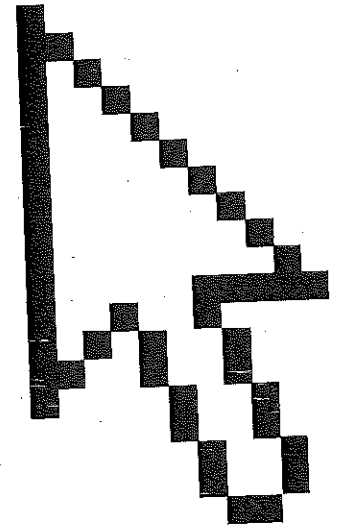


Microsoft

Microsoft

# Computer Dictionary

Fifth Edition



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**Acquisitions Editor:** Alex Blanton

**Project Editor:** Sandra Haynes

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ss, Class C IP

application processor

**application processor** *n.* A processor dedicated to a single application.

**application program** *n.* See application.

**application program interface.** *n.* See application programming interface.

**application programming interface** *n.* A set of routines used by an application program to direct the performance of procedures by the computer's operating system.  
*Acronym:* API. *Also called:* application program interface.

**application server** *n.* **1.** A server program on a computer in a distributed network that handles the business logic between users and backend business applications or databases. Application servers also can provide transaction management, failover, and load balancing. An application server is often viewed as part of a three-tier application consisting of a front-end GUI server such as an HTTP server (first tier), an application server (middle tier), and a backend database and transaction server (third tier). *Also called:* appserver. *Compare* HTTP server (definition 1). **2.** Any machine on which an application-server program is running. *Also called:* appserver.

**application service provider** *n.* A third-party company or organization that hosts applications or services for individuals or business customers. The customer connects to a data center maintained by the application service provider (ASP) through Internet or private lines to access applications that would otherwise need to be housed on the customer's local servers or individual PCs. This arrangement allows the customer to free up disk space that would otherwise be taken by applications, as well as to access the most recent software updates. ASPs deliver solutions ranging from high-end applications to services for small and medium-sized businesses. *Acronym:* ASP.

**application shortcut key** *n.* A key or combination of keys that when pressed will quickly perform an action within an application that would normally require several user actions, such as menu selections. *Also called:* keyboard shortcut.

**application software** *n.* See application.

**application-specific integrated circuit** *n.* See gate array.

**application suite** *n.* See suite (definition 1).

**appserver** *n.* See application server.

**Aqua** *n.* The graphical user interface (GUI) of Macintosh OS X. Aqua was designed to maintain familiarity and a comfort level for users of the earlier Macintosh system while allowing access to newer Macintosh OS X capabilities. The Aqua GUI features updated versions of Macintosh staples such as the Finder alongside new features like the Dock, a new type of organizational tool. *See also* Dock, Macintosh OS X.

**arbitration** *n.* A set of rules for resolving competing demands for a machine resource by multiple users or processes. *See also* contention.

**.arc** *n.* The file extension that identifies compressed archive files encoded using the Advanced RISC Computing Specification (ARC) format. *See also* compressed file.

**arcade game** *n.* **1.** A coin-operated computer game for one or more players that features high-quality screen graphics, sound, and rapid action. **2.** Any computer game designed to mimic the style of a coin-operated arcade game, such as games marketed for the home computer. *See also* computer game.

**Archie** *n.* An Internet utility for finding files in public archives obtainable by anonymous FTP. The master Archie server at McGill University in Montreal downloads FTP indexes from participating FTP servers, merges them into a master list, and sends updated copies of the master list to other Archie servers each day. Archie is a shortened form of *archive*. *See also* anonymous FTP, FTP<sup>1</sup> (definition 1). *Compare* Jughead, Veronica.

**Archie client** *n.* See Archie.

**Archie server** *n.* On the Internet, a server that contains Archie indexes to the names and addresses of files in public FTP archives. *See also* Archie, FTP<sup>1</sup> (definition 1), server (definition 2).

