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Our Database in Five Hundred Words or Less

A Monday Morning Musing from Mickey the Mercenary Geologist

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I am a self-admitted numbers wonk and have been from the earliest of schoolboy memories: I was arithmetic speed champ in second grade (but there were only 60 kids in my elementary school); got 100 on every Algebra II test during my entire junior year in high school; and scored 35 in math on the college admissions ACT (36 is perfect).

I also recall my batting average (.400) as player-manager of the 1999 Albuquerque Pirates who compiled a record of 19-3 as New Mexico Men's Over-30 Baseball League champions; #7 is me.



In early 2012, I needed a way to reference metals prices quickly for media appearances. So my student research assistant was assigned to compile historic commodity prices, metals production, economic metrics, and market indices into a spreadsheet. Our mathematical manipulation of raw data sets into

derivatives, graphs, and tables allows me to decipher historic trends, predict future events, conduct talking-head routines, and write several newsletters in any given year.

Most importantly, I use these analyses to guide my financial decisions.

After eight years, our initial research effort that began with major exchange-traded commodity prices has grown into a “Master Spreadsheet”. It comprises 83 sheets, houses over 46 mb of data, and includes 291,000 unique data entries, 729,000 derivative values, 600 graphs, and 23 tables. Numbers are compiled and assimilated monthly from available public data, free subscription services, and deep dive internet searches. We have seldom paid for data and then only when absolutely required for tens of dollars. Nevertheless, I have tens of thousands of said greenbacks invested in the database, even at graduate school wages.

Because I am hooked on numbers, an item on the agenda is to have an assistant compile the total database cost from monthly invoices. However, this task has yet to make it onto my calendar.

Grad student research assistants are sourced from New Mexico Tech, an excellent school for mining engineers and geologists located 70 miles south of my central New Mexico farm. These researchers start with competency to fluency in Microsoft XL and depart as experts. They come and go as their main duties are to obtain Masters’ degrees and get real jobs in the real world. Therefore, average tenure with me is less than two years. My fifth assistant graduated last year and is now a land surveyor. But the database remains his part-time side job, albeit delivered from a remote location.

So the next time you read a weekly notice or a musing, see a video, or listen to a podcast at MercenaryGeologist.com and encounter commodity and/or economic charts, ratios, correlations, etc., please recognize the tremendous amount of work that backs our analyses.

Sincere thanks goes to past research assistants who have landed gainful employment in such diverse places as Albuquerque New Mexico, Morenci and Tucson, Arizona, Vail, Colorado, and Lynchburg, Virginia. I trust the computer and organizational skills that were developed in my office have furthered your career goals.

This musing is now 499 words, so ...

Ciao for now,

Mickey Fulp
Mercenary Geologist



Acknowledgement: Luke Smith is the research assistant for MercenaryGeologist.com.

The [Mercenary Geologist Michael S. “Mickey” Fulp](http://MercenaryGeologist.com) is a Certified Professional Geologist with a B.Sc. in Earth Sciences with honor from the University of Tulsa, and M.Sc. in Geology from the University of New Mexico. Mickey has 40 years of experience as an exploration geologist and analyst

searching for economic deposits of base and precious metals, industrial minerals, uranium, coal, oil and gas, and water in North and South America, Europe, and Asia.

Mickey worked for junior explorers, major mining companies, private companies, and investors as a consulting economic geologist for over 20 years, specializing in geological mapping, property evaluation, and business development. In addition to Mickey's professional credentials and experience, he is high-altitude proficient, and is bilingual in English and Spanish. From 2003 to 2006, he made four outcrop ore discoveries in Peru, Nevada, Chile, and British Columbia.

Mickey is well-known and highly respected throughout the mining and exploration community due to his ongoing work as an analyst, writer, and speaker.

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