Network Glossary

A

ACAP - Application Configuration Access Protocol

ACAP is a protocol which allows applications to store and retrieve arbitrary configuration data from a central server.

Account

To use a particular computer system, you are given an account. Associated with the account are a unique user name and password. You enter these to show that you are a legitimate user of the system.

Active Port

A switch or repeater hub port through which communication is taking place.

Active Star

A network wired in a star topology with a concentrator or multiport repeater located at the center of the star. All wiring runs to the concentrator, which is responsible for retransmitting the network signal form one wiring run to the rest of the wiring runs attached to it.

Address

A unique name (or number) identifying a computer user or computer. Address are used in network communications in transmitting messages to a particular person or machine.

Address Aging

A spanning tree parameter that controls how long a switch or bridge/router must keep learned addresses in its address table before they are discarded and replaced by new ones.

Address Book

The Address Book is where you keep information about individuals or groups that you correspond with.

Address, Internet

Four numbers separated by dots (dotted quad) which uniquely identifies a computer system connected to the Internet. (Example: ESU 7's address is 162.127.7.1). For each address there is a domain name. Either the address or the domain name can be used to access an Internet host for remote login (telnet) or file transfer (ftp).

Address Resolution

Conversion of an Internet address to the corresponding physical address. On an ethernet, resolution requires broadcasting on the local area network.

Address Table Filter

A mechanism by which devices such as a switch or bridge/router selectively forward or discard (filters) data by using address table information.

Administrivia

Administrative tasks, most often related to the maintenance of mailing lists, digests, news gateways, etc...

AFS

A set of protocols that allows you to use files on other network machines as if they were local. So rather than using FTP to transfer a file to your local computer, you can read, write, or edit it on the remote computer - using your same commands.

Agent

The software component that is embedded onto an internetworking device, such as a switch, via firmware, or downloaded into the device's memory via software, to provide SNMP-compliant (or some other management standard) information about the device's status. In an SNMP-compliant device the agent performs information preparation and exchange with the NMS (network management station) via such management primitives as SET, GET and GETNEXT, and generates traps.

Alias

Another name for an existing user's address. In Eudora, an alias is also called a nickname.

Angry Fruit Salad

A bad visual-interface design that uses too many colors. This derives, of course, from the bizarre day-glo colors found in canned fruit salad.

Anonymous FTP

Also known as "anon FTP"; a service provided to make files available to the general Internet community.

ANSI

The American National Standards Institute disseminates basic standards like ASCII, and acts as the United States' delegate to the ISO. Standards can be ordered from ANSI by writing to the ANSI Sales Department, 1430 Broadway, New York, NY 10018.

Archive

Collections of files related to a particular subject, which are stored on a computer and made available for distribution, usually via FTP.

ARPA (Advanced Research Projects Agency)
>The government agency that funded ARPAnet and later the DARPA Internet. Now known as DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency).

ARPAnet
>An experimental network established in the 70's where the theories and software on which the Internet is based were tested. No longer in existence.

ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange)
>A standard method for encoding characters. Text files are usually ASCII files. ASCII has codes representing upper and lower case letters, the numerals, and punctuation.

ASICS
>Computer chips developed for such functions as implementing a switching matrix on a network switching hub device.

Asynchronous Communication
>A method for transmitting data that sends one character at a time.

Asynchronous
>Transmission by individual bytes, not related to specific timing on the transmitting end.

ATM
>A connection-oriented network technology that uses small, fixed-size cells at the lower data-communications protocol layer. ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) promises to provide high-speed network services for voice, video, and data traffic with a single underlying technology.

Attachments
>Any file can be attached to and sent with an email message. Most of the time, an attached document functions like a "rider" to the e-mail message, and does not appear within the message text. Instead, the name of the document is displayed automatically in the Attached field in the message header.

AUP (Acceptable Use Policy)
>A written agreement signed by teachers, students and parents outlining terms and conditions of Internet use in a school setting.

APOP (Authenticated Post Office Protocol)
APOP is an MD5-based login command that does not send passwords in clear text over the network.

Auto-Magic
>Something which happens pseudo-automatically, and is usually too complex to go into any further than to say it happens "automagically."

Automagically
Automatically, but for some reason, (typically because it is too complicated, or too ugly, or perhaps even too trivial) the speaker doesn't feel like explaining it to you.

