

OVER
10,000
ENTRIES

Microsoft

Computer Dictionary

Fifth Edition

- *Fully updated with the latest technologies, terms, and acronyms*
- *Easy to read, expertly illustrated*
- *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

Copyright © 2002 by Microsoft Corporation

All rights reserved. No part of the contents of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

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.

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

Distributed in Canada by H.B. Fenn and Company Ltd.

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

Microsoft Press books are available through booksellers and distributors worldwide. For further information about international editions, contact your local Microsoft Corporation office or contact Microsoft Press International directly at fax (425) 936-7329. Visit our Web site at www.microsoft.com/mspress. Send comments to mspinput@microsoft.com.

Active Desktop, Active Directory, ActiveMovie, ActiveStore, ActiveSync, ActiveX, Authenticode, BackOffice, BizTalk, ClearType, Direct3D, DirectAnimation, DirectDraw, DirectInput, DirectMusic, DirectPlay, DirectShow, DirectSound, DirectX, Entourage, FoxPro, FrontPage, Hotmail, IntelliEye, IntelliMouse, IntelliSense, JScript, MapPoint, Microsoft, Microsoft Press, Mobile Explorer, MS-DOS, MSN, Music Central, NetMeeting, Outlook, PhotoDraw, PowerPoint, SharePoint, UltimateTV, Visio, Visual Basic, Visual C++, Visual FoxPro, Visual InterDev, Visual J++, Visual SourceSafe, Visual Studio, Win32, Win32s, Windows, Windows Media, Windows NT, Xbox are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Other product and company names mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

The example companies, organizations, products, domain names, e-mail addresses, logos, people, places, and events depicted herein are fictitious. No association with any real company, organization, product, domain name, e-mail address, logo, person, place, or event is intended or should be inferred.

Acquisitions Editor: Alex Blanton

Project Editor: Sandra Haynes

Body Part No. X08-41929

p *prefix* See pico-.

P *prefix* See peta-.

P2P or P-to-P *n.* An Internet-based networking option in which two or more computers connect directly to each other to communicate and share files without use of a central server. Interest in P2P networking blossomed with the introduction of Napster and Gnutella. Short for Peer-to-Peer. *See also* peer-to-peer architecture, peer-to-peer communications.

P3P *n.* Acronym for **Platform for Privacy Preferences**. An open W3C protocol that allows Internet users to control the type of personal information that is collected by the Web sites they visit. P3P uses User Agents built into browsers and Web applications to allow P3P-enabled Web sites to communicate privacy practices to users before they log on to the Web site. P3P compares the Web site's privacy policies with the user's personal set of privacy preferences, and it reports any disagreements to the user.

P5 *n.* Intel's internal working name for the Pentium microprocessor. Although it was not intended to be used publicly, the name P5 leaked out to the computer-industry trade press and was commonly used to reference the microprocessor before it was released. *See also* 586, Pentium.

pack *vb.* To store information in a more compact form. Packing eliminates unnecessary spaces and other such characters and may use other special methods of compressing data as well. It is used by some programs to minimize storage requirements.

package *n.* **1.** A computer application consisting of one or more programs created to perform a particular type of work—for example, an accounting package or a spreadsheet package. **2.** In electronics, the housing in which an electronic component is packaged. *See also* DIP. **3.** A group of classes or interfaces and a keyword in the Java programming language. Packages are declared in Java by using the "package" keyword. *See also* class, declare, interface (definition 1), keyword.

packaged software *n.* A software program sold through a retail distributor, as opposed to custom software. *See also* canned software.

packed decimal *adj.* A method of encoding decimal numbers in binary form that maximizes storage space by using each byte to represent two decimal digits. When signed decimal numbers are stored in packed decimal format, the sign appears in the rightmost four bits of the rightmost (least significant) byte.

packet *n.* **1.** A unit of information transmitted as a whole from one device to another on a network. **2.** In packet-switching networks, a transmission unit of fixed maximum size that consists of binary digits representing both data and a header containing an identification number, source and destination addresses, and sometimes error-control data. *See also* packet switching.

packet assembler and disassembler *n.* *See* packet assembler/disassembler.

packet assembler/disassembler *n.* An interface between non-packet-switching equipment and a packet-switching network. *Acronym:* PAD.

packet filtering *n.* The process of controlling network access based on IP addresses. Firewalls will often incorporate filters that allow or deny users the ability to enter or leave a local area network. Packet filtering is also used to accept or reject packets such as e-mail, based on the origin of the packet, to ensure security on a private network. *See also* firewall, IP address, packet (definition 1).

packet flooding *n.* A technique employed in a number of DoS (denial of service) attacks in which a flood of packets of data are sent to a target server, overwhelming the computer and rendering it unable to respond to legitimate network requests. Examples of specific types of packet flooding include smurf attacks and SYN flood attacks. *See also* DoS, packet, smurf attack, SYN flood.

packet header *n.* The portion of a data packet that precedes the body (data). The header contains data, such as