

F. Woeg

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**Technical Editors:** Dail Magee Jr., Gary Nelson, Jean Ross, Jim Fuchs, John Conrow, Kurt Meyer, Robert Lyon, Roslyn Lutsch

instead of by passing sequentially through all storage areas. For example, a disk drive is a DASD, but a tape unit is not, because, with a tape unit, the data is stored as a linear sequence. *See also* direct access. *Compare* sequential access.

**.dat** \dot-dat, dot`D-A-T\ *n.* A generic file extension for a data file.

**DAT** \dat, D`A-T\ *n.* *See* digital audio tape, dynamic address translation.

**data** \dā`tə, dat`ə\ *n.* Plural of the Latin *datum*, meaning an item of information. In practice, *data* is often used for the singular as well as the plural form of the noun. *Compare* information.

**data acquisition** \dā`tə a-kwə-zí`shən, dat`ə\ *n.* The process of obtaining data from another source, usually one outside a specific system.

**data aggregate** \dā`tə a`grə-gət, dat`ə\ *n.* A collection of data records. It usually includes a description of the placement of the data blocks and their relation to the entire set.

**data attribute** \dā`tə a`tri-byū`dət, dat`ə\ *n.* Structural information about data that describes its context and meaning.

**data bank** \dā`tə bank, dat`ə\ *n.* Any substantial collection of data.

**database** \dā`tə-bās\ *n.* A file composed of records, each containing fields together with a set of operations for searching, sorting, recombining, and other functions.

**database administrator** \dā`tə-bās əd-min`-əs-trā-tər\ *n.* One who manages a database. The administrator determines the content, internal structure, and access strategy for a database, defines security and integrity, and monitors performance. *Acronym:* DBA (D`B-A). *Also called* database manager.

**database analyst** \dā`tə-bās an`ə-list\ *n.* One who provides the analytic functions needed to design and maintain applications requiring a database.

**database designer** \dā`tə-bās də-zī`nər\ *n.* One who designs and implements functions required for applications that use a database.

**database engine** \dā`tə-bās en`jən\ *n.* The program module or modules that provide access to a database management system (DBMS).

**database machine** \dā`tə-bās mə-shēn`\ *n.* **1.** A peripheral that executes database tasks, thereby relieving the main computer from performing

them. **2.** A database server that performs only database tasks.

**database management system** \dā`tə-bās man`əj-mənt sī`stəm\ *n.* A software interface between the database and the user. A database management system handles user requests for database actions and allows for control of security and data integrity requirements. *Acronym:* DBMS (D`B-M-S). *Also called* database manager. *See also* database engine.

**database manager** \dā`tə-bās man`ə-jər\ *n.* *See* database administrator, database management system.

**database publishing** \dā`tə-bās pu`blē-shēng\ *n.* The use of desktop publishing or Internet technology to produce reports containing information obtained from a database.

**database server** \dā`tə-bās sər`vər\ *n.* A network node, or station, dedicated to storing and providing access to a shared database. *Also called* database machine.

**database structure** \dā`tə-bās struk`chur\ *n.* A general description of the format of records in a database, including the number of fields, specifications regarding the type of data that can be entered in each field, and the field names used.

**data bit** \dā`tə bit, dat`ə\ *n.* In asynchronous communications, one of a group of from 5 to 8 bits that represents a single character of data for transmission. Data bits are preceded by a start bit and followed by an optional parity bit and one or more stop bits. *See also* asynchronous transmission, bit, communications parameter.

**data buffer** \dā`tə buf`ər, dat`ə\ *n.* An area in memory where data is temporarily stored while being moved from one location to another. *See also* buffer<sup>1</sup>.

**data bus** \dā`tə bus, dat`ə\ *n.* *See* bus.

**data cable** \dā`tə kā`bl, dat`ə\ *n.* Fiber-optic or wire cable used to transfer data from one device to another.

**data capture** \dā`tə kap`chur, dat`ə\ *n.* **1.** The collection of information at the time of a transaction. **2.** The process of saving on a storage medium a record of interchanges between a user and a remote information utility.

