
Subject: Re: Time Woes

Posted by [Ken Mankoff](#) on Thu, 02 May 2002 13:07:00 GMT

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On Wed, 1 May 2002, Paul Van Delst wrote:

> David Fanning wrote:

>> Ken Mankoff (mankoff@I.HATE.SPAM.cs.colorado.edu) writes:

>>> First, before you deal with any conversions, you have to understand

>>> exactly what it means to have "seconds since 1980".

>>

>> What questions would it be helpful for me to know to ask?

>

> Is the time "regular" time, or atomic time?

I would not ask anything as eloquent as this. I would ask 1 of 2 things. First, "Can I get the data on a different grid", and second would be what I asked you: A long rambling paragraph asking how many seconds are in a year, etc. So I suggest you take Paul's advice.

> p.s. I always thought the "seconds since 1980" time was a relatively
> common thing.

I always thought that "time" was a relatively common/simple thing too... until I started working with satellites and space.

I think "seconds since 19X0 (where X is 7 or 8)" is common in computers, and that the computer community assumes $60s*60m*24h*365d$ seconds in a year, unless its a leap-year. I would guess this is what Davids time-scale is, but if its not, the errors between the above equation and whatever his time is on will add up (especially if you add up 20 years of errors, and stop right before a leap-year when the errors "reset" a bit), that he will not be looking at data within 2 hours of each other.

-k.

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