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Computer Dictionary

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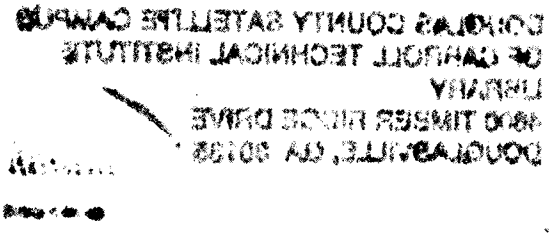

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gramming element is the procedure (a named sequence of statements, such as a routine, subroutine, or function). The most widely used high-level languages (C, Pascal, Basic, FORTRAN, COBOL, Ada) are all procedural languages. *See also* procedure. *Compare* nonprocedural language.

procedural rendering \prə-sē`jər-əl ren´dər-ēng\ *n.* The rendering of a two-dimensional image from three-dimensional coordinates with texturing according to user-specified conditions, such as direction and degree of lighting.

procedure \prə-sē´jər\ *n.* In a program, a named sequence of statements, often with associated constants, data types, and variables, that usually performs a single task. A procedure can usually be called (executed) by other procedures, as well as by the main body of the program. Some languages distinguish between a procedure and a function, with the latter (the function) returning a value. *See also* function, parameter, procedural language, routine, subroutine.

procedure call \prə-sē´jər käl`\ *n.* In programming, an instruction that causes a procedure to be executed. A procedure call can be located in another procedure or in the main body of the program. *See also* procedure.

process[1] \pros´es\ *n.* A program or part of a program; a coherent sequence of steps undertaken by a program.

process[2] \pros´es\ *vb.* To manipulate data with a program.

process-bound \pros´es-bound`\ *adj.* Limited in performance by processing requirements. *See also* computation-bound.

process color \pros´es kəl`ər\ *n.* A method of handling color in a document in which each block of color is separated into its subtractive primary color components for printing: cyan, magenta, and yellow (as well as black). All other colors are created by blending layers of various sizes of halftone spots printed in cyan, magenta, and yellow to create the image. *See also* color model, color separation (definition 1). *Compare* spot color.

processing \pros´es-ēng\ *n.* The manipulation of data within a computer system. Processing is the vital step between receiving data (input) and producing results (output)—the task for which computers are designed.

processor \pros´es-ər\ *n. See* central processing unit, microprocessor.

Processor Direct Slot \pros`es-ər-dər-ekt` slot´\ *n.* See PDS (definition 1).

Prodigy Information Service \prod`ə-jē in-fər-mā´shən sər`vəs\ *n.* An online information service founded by IBM and Sears. Like its competitors America Online and CompuServe, Prodigy offers access to databases and file libraries, online chat, special interest groups, e-mail, and Internet connectivity. *Also called* Prodigy.

product \prod´ukt\ *n.* **1.** An operator in the relational algebra used in database management that, when applied to two existing relations (tables), results in the creation of a new table containing all possible ordered concatenations (combinations) of tuples (rows) from the first relation with tuples from the second. The number of rows in the resulting relation is the product of the number of rows in the two source relations. *Also called* Cartesian product. *Compare* inner join. **2.** In mathematics, the result of multiplying two or more numbers. **3.** In the most general sense, an entity conceived and developed for the purpose of competing in a commercial market. Although computers are products, the term is more commonly applied to software, peripherals, and accessories in the computing arena.

production system \prə-duk´shən si`stəm\ *n.* In expert systems, an approach to problem solving based on an "IF this, THEN that" approach that uses a set of rules, a database of information, and a "rule interpreter" to match premises with facts and form a conclusion. Production systems are also known as rule-based systems or inference systems. *See also* expert system.

Professional Graphics Adapter \prə-fesh`ə-nəl graf´iks ə-dap`tər\ *n.* A video adapter introduced by IBM, primarily for CAD applications. The Professional Graphics Adapter is capable of displaying 256 colors, with a horizontal resolution of 640 pixels and a vertical resolution of 480 pixels. *Acronym:* PGA (P`G-A´).

