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Published by

CMP Books

An imprint of CMP Media LLC

600 Harrison Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

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email: bookorders@cmp.com

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This book is also sold through www.Amazon.com, www.Fatbrain.com,
www.BarnesAndNoble.com and all fine booksellers worldwide.

Distributed to the book trade in the U.S. by

Publishers Group West

1700 Fourth St., Berkeley, CA 94710

ISBN Number 1-57820-315-5

05 06 07 08 09 5 4 3 2

Twenty First Edition

Matt Kelsey, Publisher

Ray Horak, Senior Contributing Editor

Gail Saari, Production Editor

Cover design: Saul Roldan and Damien Castaneda

Text layout: Brad Greene, Greene Design

Typically read, write, delete, create and execute.

PRL See Preferred Roaming List.

PRMD Private Management Domain. An X.400 Message Handling System private organization mail system. Example: NASAmail.

PRNG A Bluetooth term. Pseudo Random Noise Generation.

pro forma Pro forma is a financial term. It is the presentation of data, such as a balance sheet or an income statement, where certain amounts are hypothetical. For example a pro forma balance sheet might show a debt issue that has been proposed but has not yet been consummated, or a pro forma income statement might reflect a merger that has not yet been completed. Pro forma can also mean deviating from established financial practices. Here's the history. In the late 1990s the Financial Accounting Standards Board suggested that software companies adopt an accounting practice it called 97-02. That was meant to assure that companies—some with pretty aggressive sales cultures—book revenue on shipped, or fully received wares, not just on orders. The SEC then looked at 97-02 and—with the laudable intention of providing investors with a standardized measuring stick for assessing company revenue across all industries—decided that the it was broadly applicable. So, early in 2000, the SEC propagated "Staff Accounting Bulletin 101," or SAB 101, which essentially made 97-02 the accounting standard for all publicly traded companies in the U.S. SAB 101 became mandatory as of the December quarter. But, the trouble is, some companies have very complicated business models, and many of them—along with some of their analysts and investors—simply don't believe that SAB 101 fairly reflects their business activities. Under SAB 101 accounting standards, a company has to wait until a contract is completely fulfilled before it can book proceeds from the contract as revenue. But some companies say software contracts, for instance, sometimes take years to fulfill, because they often include customization, service agreements, product updates and other over-time add-ons. Companies, given pressure to meet or beat the Street's estimates, want to give investors a more dynamic picture of their quarterly business activity, especially when they honestly view the proceeds of orders as, well, money in bank, whether it has been received or not. In short, pro forma financial numbers can be basically whatever the company wishes to report. Share buyer, beware.

proactive Taking the initiative. Doing it before someone (most likely your competition) forces you to do it. The word is currently in vogue among those people who believe the telephone companies should do all the positive, forward-looking actions before the competition does them and wins the customers and gets the public kudos. The word has no real meaning, but serves a purpose as a cry to action. The word actually is grammatically incorrect. The real word is "active." It is the opposite of "reactive."

probability theory Probability theory studies the possible outcomes of given events together with their relative likelihoods and distributions. Probability deals with predicting the likelihood of future events. Probability theory is important in picking stocks.

probe 1. A sensing device, typically about the size and shape of a pencil, that is used to sense various physical conditions such as temperature, humidity, current flow, speed. Usually connected to a meter or oscilloscope which displays the condition being monitored.

2. An empty message that is sent to reach a particular address to determine if an address can be reached.

probe envelope In X.400, the envelope that encloses a probe in the MTS (Message transfer System). See Probe.

Problem Tracking Report PTR. A report maintained by a manufacturer in its Problem Tracking Database that describes a specific reproducible product defect or anomaly with a product. A PTR is also used to document a request for a feature enhancement. Information includes PTR number, problem description, PTR priority, system configuration and steps for reproducing the problem.

process An operating system object that consists of an executable program, a set of virtual memory addresses, and one or more threads. When a program runs, a process is created.

process manufacturing The making of things. This contrasts with flow manufacturing which is working on something—like oil—that flows through a production process.

process throttling A method of restricting the amount of processor time a process consumes, for example, using job object functions.

processing delay In data communications, the time taken by a computer to operate on an inbound message and return a response; frequently not accounted for in complaints of telecommunications response time problems.

processing gain In a spread spectrum transmission system, the original informa-

tion signal is combined with a pseudo random correlating, or spreading code. The more random and the greater the length of the code, the more robust the resulting spread spectrum signal is against interference and interception. A measure of this robustness is referred to as processing gain. The FCC requires a minimum of 10 dB processing gain for non-licensed equipment operating in the Part 15 902-928 MHz, 2400-2483 MHz, and 5725-5850 MHz frequency bands. See also CDMA.

processing, batch A method of computer operation in which a number of similar input items are accumulated and sorted for processing. Compare with On-Line or Interactive Processing.

processor 1. The intelligent central element of a computer or other information handling system. Also called the Central Processing Unit (CPU).

