



Gedcom CGI Protocol and Web Services

John Finlay

PhpGedView Project Manager

The Problem



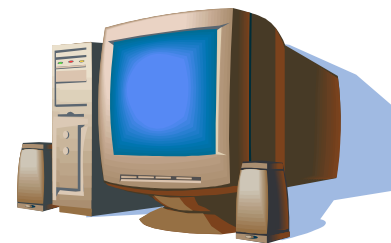
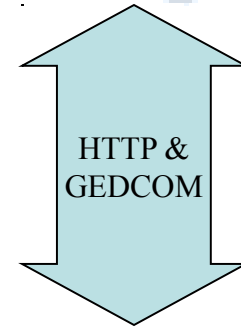
- ◆ We need a way to inter-connect different genealogy systems
- ◆ GEDCOM provides a standard for encoding genealogy data, but we still lack a common communication protocol.
- ◆ Other industries have tapped into this potential by offering a variety of B2B and P2P services.

GEDCOM Communication Protocol

- ◆ Client-server system architecture.
- ◆ The client and server communicate over HTTP
- ◆ Data is encoded in the GEDCOM 5.5 standard
 - Lightweight specification
 - Ubiquitous among genealogy programs.



Client

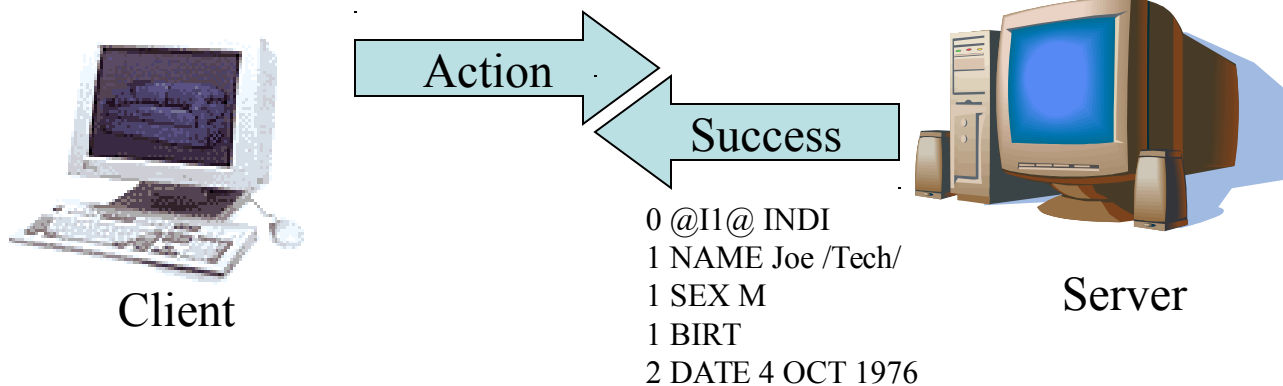


Server

GEDCOM Communication Protocol



- ◆ Every client request must specify an “action” value.
 - The “action” determines what other variables also need to be sent by the client.
- ◆ The server will respond with data and/or a success code.

