

ICANN takes control of Internet Time Keeping

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?Does anyone really know what time it is? Does anyone really care?? Well, even if you don?t remember this popular Chicago song, if you?re on the Internet you do care. Many network services, such as authentication, depend on everyone agreeing on the exact time. So when a lawsuit threatened the Internet?s authoritative source for time-zone data this had the potential to really foul up everyone?s network time.

What happened was David Olson, the volunteer who had run the public domain Time Zone and Daylight Saving Time Database was sued by?I?m not making this up?an astrology software company called AstroLab for, they claimed, using data from their ACS Atlas program.

Olson, who didn?t have the resources to fight a lawsuit, wrote on October 6th that ?A civil suit was filed on September 30 in federal court in Boston; I?m a defendant; the case involves the time zone database.? And, therefore, ?the ftp server at elsie.nci.nih.gov has been shut down.?

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