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Assignment 5.2

Native functions in SQL are fun, and especially the date and time options provide a ton of flexibility. This also excellently illustrates why proxy names are important, because some of the functions used in tandem would lead to some gross looking column headers very quickly.

The first function combination I’d like to demonstrate is DATE\_FORMAT(NOW()), which allows you to do a lot of things with the current date. Specifically, if we wanted to grab the current day of the week, we could do this:

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We can also use spaces in proxy names, as long as we encase the name in double quotes:

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(the SUM() statement could be easily used to find totals in databases, such as by adding up an entire column of values).

Lastly, by nesting a couple of these functions together, we can print custom messages based on a truth check. For example, we can use the IF() function to check to see if we’re in the right database. The DATABASE() function will return the database we’re in, and we can use the simple equality operator “=” to compare that. Then, IF() will return its second argument if true and its third argument if false. Put all together, this leads to a bit of an ugly statement:

SELECT IF(DATABASE() = “movies”, “yes we are”, “no we aren’t”);

so in order to make it very clear what we’re doing at first glance, we can add a proxy name (and I like reserving question marks for Boolean checks):

SELECT IF(DATABASE() = “movies”, “yes we are”, “no we aren’t”)

* AS “Watching Movies?”;

And this gives us the following output:

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You can see that the command prompt is actually checking which database we are currently in, and is able to use that information to give different responses to the exact same prompt.