

Dictionary of Computer and Internet Terms

Eighth Edition

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All inquiries should be addressed to:
Barron's Educational Series, Inc.
250 Wireless Boulevard
Hauppauge, New York 11788
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Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 2002033231

International Standard Book No. 0-7641-2166-9

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Downing, Douglas.

Dictionary of computer and Internet terms / Douglas A. Downing,
Michael A. Covington, Melody Mauldin Covington.—8th ed.
p. cm.

First-4th eds. published under title: Dictionary of computer terms.
ISBN 0-7641-2166-9

1. Computers—Dictionaries. 2. Internet Dictionaries. I. Covington,
Michael A., 1957– II. Covington, Melody Mauldin. III. Downing, Douglas.
Dictionary of computer terms. IV. Title.

QA76.15 .D667 2002
004'.03—dc21

2002033231

PRINTED IN CANADA

98765

conversations through the Internet or through IP networks. Several protocols are used for this purpose. *See* INTERNET TELEPHONY; PROTOCOL.

voken (virtual token) an advertisement that appears over the contents of a browser window, but not in a window of its own. *Compare* POP-UP AD.

The voken can move around the screen, rotate, and blink to attract attention. A moving voken can trick you into clicking on it — thus going to the advertiser's site — when you meant to click on something else, but it got in the way.

volatile not permanent; erased when turned off. The memory (RAM) of a computer is volatile; that is, it goes blank when power is removed. Flash memory and disks are non-volatile. In some programming languages, a variable is declared **volatile** if it can be changed by something outside the program.

volt the unit of measure of electric potential. If a potential of 1 volt is applied to a resistance of 1 ohm, then a current of 1 ampere will flow through the resistance. (*See* OHM'S LAW.)

volume

1. an individual diskette, disk, or tape.
2. the perceived loudness of a sound. The volume control on a sound card may be a knob on the card itself, a setting made in software, or both.

volume serial number an identifying number assigned to a diskette, disk, or tape by OS/2, Windows 95 and later, or other operating systems. Volume serial numbers ensure that the computer will know when the disk or tape in a drive is changed.

Von Neumann architecture a type of computer design in which programs and data are stored in a single kind of memory. *Contrast* HARVARD ARCHITECTURE. *See* COMPUTER ARCHITECTURE.

Von Neumann, John (1903–1957) mathematician who worked on one of the earliest computers and developed the concept of storing programs in memory.

VPN (virtual private network) a network where data is transferred over the Internet using security features preventing unauthorized access.

VRAM (video random access memory) RAM that is specially designed for use in video cards. Commonly, it can be read and written simultaneously so that the generation of the display is not interrupted when the CPU needs to place data in it.

VRML (Virtual Reality Markup Language or Virtual Reality Modeling Language) a programming language developed by Mark Pesce and Tony Parisi to describe three-dimensional objects for graphical display. A VRML program describes a “world” of virtual objects that a person