Quality of crowdsourcing data

Introduction

Sharing information or data has been around for longer than the United States has been a country. Certain data has allowed us to go further in science then we ever thought possible. It has also won wars, saved lives, and changed how we gather data. Data is what drives our current lives. Whether it be data in a spreadsheet to calculate students’ scores or data on a server that populates your Facebook feed. How does this data get collected though? Most of the time, it is inputted by users who are using that software or database. For the example of entering student scores into excel, the information comes from exams, quizzes, and homework. What about data that the community provides? Currently, companies are using the community to provide data about news events, pictures of restaurants, and traffic congestion. This type of data collection is called crowdsourcing and it’s been around a lot longer then what we think. Back in World War II, allied spies were used to collect data on enemy troop movements which would be sent back to headquarters so the commanders could design a plan of attack. Now this information wasn’t always correct which caused lives to be lost. This begged the question of how can we make sure the data we receive is accurate? This question is still asked to this day and many have looked into how to improve the data we receive. In this paper, I will discuss how crowdsourcing is being researched today, how it’s being improved on, and what hasn’t worked so well.

Problem Statement

Crowdsourcing is a great way to gather data from the community. As discussed before, it has been used for many years and it does provide away to gather data that would not be known otherwise. The problem that has been prevalent since the beginning of crowdsourcing which is what is the quality of the data that is being collected. Just because a spy says that the enemy is heading west, does that mean they are going in that direction or was it to avoid a broken road and heading south. Should there be standards before data is considered accurate by the community or in this case spies? Another problem is what about the data we have collected in the past. What if an individual takes a picture of a restaurant in the city? At some point, you must ask if the restaurant still looks the same or has the restaurant moved to another part of the city. Should past information be revisited in the present to verify its quality? A finally problem that arises from crowdsourcing data is how does the holder of the data protect it from being tempered with. Should the community have access to delete or update information or can they only provide new data and view the data? These problems have shown up when it comes to crowdsourcing data. In this paper, I will present answers to these questions and discuss what the academic community has done to research these questions.