2. A device which uses amplifiers and filters to "boost," "clean-up" and reprocess signals. Sometimes channel converters demodulate signals in order to accomplish this function. See Channel Converter.

processor card See Smart Card.

processor occupancy The time the telephone system processor is in use. There are two typical demands on the central processor in a telephone system, moving calls around and running self-diagnostics. Be sure you factor in the second when you're trying to figure out how many calls your telephone system processor will handle before it dies.

processor power The number of computations that a computer, microprocessor, or digital signal processor can complete in a fixed time interval. May be measured in MIPS (millions of instructions per second) or MFlops. Typical low-end DSP chips provide up to 10 MFlops; high-end chips 30 or more.

procurement lead time The interval in months between the initiation of procurement action and receipt into the supply system of the production model (excludes prototypes) purchased as the result of such actions, and is composed of two elements, production lead time and administrative lead time.

procr Processor.

prod A device that resembles a pencil, but containing a metal tip in an insulated handle with a wire to connect it to a piece of test equipment, such as a VOM (volt-ohm-millimeter). The metal tip is touched to various points in an electrical circuit for measurements and trouble-shooting.

Prodigy Formed in 1984 as a joint venture of IBM and Sears Roebuck & Company, Prodigy was originally called TRINTEX. The name was changed to Prodigy in 1988, and the company was acquired by employees with the help of International Wireless in 1996. Prodigy used to offer on-line computer services. The company was one of the first to offer such services for a largely flat monthly fee. Recently, Prodigy decided to terminate the activities of 50 staffers who develop "content" for its information service, and instead to link its users to the content of Excite, a Web directory and search engine. Prodigy will now become more a pure Internet Service Provider, offering connections to the Internet.

productize This is a stupid word. Let's say you've designed something special for one of client—a piece of hardware or software or a little of both. He likes it. You figure that others will also. So you make it into a product which you can put in your catalog and which others can buy also. Productize also means to turn an idea into a product. You complete the R&D on it, finish the customer documentation, finish the packaging design, assign a name, model number and stocking number. And you make sure that your people in service are ready to help customers. See also beta.

profile A set of parameters defining the way a device acts. In the LAN world, a profile is often used by one or more workstations to determine the connections they will have with other devices and those devices they will offer for use by other devices. Often called a login file. Profiles and login files usually work like batch files, automatically executing a number of commands when you turn on the machine.

profile alignment system PAS. A system that provides an automated method by which a fiber optic fusion splicer aligns a individual fibers prior to splicing. Collimated light (i.e., light comprising parallel rays) is directed through the fibers at right angles to the axis of each. Two highly sensitive cameras produce images that the machine uses to align each fiber exactly with the other along both the X and Y axes. See also fusion splicer.

profiling Method of classifying individuals according to any data category. However, a profile only has significance if it is compared to a base figure (usually a population or a client database).

PROFS Professional Office System. Interactive productivity software developed by IBM that is part of the Virtual Machine (VM) Productivity System and runs under the VM/CMS

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This is the world's favorite reference book on telecom, data communications, networking, computing and the Internet. With 500 new terms and hundreds more definitions updated and expanded, the 21st edition of *Newton's Telecom Dictionary* weighs in at over four times larger than any other telecom and IT dictionary, and includes wireless, broadband, VoIP, RFID, and fiber optics terms. It explains technical concepts in non-technical language that anyone can understand. According to Discount Long Distance Digest, it "truly belongs on the bookshelf of everyone in the telecom industry. It's worth every penny, and is pound-for-pound the best telecom book we have seen."

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How to protect your computing and telecom resources.



Harry Newton has spent 34 years studying, writing, lecturing and investing in telecommunications and technology. He founded key telecom magazines—LAN (now Network), Teleconnect, Call Center, Computer Telephony and Technology Investor. He also founded the trade shows, Computer Telephony Conference and Exhibition (CT Expo) and Call Center Demo. He sold his telecom publishing group in September, 1997 to concentrate on writing.

Newton has an MBA from the Harvard Business School and an Economics degree from the University of Sydney, Australia, where he was born. He is not an engineer, but wishes he were. He wrote this dictionary to teach himself his first loves—telecom and technology. In this dictionary, Newton explains complex technology in non-technical, business language. He believes it's critical to understand what the technology does, what its benefits are and the key tips to using and installing it. That's what this dictionary does.

Most dictionaries are updated every ten to twenty years. Not this one. Newton updates this dictionary every day and issues a new, expanded, improved and updated edition every year. This edition is current as of Spring 2005.

CMPBooks

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An imprint of CMP Media LLC

US \$34.95 • CAN \$46.95 • UK £20.99

ISBN 1-57820-315-5

