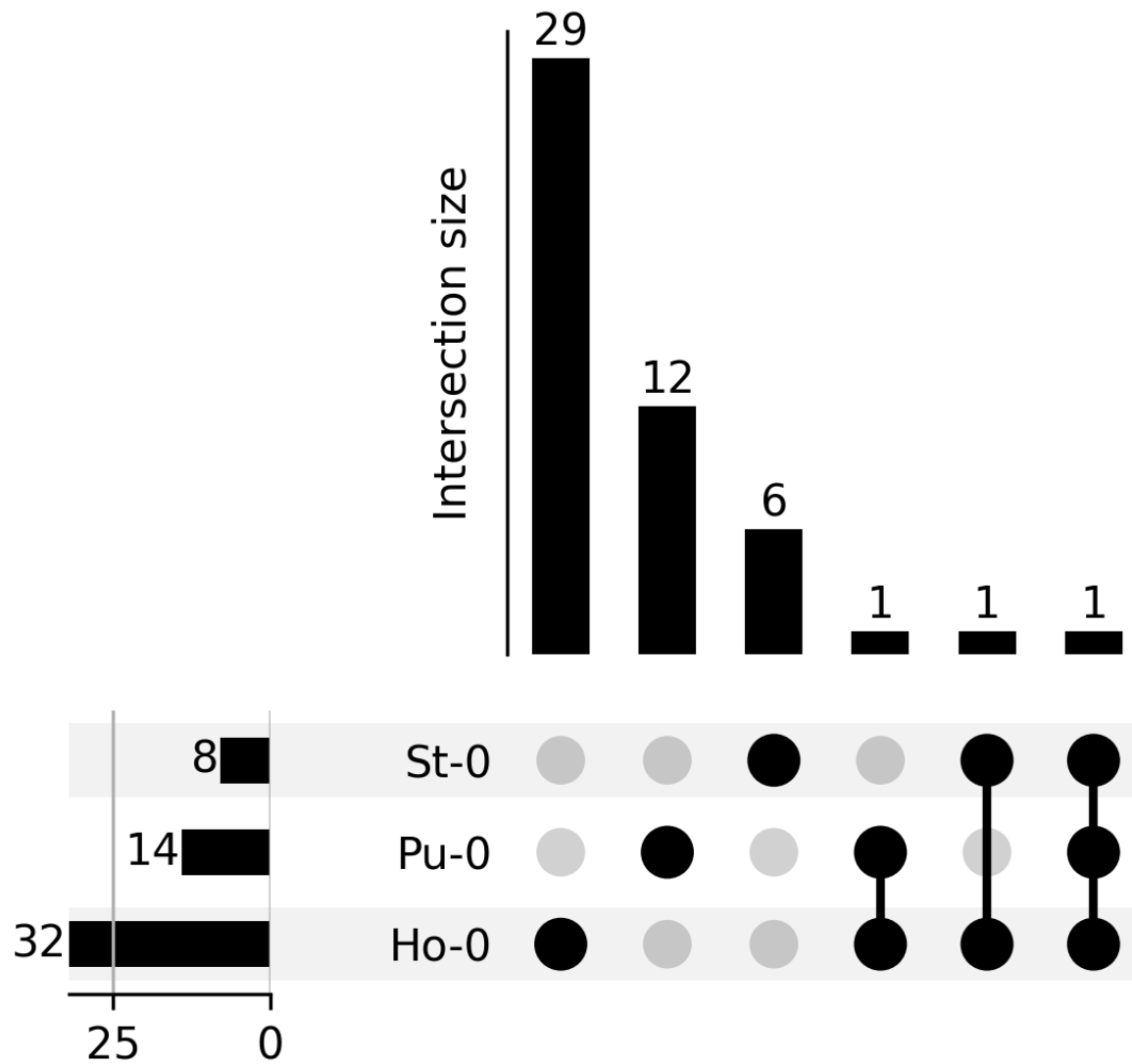
Contoso
Gross Margin in USD, aggregated by Product by Bu
PL vs AC



Contoso

Bu overlap by Customer_Name

AC



Contoso

Division overlap by State

AC