**data carrier** \dā`tə kār`ē-er, dat`ə\ *n.* *See* carrier (definition 1).

**real-time** \rēl'tīm\ *adj.* Of or relating to a time frame imposed by external constraints. Real-time operations are those in which the machine's activities match the human perception of time or those in which computer operations proceed at the same rate as a physical or external process. Real-time operations are characteristic of aircraft guidance systems, transaction-processing systems, scientific applications, and other areas in which a computer must respond to situations as they occur (for example, animating a graphic in a flight simulator or making corrections based on measurements).

**real-time animation** \rēl'tīm an-ə-mā'shən\ *n.* Computer animation in which images are computed and updated on the screen at the same rate at which the objects simulated might move in the real world. Real-time animation allows dynamic involvement by the user because the computer can accept and incorporate keystrokes or controller movements as it is drawing the next image in the animation sequence. Arcade-style animation (such as in a flight simulator program) makes use of real-time animation in translating game plays into on-screen actions. In contrast, in animation done in virtual time, image frames are first calculated and stored and later replayed at a higher rate to achieve smoother movement. *See also* animation, bit block.

**real-time clock** \rēl'tīm klok\ *n.* *See* clock (definition 2).

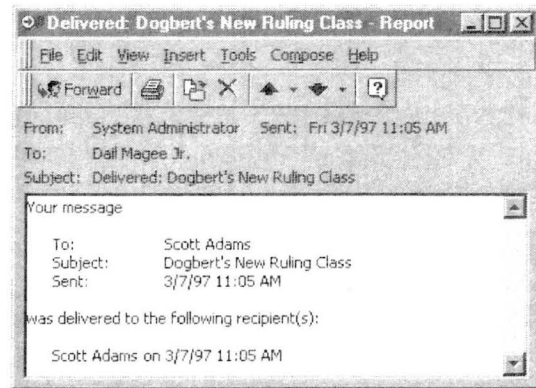
**real-time conferencing** \rēl'tīm kon'frən-sēng\ *n.* *See* teleconferencing.

**real-time operating system** \rēl'tīm op'ər-ā-tēng sī'stəm\ *n.* An operating system designed or optimized for the needs of a process-control environment. *See also* real-time system.

**real-time system** \rēl'tīm sī'stəm\ *n.* A computer and/or a software system that reacts to events before the events become obsolete. For example, airline collision avoidance systems must process radar input, detect a possible collision, and warn air traffic controllers or pilots while they still have time to react.

**reboot** \rē-bōōt\ *vb.* To restart a computer by reloading the operating system. *See also* boot<sup>2</sup>, cold boot, warm boot.

**receipt notification** \rə-sēt' nō-tə-fə-kā'shən\ *n.* An e-mail feature providing feedback to the sender that a message has been received by the recipient. *See* the illustration.



#### **Receipt notification.**

**receive** \rə-sēv\ *vb.* To accept data from an external communications system, such as a local area network (LAN) or a telephone line, and store the data as a file.

**Receive Data** \rə-sēv` dā`tə, dat`ə\ *n.* *See* RXD.

**rec. newsgroups** \rek'dot-nōōz`grōōps\ *n.* Usenet newsgroups that are part of the rec. hierarchy and whose names have the prefix "rec." These newsgroups cover topics devoted to discussions of recreational activities, hobbies, and the arts. *See also* newsgroup, traditional newsgroup hierarchy, Usenet. *Compare* comp. newsgroups, misc. newsgroups, news. newsgroups, sci. newsgroups, soc. newsgroups, talk. newsgroups.

**recompile** \rē-kəm-pīl\ *vb.* To compile a program again, usually because of changes that needed to be made in the source code in response to error messages generated by the compiler. *See also* compile.

**record**<sup>1</sup> \rek'ərd\ *n.* A data structure that is a collection of fields (elements), each with its own name and type. Unlike an array, whose elements all represent the same type of information and are accessed using an index, the elements of a record represent different types of information and are accessed by name. A record can be accessed as a collective unit of elements, or the elements can be accessed individually. *See also* array, data structure, type<sup>1</sup> (definition 1).

**record**<sup>2</sup> \rə-kōrd\ *vb.* To retain information, usually in a file.

**record format** \rek'ərd fōr'mat\ *n.* *See* record structure.

**record head** \rə-kōrd' hed\ *n.* The device in a tape machine that places data on the tape. In some