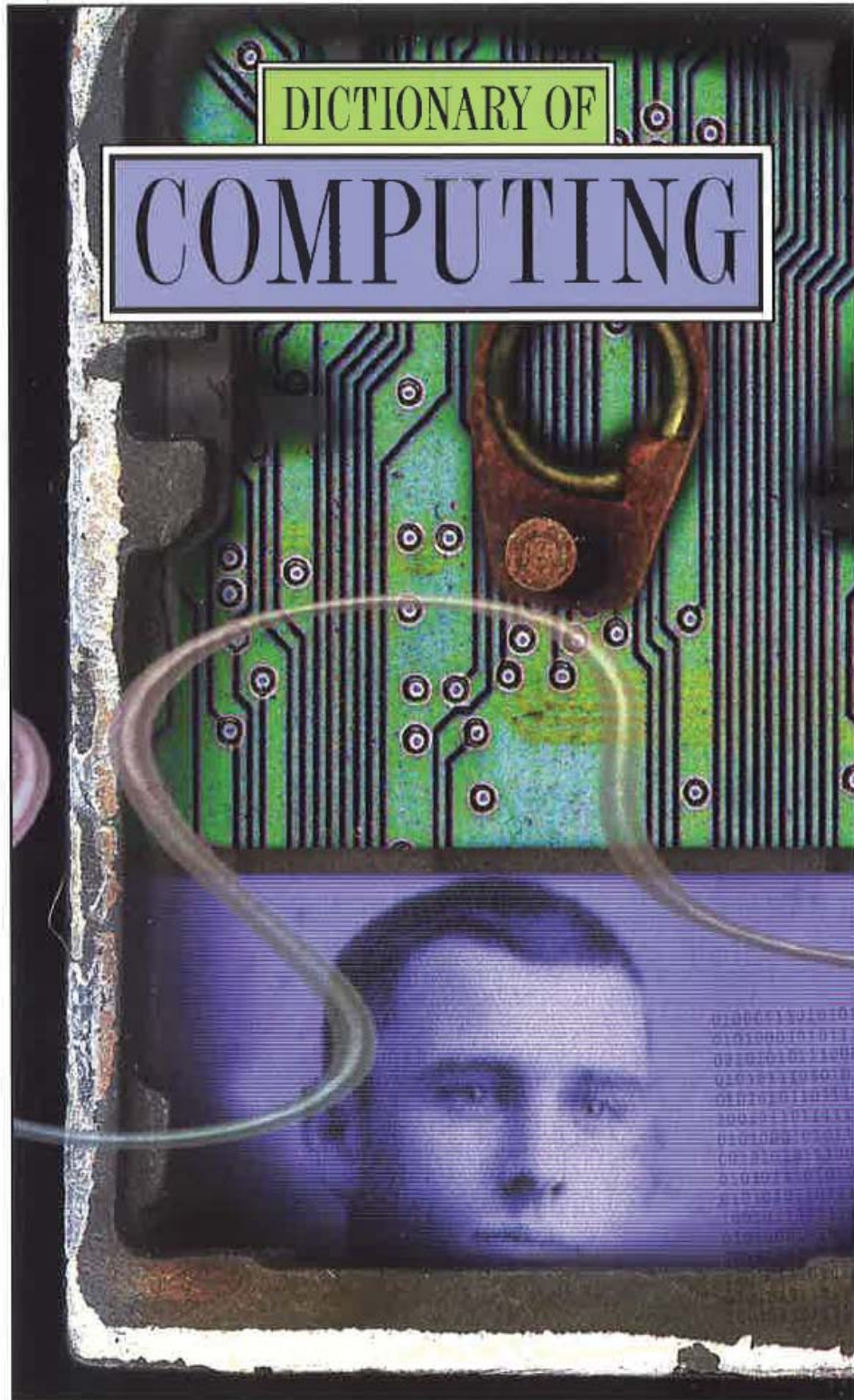


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ed, it immediately becomes the destination of the merge operations from the nonexhausted and previous-destination files. When there is only one file left the process stops. The repeated merging is referred to as *polyphase merging*.

PON *Abbrev. for passive optical network.*

pooling block An area of memory used to contain many short records that are to be transferred to or from a device for which the access time is long compared with the actual transfer time. *See also* buffer.

pop *See* stack.

PoP *Acronym for point of presence.* An access point to the Internet, either the geographical location or, as a technical term, the equipment that supports the Internet access hardware and software.

POP *Acronym for post office protocol.* The protocol that defines the communication between a utility that can accept electronic mail on behalf of a user, holding it until such time as the user wishes to recover the messages. *See* message store.

POP-2 A programming language developed by the University of Edinburgh (UK) for research in *artificial intelligence. POP-2 provided the facility to manipulate the linked data structures characteristic of *LISP, but retained a more familiar procedural structure, and was thus more accessible to programmers raised in the Algol environment of the time. *POP-11 is a modern version of POP-2.

POP-11 A programming language for artificial intelligence that claims to combine *LISP and *POP-2.

P operation (down operation) *See* semaphore.

POPL *Acronym for Principles of Programming Languages.* Title of an annual conference organized by the *ACM at which the results of much research in programming languages are announced.

POPLOG A programming environment combining *POP-11 and *Prolog.

population *See* sampling.

pop-up menu A *menu that appears on the

POSITION-INDEPENDENT CODE

display when the user changes the state of a *button or makes a selection from a *menu bar. The menu item is selected by pointing to the desired entry before changing the button state back to the original state.

pop-up program A program that is permanently resident in memory and “pops up” onto the screen at the touch of a key. The concept has been largely superseded by the advent of *graphical user interfaces, where any program can be made to “pop up”.

port L (I/O port) A connection point with associated control circuitry that allows I/O devices to be connected to the internal bus of a microprocessor. *See also* parallel port, serial port, communication port.

2. A point through which data can enter or leave a *network, either on the network or the *DTE (computer) interface.

3. To move software from one type of computer system to another, making any necessary changes en route. In a simple case little more than recompilation may be required, while in extreme cases the software might have to be entirely rewritten.

portable 1. *Another word for* machine-independent.

2. A word applied to software that can readily be transferred to other machines, although not actually *machine-independent.

3. A computer that can be simply carried from one place to another by one person. They cannot necessarily be used in transit. Examples include *laptop and *notebook computers.

POS *Abbrev. for point of sale. See* point-of-sale system.

poset *Short for* partially ordered set. *See* partial ordering.

POS expression *Short for* product of sums expression.

positional system *See* number system.

position-independent code Program code that can be placed anywhere in memory, since all memory references are made relative to the *program counter. Position-independent code can be moved at any time, unlike *relocatable code, which can be loaded anywhere