Professional Graphics Display \prə-fesh`ə-nəl graf´iks dis-plā`\ *n.* An analog display introduced by IBM, intended for use with their Professional Graphics Adapter. *See also* Professional Graphics Adapter.

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stateful handling of messages takes account of their content. *Compare* stateless.

stateless \stāt´ləs\ *adj.* Of or pertaining to a system or process that participates in an activity without monitoring all details of its state. For example, stateless handling of messages might take account of only their sources and destinations but not their content. *Compare* stateful.

statement \stāt´mənt\ *n.* The smallest executable entity within a programming language.

state-of-the-art \stāt´əv-dhē-ärt`\ *adj.* Up to date; at the forefront of current hardware or software technology.

.state.us \dot-stāt`dot-U-S´\ *n.* On the Internet, the major geographic domain specifying that an address belongs to a state government in the United States.

static[1] \stat´ik\ *adj.* In information processing, fixed or predetermined. For example, a static memory buffer remains invariant in size throughout program execution. The opposite condition is *dynamic,* or ever-changing.

static[2] \stat´ik\ *n.* In communications, a crackling noise caused by electrical interference with a transmitted signal. *See also* noise (definition 2).

static allocation \stat`ik al-ə-kā´shən\ *n.* Apportionment of memory that occurs once, usually when the program starts. The memory remains allocated during the program's execution and is not deallocated until the program is finished. *See also* allocate, deallocate. *Compare* dynamic allocation.

static binding \stat`ik bīn´dēng\ *n.* Binding (converting symbolic addresses in the program to storage-related addresses) that occurs during program compilation or linkage. *Also called* early binding. *Compare* dynamic binding.

static electricity \stat`ik ə-lek-tris´ə-tē, ē-lek-tris´ə-tē\ *n.* An electrical charge accumulated in an object. Although generally harmless to humans, the discharge of static electricity through an electronic circuit can cause severe damage to the circuit.

static RAM \stat`ik ram´, R-A-M´\ *n.* A form of semiconductor memory (RAM) based on the logic circuit known as a flip-flop, which retains information as long as there is enough power to run the device. Static RAMs are usually reserved for use in caches. *Acronym:* SRAM (S´ram, S`R-A-M´). *See also* cache, RAM. *Compare* dynamic RAM.

stationery[1] \stā´shə-nâr`ē\ *adj.* Describing a type of document that, when opened by the user, is duplicated by the system; the copy is opened for the user's modification while the original document remains intact. Stationery documents can be used as document templates or boilerplates. *See also* boilerplate, template (definition 5).

stationery[2] \stā´shə-nâr`ē\ *n.* A stationery document. *See also* stationery[1].

statistical multiplexer \stə-tis`tə-kəl mul´ti-plek-sər\ *n.* A multiplexing device that adds "intelligence" to time-division multiplexing by using buffering (temporary storage) and a microprocessor to combine transmission streams into a single signal and to allocate available bandwidth dynamically. *Also called* stat mux. *See also* dynamic allocation, multiplexing, time-division multiplexing.

statistics \stə-ti´stiks\ *n.* The branch of mathematics that deals with the relationships among groups of measurements and with the relevance of similarities and differences in those relationships. *See also* binomial distribution, Monte Carlo method, probability, regression analysis, standard deviation, stochastic.

stat mux \stat´muks\ *n. See* statistical multiplexer.

status \stat´us, stā´tus\ *n.* The condition at a particular time of any of numerous elements of computing—a device, a communications channel, a network station, a program, a bit, or other element—used to report on or to control computer operations.

status bar \stat´us bär`, stā´tus\ *n.* In Microsoft Windows, a space at the bottom of many program windows that contains a short text message about the current condition of the program. Some programs also display an explanation of the currently selected menu command in the status bar. See the illustration.

Status bar.

status codes \stat´us kōdz`, stā´tus\ *n.* Strings of digits or other characters that indicate the success or failure of some attempted action. Status codes were commonly used to report the results of early computer programs, but most software today uses words or graphics. Internet users, especially those

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