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Microsoft

Computer Dictionary

Fifth Edition

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graph is weighted if each edge has some value associated with it. *See also* node (definition 3), tree. **2.** *See* chart.

Graphical Device Interface *n.* *See* GDI.

graphical interface *n.* *See* graphical user interface.

Graphical Kernel System *n.* A computer graphics standard, recognized by ANSI and ISO, that specifies methods of describing, manipulating, storing, and transferring graphical images. It functions at the application level rather than the hardware level and deals with logical workstations (combinations of input and output devices such as keyboard, mouse, and monitor) rather than with individual devices. Graphical Kernel System was developed in 1978 to handle two-dimensional graphics; the later modification, GKS-3D, extended the standard to three-dimensional graphics. *Acronym:* GKS. *See also* ANSI, ISO.

graphical user interface *n.* A visual computer environment that represents programs, files, and options with graphical images, such as icons, menus, and dialog boxes, on the screen. The user can select and activate these options by pointing and clicking with a mouse or, often, with the keyboard. A particular item (such as a scroll bar) works the same way for the user in all applications, because the graphical user interface provides standard software routines to handle these elements and report the user's actions (such as a mouse click on a particular icon or at a particular location in text, or a key press); applications call these routines with specific parameters rather than attempting to reproduce them from scratch. *Acronym:* GUI.

graphic character *n.* Any character that is represented by a visible symbol, such as an ASCII character. A graphic character is not the same as a graphics character. *Compare* graphics character.

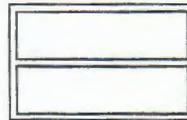
graphic limits *n.* On a computer screen, the boundary of a graphical image in a graphics software program, including all the area enclosed within the graphic. In some graphics environments the limits of a graphic consist of the smallest rectangle that can completely enclose it, called its *bounding rectangle* or *bounding box*.

graphics accelerator *n.* A video adapter that contains a graphics coprocessor. A graphics accelerator can update the video display much more quickly than the CPU can, and it frees the CPU for other tasks. A graphics accelerator is a necessity for modern software such as graphical user interfaces and multimedia applications. *See also* graphics coprocessor, video adapter.

graphics adapter *n.* A video adapter capable of displaying graphics as well as alphanumeric characters. Almost all video adapters in common use today are graphics adapters.

graphics card *n.* *See* video adapter.

graphics character *n.* A character that can be combined with others to create simple graphics, such as lines, boxes, and shaded or solid blocks. *See* the illustration. *Compare* graphic character.



Graphics character. *Box built up from line graphics characters.*

graphics controller *n.* The part of the EGA and VGA video adapters that allows the computer to access the video buffer. *See also* EGA, VGA.

graphics coprocessor *n.* A specialized microprocessor, included in some video adapters, that can generate graphical images such as lines and filled areas in response to instructions from the CPU, freeing the CPU for other work.

graphics data structure *n.* A data structure that is designed specifically for representing one or more elements of a graphical image.

graphics engine *n.* **1.** A display adapter that handles high-speed graphics-related processing, freeing the CPU for other tasks. *Also called:* graphics accelerator, video accelerator. **2.** Software that, based on commands from an application, sends instructions for creating graphic images to the hardware that actually creates the images. Examples are Macintosh QuickDraw and Windows Graphics Device Interface (GDI).

graphics export component *n.* A technology developed by Apple for creating, editing, publishing, and viewing multimedia content. The graphics export component provides an application programming interface that enables a QuickTime player to export still images into a variety of file formats.

graphics import component *n.* A technology developed by Apple for creating, editing, publishing, and viewing multimedia content. The graphics import component provides an application programming interface that enables a QuickTime player to import still images from a variety of file formats.

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