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Microsoft

Computer Dictionary

Fifth Edition

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- Definitive coverage of hardware, software, the Internet, and more!



PUBLISHED BY

Microsoft Press
A Division of Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Redmond, Washington 98052-6399

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Microsoft Computer Dictionary.--5th ed.

p. ; cm.

ISBN 0-7356-1495-4

1. Computers--Dictionaries. 2. Microcomputers--Dictionaries.

AQ76.5. M52267 2002
004'.03--dc21

200219714

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 QWT 7 6 5 4 3 2

Distributed in Canada by Penguin Books Canada Limited.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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Acquisitions Editor: Alex Blanton

Project Editor: Sandra Haynes

Body Part No. X08-41929

transaction that involves frequencies higher

ons link that uses frequencies higher megahertz).

between two or more spectrum of software and an operating or a database management software include rams and network 2. Software that providing interface (API) will run in the same An example of this has a common API application development programs by them with a scriptage.

ment Digital Inter- allows for the control instruments, and ed partly on hardware way in which municated between nitted between MIDI ssage, which h and volume as 8- devices can be used ack music. Using equencers can coming time or actually connected equip-

face Definition Lan- extension of the See also IDL.

ze computer. The icrocomputer, except ngle-user worksta-

migration *n.* The process of making existing applications and data work on a different computer or operating system.

.mil *n.* In the Internet's Domain Name System, the top-level domain that identifies addresses operated by U.S. military organizations. The designation .mil appears at the end of the address. *See also* DNS (definition 1), domain (definition 3). *Compare* .com, .edu, .gov, .net, .org.

Military Network *n.* *See* MILNET.

millennium bug *n.* *See* Year 2000 problem.

millennium-compliant *adj.* *See* Year 2000-compliant.

millennium computer bug *n.* *See* Year 2000 problem.

millennium transition *n.* *See* Year 2000 rollover.

milli- *prefix* Metric prefix meaning 10^{-3} (one thousandth). *Abbreviation:* m.

millicent technology *n.* A set of protocols for small-scale commercial transactions over the Internet, developed by Digital Equipment Corporation. Millicent technology is intended to handle purchases of items of information at prices less than a cent.

millions of instructions per second *n.* *See* MIPS.

millisecond *n.* One thousandth of a second. *Abbreviation:* ms or msec.

millivolt *n.* One thousandth of a volt. *Abbreviation:* mV.

MILNET *n.* Short for **Military Network**. A wide area network that represents the military side of the original ARPANET. MILNET carries nonclassified U.S. military traffic. *See also* ARPANET. *Compare* NSFnet.

MIMD *n.* Acronym for **multiple instruction, multiple data stream processing**. A category of computer architecture engaged in parallel processing in which central processing units independently fetch instructions and operate on data. *See also* architecture (definition 1), central processing unit, instruction, parallel processing. *Compare* SIMD.

MIME or **mime** *n.* Acronym for **Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions**. A protocol widely used on the Internet that extends the SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) to permit data, such as video, sound, and binary files, to be transmitted by Internet e-mail without having to be translated into ASCII format first. This is accomplished by the use of MIME types, which describe the contents of a document. A MIME-compliant application sending a file, such as some e-mail programs, assigns a MIME type to the file. The receiving application, which must also be

MIME-compliant, refers to a standardized list of documents that are organized into MIME types and subtypes to interpret the content of the file. For instance, one MIME type is *text*, and it has a number of subtypes, including *plain* and *html*. A MIME type of *text/html* refers to a file that contains text written in HTML. MIME is part of HTTP, and both Web browsers and HTTP servers use MIME to interpret e-mail files they send and receive. *See also* HTTP, HTTP server, Simple Mail Transfer Protocol, Web browser. *Compare* BinHex¹ (definition 1).

mindshare *n.* The presence and familiarity of a product, service, or company in the minds of users or consumers. Unlike *market share*, which is the percentage of the market won by a particular product, service, or company, mindshare is a less quantifiable but still important factor in engaging customer attention and generating sales. The term is used frequently by, but is not limited to, the computer industry.

miniaturization *n.* In the development of integrated circuits, the process of reducing the size and increasing the density of transistors and other elements on a semiconductor chip. In addition to providing the benefits of small size, miniaturization of electronic circuits also lowers power requirements, reduces heat, and shortens delays in the propagation of signals from one circuit element to the next. *See also* integrated circuit, integration (definition 2).

minicomputer *n.* A mid-level computer built to perform complex computations while dealing efficiently with a high level of input and output from users connected via terminals. Minicomputers also frequently connect to other minicomputers on a network and distribute processing among all the attached machines. Minicomputers are used heavily in transaction-processing applications and as interfaces between mainframe computer systems and wide area networks. *See also* computer, mainframe computer, microcomputer, supercomputer, wide area network. *Compare* midrange computer, workstation (definition 2).