B

Backbone
A high-speed network medium to which multiple LANs are connected using switches and/or bridges/routers and over which internetwork traffic is channeled. Like the backbone of a human being, the backbone carries and supports the whole network.

Bandwidth

A measure of the amount of network traffic the transmission medium can handle at one time , as measured by the maximum number of bits per second (bps). More informally, the mythical "size" of the network, and its ability to carry the files and messages of those that use it.

Baud
A measure of information transfer speed. The rate at which a modem transfers data from one computer to another. Common modems range in baud rate from 300 to 19200 baud.

BBS (Bulletin Board System)
An online forum, accessible via modem, for users to browse and exchange information. Thousands of local BBS systems are in operation throughout the U.S.

Binary file
All files which are not text files are considered binary files. Any combination of bits is possible with a binary file.

BIND (Berkley Internet Name Domain)
The Unix implementation of DNS.

Bit
The smallest unit of information. A bit can have the value of 1 or 0. Everything in computing is based on collecting hunks of bits together, manipulating them, and moving them from place to place. It takes 8 bits to represent a standard letter.

Bookmarking
A way of storing pointers to favorite Web sites in your browser.

Bounce
The return of a piece of mail because of an error in the way it was addressed or in its delivery.

BPS (bits per second)

    The speed at which bits are transmitted over a communications medium.

Broadcast

    A packet-delivery system; copied packets are passed to all participating stations attached to the network. In networking, a distinction is made between broadcasting and multicasting. Broadcasting sends a message to everyone on the network whereas multicasting sends a message to a select list of recipients.

Broadcast Domains

    (VLANS set up broadcast domains)

Bridge

    A store and forward device that operates at the data link layer to expand a LAN by selectively forwarding packets of data to another part of the LAN. It functions as a smart repeater. See router.

Browser

    An application that displays a Web page. Also known as a Web browser. Internet Explorer and Netscape are examples of web browsers.

BTW

    An abbreviation for "by the way".

Bus Topology

    A network topology in which a single cable is used to carry the networks signals. computing devices are attached to the central cable via taps.

C

Cache

    A computer memory with very short access time used for storage of frequently used instructions or data **.** Every time you visit a web site, your web browser keeps a cached copy of the text and pictures that it will use for faster access if you visit again and the web site has not been changed.

Catatonic

    Describes a condition of suspended animation in which something is so hung that it makes no response. If you are typing on a terminal and suddenly the computer does not even echo the letters back to the screen, let alone do what you are asking it to, then the computer is suffering from catatonia.

CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team)

CFV (Call For Votes)
Initiates the voting period for a Usenet newsgroup. At least one email address is customarily included as a repository for the votes.

Checksum
A number that allows the receiving TCP to detect errors in the packet.

CIX (Commercial Internet Exchange)
An agreement among network providers that allows them to do accounting for commercial traffic. It is primarily a concern for network providers

Click
A verb meaning "to select something with a mouse".

Client
A relationship in which one device or computer program is dedicated to serving another device or program. Can be a software application that works on your behalf to extract some service from a server somewhere on the network. Think of your telephone as a client and the telephone company as a server.

Coaxial Cable
An electrical cable that contains two separate wires. One wire is solid and the other is a tube. The solid wire is inside the tube.

Collision Domain
The situation that occurs when two or more devices attempt to send a signal along the same channel at the same time. The result of a collision is generally a garbled message. All computer networks require some sort of mechanism to either prevent collisions altogether or to recover from collisions when they do occur.

Compression
Large files often contain enough redundancy that algorithms can encode the same data in a form that uses up less memory and can be transmitted more quickly.

Concentrator

In Ethernet, a multiport hub used mostly with 10BaseT cabling. The hub typically has 8 or 12 ports, plus a BNC connector for 10Base2 and an AUI port for a LANs transceiver.

Content-Free

A message or talk that adds nothing to the recipient's knowledge.

Cookie

The most common meaning of "Cookie" on the Internet refers to a piece of information sent by a Web Server to a Web Browser that the Browser software is expected to save and to send back to the Server whenever the browser makes additional requests from the Server.

Crash and Burn

A spectacular computer crash, named after the suitably tragic car crashes at the end of a lot of bad movies.