**architecture** *n.* **1.** The physical construction or design of a computer system and its components. *See also* cache, CISC, closed architecture, network architecture, open architecture, pipelining, RISC. **2.** The data-handling capacity of a microprocessor. **3.** The design of application software incorporating protocols and the means for expansion and interfacing with other programs.

**archive**<sup>1</sup> *n.* **1.** A tape or disk containing files copied from another storage device and used as backup storage. **2.** A compressed file. **3.** A file directory on the Internet that is

**IntelliSense** *n.* A Microsoft technology used in various Microsoft products, including Internet Explorer, Visual Basic, Visual Basic C++, and Office that is designed to help users perform routine tasks. In Visual Basic, for example, information such as the properties and methods of an object is displayed as the developer types the name of the object in the Visual Basic code window.

**Intensity Red Green Blue** *n.* See IRGB.

**interactive** *adj.* Characterized by conversational exchange of input and output, as when a user enters a question or command and the system immediately responds. The interactivity of microcomputers is one of the features that makes them approachable and easy to use.

**interactive fiction** *n.* A type of computer game in which the user participates in a story by giving commands to the system. The commands given by the user determine, to some extent, the events that occur during the story. Typically the story involves a goal that must be achieved, and the puzzle is to determine the correct sequence of actions that will lead to the accomplishment of that goal. See also adventure game.

**interactive graphics** *n.* A form of user interface in which the user can change and control graphic displays, often with the help of a pointing device such as a mouse or a joystick. Interactive graphics interfaces occur in a range of computer products, from games to computer-aided design (CAD) systems.

**interactive processing** *n.* Processing that involves the more or less continuous participation of the user. Such a command/response mode is characteristic of microcomputers. Compare batch processing (definition 2).

**interactive program** *n.* A program that exchanges output and input with the user, who typically views a display of some sort and uses an input device, such as a keyboard, mouse, or joystick, to provide responses to the program. A computer game is an interactive program. Compare batch program.

**interactive services** *n.* See BISDN.

**interactive session** *n.* A processing session in which the user can more or less continuously intervene and control the activities of the computer. Compare batch processing (definition 2).

**interactive television** *n.* A video technology in which a viewer interacts with the television programming. Typical uses of interactive television include Internet access, video

on demand, and video conferencing. See also video conferencing.

**interactive TV** *n.* See iTV.

**interactive video** *n.* The use of computer-controlled video, in the form of a CD-ROM or videodisc, for interactive education or entertainment. See also CD-ROM, interactive, interactive television, videodisc.

**interactive voice response** *n.* A computer that operates through the telephone system, in which input commands and data are transmitted to the computer as spoken words and numbers or tones and dial pulses generated by a telephone instrument; and output instructions and data are received from the computer as prerecorded or synthesized speech. For example, a dial-in service that provides airline flight schedules when you press certain key codes on your telephone is an interactive voice response system. Also called: IVR.

**interactive voice system** *n.* See interactive voice response.

**interapplication communication** *n.* The process of one program sending messages to another program. For example, some e-mail programs allow users to click on a URL within the message. After the user clicks on the URL, browser software will automatically launch and access the URL.

**interblock gap** *n.* See inter-record gap.

**Interchange File Format** *n.* See .iff.

**Interchange Format** *n.* See Rich Text Format.

**interconnect** *n.* 1. See System Area Network. 2. An electrical or mechanical connection. Interconnect is the physical connection and communication between two components in a computer system.

**interface** *n.* 1. The point at which a connection is made between two elements so that they can work with each other or exchange information. 2. Software that enables a program to work with the user (the user interface, which can be a command-line interface, menu-driven interface, or a graphical user interface), with another program such as the operating system, or with the computer's hardware. See also application programming interface, graphical user interface. 3. A card, plug, or other device that connects pieces of hardware with the computer so that information can be moved from place to place. For example, standardized interfaces such as RS-232-C standard and

## interface adapter

SCSI enable communications between computers and printers or disks. *See also* RS-232-C standard, SCSI.

