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data *n.* Plural of the Latin *datum*, meaning an item of information. In practice, *data* is often used for the singular as well as the plural form of the noun. *See also* datum. *Compare* information.

Data Access Objects *n.* A data access interface that communicates with Microsoft Jet and ODBC-compliant data sources to connect to, retrieve, manipulate, and update data and the database structure. *Acronym:* DAO.

data acquisition *n.* The process of obtaining data from another source, usually one outside a specific system.

data aggregate *n.* A collection of data records. It usually includes a description of the placement of the data blocks and their relation to the entire set.

data attribute *n.* Structural information about data that describes its context and meaning.

data bank *n.* Any substantial collection of data.

database *n.* A file composed of records, each containing fields together with a set of operations for searching, sorting, recombining, and other functions. *Acronym:* DB.

database administrator *n.* One who manages a database. The administrator determines the content, internal structure, and access strategy for a database, defines security and integrity, and monitors performance. *Acronym:* DBA. *Also called:* database manager.

database analyst *n.* One who provides the analytic functions needed to design and maintain applications requiring a database.

database designer *n.* One who designs and implements functions required for applications that use a database.

database engine *n.* The program module or modules that provide access to a database management system (DBMS).

database machine *n.* **1.** A peripheral that executes database tasks, thereby relieving the main computer from performing them. **2.** A database server that performs only database tasks.

database management system *n.* A software interface between the database and the user. A database management system handles user requests for database actions and allows for control of security and data integrity requirements. *Acronym:* DBMS. *Also called:* database manager. *See also* database engine.

database manager *n. See* database administrator, database management system.

database publishing *n.* The use of desktop publishing or Internet technology to produce reports containing information obtained from a database.

database server *n.* A network node, or station, dedicated to storing and providing access to a shared database. *Also called:* database machine.

database structure *n.* A general description of the format of records in a database, including the number of fields, specifications regarding the type of data that can be entered in each field, and the field names used.

data bit *n.* In asynchronous communications, one of a group of from 5 to 8 bits that represents a single character of data for transmission. Data bits are preceded by a start bit and followed by an optional parity bit and one or more stop bits. *See also* asynchronous transmission, bit, communications parameter.

data buffer *n.* An area in memory where data is temporarily stored while being moved from one location to another. *See also* buffer[1].

data bus *n. See* bus.

data cable *n.* Fiber-optic or wire cable used to transfer data from one device to another.

data capture *n.* **1.** The collection of information at the time of a transaction. **2.** The process of saving on a storage medium a record of interchanges between a user and a remote information utility.

data carrier *n. See* carrier (definition 1).

Data Carrier Detected *n. See* DCD (definition 1).

data chaining *n.* The process of storing segments of data in noncontiguous locations while retaining the ability to reconnect them in the proper sequence.

data channel *n. See* channel (definition 1).

data closet *n. See* wiring closet.

data collection *n.* **1.** The process of acquiring source documents or data. **2.** The grouping of data by means of classification, sorting, ordering, and other organizing methods.

datacom *n.* Short for **data com**munications. *See* communications.

data communications *n. See* communications.

data compaction *n. See* data compression.

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