CRC

A value computed from the sequence of octets (i.e., bytes) to detect errors that occur during transmission. Typically, packet-switching network hardware computes a CRC (cyclic redundancy check) and appends it to a packet when transmitting. On a standard Ethernet LAN, this is known as the FCS (frame check sequence). Upon reception, the hardware verifies the contents of the packet by recomputing the CRC an comparing it to the CRC attached to the data it receives.

CSMA/CD (Carrier Sense Media Access/ Collision Detection)

A network medium access method in which each participating station waits for a clear channel before starting to transmit a packet. As part of the communications protocol, each participating station is able to detect collisions and retransmit.

Cyberspace

A term coined by William Gibson in his fantasy novel Neuromance to describe the "world" of computers, and the society that gathers around them.

D

Database

A computer hosting large amounts of information that can be searched by an Internet user.

Datagram

The basic unit of information passed across the Internet. It contains a source and destination address along with data. Somewhat like a telegram: it's a self-contained message that can arrive at any time, without notice.

DDN (Defense Data Network)

A portion of the Internet which connects to U.S. Military Bases and contractors; used for nonsecure communications. MILNET is one of the DDN networks. It also runs "the NIC," where a lot of Internet information is archived.

Dedicated Line

see 'leased line'

Destination Address

The first six bytes in a standard Ethernet frame, which contains the address of the station to which a frame is being sent.

Default Gateway

When configuring TCP/IP you must specify a default gateway. This information is used to tell your computer where to send packets when they are destined for or from an Internet address. The standard default gateway address at ESU 7 is 162.127.7.254

Dial-Up

To connect to a computer by calling it up on the telephone. Often "dial-up" only refers to the kind of connection you make when using terminal emulator and a regular modem.

Directory

Files on most computer systems are grouped together in directories. Files common to a topic are often organized into separate directories and subdirectories.

Directory Service

A service on a network that gives information about sites, computers, resources, or users in the area.

Disassembling

Converting a binary program into human-readable machine language.

Disk Server

Software that allows a user to treat a partition of another computer's hard disk as if it were a locally attached disk drive.

Distributed Networking

Dividing up resources among many host computers on a network thereby reducing the burden on any one system. Distributed networking is a primary characteristic of the Internet.

Distributed Server

A server system in which computers can be both clients and servers at the same time. Distributed servers do not require the full resources of the computer and are often run in the background.

DNS (Domain Name System)

The method used to convert Internet names to their corresponding Internet numbers. DNS allows you to use the Internet without remembering long list of numbers.

DNS (Domain Name Server)

The computer (or program) that converts a domain name to the Internet Address (140.147.254.3 for locis.loc.gov) which the network uses for routing messages.

DOD

The U.S. Department of Defense whose Advanced Research Projects Agency got the Internet started by creating the ARPAnet.

Domain

A classification category used for identifying computers in a network. Syntactically, a domain name consists of a sequence of names or other words separated by dots.

Domain Name

The name divided by dots which uniquely identifies a machine on the Internet. The leftmost group of characters is the host name; the rightmost is the top-level domain--the most general category to which the computer belongs; between these are categories (sub domains) which become narrower as they move to the left. The domain name of the ESU 7 server is http://gilligan.esu7.org; gilligan is the host name; esu7.org is the domain.

Dotted Quad

A set of four numbers connected with periods that makes up an Internet address; for example, 147.31.254.130.

Download

The process of transferring files to your local machine using the network or via modem and communications software.

Driver

Software for using a peripheral hardware device attached to a computer.

Dynamic Address

An address learned by an intelligent network interconnection device, such as a bridge or a switch (by reading it from the data packets it processes), as opposed to addresses that are manually entered into the device's address table.

E

E-journal or E-serial

A periodical distributed in electronic form.

E-text

The full text of a document available in electronic format.

EARN (European Academic and Research Network)

A European equivalent to BITNET.

Email (Electronic Mail)

Online messaging services between computer users.

Email Address

The UUCP or domain-based address that a user is referred to with.

Emoticon

Characters that are meant to be viewed sideways that reflect the emotional state of the writer of the message. Because electronic mail does not allow for body language or other emotional clues, emoticons are very useful. :-) - happy, :-(- sad.