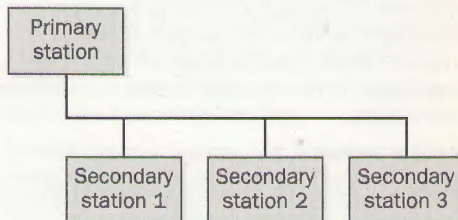
mini-driver architecture *n.* An architecture in Windows 3.1, Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, and Windows 2000 that uses a relatively small and simple driver, containing any additional instructions needed by a specific hardware device, to interface with the universal driver for that class of devices. *See also* driver.

minifloppy *n.* A 5.25-inch floppy disk. *See also* floppy disk.

is the same if the two are reversed—for example, 2×3 and 3×2 . In arithmetic performed by computers, however, the multiplicand is different from the multiplier because computer multiplication is usually performed as addition. Therefore, 2×3 means “add 2 three times,” whereas 3×2 means “add 3 two times.” *See also* factor. *Compare* multiplier (definition 1).

multiplier *n.* 1. In arithmetic, the number that indicates how many times another number (the multiplicand) is multiplied. *See also* factor. *Compare* multiplicand. 2. In computing, an electronic device independent of the central processing unit (CPU) that performs multiplication by adding the multiplicand according to the value of the digits in the multiplier.

multiport configuration *n.* A communications link in which multiple stations are connected sequentially to the same communications line. Typically, the communications line is controlled by a primary station, such as a computer, and the stations attached to the line are secondary. *See* the illustration.



Multiport configuration.

multiport repeater *n.* *See* active hub.

multiprocessing *n.* A mode of operation in which two or more connected and roughly equal processing units each carry out one or more processes (programs or sets of instructions) in tandem. In multiprocessing, each processing unit works on a different set of instructions or on different parts of the same process. The objective is increased speed or computing power, the same as in parallel processing and in the use of special units called *coprocessors*. *Compare* coprocessor, parallel processing.

multiprogramming *n.* A form of processing in which a computer holds more than one program in memory and works on them in round-robin fashion—that is, by sharing out the processor's time so that each program receives some

attention some of the time. This way of working is in contrast to using the processor to run one program at a time.

Multiprotocol Label Switching *n.* *See* MPLS.

Multi-Protocol Over ATM *n.* *See* MPOA.

Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions *n.* *See* MIME.

Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions HTML *n.* *See* MHTML.

multiscan monitor *n.* A computer monitor capable of adapting to different video frequencies to accommodate multiple screen resolutions and to support different video adapters and graphics display methods.

Multistation Access Unit *n.* *See* MAU.

multisystem network *n.* A communications network in which two or more host computers can be accessed by network users.

multitasking *n.* A form of processing supported by most current operating systems in which a computer works on multiple tasks—roughly, separate “pieces” of work—seemingly at the same time by parceling out the processor's time among the different tasks. Multitasking can be either cooperative or preemptive. In the former, the operating system relies on the task to voluntarily cede control to another task; in the latter, the operating system decides which task receives priority. *See also* background¹, context switching, cooperative multitasking, foreground², time slice.

multithreaded application *n.* A program capable of running more than one program thread simultaneously. *See also* multithreading (definition 1), thread (definition 1).

multithreading *n.* 1. The running of several processes in rapid sequence (multitasking) within a single program. *See also* thread (definition 1). 2. In data manipulation, a technique in which nodes in a tree data structure contain pointers to higher nodes to make traversal of the structure more efficient. *See also* thread (definition 2).

multi-tier *n.* *See* three-tier.

multiuser *n.* *See* multiuser system.

multiuser dungeon *n.* *See* MUD.

multiuser simulation environment *n.* *See* MUD.

multiuser system *n.* Any computer system that can be used by more than one person. Although a microcomputer

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office, or wherever technology takes you!**

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Part No. X08-41956

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