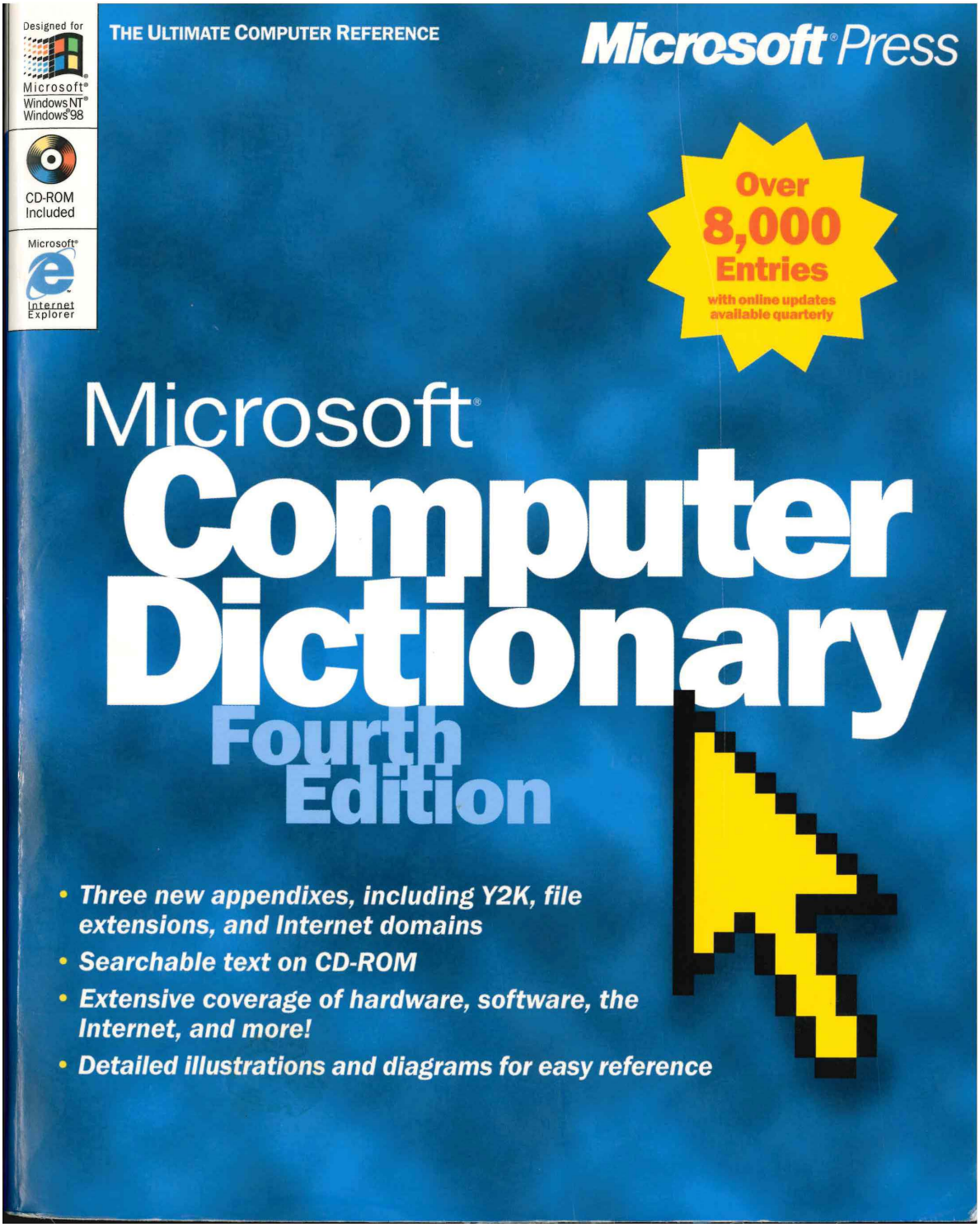

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icons. When these buttons or icons are clicked on with the mouse, macros or certain functions of the application are activated. For example, word processors often feature toolbars with buttons for changing text to italic, boldface, and other styles. Toolbars often can be customized by the user and usually can be moved around on the screen according to the user's preference. See the illustration. *See also* graphical user interface. *Compare* menu bar, palette (definition 1), taskbar, title bar.

Toolbar.

toolbox *n.* A set of predefined (and usually precompiled) routines a programmer can use in writing a program for a particular machine, environment, or application. *Also called* toolkit. *See also* library (definition 1).

Toolbox *n.* A set of routines stored mostly in the read-only memory of a Macintosh that provides application programmers with the tools needed to support the graphical interface characteristic of the computer. *Also called* User Interface Toolbox.

Tool Command Language/Tool Kit *n. See* Tcl/Tk.

toolkit *n. See* toolbox.

top-down design *n.* A program design methodology that starts with defining program functionality at the highest level (a series of tasks) and then breaks down each task into lower-level tasks, and so on. *See also* bottom-up programming, top-down programming. *Compare* bottom-up design.

top-down programming *n.* An approach to programming that implements a program in top-down fashion. Typically, this is done by writing a main body with calls to several major routines (implemented as stubs). Each routine is then coded, calling other, lower-level, routines (also done initially as stubs). *See also* bottom-up design, stub, top-down design. *Compare* bottom-up programming.

topic drift *n.* The tendency of an online discussion to move from its original subject to other related or unrelated subjects. For example, someone in a conference devoted to television may ask about a news program; then somebody else may say something about a story on that program about food poisoning, which leads somebody else to start a general discussion on the advantages of organic fruits and vegetables.

topic group *n.* An online discussion area for participants with a common interest in a particular subject.

