

Internet Users' Glossary

Status of this Memo

This memo provides information for the Internet community. This memo does not specify an Internet standard of any kind. Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

Abstract

There are many networking glossaries in existence. This glossary concentrates on terms which are specific to the Internet. Naturally, there are entries for some basic terms and acronyms because other entries refer to them.

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Glossary

10Base2

A physical layer communications specification for 10Mbps, baseband data transmission over a coaxial cable (Thinnet) with a maximum cable segment length of 200 meters.

10Base5

A physical layer communications specification for 10Mbps, baseband data transmission over a coaxial cable (Thicknet) with a maximum cable segment length of 500 meters.

10BaseF

A physical layer communications specification for 10Mbps, baseband data transmission over a fiber-optic cable.

10BaseT

A physical layer communications specification for 10Mbps, baseband data transmission over a twisted-pair copper wire.

802.x

The set of IEEE standards for the definition of LAN protocols.
See also: IEEE.

822

See: [RFC 822](#)

:-)

This odd symbol is one of the ways a person can portray "mood" in the very flat medium of computers--by using "smiley faces". This is "metacommunication", and there are literally hundreds of such symbols, from the obvious to the obscure. This particular example expresses "happiness". Don't see it? Tilt your head to the left 90 degrees. Smiles are also used to denote sarcasm.
[Source: ZEN]

abstract syntax

A description of a data structure that is independent of machine-oriented structures and encodings.
[Source: [RFC1208](#)]

Abstract Syntax Notation One (ASN.1)

The language used by the OSI protocols for describing abstract syntax. This language is also used to encode SNMP packets. ASN.1 is defined in ISO documents 8824.2 and 8825.2. See also: Basic Encoding Rules.

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Many transit networks have policies which restrict the use to which the network may be put. For example, some networks may only be used for non-commercial purposes. Some AUPs limit the type of material which can be made available to the public (e.g., pornographic material). Enforcement of AUPs varies with the network. See also: netiquette.

Access Control List (ACL)

Most network security systems operate by allowing selective use of services. An Access Control List is the usual means by which access to, and denial of, services is controlled. It is simply a list of the services available, each with a list of the hosts permitted to use the service.

ACK

See: Acknowledgment

acknowledgment (ACK)

A type of message sent to indicate that a block of data arrived at its destination without error. See also: Negative Acknowledgement.
[Source: NNSC]

ACL

See: Access Control List

AD

See: Administrative Domain

address

There are four types of addresses in common use within the Internet. They are email address; IP, internet or Internet address; hardware or MAC address; and URL. See also: email address, IP address, internet address, MAC address, Uniform Resource Locator.

address mask

A bit mask used to identify which bits in an IP address correspond to the network and subnet portions of the address. This mask is often referred to as the subnet mask because the network portion of the address (i.e., the network mask) can be determined by the encoding inherent in an IP address. See also: Classless Inter-domain Routing.

address resolution

Conversion of a network-layer address (e.g. IP address) into the corresponding physical address (e.g., MAC address). See also: IP address, MAC address.

Address Resolution Protocol (ARP)

Used to dynamically discover the low level physical network hardware address that corresponds to the high level IP address for a given host. ARP is limited to physical network systems that support broadcast packets that can be heard by all hosts on the network. See also: proxy ARP, Reverse Address Resolution Protocol.

Administrative Domain (AD)

A collection of hosts and routers, and the interconnecting network(s), managed by a single administrative authority.

Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA)

An agency of the U.S. Department of Defense responsible for the development of new technology for use by the military. ARPA (formerly known as DARPA, nee ARPA) was responsible for funding much of the development of the Internet we know today, including the Berkeley version of Unix and TCP/IP.

[Source: NNSC]

Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET)

A pioneering longhaul network funded by ARPA. Now retired, it served as the basis for early networking research as well as a central backbone during the development of the Internet. The ARPANET consisted of individual packet switching computers interconnected by leased lines. See also: Advanced Research Projects Agency.

[Source: FYI4]

agent

In the client-server model, the part of the system that performs information preparation and exchange on behalf of a client or server application.

[Source: RFC1208]

alias

A name, usually short and easy to remember, that is translated into another name, usually long and difficult to remember.

American National Standards Institute (ANSI)

This organization is responsible for approving U.S. standards in many areas, including computers and communications. Standards approved by this organization are often called ANSI standards

(e.g., ANSI C is the version of the C language approved by ANSI). ANSI is a member of ISO. See also: International Organization for Standardization.

[Source: NNSC]

American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII)

A standard character-to-number encoding widely used in the computer industry. See also: EBCDIC.

anonymous FTP

Anonymous FTP allows a user to retrieve documents, files, programs, and other archived data from anywhere in the Internet without having to establish a userid and password. By using the special userid of "anonymous" the network user will bypass local security checks and will have access to publicly accessible files on the remote system. See also: archive site, File Transfer Protocol, World Wide Web.

ANSI

See: American National Standards Institute

API

See: Application Program Interface

Appletalk

A networking protocol developed by Apple Computer for communication between Apple Computer products and other computers. This protocol is independent of the network layer on which it is run. Current implementations exist for Localtalk, a 235Kb/s local area network; and Ethertalk, a 10Mb/s local area network.

[Source: NNSC]

application

A program that performs a function directly for a user. FTP, mail and Telnet clients are examples of network applications.

application layer

The top layer of the network protocol stack. The application layer is concerned with the semantics of work (e.g. formatting electronic mail messages). How to represent that data and how to reach the foreign node are issues for lower layers of the network.

[Source: MALAMUD]

Application Program Interface (API)

A set of calling conventions which define how a service is invoked through a software package.

[Source: RFC1208]

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