

Microsoft® Press

Microsoft®
**Computer
Dictionary**
Fourth
Edition



PUBLISHED BY

Microsoft Press
A Division of Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Redmond, Washington 98052-6399

Copyright © 1999 by Microsoft Corporation

All rights reserved. No part of the contents of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Microsoft Computer Dictionary. -- 4th ed.

p. cm.

Previous eds. published under title: Microsoft Press computer dictionary

ISBN 0-7356-0615-3

1. Computers Dictionaries. 2. Microcomputers Dictionaries.

I. Microsoft Press computer dictionary.

QA76.15.M538 1999

004'.03--dc21

99-20168

CIP

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 MLML 4 3 2 1 0 9

Distributed in Canada by Penguin Books Canada Limited.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Microsoft Press books are available through booksellers and distributors worldwide. For further information about international editions, contact your local Microsoft Corporation office or contact Microsoft Press International directly at fax (425) 936-7329. Visit our Web site at mspress.microsoft.com.

Macintosh, Power Macintosh, QuickTime, and TrueType fonts are registered trademarks of Apple Computer, Inc. Kodak is a registered trademark of the Eastman Kodak Company. Intel is a registered trademark and Indeo is a trademark of Intel Corporation. Active Desktop, Active Directory, ActiveMovie, Active Platform, ActiveX, Authenticode, BackOffice, DirectInput, DirectX, Microsoft, Microsoft Press, MS-DOS, MSN, NetMeeting, NetShow, Visual Basic, Visual C++, Visual J++, WebTV, WebTV Network, Win32, Win32s, Windows, Windows NT, and XENIX are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. PANTONE is a registered trademark of Pantone, Inc. Other product and company names mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

The example companies, organizations, products, people, and events depicted herein are fictitious. No association with any real company, organization, product, person, or event is intended or should be inferred.

Acquisitions Editor: Christey Bahn

Project Editor: Kim Fryer

Contents

Introduction
vii

Dictionary
of Computer Terms
1

Appendix A
ASCII Character Set
494

Appendix B
IBM Extended Character Set
496

Appendix C
Apple Macintosh Extended Character Set
498

Appendix D
EBCDIC Character Set
502

Appendix E
Numeric Equivalents
509

Appendix F
Internet Domains
517

Appendix G
Common File Extensions
527

Appendix H
Year 2000 Problem Reference
536

B

binomial distribution *n.* In statistics, a list or a function that describes the probabilities of the possible values of a random variable chosen by means of a Bernoulli sampling process. A Bernoulli process has three characteristics: each trial has only two possible outcomes—success or failure; each trial is independent of all other trials; and the probability of success for each trial is constant. A binomial distribution can be used to calculate the probability of getting a specified number of successes in a Bernoulli process. For example, the binomial distribution can be used to calculate the probability of getting a 7 three times in 20 rolls of a pair of dice. *Also called* Bernoulli distribution.

biometrics *n.* Traditionally, the science of measuring and analyzing human biological characteristics. In computer technology, biometrics relates to authentication and security techniques that rely on measurable, individual biological stamps to recognize or verify an individual's identity. For example, fingerprints, handprints, or voice-recognition might be used to enable access to a computer, to a room, or to an electronic commerce account. Security schemes are generally categorized into three levels: level 1 relies on something the person carries, such as an ID badge with a photo or a computer cardkey; level 2 relies on something the person knows, such as a password or a code number; level 3, the highest level, relies on something that is a part of the person's biological makeup or behavior, such as a fingerprint, the pattern of blood vessels in a retina, or a signature. *See also* fingerprint reader, handwriting recognition (definition 1), voice recognition.

bionics \bī-on'iks\ *n.* The study of living organisms, their characteristics, and the ways they function, with a view toward creating hardware that can simulate or duplicate the activities of a biological system. *See also* cybernetics.

BIOS \bī'ōs\ *n.* Acronym for **basic input/output system**. On PC-compatible computers, the set of essential software routines that tests hardware at startup, starts the operating system, and supports the transfer of data among hardware devices. The BIOS is stored in read-only memory (ROM) so that it can be executed when the computer is turned on. Although critical to performance, the BIOS is usually invisible to computer users. *See also* AMI BIOS, CMOS setup, Phoenix BIOS, ROM BIOS. *Compare* Toolbox.

bipolar *adj.* **1.** Having two opposite states, such as positive and negative. **2.** In information transfer and processing, pertaining to or characteristic of a signal in which opposite voltage polarities represent on and off, true and false, or some other pair of values. *See also* nonreturn to zero. *Compare* unipolar. **3.** In electronics, pertaining to or characteristic of a transistor having two types of charge carriers. *See also* transistor.

BIS *n.* *See* business information system.

BISDN *n.* *See* broadband ISDN.

bistable *adj.* Of, pertaining to, or characteristic of a system or device that has two possible states, such as on and off. *See also* flip-flop.

bistable circuit *n.* Any circuit that has only two stable states. The transition between them must be initiated from outside the circuit. A bistable circuit is capable of storing 1 bit of information.

bistable multivibrator *n.* *See* flip-flop.

BISYNC \bī'sēnk\ *n.* Short for **binary synchronous communications protocol**. A communications standard developed by IBM. BISYNC transmissions are encoded in either ASCII or EBCDIC. Messages can be of any length and are sent in units called frames, optionally preceded by a message header. BISYNC uses synchronous transmission, in which message elements are separated by a specific time interval, so each frame is preceded and followed by special characters that enable the sending and receiving machines to synchronize their clocks. STX and ETX are control characters that mark the beginning and end of the message text; BCC is a set of characters used to verify the accuracy of transmission. *See the illustration. Also called* BSC.

bit *n.* Short for **binary digit**. The smallest unit of information handled by a computer. One bit expresses a 1 or a 0 in a binary numeral, or a true or false logical condition, and is represented physically by an element such as a high or low voltage at one point in a circuit or a small spot on a disk magnetized one way or the other. A single bit conveys little information a human would consider meaningful. A group of 8 bits, however, makes up a byte, which can be used to represent many types of information, such as a letter of the alphabet, a decimal digit, or other character. *See also* ASCII, binary¹, byte.

Explore Litigation Insights

Docket Alarm provides insights to develop a more informed litigation strategy and the peace of mind of knowing you're on top of things.

Real-Time Litigation Alerts



Keep your litigation team up-to-date with **real-time alerts** and advanced team management tools built for the enterprise, all while greatly reducing PACER spend.

Our comprehensive service means we can handle Federal, State, and Administrative courts across the country.

Advanced Docket Research



With over 230 million records, Docket Alarm's cloud-native docket research platform finds what other services can't. Coverage includes Federal, State, plus PTAB, TTAB, ITC and NLRB decisions, all in one place.

Identify arguments that have been successful in the past with full text, pinpoint searching. Link to case law cited within any court document via Fastcase.

Analytics At Your Fingertips



Learn what happened the last time a particular judge, opposing counsel or company faced cases similar to yours.

Advanced out-of-the-box PTAB and TTAB analytics are always at your fingertips.

API

Docket Alarm offers a powerful API (application programming interface) to developers that want to integrate case filings into their apps.

LAW FIRMS

Build custom dashboards for your attorneys and clients with live data direct from the court.

Automate many repetitive legal tasks like conflict checks, document management, and marketing.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Litigation and bankruptcy checks for companies and debtors.

E-DISCOVERY AND LEGAL VENDORS

Sync your system to PACER to automate legal marketing.