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B

Baudot code *n.* A 5-bit coding scheme used principally for telex transmissions, originally developed for telegraphy by the French engineer and telegrapher Jean-Maurice-Émile Baudot. Sometimes it is equated, although inaccurately, with the International Alphabet Number 2 proposed by the Comité Consultatif Internationale Télégraphique et Téléphonique (CCITT).

baud rate *n.* The speed at which a modem can transmit data. The baud rate is the number of events, or signal changes, that occur in one second—not the number of bits per second (bps) transmitted. In high-speed digital communications, one event can actually encode more than one bit, and modems are more accurately described in terms of bits per second than baud rate. For example, a so-called 9600-baud modem actually operates at 2400 baud but transmits 9600 bits per second by encoding 4 bits per event ($2400 \times 4 = 9600$) and thus is a 9600-bps modem. *Compare* bit rate, transfer rate.

bay *n.* A shelf or opening used for the installation of electronic equipment—for example, the space reserved for additional disk drives, CD-ROM drives, or other equipment in the cabinets of microcomputers. *See also* drive bay.

bayonet-Neill-Concelman *n.* *See* BNC.

BBL *n.* Acronym for **be back later**. An expression used commonly on live chat services on the Internet and online information services to indicate that a participant is temporarily leaving the discussion forum but intends to return at a later time. *See also* chat¹ (definition 1).

BBS *n.* **1.** Acronym for **bulletin board system**. A computer system equipped with one or more modems or other means of network access that serves as an information and message-passing center for remote users. Often BBSs are focused on special interests, such as science fiction, movies, Windows software, or Macintosh systems, and can have free or fee-based access, or a combination. Users dial into a BBS with their modems and post messages to other BBS users in special areas devoted to a particular topic, in a manner reminiscent of the posting of notes on a cork bulletin board. Many BBSs also allow users to chat online with other users, send e-mail, download and upload files that include freeware and shareware software, and access the Internet. Many software and hardware companies run proprietary BBSs for customers that include sales infor-

mation, technical support, and software upgrades and patches. **2.** Acronym for **be back soon**. A shorthand expression often seen in Internet discussion groups by a participant leaving the group who wishes to bid a temporary farewell to the rest of the group.

bcc *n.* Acronym for **blind courtesy copy**. A feature of e-mail programs that allows a user to send a copy of an e-mail message to a recipient without notifying other recipients that this was done. Generally, the recipient's address is entered into a field called "bcc:" in the mail header. *Also called:* blind carbon copy. *See also* e-mail¹ (definition 1), header (definition 1). *Compare* cc.

BCD *n.* *See* binary-coded decimal.

bCentral *n.* A Web site for small businesses that provides online subscription services for customer management, financial management, and e-commerce. BCentral is part of the Microsoft .NET initiative. *See also* MSN, .NET.

B channel *n.* Short for **bearer channel**. One of the 64-Kbps communications channels that carry data on an ISDN circuit. A BRI (Basic Rate Interface) ISDN line has two B channels and one D (data) channel. A PRI (Primary Rate Interface) ISDN line has 23 B channels (in North America) or 30 B channels (in Europe) and one D channel. *See also* BRI, D channel, ISDN.

BCNF *n.* Acronym for **Boyce-Codd normal form**. *See* normal form (definition 1).

beacon *n.* On an FDDI network, a special frame generated and passed along when a node detects a problem. *See also* frame (definition 2).

beam *vb.* To transfer information from one device to another through an infrared wireless connection. The term typically refers to data sharing using handheld devices such as Palm organizers, Pocket PCs, mobile phones, and pagers.

bearer channel *n.* *See* B channel.

BeBox *n.* A high-performance multiprocessor computer (RISC-based PowerPC) made by Be, Inc., and loaded with Be's operating system, BeOS. Be discontinued production of the BeBox in January 1997 in order to focus on software (BeOS) development. *See also* BeOS, PowerPC, RISC.

BEDO DRAM *n.* Acronym for **Burst Extended Data Out Dynamic RAM**. A type of EDO (extended-data-out) dynamic RAM (DRAM) that handles memory transfers in