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# Dictionary of Computer and Internet Terms

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Twelfth Edition

**More than 3,200 terms defined and explained,  
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**Practical guidance for business software users includes  
terminology, computer security, law, and ethics**

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and operating systems**

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**local**

**local** located at the user's computer or site. *Contrast* REMOTE.

**local-area network (LAN)** a network that connects several computers that are located nearby (in the same room or building), allowing them to share files and devices such as printers. *See* ETHERNET. *Contrast* WIDE-AREA NETWORK.

**local bus** a separate bus in a computer, designed to provide extra-fast access to the CPU for specific devices, such as video cards. It contrasts with the main bus, which connects to most other parts of the computer. For examples *see* PCI, AGP.

**local variable** a variable that has meaning only within a particular function, subroutine, or other program unit. The name of a local variable can be used in another subroutine elsewhere in the program, where it will refer to an entirely different variable. Local variables contrast with *global variables*, which are recognized throughout the program.

The advantage of using local variables is not obvious in short programs. However, it is a good idea when writing a long program to make as many variables as possible local, because then there will be no problem if you wish to use the same name to mean something else elsewhere in the program. This rule is even more important if several different people are writing subroutines that will be combined into one main program. *See also* SCOPE; SIDE EFFECT.

**localization** the process of adapting software to run and be understood in a particular culture or part of the world. Localization might involve translating screen displays into French or German, adapting to a foreign-language keyboard, printing the date differently (e.g., 2012 oct 21 in Japan vs. 21 oct 2012 in Britain and oct. 21, 2012 in the United States), setting the clock for daylight saving time on different dates, or even reading or writing numbers differently (3,000.95 vs. 3 000.95 or even 3.000,95).

**location** the address in memory of a piece of data or the ENTRY POINT of a subroutine.

**lock**

1. to configure a CELLULAR TELEPHONE (or other wireless device that uses the cellular network) so that it will only connect to one company's cellular service. Many cellular telephones are supplied locked to the company that provided them but can be unlocked to work with other companies. *See also* JAILBREAK.

2. to mark a file "read-only" so that software cannot change it. In the Mac, this is done by checking the "Locked" box in the "Get Info" window.

3. to mark a variable, an open file, or other resource so that other concurrent tasks cannot use it. *See* MULTITASKING.

(See ABSOLUTE ADDRESS.) For example, if the formula  $2*D7$  is entered into the cell E9, the D7 in the formula really means, "the cell that is one column to the left and two rows above." If this formula is now copied to cell H15, the formula will now become  $2*G13$ , since G13 is the cell that is one column to the left and two rows above the cell H15.

**relative URL** a URL for a document in the same directory as the current document. For example, if a web page contains the link `<a href="doc1.htm1">` it will look for the document `doc1.htm1` in the same directory as the page containing the link. If you copy both of these files to a different directory or different machine, the link will still work. *Contrast* ABSOLUTE URL.

#### release

1. the edition or version number of a software product. Most commonly, whole-number increments in the release number (e.g., from 1.0 to 2.0) signify a major upgrade to the program. Fractional increases are for minor upgrades and bug fixes.
2. to let go of the mouse button. *Contrast* CLICK; PRESS.

**reload** to obtain a fresh copy of information that is already in a computer; an example is reloading a WEB PAGE that may have changed recently, rather than viewing a copy stored in a CACHE on your own computer.

**remote** located on a computer far away from the user. *Contrast* LOCAL.

**Remote Desktop** a feature of some versions of Microsoft Windows that allows one computer to serve as the screen, keyboard, and mouse of another; thus, any computer can be operated remotely. This is particularly handy for administering servers that may be located in a different room.

To enable remote access to a computer, go to Control Panel, System, Remote, and turn on remote access. Add one or more user accounts to the Remote Desktop Users security group. If the computers involved are separated by a firewall, make sure port 3389 traffic is allowed between them.

Once you have made a computer accessible, you can "remote in" to it from a second computer by going to Programs, Accessories, Communication, Remote Desktop Connection, and typing its network address. The host computer's desktop will be a window on the screen of the client computer.

Common versions of Windows allow one or two remote users at a time. Server versions can be licensed to allow larger numbers of users.

**remoting** the spreading of a computational task across multiple computers in different locations.