

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD™

DICTIONARY

— of —

COMPUTER TERMS

EIGHTH EDITION

By Bryan Pfaffenberger, Ph.D.

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Dedication

For Suzanne, always

Webster's New World™ Dictionary of Computer Terms,
8th Edition

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for transmission on a frame relay network. The same device also decapsulates incoming data. See *frame relay*.

fragmentation See *file fragmentation*.

fragment identifier In HTML, a hyperlink that points to a named location within the current document or another document. For example, a hyperlink that points to #CHAP1 will display the document beginning at the point where the anchor named CHAP1 is inserted. The XPointer language, part of the XML language specification, includes more sophisticated ways of linking to selected content within the destination document.

frame 1. In data communications, a unit (packet) of data that is transmitted via the network. 2. In desktop publishing (DTP) and word processing, a rectangular area absolutely positioned on the page. The frame can contain text, graphics, or both. 3. In the World Wide Web (WWW), a section of the window that has been partitioned off to display a separate document. This is done with frame tags. 4. In animation and video, one of the still images that, when played at a rapid speed (see *frame rate*), produces the illusion of continuous movement.

frame buffer 1. A portion of video memory that stores the information used to generate an image onscreen. Usually, the central processing unit (CPU) writes data to the frame buffer; then the video controller reads it, but dual-ported video random access memory (VRAM) allows simultaneous reads and writes. A frame buffer that can handle more information than the display might be used for hardware panning. 2. In Lotus 1-2-3, the shaded border across the top of the spreadsheet containing the column letters and down the left of the spreadsheet containing the row numbers.

frame rate In animation and video, the number of still images that are presented per second. The frame rate is measured in *frames per second (fps)*.

frame relay A service provided by telecommunications companies that connects local area networks (LANs) to regional or national backbone networks. Frame relay protocols place data within variably sized units called frames, which can encapsulate data conforming to other protocols (including Ethernet, X.24, and TCP/IP). Physically implemented by means of T1 or T3



package In Microsoft Windows 95/98 and Microsoft Windows 3.1, an icon created by Object Packager that contains a linked object, embedded object, file, or part of a file. See *OLE*.

packaged software Application programs commercially marketed, unlike custom programs privately developed for a specific client.

packet In a packet-switching unit, a unit of data of a fixed size—not exceeding the network's maximum transmission unit (MTU) size—that has been prepared for network transmission. Each packet contains a header that indicates its origin and its destination. Synonymous with *datagram*. See *packet switching network*.

packet driver In a local area network (LAN), a program that divides data into packets (transmission units of fixed size) before sending them out on the network.

Packet Internet Groper (PING) A diagnostic program that is commonly used to determine whether a computer is properly connected to the Internet.

packet radio A method of exchanging TCP/IP data by means of VHF radio transmissions linking two or more computers. First developed for military applications during the development of ARPANET, packet radio is now most widely used among radio hobbyists. Packet radio transmissions are limited by line of sight (approximately 10 to 100 miles, barring obstructions).

packet sniffer A program designed to search the data packets coursing through an Internet line for some predetermined pattern, such as a password, social security number, or credit card number; these are often transmitted via the Internet in cleartext. The ability of computer criminals to intercept such data is a fundamental security shortcoming of the Internet and explains why use of the network is inherently insecure unless encryption is used.

packet switching See *packet switching network*.