Hey, you work for Microsoft. Do you know…?

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Windows 10 for Phone comes with a variety of wallpaper images, and <u>the timestamp for all of the images is April 4, 1975</u>. What's the story behind that?

Originally, the wallpaper images didn't have a date-taken in their EXIF metadata. This meant that they were treated as taken on the file's creation date, which is the date you installed the operating system. The problem is that if you upgrade your phone, then the wallpaper image timestamps will be sorted after the pictures you took with the old operating system and before the pictures you took with the new operating system.

This is rather unsightly, so Windows 10 added EXIF metadata to sort all of those images before any pictures you may have taken yourself with that phone. Any date prior to 2007 would probably have sufficed (assuming people don't backdate pictures in their Camera Roll), but the developer who fixed the bug decided to be a bit clever: He chose April 4, 1975, the date of Microsoft's founding.

Okay, that's the end of that story. What about the question in the title?

Last year, I was visiting Canada and paid a visit to some very distant relatives. (Distance measured in terms of blood relationship, not geographic distance.) They had other relatives visiting at the time, and in the course of conversation, those other relatives mentioned that their son worked for Microsoft.

Everybody who works at Microsoft has gone through the "Hey, you work for Microsoft. Do you know…?" ritual. And the answer is always "Nope, no idea who you're talking about." Because it turns out Microsoft employs <u>over 100,000 people worldwide</u>,[1] so the odds of a hit are pretty low.

I guess the relative had gone through the ritual before, because he never bothered to ask.

After we returned home, my wife told me, "In case you were wondering, their son's name is X. But I'm sure you've never met him."

Oh wait, X? Why yes, actually I know him. He's the developer who set the timestamp on the wallpapers to April 4, 1975. Works just down the hall from me.

The next day, I paid him a visit. "Just letting you know, your parents say Hi."

[1] I like how that page has a footnote to the breakdown of employees by role.

Role	Percentage
Engineering	46.5%
Sales & Marketing Support Group	47.0%
Finance, HR & Legal	4.3%
Business Functions	2.1%

Functional breakout does not include CEO in total.

Yeah, because adding the CEO would change those percentages by less than 0.001%, two orders of magnitude lower than the rounding error in the table itself.

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