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Lab One
Database Management
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Basketball Reference Database

As businesses continue to grow, they rely more on computers, specifically databases. Databases are a collection of data that can be organized by something in common. Data, however, as we defined in class is a collection of raw facts. Thus, data is meaningless. Once data is given context, it becomes information. Businesses have increasingly added database systems to their line of work to effectively and efficiently search through data to find relevant information. As a basketball fan, one of the main databases that I regularly use is basketball-reference.com.

Basketball-reference.com has every statistic from the NBA to European games. It includes virtually every statistic (including made up ones like effective field goal percentage) and an explanation of what each statistic means. The numbers (which are just data) is absolutely meaningless until put next to a player's name, a team, or a statistic such as points. This is demonstrated below in a table for total points scored as of January 25, 2016:

2015-16 NBA Leaders Points		
1.	James Harden (HOU)	1267
2.	Stephen Curry (GSW)	1264
3.	Russell Westbrook (OKC)	1101
4.	Paul George (IND)	1043
5.	Kevin Durant (OKC)	1038
6.	LeBron James (CLE)	1026
7.	DeMar DeRozan (TOR)	1020
8.	Isaiah Thomas (BOS)	977
9.	Jimmy Butler (CHI)	967
10.	Damian Lillard (POR)	958

For example, “1267” is just data. It could mean anything to anyone (1267 apples....1267 carrots, nobody knows because it has no context.) However, since it is placed next to “James Harden”, who is on Houston, we know a little more about “1267.” To be more specific, it is in the NBA Leaders points table. The data of 1267, as it is placed in the table gives users information. We know that James Harden on Houston is leading the NBA in points with 1267.

Information is enormously important in sports. There is constant argument over who the best player is in the world. This information, however, without context can make or break someone’s argument. If they showed this table with James Harden and 1267 next to his name, they could value the fact that he has scored the most points in the league and thus the best player. If they “points” was not at the top of this table, the 1267 could stand for “turnovers” and in return, James Harden is the worst player in the league. Databases, such as basketball-reference.com are extremely helpful for sports fanatics. Basketball reference.com has a constant update of every statistic for every player, and calculates probabilities of winning percentages of every night’s games. Thus, it is perfect for the common bar argument over who the best player is or for your degenerate gambler who places parlays on the reg.