top-level domain *n.* In the domain-name system of Internet addresses or DNS hierarchy, any of the broadest category of names, under which all domain names fit. Top-level domains for sites in the United States include .com, .edu, .gov, .net, and .org. *See also* DNS (definition 1), major geographic domain.

top-of-file *n.* **1.** The beginning of a file. **2.** A symbol used by a program to mark the beginning of a file—the first character in the file or, in an indexed (ordered) database, the first indexed record. *Acronym:* TOF. *See also* beginning-of-file.

topology *n.* The configuration or layout of a network formed by the connections between devices on a LAN (local area network) or between two or more LANs. *See also* bus network, LAN, ring network, star network, token ring network, tree network.

total bypass *n.* A communications network that uses satellite transmission to bypass both local and long-distance telephone links.

total cost of ownership *n.* Specifically, the cost of owning, operating, and maintaining a single PC. More generally, the cost to businesses and organizations of setting up and maintaining complex and far-reaching networked computer systems. Total cost of ownership includes the up-front costs of hardware and software added to later costs of installation, personnel training, technical support, upgrades, and repairs. Industry initiatives designed to lower the total cost of ownership include centralized network management and administration, as well as hardware solutions in the form of network-based computers with or without local storage and expansion capability. *See also* cost of ownership (CO).

touch pad *n.* A variety of graphics tablet that uses pressure sensors, rather than the electromagnetics used in more expensive high-resolution tablets, to track the position of a device on its surface. *See also* absolute pointing device, graphics tablet.

touch screen *n.* A computer screen designed or modified to recognize the location of a touch on its surface. By touching the screen, the user can make a selection or move a cursor. The simplest type of touch screen is made up of a grid of sensing lines, which determine the location of a touch by matching

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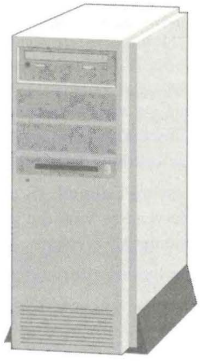
vertical and horizontal contacts. Another, more accurate type uses an electrically charged surface and sensors around the outer edges of the screen to detect the amount of electrical disruption and pinpoint exactly where contact has been made. A third type has infrared light-emitting diodes (LEDs) and sensors around the outer edges of the screen. These LEDs and sensors create an invisible infrared grid, which the user's finger interrupts, in front of the screen. *Compare* light pen.

touch-sensitive display *n. See* touch screen.

touch-sensitive tablet *n. See* touch pad.

touch tone dialing *n.* The signaling system used in telephones with touch-tone keypads, in which each digit is associated with two specific frequencies. During dialing, these frequencies—for example, 1336 Hz and 697 Hz for the number 2—are transmitted to the telephone company. *Also called* DTMF, Dual Tone Multiple Frequency.

tower *n.* A microcomputer system in which the cabinet for the central processing unit (CPU) is tall, narrow, and deep rather than short, wide, and deep. The motherboard is usually vertical, and the disk drives are often perpendicular to the motherboard. A tower cabinet is at least 24 inches tall. See the illustration. *See also* cabinet, microcomputer, motherboard. *Compare* minitower.



Tower.

TP *n. See* transaction processing.

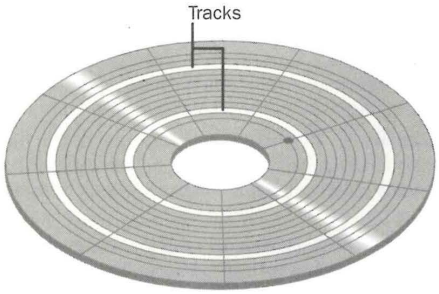
TPC *n. See* Transaction Processing Council.

TPC-D *n.* Acronym for **T**ransaction **P**rocessing **C**ouncil Benchmark **D**. A benchmark standard that addesses a broad range of decision support applications working with complex data structures. *See also* Transaction Processing Council.

TP monitor *n.* Short for **t**eleprocessing **monitor** or **t**ransaction **p**rocessing **monitor.** A program that controls the transfer of data between terminals (or clients) and a mainframe (or one or more servers) so as to provide a consistent environment for one or more online transaction processing (OLTP) applications. A TP monitor may also control the appearance of the screen displays and check input data for proper format. *See also* client (definition 3), mainframe computer, OLTP, server (definition 1).

trace *vb.* To execute a program in such a way that the sequence of statements being executed can be observed. *See also* debugger, single step.

track[1] *n.* One of numerous circular data storage areas on a floppy disk or a hard disk, comparable to a groove on a record but not spiral. Tracks, composed of sectors, are recorded on a disk by an operating system during a disk format operation. On other storage media, such as tape, a track runs parallel to the edge of the medium. See the illustration.



Track[1]. The storage areas on a floppy disk or hard drive.

track[2] *vb.* **1.** To follow a path. **2.** In data management, to follow the flow of information through a manual or an automated system. **3.** In data storage and retrieval, to follow and read from a recording channel on a disk or a magnetic tape. **4.** In computer graphics, to cause a displayed symbol, such as a pointer, to match on the screen the movements of a mouse or another pointing device.

trackball *n.* A pointing device that consists of a ball resting on two rollers at right angles to each other, which translate the ball's motion into vertical and horizontal movement on the screen. A trackball also typically has one or more buttons to initiate other

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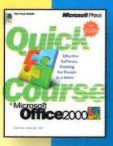

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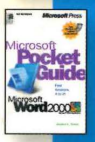

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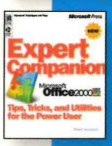

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