

Computer and Internet Definitions

Abstract: A short text summary in paragraph form describing the contents of an article or book.

Application: Computer programs that run on your computer that allow you to accomplish certain tasks, such as creating text documents, sending e-Mail messages and viewing Web pages.

Bookmark: A link you establish on your computer so you can easily return to a particular website you visited earlier.

Browser: Utility software that lets users read text and helps them find other sources of information. Graphical browsers allow users to navigate by clicking on/pressing buttons. The two most popular Browsers are Netscape's Navigator and Microsoft's Internet Explorer.

CD-ROM: An acronym for "Compact Disc-Read Only Memory." Many software products, including Web Browsers, are on CD-ROM.

Chat or Chat Session: A live online conference or meeting. People participating in the chat type in comments that others in the chat "room" can see on their computers. Some of these meetings are structured by topic and are led by hosts/monitors while others are informal by-chance meetings.

Client: A computer program that asks for data (file, software) from another computer or server.

Cyberspace: Somewhere "out there" on the Information Highway. It is a general term given to the universe of computer communications.

Data: Information entered into a computer.

Database: An electronic filing cabinet with the ability to sort, organize and search for information. The information is organized into fields, records and files.

Directory: Created by humans who select resources and organize them by subject into hierarchies. You can then browse the subject hierarchy. A directory doesn't contain as much as a search engine's listings, but it has information that is more selective. If you already know a little bit about your topic, you may want to begin with a directory going from the general to the more specific.

Domain Name: See URL.

Download: To transfer a file or document that is online to your computer. When you download a file, you are making a copy of it and loading that copy onto your home computer. Upload is the opposite of download.

e-mail or electronic mail: A method of sending messages, files, and multimedia electronically from one computer to another.

Emoticons: Human expressions created from keyboard characters. They help compensate for a reader's difficulty in interpreting emotion in printed text. Example: :) or ;)

Flame: Writing or posting unkind (or worse) remarks in response to something someone has posted online or sent through e-mail.

FTP: File Transfer Protocol used on the Internet to get and transfer files to your computer from other computers on the Internet.

Fulltext: The entire text of an article or book.

Gateway: An entrance/exit from one computer system/network to another. For example, most commercial online services provide a gateway to the Internet, allowing users to send and receive information through the Internet from the service.

Gopher: An Internet menu system to help you find information on the Internet.

Hardware: Physical equipment, such as computers, modems, printers, and scanners. Your hardware works with software programs that allow you to accomplish certain tasks.

Home Page: The first page a user sees when visiting a Web Site. Many people and groups develop their own Home Pages.

HTML: An acronym for “hyper-text markup language.” HTML is the formatting language for the WWW. HTML defines how text and graphics will appear when they are viewed through your Browser.

HTTP: HyperText Transport Protocol

Hyperlink: Words or graphics that take you to a particular piece of information on the WWW when you click your mouse on them. When they appear in text form, hyperlinks are usually underlined and/or in a different color than the other text. The common use, “hyperlink” is often shortened to simply “link.”

Hypertext: A document form that features links to other documents in the form of graphics, text, sounds, and movies.

Icon – A small picture that represents an object or program.

Internet: A worldwide network composed of numerous other networks, started by the U.S. government for defense purposes and now used by businesses, universities, K-12 schools, and individuals used for sharing data, messages and online commerce.

Internet Address: An electronic address for a computer that is linked to the Internet.

Internet Service Provider: An organization that provides users with access to the Internet through its connections.

Keypal: An online pen pal.

Listserv: Online mailing list that provides e-mail information on specific topics to its subscribers.

Log On: To connect with an online service or network.

Log Off: To disconnect from an online service or network.

Meta-Search Engine: Allows you to conduct a search in many search engines at once. Meta-search engines return only a limited number of hits from each site and are effective only if the search is simple. Examples: www.dogpile.com and Sherlock.

Modem: A piece of equipment that allows computers to connect by telephone lines or other cabling to other computers. Cable modems allow users to access and retrieve information at much higher speeds than conventional dial-up modems.

Multimedia: The integration of several types of presentation techniques, including sound, video, text, and graphics on computer.

Netiquette: Online etiquette

Network: A number of computers interconnected through a central server.

Newsgroups: Bulletin board-type areas on the Internet. People join newsgroups on topics of interest to them. Newsgroups are not necessarily related to news.

NII: The National Information Infrastructure. The term used by the United States government to refer to the current structure of the Information Highway.

Offline: Your computer is not connected to a telecommunications service or network.

Online: Your computer is connected to a telecommunications service or network. While online you can send messages, read and receive mail, find information, download information, etc.

PDF: Portable Document Format, To view a file in PDF format, you need Adobe Reader, a free application distributed by Adobe Systems.

Protocol: The language that a computer uses to communicate with other computers and electronic devices. The use of standard protocols allows computers to communicate via the Internet.

Post: To type or upload a message online for others to read.

Search Engine: Automatically search the Internet and then create a listing. Search engines allow you to find the greatest number of resources, but the quality of the resources varies widely. If you know little about your topic and want the largest number of documents to examine, try a search engine first.

Server: A computer that provides information access throughout a network.

Software: See Application.

Subject Catalog: See Directory.

Subject Guides: Are compiled by specialists whose objective is to find the best resources available. Subject guides are very similar to directories in many ways, but the resources of the guides are usually of higher quality because of the specialists who control the guide.

Surfing: Widely used term from browsing the Internet users log on to other computers on the Internet and to connect to computers anonymously to access public information.

TCP/IP: Short for "Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol." This protocol defines the order and speed of communication between two computers.

Toolbar: A series of selectable buttons in a program that give the user an easy way to select desktop, application or Web browser functions. Toolbars are typically displayed as either a horizontal row or a vertical column around the edges of the program where they are visible while the application is in use.

Upload: To transfer a file or document from your computer to another computer online. Upload is the opposite of download.

URL: Acronym for Uniform Resource Locator also called a Domain Name. A URL is the address for a web site and must be entered exactly as it appears in print (uppercase, lowercase, spaces, periods, slashes, and special characters all matter. Each specific part of a URL has a special meaning and purpose.

The ending of a URL will often tell you something about the type of organization sponsoring that Web site. For example: .org – non-profit organization, .com – commercial, .edu – education, .gov – government, .net – network, .mil - military

User Group: A local, national, or worldwide organization of people interested in technology.

WAIS: Wide Area Information Service. Network of databases with excellent search options.

WWW: World Wide Web. An Internet tool that makes traveling through and finding resources on the Internet easier with its use of sound and graphics and its ability to link to other WWW files.

Zip: A term used for compressed files. When viewed online, these files are listed with the extension .zip.

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