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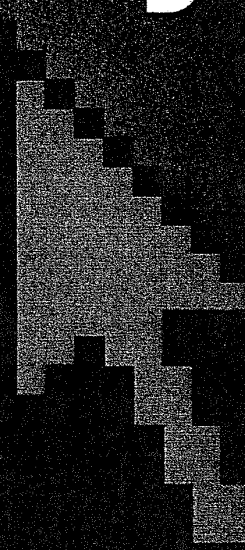
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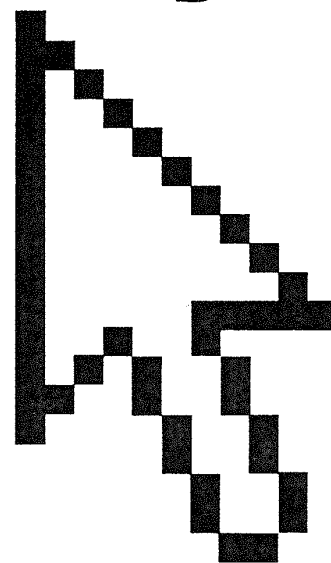


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InterNIC *n.* Short for NSFnet (**I**nternet) **N**etwork **I**nformation **C**enter. The organization that has traditionally registered domain names and IP addresses as well as distributed information about the Internet. InterNIC was formed in 1993 as a consortium involving the U.S. National Science Foundation, AT&T, General Atomics, and Network Solutions, Inc. (Herndon, Va.). The latter partner administers InterNIC Registration Services, which assigns Internet names and addresses.

interoperability *n.* Referring to components of computer systems that are able to function in different environments. For example, Microsoft's NT operating system is interoperable on Intel, DEC Alpha, and other CPUs. Another example is the SCSI standard for disk drives and other peripheral devices that allows them to interoperate with different operating systems. With software, interoperability occurs when programs are able to share data and resources. Microsoft Word, for example, is able to read files created by Microsoft Excel.

interpolate *vb.* To estimate intermediate values between two known values in a sequence.

interpret *vb.* **1.** To translate a statement or instruction into executable form and then execute it. **2.** To execute a program by translating one statement at a time into executable form and executing it before translating the next statement, rather than by translating the program completely into executable code (compiling it) before executing it separately. *See also* interpreter. *Compare* compile.

interpreted language *n.* A language in which programs are translated into executable form and executed one statement at a time rather than being translated completely (compiled) before execution. Basic, LISP, and APL are generally interpreted languages, although Basic can also be compiled. *See also* compiler. *Compare* compiled language.

interpreter *n.* A program that translates and then executes each statement in a program written in an interpreted language. *See also* compiler, interpreted language, language processor.

interprocess communication *n.* The ability of one task or process to communicate with another in a multitasking operating system. Common methods include pipes, semaphores, shared memory, queues, signals, and mailboxes. *Acronym:* IPC.

inter-record gap *n.* An unused space between data blocks stored on a disk or tape. Because the speed of disks

and tapes fluctuates slightly during operation of the drives, a new data block may not occupy the exact space occupied by the old block it overwrites. The inter-record gap prevents the new block from overwriting part of adjacent blocks in such a case. *Acronym:* IRG. *Also called:* gap, interblock gap.

interrogate *vb.* To query with the expectation of an immediate response. For example, a computer may interrogate an attached terminal to determine the terminal's status (readiness to transmit or receive).

interrupt *n.* A signal from a device to a computer's processor requesting attention from the processor. When the processor receives an interrupt, it suspends its current operations, saves the status of its work, and transfers control to a special routine known as an interrupt handler, which contains the instructions for dealing with the particular situation that caused the interrupt. Interrupts can be generated by various hardware devices to request service or report problems, or by the processor itself in response to program errors or requests for operating-system services. Interrupts are the processor's way of communicating with the other elements that make up a computer system. A hierarchy of interrupt priorities determines which interrupt request will be handled first if more than one request is made. A program can temporarily disable some interrupts if it needs the full attention of the processor to complete a particular task. *See also* exception, external interrupt, hardware interrupt, internal interrupt, software interrupt.

interrupt-driven processing *n.* Processing that takes place only when requested by means of an interrupt. After the required task has been completed, the CPU is free to perform other tasks until the next interrupt occurs. Interrupt-driven processing is usually employed for responding to events such as a key pressed by the user or a floppy disk drive that has become ready to transfer data. *See also* interrupt. *Compare* autopolling.

interrupt handler *n.* A special routine that is executed when a specific interrupt occurs. Interrupts from different causes have different handlers to carry out the corresponding tasks, such as updating the system clock or reading the keyboard. A table stored in low memory contains pointers, sometimes called vectors, that direct the processor to the various interrupt handlers. Programmers can create interrupt handlers to replace or supplement existing handlers,