Ethernet

An LAN communications system using 10-Mbps and now 100-Mbps baseband transmission, CSMA/CD access, logical-bus topology, and 10Base-5 (thick-wire Ethernet), 10Base-2 (coaxial), or 10Base-T (UTP or STP) cable.

Ethernet Station

An addressable device or node on an Ethernet network capable of transmitting, repeating, and/or receiving data.

F

FAQ (Frequently Asked Question)
A compilation of the most often asked questions and answers on a topic.

FCS Error Packet
A data packet that was received with an integral number of octets in length but does not pass the FCS (frame check sequence) check.

FDDI (Fiber Distributed Data Interface)
A new standard for network technology using fiber-optic cable capable of 100-million bit per second data rate.

Finger
A program that displays a particular user's plan file or all users logged onto the system or a remote system.

File Server
A computer specifically intended for storing files that people can share over a network. The computer being used as the file server might not be able to be used for other common workstation tasks.

Flame
Mail or Usenet posting which is violently argumentative.

Flamefest
Massive flaming.

Flaming
Sending hate email to an Internet user, usually a company or person who has violated netiquette, the rules of online conduct. A user who writes flames is known as a flamer.

Foo
A place holder for nearly anything - a variable, function, procedure, or even person.

FQDN (Fully Qualified Domain Name)
The FQDN is the full name of a system, rather than just its host name.

Frame

A group of digits transmitted as a unit, over which a coding procedure is applied for synchronization (synonym: packet).

Frame Relay

A CCITT recommendation (I.122) and ANSII standard (T1S1). Frame relay is an ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) packet-mode bearer service that defines a user-to-network interface. The two main benefits are bandwidth on demand and integrated access. The standard currently addresses data communications speeds up to 2 Mbps over permanent virtual circuits. By reducing the network functions performed, frame relay takes advantage of more robust physical facilities to improve throughput.

Freenet

An organization to provide free Internet access to people in a certain area, usually through public libraries.

Freeware

Software that is distributed free of charge, but often without customer service or much documentation.

FTP (File Transfer Protocol)

Allows transferring files from one computer to another across a network.

Full Duplex

Refers to the transmission of data in two directions simultaneously. For example, a telephone is a full-duplex device because both parties can talk at once. In contrast, a walkie-talkie is a half-duplex device because only one party can transmit at a time.

In full-duplex mode, data you transmit does not appear on your screen until it has been received and sent back by the other party. This enables you to validate that the data has been accurately transmitted. If your display screen shows two of each character, it probably means that your modem is set to half-duplex mode when it should be in full-duplex mode.

FYI

An abbreviation for the phrase "for your information".

G

Gateway

A special-purpose dedicated computer that is a node in two (or more) networks and routes packets from one network to the other. The two networks may use the same protocol or different protocols. The gateway has a name/address in EACH network and has to be running an implementation of each protocol. An Internet gateway (both nets are using the TCP/IP protocol) routes IP datagrams between the networks it connects. Gateways route packets to other gateways until they can be delivered to the final destination directly across one physical network.

Going Postal

The state of being totally stressed. This is in reference to the inordinate number of postal workers that go bezerk.

Gopher

A menu-driven program that "runs out onto the Internet" to find programs and resources. Since the program was developed at the University of Minnesota, the name "gopher" came from their college mascot.

GUI (Graphical User Interface)

The aspects of a windowing system that make it unique; for example, the Motif GUI has a 3D feel to its buttons and menus.

Guru

Any person with a lot of experience in a certain topic or area of study.

H

Hacker

An Internaut who possesses vast amounts of computer knowledge and uses it to illegally visit networked computers to look around or to cause harm.

Half Duplex

Refers to the transmission of data in just one direction at a time. For example, a walkie-talkie is a half-duplex device because only one party can talk at a time. In contrast, a telephone is a full-duplex device because both parties can talk simultaneously.In half-duplex mode, each character transmitted is immediately displayed on your screen. (For this reason, it is sometimes called local echo -- characters are echoed by the local device). In full-duplex mode, transmitted data is not displayed on your monitor until it has been received and returned (remotely echoed) by the other device. One end must wait for acknowledgment of its data transmission from the other end before it can continue transmitting another data packet.

Hardware Address

The low-level address used by physical networks. Each type of network hardware has its own addressing scheme.

