



RANDOM HOUSE WEBSTER'S

**COMPUTER
& INTERNET
DICTIONARY**

Third Edition

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**Random House
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Random House Webster's Computer & Internet Dictionary, Third Edition

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Web is *Secure HTTP (S-HTTP)*. Whereas SSL creates a secure connection between a client and a server, over which any amount of data can be sent securely, S-HTTP is designed to transmit individual messages securely. SSL and S-HTTP, therefore, can be seen as complementary rather than competing technologies. Both protocols have been submitted to the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) for approval as a standard.

⇒ See also DIGITAL CERTIFICATE; DIGITAL SIGNATURE; IETF; IPSEC; S-HTTP; SECURITY; X.509.

ST-412 interface Same as ST-506 INTERFACE.

ST-506 interface An old standard interface for connecting hard disk drives to PCs. Newer standards, such as enhanced IDE and SCSI, support faster data transfer rates.

ST-506 is sometimes referred to as *MFM*, which is the most prevalent encoding scheme used on ST-506 disk drives. ST-506 also supports the RLL encoding format.

⇒ See also HARD DISK; IDE INTERFACE; INTERFACE; MFM; RLL; SCSI.

stack 1. In programming, a special type of data structure in which items are removed in the reverse order from that in which they are added, so the most recently added item is the first one removed. This is also called *last-in, first-out (LIFO)*.

Adding an item to a stack is called *pushing*. Removing an item from a stack is called *popping*. **2.** In networking, short for *protocol stack*. **3.** In Apple Computer's HyperCard software system, a stack is a collection of cards.

⇒ See also DATA STRUCTURE; HEAP.

stand-alone Refers to a device that is self-contained, one that does not require any other devices to function. For example, a fax machine is a stand-alone device because it does not require a computer, printer, modem, or other device. A printer, on the other hand, is not a stand-alone device because it requires a computer to feed it data.

⇒ See also FAX MACHINE.

standard A definition or format that has been approved by a recognized standards organization or is accepted as a de facto standard by the industry. Standards exist for programming languages, operating systems, data formats, communications protocols, and electrical interfaces.

From a user's standpoint, standards are extremely important in the computer industry because they allow the combination of products from different manufacturers to create a customized system. Without standards, only hardware and software from the same company could be used together. In addition, standard user interfaces can make it much easier to learn how to use new applications.

Most official computer standards are set by one of the following organizations:

- ANSI (American National Standards Institute)
- CCITT (Comité Consultatif Internationale Télégraphique et Téléphonique)
- IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers)
- ISO (International Organization for Standardization)
- VESA (Video Electronics Standards Association)

IEEE sets standards for most types of electrical interfaces. Its most famous standard is probably RS-232C, which defines an interface for serial communication. This is the interface used by most modems, and a number of other devices, including display screens and mice. IEEE is also responsible for designing floating-point data formats.

While IEEE is generally concerned with hardware, ANSI is primarily concerned with software. ANSI has defined standards for a number of programming languages, including C, COBOL, and FORTRAN.

CCITT defines international standards, particularly communications protocols. It has defined a number of standards, including V.22, V.32, V.34, and V.42, that specify protocols for transmitting data over telephone lines.

In addition to standards approved by organizations, there are also de facto standards. These are formats that have become standard simply because a large number of companies have agreed to use them. They have not been formally approved as standards, but they are standards nonetheless. PostScript is a good example of a de facto standard.

⇒ See also ACM; ANSI; ARCHITECTURE; CCITT; COMPATIBLE; DE FACTO STANDARD; ELECTRONIC INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION (EIA); IEEE; IETF; INTERNET SOCIETY; ISO; ITU; OPEN ARCHITECTURE; SAA; VESA.

Standard Generalized Markup Language See SGML.

standard input The place from which input comes unless you specify a different input device. The standard input device is usually the keyboard.

⇒ See also INPUT.

standard output The place where output goes unless you specify a different output device. The standard output device is usually the display screen.

⇒ See also OUTPUT.

star network A local-area network (LAN) that uses a star topology in which all nodes are connected to a central computer. The main advantages of a star network is that one malfunctioning node doesn't affect the rest of the network, and it's easy to add and remove nodes. The main disadvantage of star networks is that they require more cabling than other topologies, such as a bus or ring networks. In addition, if the cen-