

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

internal font *n.* A font that is already loaded in a printer's memory (ROM) when the printer is shipped. *Compare* downloadable font, font cartridge.

internal interrupt *n.* An interrupt generated by the processor itself in response to certain predefined situations, such as an attempt to divide by zero or an arithmetic value exceeding the number of bits allowed for it. *See also* interrupt. *Compare* external interrupt.

internal memory *n.* *See* primary storage.

internal modem *n.* A modem constructed on an expansion card to be installed in one of the expansion slots inside a computer. *Compare* external modem, integral modem.

internal schema *n.* A view of information about the physical files composing a database, including file names, file locations, accessing methodology, and actual or potential data derivations, in a database model such as that described by ANSI/X3/SPARC, that supports a three-schema architecture. The internal schema corresponds to the schema in systems based on CODASYL/DBTG. In a distributed database, there may be a different internal schema at each location. *See also* conceptual schema, schema.

internal sort *n.* **1.** A sorting operation that takes place on files completely or largely held in memory rather than on disk during the process. **2.** A sorting procedure that produces sorted subgroups of records that will be subsequently merged into one list.

International Computer Security Association *n.* *See* ICSA.

International Federation of Information Processing *n.* *See* IFIP.

International Maritime Satellite *n.* *See* Inmarsat.

International Mobile Telecommunications for the Year 2000 *n.* Specifications set forth by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to establish third-generation wireless telecommunication network architecture. The specifications include faster data transmission speeds and improved voice quality. *Acronym:* IMT-2000.

International Organization for Standardization *n.* *See* ISO.

International Telecommunication Union *n.* *See* ITU.

International Telecommunication Union-Telecommunication Standardization Sector *n.* *See* ITU-T.

International Telegraph and Telephone Consultative Committee *n.* English-language form of the name for the

Comité Consultatif International Télégraphique et Téléphonique, a standards organization that became part of the International Telecommunication Union in 1992. *See also* CCITT, ITU-T.

Internaut *n.* *See* cybernaut.

internet *n.* Short for **internetwork**. A set of computer networks that may be dissimilar and are joined together by means of gateways that handle data transfer and conversion of messages from the sending networks' protocols to those of the receiving network.

Internet *n.* The worldwide collection of networks and gateways that use the TCP/IP suite of protocols to communicate with one another. At the heart of the Internet is a backbone of high-speed data communication lines between major nodes or host computers, consisting of thousands of commercial, government, educational, and other computer systems, that route data and messages. One or more Internet nodes can go off line without endangering the Internet as a whole or causing communications on the Internet to stop, because no single computer or network controls it. The genesis of the Internet was a decentralized network called ARPANET created by the U.S. Department of Defense in 1969 to facilitate communications in the event of a nuclear attack. Eventually other networks, including BITNET, Usenet, UUCP, and NSFnet, were connected to ARPANET. Currently the Internet offers a range of services to users, such as FTP, e-mail, the World Wide Web, Usenet news, Gopher, IRC, telnet, and others. *Also called:* the Net. *See also* BITNET, FTP¹ (definition 1), Gopher, IRC, NSFnet, telnet¹, Usenet, UUCP, World Wide Web.

Internet2 *n.* A computer-network development project launched in 1996 by a collaborative group of 120 universities under the auspices of the University Corporation for Advanced Internet Development (UCAID). The consortium is now being led by over 190 universities working with industry and government. The goal of Internet2, whose high-speed, fiberoptic backbone was brought on line in early 1999, is the development of advanced Internet technologies and applications for use in research and education at the university level. Though not open for public use, Internet2 and the technologies and applications developed by its members are intended to eventually benefit users of the commercial Internet as well. Some of the new technologies Internet2 and its members are developing and testing include IPv6, multicasting, and quality of service (QoS). Internet2 and the Next Generation Internet

by its leading standard-setting organization—for example, ANSI (American National Standards Institute) for the United States. The ISO works to establish global standards for communications and information exchange. Primary among its accomplishments is the widely accepted ISO/OSI reference model, which defines standards for the interaction of computers connected by communications networks. *ISO* is not an acronym; rather, it is derived from the Greek word *isos*, which means “equal” and is the root of the prefix “iso-.”

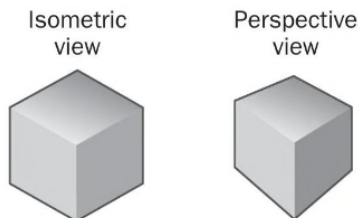
ISO 8601:1988 *n.* A standard entitled “Data elements and interchange formats” from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) that covers a number of date formats.