**interface adapter** *n.* *See* network adapter.

**interface card** *n.* *See* adapter.

**Interface Definition Language** *n.* *See* IDL.

**interference** *n.* **1.** Noise or other external signals that affect the performance of a communications channel. **2.** Electromagnetic signals that can disturb radio or television reception. The signals can be generated naturally, as in lightning, or by electronic devices, such as computers.

**Interior Gateway Protocol** *n.* A protocol used for distributing routing information among routers (gateways) in an autonomous network—that is, a network under the control of one administrative body. The two most often used interior gateway protocols are RIP (Routing Information Protocol) and OSPF (Open Shortest Path First). *Acronym:* IGP. *See also* autonomous system, OSPF, RIP. *Compare* exterior gateway protocol.

**Interior Gateway Routing Protocol** *n.* *See* IGRP.

**Interix** *n.* A software application from Microsoft that allows businesses to run existing UNIX-based legacy applications while adding applications based on the Microsoft Windows operating system. Interix serves as a single enterprise platform from which to run UNIX-based, Internet-based, and Windows-based applications.

**interlaced** *adj.* Pertaining to a display method on raster-scan monitors in which the electron beam refreshes or updates all odd-numbered scan lines in one vertical sweep of the screen and all even-numbered scan lines in the next sweep. *Compare* noninterlaced.

**interlaced GIF** *n.* A picture in GIF format that is gradually displayed in a Web browser, showing increasingly detailed versions of the picture until the entire file has finished downloading. Users of slower modems have a perceived shorter wait time for the image to appear, and they can sometimes get enough information about the image to decide whether to proceed with the download or move on. Users with faster connections will notice little difference in effect between an interlaced GIF and a noninterlaced GIF.

**interlace scanning** *n.* A display technique designed to reduce flicker and distortions in television transmissions; also used with some raster-scan monitors. In interlace scanning the electron beam in the television or monitor refreshes alternate sets of scan lines in successive top-to-bottom sweeps, refreshing all even lines on one pass, and

## internal command

all odd lines on the other. Because of the screen phosphor's ability to maintain an image for a short time before fading and the tendency of the human eye to average or blend subtle differences in light intensity, the human viewer sees a complete display, but the amount of information carried by the display signal and the number of lines that must be displayed per sweep are halved. Interlaced images are not as clear as those produced by the progressive scanning typical of newer computer monitors. Interlace scanning is, however, the standard method of displaying analog broadcast television images. *Also called:* interlacing. *Compare* progressive scanning.

**interlacing** *n.* *See* interlace scanning.

**interleave** *vb.* To arrange the sectors on a hard disk in such a way that after one sector is read, the next sector in numeric sequence will arrive at the head when the computer is ready to accept it rather than before, which would make the computer wait a whole revolution of the platter for the sector to come back. Interleaving is set by the format utility that initializes a disk for use with a given computer.

**interleaved memory** *n.* A method of organizing the addresses in RAM memory in order to reduce wait states. In interleaved memory, adjacent locations are stored in different rows of chips so that after accessing a byte, the processor does not have to wait an entire memory cycle before accessing the next byte. *See also* access time (definition 1), wait state.

**interlock** *vb.* To prevent a device from acting while the current operation is in progress.

**intermediate language** *n.* **1.** A computer language used as an intermediate step between the original source language, usually a high-level language, and the target language, usually machine code. Some high-level compilers use assembly language as an intermediate language. *See also* compiler (definition 2), object code. **2.** *See* Microsoft intermediate language.

**intermittent** *adj.* Pertaining to something, such as a signal or connection, that is not unbroken but occurs at periodic or occasional intervals.

**intermittent error** *n.* An error that recurs at unpredictable times.

**internal clock** *n.* *See* clock/calendar.

**internal command** *n.* A routine that is loaded into memory along with the operating system and resides there for as long as the computer is on. *Compare* external command.

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**internal font** memory (ROM) downloadable

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