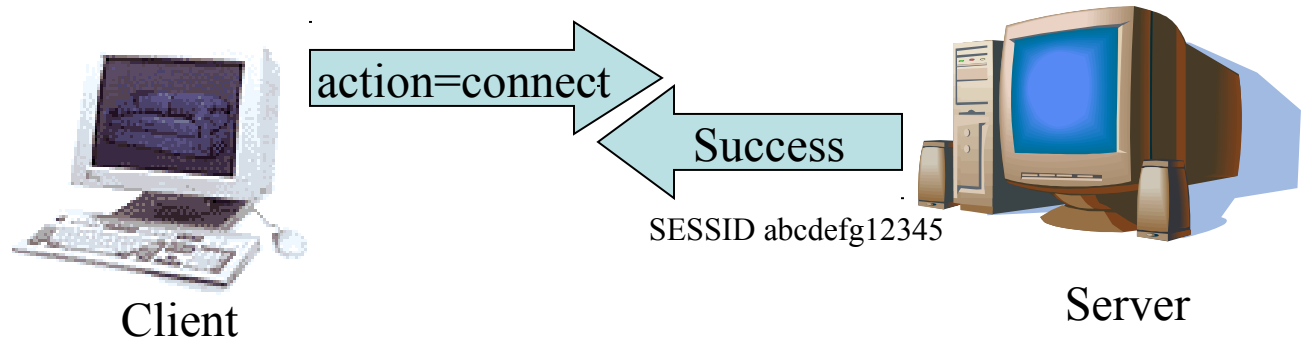


GEDCOM Communication Protocol



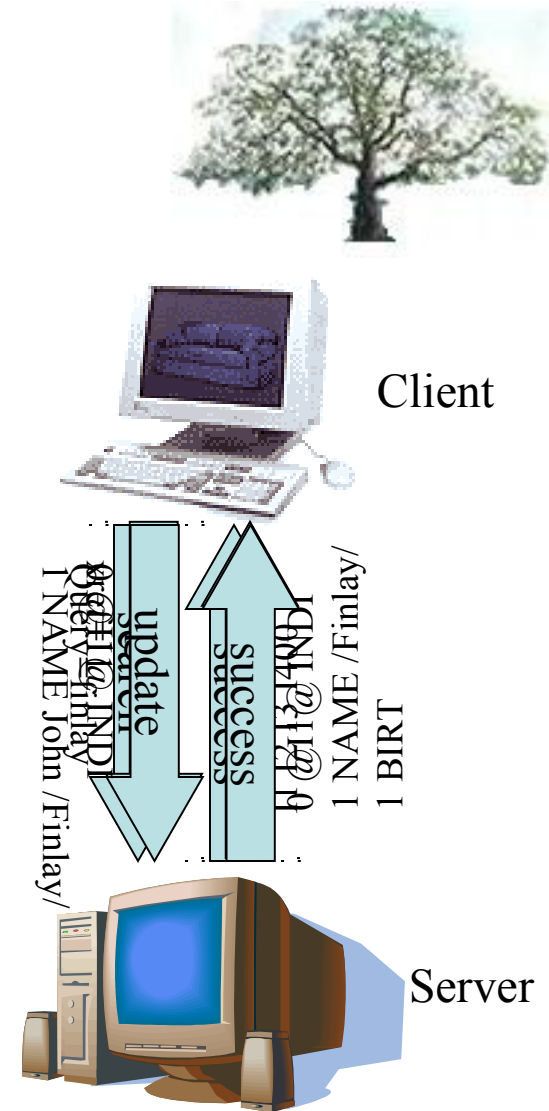
◆ Initiating a Connection

- The client sends “connect” action.
 - Anonymous read-only session or an authenticated session by providing a username and password.
- Client must include this session identifier with every future request.
- The server responds with client’s unique session identifier.
- Authenticated clients may receive greater access to private data or be allowed editing privileges.



GEDCOM Communication Protocol

- ◆ Query the server with the “search” or “soundex” actions
- ◆ Request Gedcom record through the “get” action.
- ◆ Authenticated clients can send an “update” action to update a gedcom record.





