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Response to What is Information

According to Buckland, the three principal uses of the term “Information” are:

1. Information-as-knowledge;
2. Information-as-thing;
3. Information-as-process.

Information-as-knowledge is intangible, which means that one cannot touch it or measure it in direct ways, but they can express, describe, and represent it in physical ways, such as text and communication. Therefore, information-as-knowledge have the meaning of telling things and which is being told, which refers to an attribute of receivers’ knowledge and interpretation of signal, not of the sender's, nor some omniscient observer's nor of the signal itself.

One of my examples is that as a programmer, I have the knowledge to write codes, which tell the computer what to do. I express my knowledge through a combination of lines of codes and the computer is informed by this knowledge.

Information-as-thing is tangible and commonly used meaning of the term “information”. To examine it, we can touch or measure it directly, which means it is some physical thing. In addition, it has relation to information systems, including “expert systems” and information retrieval systems, which is with information in the sense of a special interest in the study of information system that information systems deal directly; for instance, libraries deal with books; computer as information systems handles data using physical bits and bytes.

For me, my laptops and other electronic devices are information-as-thing. I can touch them, type things, and create outputs from these devices. And just like mentioned above, computers can be utilized as information systems to handle data by bits and bytes.

In the original article, information-as-process is first mentioned but discussed after information-as-knowledge and information-as-thing. I agree with that, so I switch to this order as well.

Information-as-process is situational. It can be both intangible and tangible is defined handling, manipulating, and deriving of new forms or versions of information-as-thing. In conclusion, it is processes, not entities.

While I’m writing codes to build a software or resolve for a solution is an information-as-process.

In conclusion, for entity, when talking about intangible, it is information-as-knowledge, which mainly refers to knowledge; when tangible, then it is information-as-thing, which is commonly data and documents. While something is not entity and is intangible and process, then we look at information-as-process, which is the process of becoming informed; when is tangible and process, then it is information processing, which refers to data processing.