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The Naming of Hosts

Status of this Memo

This memo provides information for the Internet community. This memo does not specify an Internet standard of any kind. Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

Introduction

This RFC is a commentary on the difficulty of deciding upon an acceptably distinctive hostname for one's computer, a problem which grows in direct proportion to the logarithmically increasing size of the Internet.

Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

Except to TS Eliot.

And, for that matter, to David Addison, who hates iambic pentameter.

Poetry

The Naming of Hosts is a difficult matter,
It isn't just one of your holiday games;
You may think at first I'm as mad as a hatter
When I tell you, a host must have THREE DIFFERENT NAMES.

First of all, there's the name that the users use daily,
Such as venus, athena, and cisco, and ames,
Such as titan or sirius, hobbes or europa--
All of them sensible everyday names.

There are fancier names if you think they sound sweeter,
Some for the web pages, some for the flames:
Such as mercury, phoenix, orion, and charon--
But all of them sensible everyday names.

But I tell you, a host needs a name that's particular,
A name that's peculiar, and more dignified,
Else how can it keep its home page perpendicular,
And spread out its data, send pages world wide?

Of names of this kind, I can give you a quorum,
Like lothlorien, pothole, or kobyashi-maru,
Such as pearly-gates.vatican, or else diplomatic-
Names that never belong to more than one host.

But above and beyond there's still one name left over,
And that is the name that you never will guess;
The name that no human research can discover--
But THE NAMESERVER KNOWS, and will usually confess.

When you notice a client in rapt meditation,
The reason, I tell you, is always the same:
The code is engaged in a deep consultation
On the address, the address, the address of its name:

It's ineffable,
effable,
Effanineffable,
Deep and inscrutable,
singular
Name.

Credits

Thanks to Don Libes, Mark Lottor, and a host of twisted individuals^W^Wcreative sysadmins for providing source material for this memo, to Andrew Lloyd-Webber, Cameron Mackintosh, and a cast of thousands (particularly including Terrance Mann) who drew my attention to the necessity, and of course, to Thomas Stearns Eliot, for making this all necessary.

References

- [1] Libes, D., "Choosing a Name for Your Computer", Communications of the ACM, Vol. 32, No. 11, Pg. 1289, November 1989.
- [2] Lottor, M. et al., "Domain Name Survey, Jan 1997", namedroppers@internic.net
- [3] Wong, M. et. al., "Cool Hostnames", <http://www.seas.upenn.edu/~mengwong/coolhosts.html>
- [4] Stearns, TS, _Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats_.

Security Considerations

Security issues are not discussed in this memo.

Particularly the cardiac security of certain famous poets.

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