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COMPUTER TERMS

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Compiled by

Donald Spencer



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database management 95

The raw material of information; individual pieces of quantitative information, such as dollar sales of carpets, numbers of building permits issued, or units of raw material on hand. Historically, data is a plural noun while datum is singular—a distinction now generally ignored in data processing terminology.

data acquisition The retrieval of data from remote sites initiated by a central computer system; the collection of data from external sensors.

data administrator See DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR.

data aggregate Any collection of data items within a record that is given a name and referred to as a whole, such as an array.

data bank (1) A comprehensive collection of libraries of data. (2) Loosely, a database.

database Most generally, any clearly identified collection of data, such as a telephone book or the card catalog at a library. In theory, a database should contain all its information in one central store or file, each record in the file containing roughly the same type of information, such as name, address, city, state, zip code, area code, and telephone number. Each of these categories is called a field, while a record consists of a set of fields pertaining to one person or item. The database file is made up of a number of related RECORDS. Some people differentiate between a data base (two words), meaning an underlying collection of data in the real world, and a database (single word), a coherent collection of data entered into a computer system. As applied to data in the computer, it particularly means data organized so that various programs can access and update the information.

database administrator The person responsible for the creation of the information system database and, once it is established, for maintaining its security and developing procedures for its recovery from disaster.

database analyst The key person in the analysis, design, and implementation of data structures in a database environment.

database environment That environment resulting from the integration of users, data, and systems by implementing the database.

database management The systematic approach to storing, updating, and retrieving of data items, usually in the form of records in a file, by