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AUTOMATIC LOCAL TIME CONVERSION IN TEXT CHATS AND MESSENGERS

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ABSTRACT

Converting time across multiple time zones may be a challenge for members of a global team. To address this issue, techniques are described herein to cause user(s) in various time zones to see the local date and time in addition to the original date and time specified in a message from a sender. The message may be sent in a one-to-one or group chat, and may mention a time in any time zone. This improves efficiency and avoids confusion during collaboration within a global team.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Users (e.g., employees at transnational companies) experience inconvenience when they interact with users from other time zones. For example, if one user based in San Jose indicates in a message that he/she wants to move the meeting to 8am Pacific Time (PT), it may not be immediately clear what that means for a user in other time zones. The other user may need to research the difference between PT and the other time zones, which is less convenient than if the relevant information was provided immediately.

Some teams use only UTC time. However, the only advantage is that the time is unified across the team, and this still requires users to manually look up the current UTC time, which results in the same problem. Furthermore, even if a sender wants to be kind and convert the time for the other users (e.g., “Hey Tom, let's meet @ 10am your time”), the sender may not be aware of the presence/lack of summer/winter time zone changes, or they may convert to a different time zone than that in which the person which whom they are communicating actually lives. Thus, there is a manual effort involved when converting time from one time zone to another when communicating within a team. There is a chance the time will be converted incorrectly, which may have negative financial impact.

In any environment involving two or more people from different time zones chatting together, there is a chance they will bring up a topic of an event taking place at a certain time. For example, messages may resemble, “Hi John, let's sync up tomorrow at 9 am PT,” or “Don't forget, the Scrum meeting got moved to 8am!”. Because this kind of

situation normally requires further research, it takes an unnecessary amount of time. Moreover, the time change may nonetheless be interpreted incorrectly.

Accordingly, as described herein, if a user lives in the UTC+1 time zone, the message, “Hi John, let's sync up tomorrow at 9 am PT” may be automatically altered in order to fit the information about the local time zone (e.g., “Hi John, let's sync up tomorrow at 9 am PT (5 pm London time)”). The message, “Don't forget, the Scrum meeting got moved to 8am!” may be processed in a similar way. For example, the messenger may have information about the sender's time zone (e.g., US Eastern time, or ET). In this case, the user living in the UTC+1 time zone may see, “Don't forget, the Scrum meeting got moved to 8am! (1 pm London time).” This is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

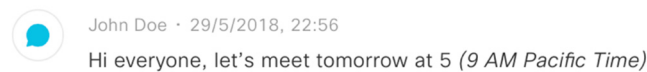


Figure 1

The system may determine the converted time zone based on explicitly specified time zone information, (e.g., “at 5pm ET,” “at 1 UTC,” etc.), or guess the converted time zone based on the sender's computer settings, messenger settings, or Global Positioning System (GPS) data. This information may be converted into the local time zone for each recipient. This data may originate from any combination of user profile, computer settings, GPS, etc. The original message may be displayed with the alterations once any time-related information is found.

In summary, techniques are described herein to cause user(s) in various time zones to see the local date and time in addition to the original date and time specified in a message from a sender. The message may be sent in a one-to-one or group chat, and may mention a time in any time zone. This improves efficiency and avoids confusion during collaboration within a global team.