ISO 9660 *n.* An international format standard for CD-ROM adopted by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) that follows the recommendations embodied in the High Sierra specification, with some modifications. *See also* High Sierra specification.

ISOC *n.* *See* Internet Society.

isochronous network *n.* A type of network defined in the IEEE 802.9 specification that combines ISDN and LAN technologies to enable networks to carry multimedia. *Also called:* Integrated Services LAN, ISLAN.

isometric view *n.* A display method for three-dimensional objects in which every edge has the correct length for the scale of the drawing and in which all parallel lines appear parallel. An isometric view of a cube, for example, shows the faces in symmetrical relation to one another and the height and width of each face evenly proportioned; the faces do not appear to taper with distance as they do when the cube is drawn in perspective. *See the illustration. Compare* perspective view.



Isometric view. A cube in isometric view and in perspective view.

ISO/OSI reference model *n.* Short for **International Organization for Standardization Open Systems Interconnection reference model**. A layered architecture (plan)

that standardizes levels of service and types of interaction for computers exchanging information through a communications network. The ISO/OSI reference model separates computer-to-computer communications into seven protocol layers, or levels, each building—and relying—upon the standards contained in the levels below it. The lowest of the seven layers deals solely with hardware links; the highest deals with software interactions at the application-program level. It is a fundamental blueprint designed to help guide the creation of networking hardware and software. *See the illustration. Also called:* OSI reference model.

ISO/OSI MODEL	
ISO/OSI Layer	Focus
Application (highest level)	Program-to-program transfer of information
Presentation	Text formatting and display, code conversion
Session	Establishing, maintaining, and coordinating communication
Transport	Accurate delivery, service quality
Network	Transport routes, message handling and transfer
Data-link	Coding, addressing, and transmitting information
Physical	Hardware connections

ISO/OSI reference model.

ISP *n.* Acronym for **Internet service provider**. A business that supplies Internet connectivity services to individuals, businesses, and other organizations. Some ISPs are large national or multinational corporations that offer access in many locations, while others are limited to a single city or region. *Also called:* access provider, service provider.

ISSE *n.* *See* SSE.

ISV *n.* *See* independent software vendor.

IT *n.* Acronym for **Information Technology**. *See* Information Services.

italic *n.* A type style in which the characters are evenly slanted toward the right. *This sentence is in italics.* Italics are commonly used for emphasis, foreign-language words and phrases, titles of literary and other works, technical terms, and citations. *See also* font family. *Compare* roman.

point of sale *n.* See POS.

point-to-point configuration *n.* A communications link in which dedicated links exist between individual origins and destinations, as opposed to a point-to-multipoint configuration, in which the same signal goes to many destinations (such as a cable TV system), or a switched configuration, in which the signal moves from the origin to a switch that routes the signal to one of several possible destinations. *Also called:* point-to-point connection.

point-to-point connection *n.* See point-to-point configuration.

point-to-point message system *n.* In Sun Microsystems's J2EE network platform, a messaging system that uses message queues to store asynchronous, formatted data for coordinating enterprise applications. Each message is addressed to a specific queue, and client applications retrieve messages from the queues. *See also* asynchronous, J2EE.

Point-to-Point Protocol *n.* See PPP.

point-to-point tunneling *n.* A means of setting up secure communications over an open, public network such as the Internet. *See also* PPTP.

Point-to-Point Tunneling Protocol *n.* See PPTP.

Poisson distribution *n.* A mathematical curve often used in statistics and simulation to represent the likelihood of some event occurring, such as the arrival of a customer in a queue, when the average likelihood is known. This distribution, named after the French mathematician S. D. Poisson, is simpler to calculate than the normal and binomial distributions. *See also* binomial distribution, normal distribution.

poke *vb.* To store a byte into an absolute memory location. PEEK (read a byte from memory) and POKE commands are often found in programming languages, such as Basic, that do not normally allow access to specific memory locations.

polar coordinates *n.* Coordinates of the form (r , q) used to locate a point in two dimensions (on a plane). The polar coordinate r is the length of the line that starts at the origin and ends at the point, and q (Greek theta) is the angle between that line and the positive x -axis. *Compare* Cartesian coordinates.

polarity *n.* The sign of the potential (voltage) difference between two points in a circuit. When a potential difference exists between two points, one point has a positive polarity and the other a negative polarity. Electrons flow from negative to positive; by convention, however, current is considered to flow from positive to negative.

polarized component *n.* A circuit component that must be installed with its leads in a particular orientation with respect to the polarity of the circuit. Diodes, rectifiers, and some capacitors are examples of polarized components.

polarizing filter *n.* A transparent piece of glass or plastic that polarizes the light passing through it; that is, it allows only waves vibrating in a certain direction to pass through. Polarizing filters are often used to reduce glare on monitor screens. *See also* glare filter.