Header

The portion of a packet, preceding the actual data, containing source and destination addresses and error-checking fields. Also part of a message or news article.

Hits

*Results of a web search. (ex: I got 115,324 hits on my search for "WWII")

*As used in reference to the World Wide Web, "hit" means a single request from a web browser for a single item from a web server; thus in order for a web browser to display a page that contains 3 graphics, 4 "hits" would occur at the server: 1 for the HTML page, and one for each of the 3 graphics.

*"hits" are often used as a very rough measure of load on a server, e.g. "Our server has been getting 300,000 hits per month." Because each "hit" can represent anything from a request for a tiny document (or even a request for a missing document) all the way to a request that requires some significant extra processing (such as a complex search request).

Host

Any computer (node) connected to a network which is directly used by resources (e.g., public domain programs, text/data files, mailboxes, etc.). An Internet host can be identified by its dotted quad address or its distinctive domain name. This computer system may also be the source of network services on which you may hold an interactive session if you are a valid user of that system.

Hostname

The name given to an Internet server, or computer that can be accessed via the Internet (ex: www.esu7.org).

HTML - Hypertext Markup Language

Hypertext Markup Language. The standard for adding tags to a text file, so that the file is able to be interpreted by a Web browser.

HTTP - Hypertext Transfer Protocol

Hypertext Transfer Protocol. The Internet protocol that the Web uses to send information to the client, so the client browser can view Web pages.

Hub

A regional point of connection between an Internet user and the Internet. Regional hubs are also called Internet Service Providers which sell their networking services for a fee.

Hyperlink

A reference in an HTML document that leads to a separate document or media file and allows the reader to follow nonlinear information trails through HTML documents.

I

IAB (Internet Architecture Board)

The "ruling council" that makes decisions about standards and other important issues.

IETF (The Internet Engineering Task Force)

A volunteer group that investigates and solves technical problems, and makes recommendations to the IAB.

IMHO (In My Humble Opinion)

This usually accompanies a statement that may bring about personal offense or strong disagreement.

Internaut

Someone who uses or "surfs" the Internet.

Internet

The world-wide "network of networks" that are connected to each other, using the TCP/IP protocol and other similar protocols. The Internet provides file transfer, remote login, electronic mail, news, and other services.

Internet Site

A computer connected to the Internet that contains information that can be accessed using a navigation tool such as ftp, telnet, gopher, etc.

Internet Number

The dotted-quad address used to specify a certain system. The Internet number for the site cs.widener.edu is 147.31.254.130. A resolver is used to translate between host names and Internet addresses.

Interoperate

The ability of multivendor computers to work together using a common set of protocols. With interoperability, PC's Mac's, Suns,etc., all work together allowing one host computer to communicate with and take advantage of the resources of another.

IP (The Internet Protocol)

The most important of the protocols on which the Internet is based. It allows a packet to traverse multiple networks on the way to its final destination.

IP address

A specially formulated number assigned to an Internet computer.

IRC (Internet Relay Chat)

Just like the telephone, the Internet supports interactive, realtime discussions between Internauts. Users log on to special Net computers and join discussions already in progress.

ISO (International Organization for Standardization)

Coordinator of the main networking standards that are put into use today.

ISOC (The Internet Society)

A membership organization whose members support a world-wide information network. It is also the governing body to which the IAB reports.

ISP (Internet Service Provider)

Any organization that provides access to the Internet. ISP's also offer technical assistance to schools that want to become Internet sites and place their information online.

J

JANET (Joint Academic Network)
The academic and research network in the United Kingdom.

K

K
A suffix meaning "about 1000", derived from the Greek kilo. For example, 8.6K characters meaning 8600 characters.

Kernel
The level of an operating system or networking system that contains the system-level commands or all of the functions hidden from the user. This program is always running while the system is operating.

Knowbot
Knowledge robots designed to search files on the Internet "a robotic librarian." It is a registered trademark of the Corporation for national Research Initiatives.

L

LAN (Local Area Network)
Any physical network technology that operates at high speed over short distances (up to a few thousand meters).

LAN Manager
A person that is responsible for maintaining and managing the Local Area Network (LAN).