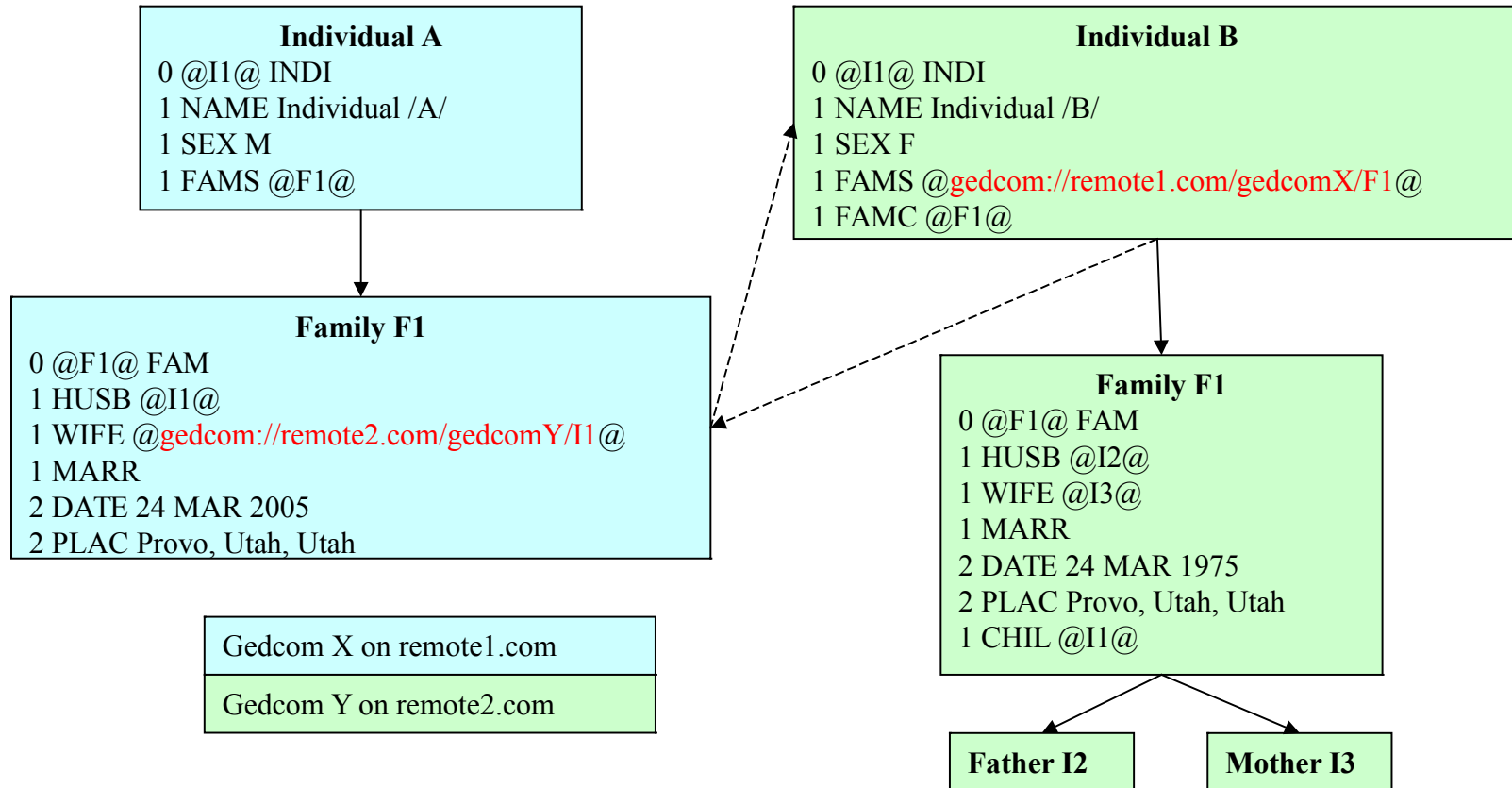
PhpGedView / GDBI Demonstration

Using the protocol to Link Gedcoms



- ◆ Link people in different Gedcoms such that individual A in Gedcom X links to individual B in Gedcom Y.
- ◆ Useful when trees are joined through marriages
- ◆ Gedcom X and Gedcom Y could reside on different computers.

Using the protocol to Link Gedcoms



Using the protocol to Link Gedcoms



- ◆ With this protocol and the simple extension of the GEDCOM specification, you can see how it would be possible to truly create that elusive world tree.
- ◆ It allows people to maintain control and ownership over their own data, but still allow it to be shared and linked into other family trees.



Questions?

