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# Computer Dictionary

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nications. The addition of SBC's Internet customer base made Prodigy the third largest ISP in the United States.

**Prodigy Information Service** *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** *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** *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** *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.

**Professional Graphics Display** *n.* An analog display introduced by IBM, intended for use with their Professional Graphics Adapter. *See also* Professional Graphics Adapter.

**profile**<sup>1</sup> *n.* *See* user profile.

**profile**<sup>2</sup> *vb.* To analyze a program to determine how much time is spent in different parts of the program during execution.

**profiler** *n.* A diagnostic tool for analyzing the run-time behavior of programs.

**Profiles for Open Systems Internetworking Technology** *n.* *See* POSIT.

**program**<sup>1</sup> *n.* A sequence of instructions that can be executed by a computer. The term can refer to the original source code or to the executable (machine language) version. *Also called:* software. *See also* program creation, routine, statement.

**program**<sup>2</sup> *vb.* To create a computer program, a set of instructions that a computer or other device executes to perform a series of actions or a particular type of work.

**program button** *n.* On a handheld device, a navigation control that is pressed to launch an application. *Also called:* application button.

**program card** *n.* *See* PC Card, ROM card.

**program cartridge** *n.* *See* ROM cartridge.

**program comprehension tool** *n.* A software engineering tool that facilitates the process of understanding the structure and/or functionality of computer applications. *Acronym:* PCT. *Also called:* software exploration tool.

**program counter** *n.* A register (small, high-speed memory circuit within a microprocessor) that contains the address (location) of the instruction to be executed next in the program sequence.

**program creation** *n.* The process of producing an executable file. Traditionally, program creation comprises three steps: (1) compiling the high-level source code into assembly language source code; (2) assembling the assembly language source code into machine-code object files; and (3) linking the machine-code object files with various data files, run-time files, and library files into an executable file. Some compilers go directly from high-level source to machine-code object, and some integrated development environments compress all three steps into a single command. *See also* assembler, compiler (definition 2), linker, program.

**program encapsulation** *n.* A method of dealing with programs with Year 2000 problems that entailed modifying the data with which a program worked. The input data is modified to reflect a parallel date in the past that the program can handle. When output is generated, that data is changed again, to reflect the correct date. The program itself remains unchanged.

**program file** *n.* A disk file that contains the executable portions of a computer program. Depending on its size and