Polish notation *n.* See prefix notation.

polling *n.* See autopolling.

polling cycle *n.* The time and sequence required for a program to poll each of its devices or network nodes. *See also* autopolling.

polygon *n.* Any two-dimensional closed shape composed of three or more line segments, such as a hexagon, an octagon, or a triangle. Computer users encounter polygons in graphics programs.

polyline *n.* An open shape consisting of multiple connected segments. Polyline is used in CAD and other graphics programs. *See also* CAD.

polymorphism *n.* In an object-oriented programming language, the ability to redefine a routine in a derived class (a class that inherited its data structures and routines from another class). Polymorphism allows the programmer to define a base class that includes routines that perform standard operations on groups of related objects, without regard to the exact type of each object. The programmer then redefines the routines in the derived class for each type, taking into account the characteristics of the object. *See also* class, derived class, object (definition 2), object-oriented programming.

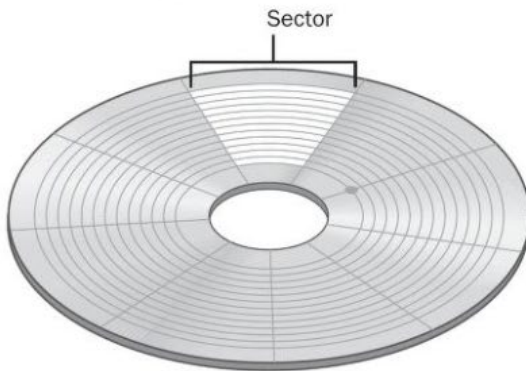
Pong *n.* The first commercial video game, a table tennis simulation, created by Nolan Bushnell of Atari in 1972.

P

secret channel *n.* See private channel.

section *n.* A length of fiberoptic cable in a SONET network. See also line, path.

sector *n.* A portion of the data storage area on a disk. A disk is divided into sides (top and bottom), tracks (rings on each surface), and sectors (sections of each ring). Sectors are the smallest physical storage units on a disk and are of fixed size; typically, they are capable of holding 512 bytes of information apiece. See the illustration.



Sector.

sector interleave *n.* See interleave.

sector map *n.* **1.** A map that indicates the unusable sectors on a disk. **2.** A table used to translate the sector numbers that are requested by the operating system into physical sector numbers. The sector map represents a different method of performing sector interleaving. When a sector map is used, the sectors are formatted on the disk in sequential order. The mapping enables the system to read sectors in a nonsequential order. For example, using a 3-to-1 sector interleaving map, a system request for sectors 1 through 4 will result in the disk driver reading physical sectors 1, 4, 7, and 10. See also interleave.

S

secure channel *n.* A communications link that has been protected against unauthorized access, operation, or use by means of isolation from the public network, encryption, or other forms of control. See also encryption.

Secure Digital Music Initiative *n.* A coalition of companies from the recording, electronics, and information technology industries founded in February 1999 for the purpose of developing an open standard for the secure distribution of music in digital form. The Secure Digital Music Initiative specification is designed to provide consumers with flexibility and convenient access to electroni-

cally distributed music (that is, over the Internet) while also protecting the rights of artists. *Acronym:* SDMI. See also MP3, Windows Media Technologies.

Secure Electronics Transactions protocol *n.* Protocol for conducting secure transactions over the Internet, the result of a joint effort by GTE, IBM, MasterCard, Microsoft, Netscape, SAIC, Terisa Systems, VeriSign, and Visa. *Acronym:* SET.

Secure Hash Algorithm *n.* See SHA.

Secure HTTP *n.* See S-HTTP, HTTPS.

Secure Hypertext Transfer Protocol *n.* See S-HTTP.

Secure/Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions *n.* See S/MIME.

Secure Password Authentication *n.* A feature that allows a server to confirm the identity of the person logging on. *Acronym:* SPA.

secure site *n.* A Web site having the capability of providing secure transactions, ensuring that credit card numbers and other personal information will not be accessible to unauthorized parties.

Secure Sockets Layer *n.* See SSL.

Secure Transaction Technology *n.* The use of the SSL (Secure Sockets Layer), S-HTTP (Secure HTTP), or both in online transactions, such as form transmission or credit card purchases. *Acronym:* STT. See also S-HTTP, SSL.

