

4.8 The Shepherd

A shepherd was grazing his flock of sheep in a remote part of the country when he suddenly saw a brand new BMW 645 Cabrio racing towards him. When the dust had settled, the shepherd saw that the driver was a gentleman, elegantly dressed in a designer suit from Versace, Shoes from Gucci, wearing a pair of Ray Ban sunglasses and an Yves Saint Laurent tie. The driver lowered his window and, leaning out of it, asked the shepherd: “If I can tell you exactly how many sheep you have, will you allow me to select one for myself?” The shepherd looked at the gentleman and said: “Well, why not?”

The man immediately set up his Dell notebook and connected it with Bluetooth to his mobile. He made a GPRS connection to the internet, opened the NASA website with an ultra-high resolution camera to scan the area. Within minutes, he had a perfect picture of the area and the flock of sheep. The gentleman then connected to the website of a German company to which he forwarded the image and within seconds he got confirmation via his Palm Pilot that the picture had arrived. Via an ODBC connection, he then logged into an MS-SQL database, sent a package of proprietary spreadsheets with hundreds of complicated formulas, and entered some additional verification data with his Blackberry. Then, within minutes, the software generated a 150-page report in full colour, including the methodology, scope and limitations of the investigation, and of course, the result. The gentleman immediately printed the report on his mini HP LaserJet. All along the shepherd had been watching with much interest.

The gentleman flipped through the report, looked at the shepherd and finally said: “you have exactly 1586 sheep”. “Correct”, said the shepherd,

”so now you can select a sheep”. The gentleman got out of his cabrio, selected an animal and put it in the back of his car. The shepherd said: “If I guess your profession, will you return my animal?” The gentlemen thought for a minute and then said: ‘Ok, why not? The shepherd said: “You are a consultant”. “Unbelievable” the gentleman cried out. “How did you know?”.

“Well, that’s not so difficult”, the shepherd answered. “First of all, you came along without anyone asking for you. Secondly, you provide me with irrelevant information because I knew the answer all along. Thirdly, you want to be paid for your so-called advice. And finally, you don’t know anything about my work, because you just put my dog in your car.”

