

An Equation Easily Misinterpreted

TWO PUZZLES IN ONE

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Consider the equation

$$ABC = A! + B! + C!$$

Find two ways to interpret the question “What is the solution?” and solve them both.

Here, the ! is the factorial symbol: the quantity $n!$ denotes the product of all the integers from one to n . For example

$$3! = 3 \cdot 2 \cdot 1 = 6$$

$$4! = 4 \cdot 3 \cdot 2 \cdot 1 = 24$$

and $0!$ is equal to one.