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Microsoft Computer Dictionary

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CD. A permutation is a grouping of elements taken from a larger set with regard to the order of the elements. For example, in making permutations of two objects from the same set of four objects, there would be four candidates to choose from for the first selection (A), and three left over to choose from for the second selection (B), or 12 permutations in all: AB, AC, AD, BA, BC, BD, CA, CB, CD, DA, DB, DC. *See also* combinatorial explosion.

COM callable wrapper *n.* A proxy object generated by the runtime so that existing COM applications can use managed classes, including .NET Framework classes, transparently. *Acronym:* CCW.

COMDEX *n.* Any of a series of annual computer trade shows operated by Softbank COMDEX, Inc. One of these shows takes place in Las Vegas each November and is the largest computer trade show in the United States.

Comité Consultatif International Télégraphique et Téléphonique *n. See* CCITT.

comma-delimited file *n.* A data file consisting of fields and records, stored as text, in which the fields are separated from each other by commas. Use of comma-delimited files allows communication between database systems that use different formats. If the data in a field contains a comma, the field is further surrounded with quotation marks.

command *n.* An instruction to a computer program that, when issued by the user, causes an action to be carried out. Commands are usually either typed at the keyboard or chosen from a menu.

command buffer *n.* An area in memory in which commands entered by the user are kept. A command buffer can enable the user to repeat commands without retyping them completely, edit past commands to change some argument or correct a mistake, undo commands, or obtain a list of past commands. *See also* history, template (definition 4).

command button *n.* A control shaped like a pushbutton in a dialog box in a graphical user interface. By clicking a command button, the user causes the computer to perform some action, such as opening a file that has just been selected using the other controls in the dialog box.

COMMAND.COM *n.* The command interpreter for MS-DOS. *See also* command interpreter.

command-driven *adj.* Accepting commands in the form of code words or letters, which the user must learn. *Compare* menu-driven.

command-driven system *n.* A system in which the user initiates operations by a command entered from the console. *Compare* graphical user interface.

command interpreter *n.* A program, usually part of the operating system, that accepts typed commands from the keyboard and performs tasks as directed. The command interpreter is responsible for loading applications and directing the flow of information between applications. In OS/2 and MS-DOS, the command interpreter also handles simple functions, such as moving and copying files and displaying disk directory information. *See also* shell[1].

Command key *n.* On the original Macintosh keyboard, a key labeled with the special symbol, sometimes called the propeller or puppy foot. This key is found on one or both sides of the Spacebar, depending on the version of the Apple keyboard. The key serves some of the same functions as the Control key on IBM keyboards. *See also* Control key.

command language *n.* The set of keywords and expressions that are accepted as valid by the command interpreter. *See also* command interpreter.

command line *n.* A string of text written in the command language and passed to the command interpreter for execution. *See also* command language.

command-line interface *n.* A form of interface between the operating system and the user in which the user types commands, using a special command language. Although systems with command-line interfaces are usually considered more difficult to learn and use than those with graphical interfaces, command-based systems are usually programmable; this gives them flexibility unavailable in graphics-based systems that do not have a programming interface. *Compare* graphical user interface.

command mode *n.* A mode of operation in which a program waits for a command to be issued. *Compare* edit mode, insert mode.

command processing *n. See* command-driven system.

command processor *n. See* command interpreter.

command prompt window *n.* A window displayed on the desktop used to interface with the MS-DOS operating