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**Computer
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Fifth Edition

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- *Easy to read, expertly illustrated*
- *Definitive coverage of hardware, software, the Internet, and more!*



PUBLISHED BY

Microsoft Press

A Division of Microsoft Corporation

One Microsoft Way

Redmond, Washington 98052-6399

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Microsoft Computer Dictionary.--5th ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-7356-1495-4

1. Computers--Dictionaries. 2. Microcomputers--Dictionaries.

AQ76.5. M52267 2002

004'.03--dc21

200219714

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 QWT 7 6 5 4 3 2

Distributed in Canada by H.B. Fenn and Company Ltd.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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C

for microcomputers based on Intel microprocessors. The first system, CP/M-80, was the most popular operating system for 8080- and Z80-based microcomputers. Digital Research also developed CP/M-86 for 8086/8088-based computers, CP/M-Z8000 for Zilog Z8000-based computers, and CP/M-68K for Motorola 68000-based computers. When the IBM PC and MS-DOS were introduced, common use of CP/M by end users dwindled. DRI continues to enhance the CP/M line, supporting multitasking with the Concurrent CP/M and MP/M products. *See also* MP/M.

CPM *n.* *See* critical path method.

CPRM *n.* Acronym for Content Protection for Recordable Media. Technology developed to control the use of copyrighted digital music and video material by blocking the transfer of protected files to portable media such as zip disks and smart cards. CPRM would be added to storage devices and provide data scrambling and identification codes to block the copying of copyrighted files.

cps *n.* *See* characters per second.

CPSR *n.* Acronym for Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility. A public advocacy organization of computer professionals. CPSR was originally formed out of concern over the use of computer technology for military purposes but has extended its interest to such issues as civil liberties and the effect of computers on workers.

CPU *n.* Acronym for central processing unit. The computational and control unit of a computer. The CPU is the device that interprets and executes instructions. Mainframes and early minicomputers contained circuit boards full of integrated circuits that implemented the CPU. Single-chip central processing units, called *microprocessors*, made possible personal computers and workstations. Examples of single-chip CPUs are the Motorola 68000, 68020, and 68030 chips and the Intel 8080, 8086, 80286, 80386, and i486 chips. The CPU—or microprocessor, in the case of a microcomputer—has the ability to fetch, decode, and execute instructions and to transfer information to and from other resources over the computer's main data-transfer path, the bus. By definition, the CPU is the chip that functions as the “brain” of a computer. In some instances, however, the term encompasses both the processor and the computer's memory or, even more broadly, the main computer console (as opposed to peripheral equipment). *See the illustration. See also* microprocessor.



CPU.

CPU-bound *adj.* *See* computation-bound.

CPU cache *n.* A section of fast memory linking the CPU (central processing unit) and main memory that temporarily stores data and instructions the CPU needs to execute upcoming commands and programs. Considerably faster than main memory, the CPU cache contains data that is transferred in blocks, thereby speeding execution. The system anticipates the data it will need through algorithms. *Also called:* cache memory, memory cache. *See also* cache, CPU, V-cache.

CPU cycle *n.* 1. The smallest unit of time recognized by the CPU (central processing unit)—typically a few hundred-millionths of a second. 2. The time required for the CPU to perform the simplest instruction, such as fetching the contents of a register or performing a no-operation instruction (NOP). *Also called:* clock tick.

CPU fan *n.* An electric fan usually placed directly on a CPU (central processing unit) or on the CPU's heat sink to help dissipate heat from the chip by circulating air around it. *See also* CPU, heat sink.

CPU speed *n.* A relative measure of the data-processing capacity of a particular CPU (central processing unit), usually measured in megahertz. *See also* CPU.

CPU time *n.* In multiprocessing, the amount of time during which a particular process has active control of the CPU (central processing unit). *See also* CPU, multiprocessing.

CR *n.* *See* carriage return.

crack *vb.* 1. To gain unauthorized access to a network by breaching its security. 2. To decipher encrypted information.

cracker *n.* A person who overcomes the security measures of a computer system and gains unauthorized access. The goal of some crackers is to obtain information ille-

game tree *n.* A tree structure representing contingencies in a game and used by game developers for design purposes. Each node in a game tree represents a possible position (for example, the configuration of pieces on a chessboard) in the game, and each branching represents a possible move. *See also* computer game.

gamut *n.* The complete range of colors a display or printer is capable of producing. If a color falls outside the gamut of a device, it cannot be accurately displayed or printed from that device.

gamut alarm *n.* A feature in graphics programs that alerts the user if a chosen color will fall outside the currently selected gamut. *See also* gamut.

Gantt chart *n.* A bar chart that shows individual parts of a project as bars against a horizontal time scale. Gantt charts are used as a project-planning tool for developing schedules. Most project-planning software can produce Gantt charts.

gap *n.* *See* inter-record gap.

garbage *n.* 1. Incorrect or corrupted data. 2. Gibberish displayed on screen, either due to faulty hardware or software or because a program is unable to display a file's content. For example, an executable file is not meant to be displayed by a text editor and so is indecipherable on screen.

garbage collection *n.* A process for automatic recovery of heap memory. Blocks of memory that had been allocated but are no longer in use are freed, and blocks of memory still in use may be moved to consolidate the free memory into larger blocks. Some programming languages require the programmer to handle garbage collection. Others, such as Java, perform this task for the programmer. *See also* heap (definition 1).

garbage in, garbage out *n.* A computing axiom meaning that if the data put into a process is incorrect, the data output by the process will also be incorrect. *Acronym:* GIGO.

gas-discharge display *n.* A type of flat-panel display, used on some portable computers, containing neon between a horizontal and a vertical set of electrodes. When one electrode in each set is charged, the neon glows (as in a neon lamp) where the two electrodes intersect, representing a pixel. *Also called:* gas-plasma display. *See also* flat-panel display, pixel.

