



# Glossary of Terms for Device Independence

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## Abstract

This document is a glossary of terms used in other documents produced by the Device Independence Activity. Details of the entire series of documents can be found on the [W3C Device Independence Activity](#) home page.

## Status of this Document

*This section describes the status of this document at the time of its publication. Other documents may supersede this document. A list of current W3C publications and the latest revision of this technical report can be found in the [reports index](#) at <http://www.w3.org/TR/>.*

The glossary is maintained as a Working Draft of a future W3C Note. This allows it to be revised at a future date. Updates take place in support of new work being carried out by the DIWG. In general, it is inappropriate to cite Working Drafts as formal reference material or to cite them as other than "work in progress". Because this document is a Working Draft, it may change, other authors wishing to cite definitions in this glossary should exercise caution. Updates to the glossary should be in such a way as to avoid invalidating references, as long as those references conform to the mechanism described in section [Using and Maintaining the Glossary](#). However, in support of its work, DIWG may need to modify previous versions of this document.

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Information on how to use this document and how it is maintained can be found in [Using and Maintaining the Glossary](#).

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## Verbatim Definitions

Terms whose definitions are taken directly from other sources are marked as follows:

*Definition taken from another source*

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## Changes to the Glossary

### Changes from the Version Published on 25 August 2003

- The definition of the term [decomposition](#) has been modified. The [previous version](#) of the definition reference.
- A new definition for the term [aggregation](#) has been added
- A new definition for the term [aggregated authored unit](#) has been added
- A definition for the term [Physical Transducer](#) has been added.
- A new definition for [Single Authoring](#) has been added.
- A new definition for [Multiple Authoring](#) has been added.
- A new definition for [Flexible Authoring](#) has been added.
- The definition of [Delivery Context](#) has been updated. The [previous version](#) of the definition remains as a reference.

## Glossary

### Access Mechanism

A combination of hardware (including one or more [devices](#) and network connections) and software (including one or more [user agents](#)) that allows a [user](#) to perceive and [interact](#) with the Web using one or more [input devices](#) (e.g., keyboard, voice etc.)

### Active Perceivable Unit

A [perceivable unit](#) that is currently being rendered by the [user agent](#) and with which [interaction](#) is possible.

### Adaptation

a process of selection, generation or modification that produces one or more [perceivable units](#) requested [uniform resource identifier](#) in a given delivery context.

### Adaptation Preferences

A set of preferences, specified by a [user](#), that may affect the [adaptation](#) for a given delivery context and the resultant [user experience](#).

### Application Personalization

A set of factors, specified by a [user](#) or other aspects of the [delivery context](#), that may affect the [adaptation](#) of an application, independently of its [adaptation](#) and delivery, and so change the resultant [user experience](#).

### Aggregation

The act of combining materials in various ways.

Where the materials being aggregated are [authored units](#), the result of aggregation is an [aggregated unit](#).

A set of [authored units](#) that have been [aggregated](#) in some way.

**Authored Unit**

Some set of material created as a single entity by an author. Examples include a collection of resources or a media [resource](#), such as an image or audio clip.

**Browser**

A [user agent](#) that allows a [user](#) to perceive and [interact](#) with information on the Web. This definition was developed from that in [Weaving the Web: Glossary](#).

**Client**

*The role adopted by an application when it is retrieving and/or rendering [resources](#) or [resource](#).* This term was taken verbatim from [Web Characterization Terminology & Definitions Sheet](#).

**Content Negotiation**

*The mechanism for selecting the appropriate [HTTP representation](#) when servicing a [request](#). The [representation](#) of entities in any response can be negotiated (including error responses).* This term was developed from that in [Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1](#).

**Decomposition**

The act of dividing up one or more [authored units](#), or an [aggregated authored unit](#), during creation of [units](#) appropriate for a particular delivery context.

**Delivery Context**

A set of attributes that characterizes the capabilities of the [access mechanism](#), the preferences, and other aspects of the context into which a web page is to be delivered.

**Delivery Unit**

A set of material transferred between two cooperating web programs as the response to a single transfer might, for example, be between an [origin server](#) and a [user agent](#). Users are not normally aware of individual delivery units.

**Device**

An apparatus through which a [user](#) can perceive and [interact](#) with the Web

**Flexible Authoring**

An authoring style in which an appropriate set of [variants](#) of each [resource](#) is created for use in each [delivery context](#).

Flexible authoring lies within a spectrum of authoring styles bounded at one end by [single authoring](#) and at the other by [multiple authoring](#).

**Focus of Attention**

The point in an [active perceivable unit](#) on which the user's attention is currently focused. For example, this might be a paragraph of text or an image on which the user is concentrating.

**Functional Adaptation**

An [adaptation](#) that generates a [functional user experience](#) from a particular [resource](#).

**Functional User Experience**

A set of one or more [perceivable units](#) that enables a [user](#) to complete the function intended by a [resource](#) via a given [access mechanism](#).

*A gateway is an intermediary which acts as a [server](#) on behalf of some other [server](#) with the purpose of providing [resources](#) or [resource manifestations](#) from that other [server](#). [Clients](#) using a gateway know the gateway but do not know that it is an intermediary.*

This term was taken verbatim from [Web Characterization Terminology & Definitions Sheet](#).

### **Harmonized Adaptation**

A [functional adaptation](#) sufficiently harmonized with the [delivery context](#) that it generates a [harmonized user experience](#).

### **Harmonized User Experience**

A [functional user experience](#) that is sufficiently harmonized with the [delivery context](#) to meet the requirements of the author.

### **HTTP Client**

A program that establishes connections for the purpose of sending [HTTP requests](#).

This term was developed from the definition of **client** in [Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1](#).

### **HTTP Gateway**

An [HTTP server](#) which acts as an intermediary for some other [HTTP server](#). Unlike an [HTTP server](#), an [HTTP gateway](#) receives requests as if it were the [origin server](#) for the requested [resource](#); the requesting [HTTP client](#) knows that it is communicating with an HTTP gateway.

This term was developed from the definition of **gateway** in [Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1](#).

### **HTTP Payload Entity**

The information transferred as the payload of an [HTTP request](#) or [HTTP response](#).

An HTTP payload entity consists of meta-information in the form of entity-header fields and content, and an entity-body.

This term was developed from the definition of **entity** in [Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1](#).

### **HTTP Proxy**

An intermediary program which acts as both an [HTTP server](#) and as an [HTTP client](#) for the purpose of acting on behalf of other [HTTP clients](#).

[HTTP requests](#) are serviced internally or by passing them on, with possible translation, to other [HTTP servers](#). A proxy must implement both the client and server requirements of this specification. A "transparent proxy" does not modify the [HTTP request](#) or the [HTTP response](#) beyond what is required for proxy authentication. A "non-transparent proxy" is a proxy that modifies the [HTTP request](#) or [HTTP response](#) to provide some added service to the [user agent](#), such as group annotation services, media type transformation, or anonymity filtering. Except where either transparent or non-transparent behavior is explicitly specified, the requirements apply to both types of proxies.

This term was developed from the definition of **proxy** in [Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1](#).

### **HTTP Representation**

An [HTTP payload entity](#), included in an [HTTP response](#), that is subject to [content negotiation](#). It is one of the representations associated with a particular [HTTP response](#) status.

This term was developed from the definition for **representation** in [Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1](#).

### **HTTP Request**

An HTTP message sent by an [HTTP client](#) requesting that some operation be performed on some resource.

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