

sci.math: Re: [XPOST] A unique number for every "person" – can it be done?

## Re: [XPOST] A unique number for every "person" – can it be done?

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Date: Sun, 27 Feb 2005 20:55:35 GMT

| Ioannis wrote:

> TGOS wrote:

> Hello,

> First please excuse the xpost, but the topic of this post does not fit  
> into any single NG and I didn't want to miss the right people by posting  
> to the wrong NG. Maybe we can find out where it really belongs to in the  
> discussion process and move the thread to the right group.

> For halve a year now I'm thinking about creating an algorithm, this  
> sounds like math, but without some form of hashing used in cryptography  
> it will most likely get nowhere, and the topic is program related. You  
> see, it's very hard to categorize the topic.

> The problem can be summarized in one sentence:

> Calculate a number for every human being, company and organization on  
> earth, that is guaranteed to be unique till the end of time.

> The rules in detail:

[snip]

> Be creative, try to find data useful for the purpose. Things you may  
> want to use:

> – Date of birth / Year of foundation

> – Place of birth (consider not always known, names can change over time,  
> better go for coordinates)

> – Name (First, Last / Name of company/organization)

> – Name of parents (consider orphans / companies)

> – Blood Type (consider companies have no blood type)

> – Gender (consider companies)

> – Eye color (should be constant, consider companies)

> and so on.

There are people who don't know where they were born, when they were born, or their birth name. They, of course, had a name assigned to them later, but you see the problem. And then there is the problem

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of translating non-Latin names to Latin names, or whatever alphabet you want to use. The use of Gender can cause problems with trans-sexuals (right of privacy in this country) and also you have to consider hermaphrodites and the "opposite", I don't know what the word is for that. Also, eye color can change, and often does for babies, and so on.

|> Just because some people may not know something or something may not  
|> apply to certain people doesn't mean you can not use it. But explain  
|> what to do in the case it does not exist or is unknown.

|  
| The simplest idea I can come up with would be to find a way to  
| mathematically encode one's fingerprints, since they are unique. One  
| could for example take the decimal equivalent of the file contents of a  
| standard JPEG or GIF's consecutive bytes of one's fingerprint, if one  
| standardizes the process of scanning it.

-----[-----snipped-----]-----

Since companies, organizations don't have fingerprints, using (an encoding) for fingerprints would be superflous and wastefull, not to mention the logistics of actually fingerprinting everyone, and that is assuming that everyone will let themselves be fingerprinted. And of course, there are people with no fingers, so another method would still need to be used to incorporate, er the corporations. Keep in mind, a simple (let large) number could be used for everthing. They aren't that many sands on the beach, after all. And according to some theory, there are "only"  $10^{80}$  atoms in the universe. Just counting/numbering each human being (that ever lived and will live) along with their companies/corporations/etc, isn't that much of a reach. The only problem I see is trying to find out what the max number would (should) be, and that is for record (data) storage. Of course, you could make the number "open-ended" and just keeping numbering the entities. Given that the  $10^{80}$  atoms in the universe can only "make" so many people, a finite table should suffice. One could also use positive numbers for people, and negative numbers of corporate entities, that would make identification a wee bit simplier, if not just a bit easier to record (store). Of course, I assuming using a decimal numbering system, but that shouldn't be assumed that that's the best system, but it would be easier to print those numbers using the existing technology (typewriters, printers, people's understanding of numbers...). \_\_\_\_\_Gerard S.