MyTime: A Protocol for Universal Availability

Request for Comments (RFC): The "Time Layer" of the Internet

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28 December 2025

Version 1.0 | DRAFT | PUBLIC

Executive Summary

Problem: Commerce depends on discovering when resources are available, yet no universal system exists for advertising time availability. Currently, availability data is trapped in proprietary booking platforms or private silos, creating measurable inefficiency: driving instructors sit idle between lessons, venues stand empty, consultants have unutilised hours.

Insight: The core failure is structural. Users ask "who is free at 3pm Tuesday?" but current systems are person-centric ("When is John available?"). This paper proposes inverting the model to time-centric resource discovery.

Solution: MyTime is a global availability directory using a minimal three-state model (Free/Busy/Tentative). It operates as pure information infrastructure—no transaction intermediation, no commissions, no platform lock-in. Just as HTTP made information searchable, MyTime makes time searchable.

Ask: We seek founding contributors—systems architects, calendar protocol experts, database engineers, and economists—to refine this specification before implementation begins in early 2026.

1.0 The Missing Layer

Commerce depends on discovering when resources are available, yet no universal system exists for advertising time availability across resource categories. Currently, availability data is trapped in walled gardens (proprietary booking platforms) or private silos (corporate calendars).

The inefficiency is measurable: a driving instructor sits idle between lessons; a wedding venue stands empty on certain dates; a consultant has free evening hours. The resource provider knows their availability but cannot advertise it efficiently.

The core failure is structural. Users searching for resources typically ask "who is free at 3pm Tuesday?". However, current systems are person-centric ("When is John available?"). MyTime inverts this to time-centric resource discovery.

2.0 The Universal Language

2.1 The Three-State Model

To create a protocol that serves driving instructors, shipping containers, and computational clusters equally well, we must strip away complexity. MyTime proposes a Three-State Atomic Unit for time:

State	Meaning
Free (0)	Available for booking or allocation
Busy (1)	Unavailable, confirmed
Tentative (2)	Provisionally booked or lower priority

2.2 Design Principles

This minimalism enables:

- **Privacy Preservation:** Nothing more is stored—no appointment details, no customer data, and no transaction history.
- **Universality:** The system supports variable granularity, from 10-minute blocks for a freelancer to 180-day blocks for a venue.
- **Efficiency:** The system stores only non-default states. If a resource defaults to "Free," only Busy and Tentative cells are recorded, reducing storage requirements by orders of magnitude.

3.0 Infrastructure, Not a Marketplace

Existing solutions optimise for transaction capture (10–30% commissions) rather than information transparency. MyTime operates as a global, searchable calendar where any resource can publish availability states without platform intermediation.

- **No Intermediation:** Seekers discover availability; resource owners handle engagement directly.
- **Source Aggregation:** Resources can aggregate multiple calendar sources—corporate calendars, personal time, and side business capacity—into a single availability feed.
- **Standardisation:** Like DNS or email, it provides a universal protocol without extracting transaction value.

4.0 Use Cases

By abstracting "Availability" into a standard format, we enable cross-category innovation:

4.1 Logistics & Freight

Delivery networks publish estimated time windows for routes. Recipients search by address to find expected arrival times, reducing wasted wait time.

4.2 Service Professionals

A driving instructor publishes free slots. Students discover availability without phone calls.

4.3 Asset Utilisation

Cloud providers advertise spot capacity. Researchers needing GPU clusters search for multi-hour blocks at specific price points.

4.4 Social Coordination

Friends search "who's free Friday evening?" without coordination messages.

5.0 Market Timing

Three convergent trends make this viable today where it wasn't a decade ago:

1. **API Maturity:** Calendar systems now expose programmatic access, enabling automated updates.
2. **Mobile Ubiquity:** Resources can update availability in real-time from anywhere.
3. **Search Expectations:** Users now expect to search for everything; time is the last frontier.

The technical infrastructure exists. What's missing is the protocol.

6.0 Call for Founding Contributors

This paper describes a protocol, not a product. MyTime will be developed as open-source infrastructure in the spirit of the web's foundational technologies.

We seek founding contributors—systems architects, calendar protocol experts, database engineers, and economists—to refine this specification before implementation begins in early 2026.

6.1 Key Architectural Challenges

- **Trust Mechanics:** Designing sybil-resistance to prevent inventory squatting.
- **Privacy Standards:** Proving availability without leaking pattern-of-life data.
- **Economic Modelling:** Designing sustainability for zero-transaction-fee systems.
- **Federation Protocols:** Integration with iCal, CalDAV, and Exchange.

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The web made information searchable. MyTime makes time searchable.

Appendix A: Glossary

Term	Definition
API	Application Programming Interface
CalDAV	Calendar Distributed Authoring and Versioning—an Internet standard for calendar access
DNS	Domain Name System—the Internet's naming service
GPU	Graphics Processing Unit—high-performance computing hardware
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol—the foundation of data communication on the web
iCal	iCalendar—a standard file format for calendar data exchange
RFC	Request for Comments—a publication describing methods and standards for the Internet
Sybil Attack	A security threat where a single entity creates multiple fake identities to gain disproportionate influence

Appendix B: References

No external references cited in this document.

Appendix C: Document Control

Document Title	MyTime: A Protocol for Universal Availability
Subtitle	Request for Comments (RFC): The "Time Layer" of the Internet
GUID	`3feff7bc-68fb-4bed-ba97-d9bcae3800e5`
Version	1.0
Date	28 December 2025
Author	Aaron Garcia
Origin Context	Draft RFC Document
Classification	PUBLIC
Status	DRAFT

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