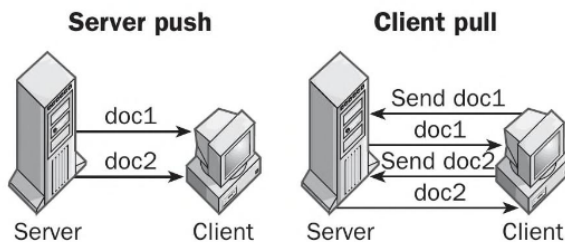
secure wide area network *n.* A set of computers that communicate over a public network, such as the Internet, but use security measures, such as encryption, authentication, and authorization, to prevent their communications from being intercepted and understood by unauthorized users. *Acronym:* S/WAN. See also authentication, authorization, encryption, virtual private network (definition 1).

security *n.* The technologies used to make a service resistant to unauthorized access to the data that it holds or for which it is responsible. A major focus of computer security, especially on systems that are accessed by many people or through communications lines, is the prevention of system access by unauthorized individuals.

security kernel *n.* An operating-system kernel that is protected from unauthorized use. See also kernel.

security log *n.* A log, generated by a firewall or other security device, that lists events that could affect security, such as access attempts or commands, and the names of the users involved. See also firewall, log (definition 1).

server push-pull *n.* A combination of Web client/server techniques individually called “server push” and “client pull.” In server push, the server loads data to the client, but the data connection stays open. This allows the server to continue sending data to the browser as necessary. In client pull, the server loads data to the client, but the data connection does not stay open. The server sends an HTML directive to the browser telling it to reopen the connection after a certain interval to get more data or possibly to open a new URL. See the illustration. *See also* HTML, server (definition 2), URL.



Server push-pull.

server-side include *n.* A mechanism for including dynamic text in World Wide Web documents. Server-side includes are special command codes that are recognized and interpreted by the server; their output is placed in the document body before the document is sent to the browser. Server-side includes can be used, for example, to include the date/time stamp in the text of the file. *Acronym:* SSI. *See also* server (definition 2).

service *n.* **1.** A customer-based or user-oriented function, such as technical support or network provision. **2.** In reference to programming and software, a program or routine that provides support to other programs, particularly at a low (close to the hardware) level. **3.** In networking, specialized, software-based functionality provided by network servers—for example, directory services that provide the network equivalent of “phone books” needed for locating users and resources. *See also* utility.

Service Advertising Protocol *n.* A method used by a service-providing node in a network (such as a file server or application server) to notify other nodes on the network that it is available for access. When a server boots, it uses the protocol to advertise its service; when the same server goes off line, it uses the protocol to announce that it is no longer available. *Acronym:* SAP. *See also* server (definition 1).

service bureau *n.* **1.** A company that provides various services related to publishing, such as prepress production, desktop publishing, typesetting, imagesetting, and optical scanning of graphics. **2.** An organization that provides data processing services and access to software packages for a fee.

service provider *n.* *See* ISP.

servlet or **servelet** *n.* A small Java program that runs on a server. The term is a companion to applet, a Java program that usually runs on the client. Servlets perform lightweight Web services, such as redirecting a Web user from an outdated address to the correct page—tasks traditionally handled by CGI (Common Gateway Interface) applications. Because servlets are automatically threaded and highly responsive, they execute quickly, thereby reducing system overhead. *Also called:* serverlet. *See also* applet, CGI.

servlet container *n.* In Sun Microsystems’s J2EE network platform, a container that decodes requests, formats responses, and provides the network services over which requests and responses are sent. All servlet containers must support HTTP as a protocol for requests and responses, but they may also support additional request-response protocols such as HTTPS. *See also* container, HTTP, HTTPS, J2EE.

servo *n.* The part of a servomechanism, controlled by the servomechanism’s feedback circuit, that produces the final mechanical output. *Also called:* servomotor. *See also* servomechanism.

servomechanism *n.* A control system in which the final output is mechanical movement. A servomechanism uses feedback to control the position, velocity, or acceleration of a mechanical component. *Also called:* servo system.

servomotor *n.* *See* servo.

servo system *n.* *See* servomechanism.

session *n.* **1.** The time during which a program is running. In most interactive programs, a session is the time during which the program accepts input and processes information. **2.** In communications, the time during which two computers maintain a connection. **3.** A specific protocol layer in the ISO/OSI reference model that manages communication between remote users or processes. *See also* ISO/OSI reference model, session layer.

session bean *n.* In the Java programming language and J2EE network platform, an enterprise bean that is created

