



Dictionary of Computer and Internet Terms

Fourth Edition



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- More than 5,200 key terms defined and explained, many with helpful illustrations and tables
 - Technical problems for the home user solved, such as installing computer networks, fax, and e-mail
 - Computer science principles and programming examples in the most widely used computer languages
 - Includes maps, audio, digital photography and more, Internet culture, and humor
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Douglas Downing, Ph.D., Michael Cunningham, Ph.D., and
Betty Madden Thompson

Dictionary of Computer and Internet Terms

Tenth Edition

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CONTENTS

About the Authors	ii
To the Reader	iv
Dictionary of Computer and Internet Terms	1
Numbers	1
Greek Letters	5
A	7
B	38
C	71
D	124
E	159
F	185
G	211
H	223
I	242
J	264
K	272
L	276
M	296
N	322
O	336
P	349
Q	389
R	392
S	421
T	468
U	498
V	510
W	521
X	538
Y	543
Z	545
Visual Dictionary of Characters and Symbols	547
Country Codes for Top-Level Domains	552

Altair a pioneering microcomputer marketed to hobbyists in 1975, significant because the version of BASIC for this machine was the first Microsoft product.

AltaVista a popular World Wide Web SEARCH ENGINE originally developed by Digital Equipment Corporation. Their web address is www.altavista.com.

aluminum chemical element (atomic number 13) added to silicon to create a P-type SEMICONDUCTOR.

Amazon.com the first prominent E-TAIL merchant. Established as a bookstore in 1995 in Seattle, Washington, Amazon has since expanded to sell a wide variety of products around the world. Web address: www.amazon.com

ambient lighting (in three-dimensional computer graphics) the overall lighting of a scene. Ambient lighting in a computer scene appears to have no specific source.

AMD (Advanced Micro Devices) a manufacturer of digital integrated circuits, including the Athlon and Duron, which are compatible substitutes for Intel's Pentium. AMD is headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, and can be reached on the Web at www.amd.com. *See also* MICROPROCESSOR; PENTIUM.

AMD64 *see* X64.

America Online (AOL) an online information service based in Dulles, Virginia. America Online offers its subscribers e-mail, conferencing, software, computing support, interactive magazines and newspapers, online classes, and Internet access. In 2000, AOL merged with Time Warner. Web address: www.aol.com. *See* INTERNET; ONLINE (usage note).

AMI (American Megatrends, Inc.) the leading supplier of the BIOS software built into PC motherboards (*see* BIOS). AMI also makes diagnostic software, RAID disk array controllers, and other products. The company is headquartered in Norcross, Georgia (a suburb of Atlanta), and can be reached on the Web at www.ami.com.

Amiga a computer marketed by Commodore Business Machines in the 1980s to mid-90s. Similar in size and cost to the IBM PC, it had a quite different architecture and was ahead of its time in many ways, offering multitasking, windowing, an advanced graphics system, and MIDI music. Like the Macintosh, it used Motorola 68000-series microprocessors.

Despite being admired by knowledgeable programmers, the Amiga never achieved the popularity of the PC or Macintosh. Although Commodore went bankrupt in 1994, a new company named Amiga continued development on the Amiga platform (web address: www.amiga.com).