

## Re: too much information!

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2005-01/4033.html>

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*mensanator\_at\_aol.compost*

**Date:** 01/13/05

Date: 13 Jan 2005 12:11:08 -0800

*jmfahciv@aol.com* wrote:

> *In article <20050112093819.25685.00000061@mb-m26.aol.com>,*

> *mensanator@aol.compost (Mensanator) wrote:*

>>>*Subject: Re: too much information!*

>>>*From: jmfahciv@aol.com*

>>>*Date: 1/12/05 5:46 AM Central Standard Time*

>>>*Message-id: <PqCdnWhR7560hXjcRVn-hQ@rcn.net>*

>>>

>>>*In article <1105468858.967035.96660@z14g2000cwz.googlegroups.com>,*

>>>*"mensanator@aol.compost" <mensanator@aol.com> wrote:*

>>>>

>>>>*jmfahciv@aol.com* wrote:

>>>>> *In article*

>>>>>*<1105420562.691975.269220@c13g2000cwb.googlegroups.com>,*

>>>>>*"mensanator@aol.compost" <mensanator@aol.com> wrote:*

>>>>>>

>>>>>>*>Androcles wrote:*

>>>>>>*<snip>*

>>>>>>

>>>>>>>>*7) Pixels on a computer screen. 16,000,000 colors for each pixel.*

>>>>>>>>*How many different pictures are possible?*

>>>>>>>>*Is it more or less than a google?*

>>>>>>>>

>>>>>>>>*>For a 640x480 screen, it's 10<sup>2219433</sup>, slightly larger than a googol.*

>>>>>>>>*But none of it is information.*

>>>>>>>>

>>>>>>>>*I wouldn't say none. A lot of it would be useless. But just because*

>>>>>>>>*you can't tell the difference between a picture of a polar bear in*

>>>>>>>>*a blizzard and the inside of a ping pong ball doesn't mean the*

>>>>>>>>*picture of the inside of a ping pong ball isn't an accurate*

>>>>>>>>*representation.*

>>>>>>>>

>>>>>>>>*It isn't an accurate representation.*

>>>>>>>>

Re: too much information!

sci.math: Re: too much information!

> > *Sure it is. A 640x480x24 array of binary 1s is an accurate  
> > representation of a uniform white object.*  
> >  
> > *The picture is only in your imagination.*  
> >  
> > *No, there are two files on my hard drive called*  
> >  
> > *polar\_bear\_in\_blizzard.jpg*  
> > *ping\_pong\_ball\_interior.jpg*  
> >  
> > *If the pictures are copied to another disk and renamed*  
> >  
> > *image1.jpg*  
> > *image2.jpg*  
> >  
> > *then the context of those images has been lost*  
>  
> *No, it hasn't lost context because there was no context*  
> *to lose. "A rose is a rose by any other name."*

Only if the second file is a copy of the first. If there were two distinct uniform white objects, each object's picture will be a file of all binary 1s and each file is a distinct piece of information even though the content is identical.

Would you want your bank to delete your account because the balance matches that of another customer?

>  
> > *.. and they*  
> > *become useless. But they remain valid pictures.*  
>  
> *They are not valid picture\_s\_. It is one, and only one, picture.*

Only if they were created invalidly. If I opened Windows Paint and saved the default white canvas and then `_claimed_` it was a photo of the interior of a ping pong ball, then you could claim it was an invalid picture.

It may be that no two objects are `_exactly_` identical, but they don't have to be to take the same picture. The camera has a finite resolution and light sensitivity, so two distinct objects may appear identical to the camera.

>  
> > *The information*  
> > *has not been lost, only the context in which it was used has.*  
>  
> *There is only one piece of information with this picture and that*  
> *is the color to paint the TTY screen.*

Re: too much information!

sci.math: Re: too much information!

Now you're starting to sound like Androcles. It's one piece of information PER PIXEL. And there are 307200 pixels. It is irrelevant to this discussion that every one of those 307200 pieces of information is identical.

>  
> >  
> >> *At no time would you be able to compare*  
> >> *the picture of the ping pong ball insides with a the polar*  
> >> *bear and be able to accurately specify which was which.*  
> >  
> > *Based on content alone, that is correct. But the same can be*  
> > *said about any and all binary arrays you have stored on your*  
> > *computer. Identical blocks of binary data will be different*  
> > *information depending on the context in which it is used.*  
>  
> *GIGO is still GIGO no matter what you name it.*

What part didn't you understand? So if a PDP-11/34 program won't run on my Pentium it must be garbage?

>  
> >  
> > *Have you ever opened an .exe file in Windows Notepad*  
> > *(or any other text editor).*  
>  
> *Yes, I have opened an EXE with an editor. I did that so*  
> *I could edit the file and make a different executable.*  
>  
> > *Does the file stop becoming*  
> > *"information" just because you used it in an inappropriate*  
> > *context? No, in a different context, it becomes different,*  
> > *albeit useless, information. And although you cannot*  
> > *execute the .exe file inside Notepad, you may be able*  
> > *to see arrays of ASCII data that are embedded in the*  
> > *executable such as error messages. I have a couple*  
> > *utility programs specifically for this task: dump.exe does*  
> > *a hex dump of any file and damp.exe does an ASCII dump.*  
>  
> *Lordy, lordy, lordy. You have no idea how things work.*  
>  
> *<snip serious confusion>*

projection: 6. b. the attribution of one's own ideas, feelings, or attitudes to other people

There seems to be a lot of this going around.

>  
> */BAH*  
>  
> *Subtract a hundred and four for e-mail.*

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