

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD™

DICTIONARY *of* COMPUTER TERMS

SIXTH EDITION

The Best Computer Dictionary in Print

Clear, complete, up-to-date

Extensive Internet coverage

More than 4,000 terms and acronyms

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD™

DICTIONARY — of — COMPUTER TERMS

SIXTH EDITION

By Bryan Pfaffenberger, Ph.D.

Webster's New World™

Dictionary of Computer Terms, 6th Edition

Copyright © 1997 by
Simon & Schuster, Inc.

All rights reserved
including the right of reproduction
in whole or in part in any form

Macmillan General Reference
A Simon & Schuster Macmillan Company
1633 Broadway
New York, NY 10019-6785

Macmillan Publishing books may be purchased for business or
sales promotional use. For information please write: Special
Markets Department, Macmillan Publishing USA,
1633 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

A Webster's New World™ Book

MACMILLAN is a registered trademark of Macmillan, Inc.

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY is a registered trade-
mark of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 97-80220

ISBN: 0-02-861890-4

Manufactured in the United States of America

2 3 4 5 6 7 97 8 99 00 1 02

event-driven program See *event-driven environment*.

event handler In an *event-driven environment*, a block of *program* code designed to handle the messages generated when a specific kind of event occurs, such as a *mouse click*.

Excel See *Microsoft Excel*.

EXE In *MS-DOS*, a file-name extension that indicates that the file is an executable *program*. To run the program with DOS, simply type the file name (but not the extension) and press Enter.

executable file See *executable program*.

executable program A *program* that is ready to run on a given computer. For a program to be executable, it first must be translated, usually by a *compiler*, into the *machine language* of a particular computer.

execute To carry out the instructions in an *algorithm* or *program*.

expand 1. In an *outlining utility* or a graphical file management utility (such as the *Windows Explorer*), to reveal all the subordinate entries below the selected outline heading or *directory*. In Explorer, for example, you can expand a directory quickly by double-clicking the directory *icon*—a folder. 2. In file compression, synonymous with *decompress*.

expandability The capability of a *computer system* to accommodate more *memory*, additional *disk drives*, or *adapters*. Computers vary in their expandability. When shopping for a computer, consider systems configured the way that you want but with space for growth. Look for one or two empty *drive bays*, three to five empty *expansion slots*, and room for at least four times as much *random access memory (RAM)* as comes installed.

expanded memory In older IBM PCs and compatibles running MS-DOS, a method of using more than 640KB of *random-access memory (RAM)*. Expanded memory works by paging blocks of data into and out of a fixed location within *conventional*



K Abbreviation for *kilobyte* (1024 bytes).

K56plus One of two competing *modulation protocols* for 56 Kbps *modems*. The K56plus standard is backed by Lucent and Rockwell; the competing x.2 standard is backed by U.S. Robotics. The two standards do not work together. A decision concerning the 56 Kbps modem standard will be made by the *ITU-TSS*.

Kb Abbreviation for *kilobit* (1024 bits).

Kbps See *bits per second (bps)*.

Kerberos An *authentication* system for computer networks developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Unlike server-based authentication systems, which provide only a single point of entry to the network, Kerberos enables administration and management of authentication at the network level. Passwords are encrypted to prevent interception en route.

Kermit An *asynchronous communications* protocol that makes the error-free transmission of program files via the telephone system easier. Developed by Columbia University and placed in the public domain, Kermit is used by academic institutions because, unlike *XMODEM*, Kermit can be implemented on mainframe systems that transmit 7 bits per byte. See *communications protocol*.

kernel In an *operating system*, the core portions of the program that reside in memory and perform the most essential operating system tasks, such as handling disk input and output operations and managing the internal memory.

kerning The adjustment of space between certain pairs of characters, so that the characters print in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

Kerr effect The tendency of polarized light to shift its orientation slightly when reflected from a magnetized surface. *Magneto-optical (MO) drives* rely on the Kerr effect to read and write data.