

# The Dictionary of Multimed Terms & Acronyms

Brad Han

comprehensive  
reference for  
digital media

*Appendices:*

- The World Wide We
- Standards Organiza
- Copyright Issues

**Dedication**  
*For my son, Graham.*

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**DDR** (n.) **D**igital **d**isk **r**ecorder; post-production studios often use DDRs to record frames of video or animation since they have hardware that is capable of capturing a large field of data at once. Abekas is a popular brand of DDR.

**DDS** (n.) **D**igital **d**ataphone **s**ervice; a telecommunications network that typically transmits synchronous data at 56 kilobits per second (Kbps) requiring special interface equipment at both ends.

**debug** (v.) To isolate and correct errors or malfunctions in computer software or hardware.

**DEC** (n.) **D**igital **E**quipment **C**orporation; makers of the VAX computer and VMS operating system.

**decibel** See *dB*.

**decimate** (v.) To discard portions of a signal for the purpose of reducing the amount of information to be encoded or compressed. Lossy compression algorithms ordinarily decimate while subsampling.

**decoder** (n.) Any hardware or software system that translates data streams into video or audio information.

**decompression** (n.) The process of restoring compressed data to its original condition.

**decrement** (v.) To decrease incrementally, or reduce by a single step.

**dedicated** (adj.) Describes any computing system that performs one function exclusively.

**default** (n.) The standard setting of an optional parameter. Factory defaults are the original settings for most equipment.

**defragment** (v.) To place all data on a hard disk in contiguous sectors, avoiding gaps between parts of a file or pieces of files spread geographically on the disk. When digitizing audio or video direct to disk, the disk must be defragmented so that a continuous stream of data may be recorded to the disk.

**degauss** (v.) To remove a magnetic field.

**delimiter** (n.) Any character or symbol that marks the beginning or end of a data segment.

**delivery system** (n.) The combined hardware and software used to present or play back media, whether it be audio, video, text, images, or a combination of data types, in an interactive environment.

**delta modulation** (n.) A process for the conversion of analog audio to digital form, similar to pulse code modulation (PCM). It is the sampling of an audio signal at 32 kilobits per second (Kbps) at 1-bit resolution, as opposed to creating eight each 8-bit samples per second in PCM at the rate of 64 Kbps.

**delta YUV** See *DYUV*.

averages the luma and chroma values at each corner of a polygon.

**GPF** (n.) General protection fault; an error message that occurs when software is trying to read or write memory that it does not own or have access to.

**gradient** (n.) A method of filling or shading an object that incorporates the blending of two different shades or patterns across the surface of the object.

**graphical user interface** See *GUI*.

**Graphic Interchange Format** See *GIF*.

**graphics** (n.) The visual content prepared for a production. Computer-generated letters, symbols and drawings, photographs, scans, slides, and all other still visuals belong to this broad category.

**graphics accelerator** (n.) A specialized circuit board that contains a coprocessor which enhances the graphical performance of a computer. It is inserted into an expansion slot and relieves the CPU from graphics processing.

**graphics input** (n.) The use of a peripheral, such as a drawing tablet, mouse, touch screen, or light pen to create or alter a graphics display.

**graphics input device** (n.) Any digitizer that feeds a computer x-y coordinates and in some cases, color data.

**graphics output device** (n.) Any device

that displays or records an image; monitors and printers are examples.

**graphics tablet** (n.) This type of drawing surface, often with pressure-sensitivity, feeds a computer data defining x-y coordinates from a hand-held input device, such as a light pen.

**grayscale** (adj.) In a computer graphic, the number of levels of gray that exist between black and white. With a minimum of 256 levels, the quality of a black-and-white photograph can be achieved.

**Green Book standard** See *CD-i*.

**grip** (n.) In a film or video production, the person who mounts or positions the camera according to the director's instructions. It may be mounted on a dolly, a crane, or on any other surface that provides a desirable camera angle.

**ground** See *GND*.

**guard band** (n.) A narrow bandwidth of dead space between two adjacent channels; space inserted between tracks of recorded material on audio or videotapes to prevent crosstalk between tracks.

**GUI** (n.) Graphical user interface; an environment in which icons represent objects that an operator can manipulate with a pointing device. Initially designed by Xerox, it serves as the basis for the Macintosh operating system and has been deployed in a similar context by Microsoft in Windows. See *user interface*.