

Edtec 655 - Inquiry
Phase 2: Relational Models
Task 4: Goals and objectives of database

Keeping in touch with family members is an important element of genealogy. With the distance between families and the infrequency of family gatherings, families often become splintered and lose touch. Several years ago, however, my daughter began a genealogy project for one of her 4H projects. Since then, our family has had a renewed interest in the family history. At this year's family reunion, I volunteered to be the person in charge of mailing out invitations to the yearly reunions. Keeping track of addresses, however, has become a nightmare.

In response to my dilemma, I have created a database of Schilling family members, beginning with my husband and our children and ending with his great-great grandfather, spanning six generations of Schillings. The database gives each entry an identification number, as well as records the name, the father's name, the mother's name, the date and location of birth, the date and location of death, the spouse's name, the date of marriage, and the individual's last known address. My goal for this project is purely personal, although the elements could be applied to an educational setting. As the person in charge of mailing the invitations to the Schilling family reunion this summer and in the future, I will use this database to identify family members as well as last known addresses, generating address labels.

Family members can find related family members as well as all those at one address. By using the relationships between each father and his offspring as well as each mother and her children as well, users of the Schilling Family Tree database can quickly type in a father's name and find all children related to him. They can also enter the mother's name and do the same. Once children are identified, people living at the same address can also be identified easily and mailings will not be duplicated.

Developing the database, however, has not been easy. Deciding on the relationships between the family members and how to organize the data has posed the most difficult situation for me. With a lot of help, I have created a usable database that can be handed on to other family members. Ultimately, the database could be web enabled so when new family members are born or marry into the family, family members all over the world can log into the site and enter the important information.