gas-plasma display *n.* *See* gas-discharge display.

gate *n.* 1. An electronic switch that is the elementary component of a digital circuit. It produces an electrical output signal that represents a binary 1 or 0 and is related to the states of one or more input signals by an operation of Boolean logic, such as AND, OR, or NOT. *Also called:* logic gate. *See also* gate array. 2. The input terminal of a field-effect transistor (FET). *Also called:* gate electrode. *See also* drain (definition 1), FET, MOSFET, source (definition 2). 3. A data structure used by 80386 and higher microprocessors to control access to privileged functions, to change data segments, or to switch tasks.

gate array *n.* A special type of chip that starts out as a nonspecific collection of logic gates. Late in the manufacturing process, a layer is added to connect the gates for a specific function. By changing the pattern of connections, the manufacturer can make the chip suitable for many needs. This process is very popular because it saves both design and manufacturing time. The drawback is that much of the chip goes unused. *Also called:* application-specific integrated circuit, logic array.

gated *adj.* 1. Transmitted through a gate to a subsequent electronic logic element. 2. Transmitted through a gateway to a subsequent network or service. For example, a mailing list on BITNET may be gated to a newsgroup on the Internet.

gate electrode *n.* *See* gate (definition 2).

gateway *n.* A device that connects networks using different communications protocols so that information can be passed from one to the other. A gateway both transfers information and converts it to a form compatible with the protocols used by the receiving network. *Compare* bridge.

gateway page *n.* *See* doorway page.

gating circuit *n.* An electronic switch whose output is either on or off, depending on the state of two or more inputs. For example, a gating circuit may be used to pass or not pass an input signal, depending on the states of one or more control signals. A gating circuit can be constructed from one or more logic gates. *See also* gate (definition 1).

gated *vb.* To have been the victim of a hijackware program that seized control of an Internet shopping or surfing experience and caused the victim's browser to display ads and Web sites chosen by the program. Users may be

continuing through referrals to name servers at lower levels of the hierarchy, the DNS is able to match a “friendly” Internet address, such as microsoft.com, with its numerical counterpart, the IP address. Root servers thus contain the data needed for referrals to name servers at the highest level of the hierarchy. There are 13 root servers in the world, located in the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Japan. *Also called:* root name server. *See also* DNS (definition 1), DNS server, top-level domain.

root web *n.* The default, top-level web provided by a Web server. To access the root web, you supply the URL of the server without specifying a page name or subweb.

ROT13 encryption *n.* A simple encryption method in which each letter is replaced with the letter of the alphabet 13 letters after the original letter, so that A is replaced by N, and so forth; N, in turn, is replaced by A, and Z is replaced by M. ROT13 encryption is not used to protect messages against unauthorized readers; rather, it is used in newsgroups to encode messages that a user may not want to read, such as sexual jokes or spoilers. Some newsreaders can automatically perform ROT13 encryption and decryption at the touch of a key.

rotary dialing *n.* The signaling system used in telephones with rotary dials, in which each digit is associated with a set number of pulses. During dialing, these pulses, which are audible as series of clicks, momentarily turn the current in the telephone wires on and off. *Also called:* pulse dialing. *Compare* touch tone dialing.

rotate *vb.* 1. To turn a model or other graphical image so that it is viewed at a different angle. 2. To move bits in a register to the left or to the right. The bit that moves out of the end position rotates to the newly vacated position at the opposite end of the register. *Compare* shift.

rotational delay *n.* The time required for a desired disk sector to rotate to the read/write head. *Also called:* rotational latency.

rotational latency *n.* *See* rotational delay.

RO terminal *n.* Short for read-only terminal. A terminal that can receive data but cannot send data. Nearly all printers can be classified as RO terminals.

ROTFL *n.* *See* ROFL.

round *vb.* To shorten the fractional part of a number, increasing the last remaining (rightmost) digit or not, according to whether the deleted portion was over or

under five. For example, 0.3333 rounded to two decimal places is 0.33, and 0.6666 is 0.67. Computer programs often round numbers, sometimes causing confusion when the resulting values do not add up “correctly.” Percentages in a spreadsheet can thus total 99 percent or 101 percent because of rounding.

round robin *n.* A sequential, cyclical allocation of resources to more than one process or device.

roundtripping *n.* The process of converting files from one format to another for viewing or editing and then converting the files back to the original format again. In some cases, roundtripping can involve repeated conversions of the file from one format to another and back. Frequent roundtripping may be a concern because each conversion has the potential to introduce unwanted changes to the file.

routable protocol *n.* A communications protocol that is used to route data from one network to another by means of a network address and a device address. TCP/IP is an example of a routable protocol.

router *n.* An intermediary device on a communications network that expedites message delivery. On a single network linking many computers through a mesh of possible connections, a router receives transmitted messages and forwards them to their correct destinations over the most efficient available route. On an interconnected set of LANs (local area networks)—including those based on differing architectures and protocols—using the same communications protocols, a router serves the somewhat different function of acting as a link between LANs, enabling messages to be sent from one to another. *See also* bridge, gateway.

routine *n.* Any section of code that can be invoked (executed) within a program. A routine usually has a name (identifier) associated with it and is executed by referencing that name. Related terms (which may or may not be exact synonyms, depending on the context) are *function*, *procedure*, and *subroutine*. *See also* function (definition 3), procedure, subroutine.

routing *n.* The process of forwarding packets between networks from source to destination. *See also* dynamic routing, static routing.

Routing Information Protocol *n.* *See* RIP (definition 1).

routing table *n.* In data communications, a table of information that provides network hardware (bridges and routers) with the directions needed to forward packets of data to locations on other networks. The information contained