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Computer Dictionary

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serial port adapter *n.* An interface card or device that either provides a serial port or converts a serial port to another use. *See also* adapter, serial port.

serial printer *n.* A printer connected to the computer via a serial interface (commonly RS-232-C or compatible). Connectors for this type of printer vary widely, which is one reason they are less popular than parallel printers among those who use IBM and IBM-compatible PCs. Serial printers are standard for Apple computers. *See also* DB connector, serial, serial transmission. *Compare* parallel printer.

serial processing *n.* *See* sequential processing (definition 2).

Serial Storage Architecture *n.* *See* SSA.

serial transmission *n.* The transfer of discrete signals one after another. In communications and data transfer, serial transmission involves sending information over a single line one bit at a time, as in modem-to-modem connections. *Compare* parallel transmission.

series circuit *n.* A circuit in which two or more components are linked in series. All the current passes through each component in a series circuit, but the voltage is divided among the components. *See the illustration. Compare* parallel circuit.



Series circuit.

serif¹ *adj.* Marked by the use of serifs. For example, Goudy is a serif typeface, whereas Helvetica is a sans serif typeface. *See the illustration. See also* serif². *Compare* sans serif.



Serif. A serif typeface (top) and a sans serif typeface (bottom).

serif² *n.* Any of the short lines or ornaments at the ends of the strokes that form a typeface character.

server *n.* **1.** On a local area network (LAN), a computer running administrative software that controls access to the network and its resources, such as printers and disk drives, and provides resources to computers functioning as workstations on the network. **2.** On the Internet or other network, a computer or program that responds to commands from a client. For example, a file server may contain an archive of data or program files; when a client submits a request for a file, the server transfers a copy of the file to the client. *See also* application server (definitions 1 and 2), client/server architecture. *Compare* client (definition 3).

server appliance *n.* A device designed to deliver one or more specific network services in a single turnkey package that includes both hardware and software. All necessary programs are preinstalled on a server appliance, which has minimal, simplified options and controls. Server appliances can be used to complement or replace traditional servers on a network and can provide such services as file and printer sharing and Internet connectivity. *Also called:* appliance. *See also* information appliance.

server-based application *n.* A program that is shared over a network. The program is stored on the network server and can be used at more than one client machine at a time.

server cluster *n.* A group of independent computer systems, known as nodes, working together as a single system to ensure that mission-critical applications and resources remain available to clients. A server cluster is the type of cluster that Cluster service implements. *See also* cluster.

server control *n.* *See* ASP.NET server control.

server error *n.* A failure to complete a request for information through HTTP that results from an error at the server rather than an error by the client or the user. Server errors are indicated by HTTP status codes beginning with 5. *See also* HTTP, HTTP status codes.

server farm *n.* A centralized grouping of network servers maintained by an enterprise or, often, an Internet service provider (ISP). A server farm provides a network with load balancing, scalability, and fault tolerance. Individual servers may be connected in such a way that they appear to represent a single resource.

serverlet *n.* *See* servlet.

Server Message Block *n.* *See* SMB.