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Dedication

For my daughter, Claire.

—B.H.

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quality assurance (QA) (n.) A discipline that addresses all business activities with the intention of improving procedures and outcomes and that submits production results to a stringent testing regimen.

quality of service (QoS) (n.) A measure of performance for a telecommunications system that reflects the integrity of transmission and the availability of the service.

quantization (n.) In video compression, a process that attempts to determine what information can be discarded safely without a significant loss in visual fidelity. Quantization uses DCT coefficients and provides many-to-one mapping. The quantization process is inherently lossy because of the many-to-one mapping process.

quantization error (n.) Inaccuracies in data resulting from the process of quantizing an analog waveform to a discrete level. The more data used to define a waveform, the lower the propensity for errors.

quantize (v.) In digitizing audio or video, to measure the amplitude of a sample at regular intervals to establish a representative numerical value to encode. Other steps in analog-to-digital (A/D) conversion are sampling and encoding.

quantum (n.) A small, indivisible piece of energy.

Quarter CIF (QCIF) (n.) Quarter Common Intermediate Format; video frame specification in the ITU-T H.261 standard that calls for a resolution of 176 x 144 pixels. This is approximately one-fourth the size of CIF, and demands a proportionally smaller bandwidth for delivery.

Quarter-Inch Committee (QIC) (n.) Industry association that establishes standards for 0.25-inch wide tape backup units.

quarter-inch jack (n.) Synonymous with 0.25-inch phone jack, a female audio connector.

query 1. (v.) To request information from a database. **2. (n.)** The request itself for particular information contained in a database.

Query Interface (QI) (n.) A database system that client programs can access in order to read or edit content.

queue (n.) In computing, a series of tasks or operations waiting to be performed.

queuing (n.) In telecommunications, a feature that allows calls or packets to be held up, or delayed, at the origination switch while waiting for a channel to become available.

QuickDraw (n.) A set of software routines that a Macintosh uses to display graphics.

QuickTime (n.) Cross-platform system-level software developed by Apple Computer in 1991 that manages the playback of all types of digital media. It is implemented as a set of extensions on the Macintosh platform and a dynamic-link library (DLL) for Windows that integrates video, still images, animated images (sprites), vector graphics, multiple sound channels, MIDI files, 3D objects, virtual reality objects, panoramas and text across applications. QuickTime provides a method for manipulating streaming media according to time lines, maintaining synchronization between video and audio. The Movie Player is the desktop application that plays QuickTime files.

The format does not restrict the size of the