

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD™

COMPUTER DICTIONARY

TENTH EDITION

The Best Computer Dictionary Anywhere

Revised and updated

Contains extensive coverage of Internet and multimedia terms

Over 4,750 words, phrases, abbreviations, and acronyms

BRYAN PFAFFENBERGER

WE DEFINE YOUR WORLD™

Webster's New World™ Computer Dictionary, 10th Edition

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installed in small, dedicated devices, including cellular phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs). See *application programming interface (API)*, *BSD Unix*, *interprocess communication (IPC)*, *multiprocessing*, *multitasking*, *multithreading*, *Plan 9*, *preemptive multitasking*.

operating voltage The electrical voltage at which a microprocessor operates. Most microprocessors have operating voltages of 5 volts—a mostly arbitrary specification decided upon when the transistor was invented—but some chips run at 3.3 volts to save electricity (a real concern in portable computers) and reduce heat output.

operator In programming, a code name or symbol that is used to describe a command or function, such as multiplying or dividing.

optical character recognition See *OCR*.

optical disc A large-capacity data storage medium for computers on which information is stored at extremely high density in the form of tiny pits. The presence or absence of pits is read by a tightly focused laser beam. CD-ROMs and DVDs offer an increasingly economical medium for storing data and programs. Write-once, read-many (WORM) drives enable organizations to create their own huge, in-house databases. Erasable optical disc drives combine good storage capacity with the convenience of removable CDs; however, they are still more expensive and slower than hard drives. See *interactive videodisk*.

optical fiber See *fiber optics*.

optical mouse Instead of using a rubber ball to communicate its movement, an optical mouse shines a beam of light onto the surface beneath it and reads the changes in that surface when the mouse moves. An optical mouse is more convenient because it does not require cleaning.

optical resolution A measure of the sharpness with which a scanner can digitize an image without help from software. The more charge-coupled devices (CCDs) in a scanner (1200 is about average, and 4800 is very good), the better its optical resolution. By means of software interpolation, output can be improved, but software interpolation is a poor substitute for high optical resolution.

optical scanner See *scanner*.

optimal recalculation In Lotus 1-2-3 and other advanced spreadsheet programs, a method that speeds automatic recalculation by recalculating only those cells that have changed since the last recalculation.

optimizing compiler A compiler that translates source code into machine language optimized to run as efficiently as possible on a particular microprocessor. Optimizing compilers are virtually essential when preparing programs to run on any microprocessor equipped with superscalar architecture.

option button See *radio button*.

OR 1. In programming, a Boolean function that returns an expression as true if any of its arguments are true. 2. In computer database searching, a Boolean operator that retrieves a document if it contains any of the specified search terms.

Oracle Corporation The leading manufacturer of relational database management systems (RDMS) for multiuser enterprise computing, and the first major database firm to adopt SQL as its standard query language.

ORB Acronym for object request broker. A standard for requesting services from objects in a distributed object architecture, a cross-platform computer network in which program modules can be written in any computer language but still supply needed functions to other applications. The standard is the work of the Object Management Group (OMG), an industry consortium that is developing standards for