

Have They Got Your Number?

Life is a numbers game. Gas prices always end with nine-tenths of a cent. I want the U.S. Mint to make a one-tenth cent coin so I don't have to overpay for gas I'm already overpaying for. 7-Eleven stores started appearing across the country in the 1950's. By being open from 7 am until 11 pm, they put convenience in convenience shopping - so much convenience there are more 7-Elevens than McDonalds. Now there are supermarkets, pharmacies and restaurants that are open twenty-four hours a day; but are they making our days easier or just longer? The 1980's brought 99 Cent Only Stores. Literally everything from soup to nuts for ninety-nine cents. Anything costing less than a dollar screams bargain to our subconscious. Even if we're disappointed by what we buy, we tell ourselves it was less than a dollar. No big deal - which is a big, money-making deal for the chain's owner. Lucky numbers are a big deal for lots of people. I don't know where other people got theirs, but I got mine in seventh grade. It was the number Dennis Shea and I had in an elimination dance. No, we didn't win the prize for being the last couple on the dance floor. In seventh grade I thought Dennis Shea was the prize. I've bet twenty-three on lottery tickets, race horses and roulette ever since. I wonder how many times a number can lose before you realize it's not lucky. I've never heard anyone say they changed their lucky number. Would it be unlucky? I think I'm lucky when I find street numbers on houses and businesses, but the last four digits in zip codes can supposedly pinpoint exact locations. How many of us use the last four digits? How many of us believe the mail would be delivered faster? Then there are phone numbers. Many businesses try to make them easier to remember by having the alphabetical equivalent of the number spell a word associated with the business. For example 349-3368 or fix dent would be good for an auto body shop. For me, I'd like 687-8968. When someone called, they'd think - "must you?" I'm a conglomeration of numbers - phone, social security, driver's license, insurance, PIN, credit cards. Because of my less-than-accurate memory, my number's been up several times. However, I wonder if people who always want to be number one ever want a second chance.

About the Author

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