

ProgenyLink.com Project

Harvesting US Genealogical Data For a \$3 Billion Profit Cost: \$70 million

The 30-60 second explanation of my genealogy project

It is all about the mathematics:

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| Need: | 70 million names to complete all basic genealogy for those who lived and died before 1930 in the US. |
| Value: | \$40 for each name * 70 million = \$2.8 billion |
| Profit: | 40 times return on investment or 4000% |
| Time and cost to produce: | Cost: \$1 per name to assemble commercially. For 70 million names, that is \$70 million. At 20,000 names a year for each of 1,000 workers, do 70 million names in 3500 man-years or about 3.5 years to completion. Start selling data in year two with 20 million names in database. |
| Preparations: | Necessary software is ready. |
| Staff: | Clerical staff of up to 1,000 people to transcribe data from printed books to computer database format. Pay \$10 per hour (or less offshore). |

What's the catch? There isn't one.

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The 30-60 second explanation of my genealogy project

I can see the importance of having a 30-60-second presentation if one is seeking funding. It is important to start with the basic factors that will make the project outrageously successful.

Most people seem to assume that genealogy is a really boring topic and that very few people can make any money doing it, so it all has to be done by slow-moving volunteers who are old people who have nothing better to do. But they are wrong. New technology changes everything.

It is all about the mathematics.

I'm going to use a modified LDS Church example:

Last year church volunteers used the Online Indexing program to transcribe and index the approximately 140 million names which appear in the 1940 census. It only took them four months. Each of 150,000 part-time workers entered about 933 names, on average. (Apparently, some super-motivated and super-skilled people entered up to 100 names an hour for 300 hours to do about 30,000 names in 4 months.)

We start with the fact that there were only 70 million people who died in the United States before 1930 -- half as many people as are in the 1940 census. In other words, at the same rate of data entry, that same group of 150,000 people doing the indexing could complete in TWO MONTHS the genealogy for everyone who lived in United States before 1930. Each of those names is worth about \$40 commercially, assuming many of them are sold multiple times at lower prices because of overlapping pedigrees. For example, each name might be sold for \$10 four different times. So \$40 times 70 million people is \$2.8 billion. So the Church, or some commercial entity, could earn \$2.8 billion in two months.

That is a 40-times return on investment or 4000%.

That \$3 billion should be enough to capture the other 50 billion genealogy records in the world that have yet to be photographed. Apparently, the Church has more money than it can spend properly, or it would have thought of this way to get some outside participation on a worldwide project. It will take from 300 to 600 years to do that image capture job at current rates of Church progress.

It is a little bit more difficult to enter the finished, complete genealogy for 70 million people than it is to do the transcribing and indexing for 140 million people in a census, so let's say it is four times more difficult. Most of the data and the family connections are already available for transcription in printed form in published books.

In a commercial project, the project would take two or three years instead of two or three months, simply because not as many people would be doing the work. So, for \$70 million, or a cost of \$1 per name for data entry, the return is \$2.8 billion over a 2 to 5 year project.

Of course, it takes special software and special training for a group of up to 1000 people to do this job, but it is a very straightforward proposition.

What's the catch? There isn't one.