Latency
On a network switch, this indicates the time between when a packet arrives at a port to the time when it is retransmitted via a destination port. It also refers to the time between when a network station seeks access to a transmission channel and when access is granted or received.

Launch
> To open and run an application. You launch your web browser to view a web page.

Leased Line
> A permanently-connected private telephone line between two locations. Leased lines are typically used to connect a moderate-sized local network to an Internet service provider.

Listserv
> Discussion groups over the Internet that link a group of people together with common interests. If you belong to a listserv, you receive every message posted to that list via email.

Login
> An opening procedure to identify yourself to a system as a legitimate user and begin a session. To log in you usually need a valid user name and password that were pre assigned by the system administrator of the system.

Logout
> A closing procedure to formally end a session with a system.

M

MAC (Media Access Control) Address
> The sub layer within the data link layer of the IEEE-802 model for data communications over Ethernet that's responsible for scheduling, transmitting, and receiving data on a shared-medium LAN, MAC addresses are unique, 48-bit, binary numbers (usually represented as a 12-digit hexadecimal number) encoded in a device's circuitry to identify it to a LAN.

Mail Gateway
> A machine that connects to two or more electronic mail systems (especially dissimilar mail systems on two different networks) and transfers mail messages among them.

Mail Path
> A series of machine names used to direct electronic mail from one user to another.

Mail Reflector
> A special mail address; electronic mail sent to this address is automatically forwarded to a set of other addresses. Typically, used to implement a mail discussion group.

Mailing List

A possibly moderated discussion group, distributed via email from a central computer maintaining the list of people involved in the discussion.

Medium

The material used to support transmission of data. This can be copper wire, coaxial cable, optical fiber, or electromagnetic waves (as in microwaves).

MILNET

One of the DDN networks that make up the Internet; devoted to non-classified military (U.S.) communications. It was built using the same technology as the ARPAnet, and remained in production when the ARPAnet was decommissioned.

MLM

Multi-Level Marketing

MMF

Make Money Fast

Modem

A device that allows connection to another computer via phone lines. Normal people use modems that transfer data at speeds ranging from 1200 bps to 19.2 Kbps.

Multicast

A type of network addressing that enables a node to send messages or data packets to an address that represents a group of stations rather than a single station.

Multiplex

The division of a single transmission medium into multiple logical channels supporting many simultaneous sessions. For example, one network may have simultaneous FTP, telnet, rlogin, and SMTP connections all going at the same time.

O

Octet

Internet standards-monger's lingo for a set of 8 bits, i.e., a byte.

One-Banana Problem

A measure of difficulty of a problem. A one-banana problem is simple, whereas a three-banana problem is fairly difficult. This term derives from large computer organizations where the programmers & engineers claim that the computer operators could be

Online

When you are logged onto a computer through your modem, you are said to be online.

Operating System

The foundation software of a machine. the software that schedules tasks,allocates memory, disk storage, and presents an interface to the user. the Macintosh operating system is called the Finder (which produces the pulldown menus, mouse pointer)

OSI (Open Systems Interconnect)

Short for Open System Interconnection, an ISO standard for worldwide communications that defines a networking framework for implementing protocols in seven layers. Control is passed from one layer to the next, starting at the application layer in one station, proceeding to the bottom layer, over the channel to the next station and back up the hierarchy.
Most of the functionality in the OSI model exists in all communications systems, although two or three OSI layers may be incorporated into one.
OSI is also referred to as the OSI Reference Model or just the OSI Model.

P

Packet

A bundle of data. On the Internet,data is broken up into small chunks,called "packets";each packet traverses the network independently. Packet sizes can vary from 40 to 32000 bytes, depending on network hardware and media, but normally less than 1500.   (synonym: frame)

Plug-in

A (usually small) piece of software that adds features to a larger piece of software. Common examples are plug-ins for the Netscape® browser and web server. Adobe Photoshop® also uses plug-ins. The idea behind plug-ins is that a small piece of software is loaded into memory by the larger program, adding a new feature, and that users need only install the few plug-ins that they need, out of a much larger pool of possibilities. Plug-ins are usually created by people other than the publishers of the software the plug-in works with.

Polling

Connecting to another system to check for things like mail or news.

Port (1)

A # that identifies a particular Internet application. When your computer sends a packet to another computer, that packet contains info about what protocol it's using, and what application it's communicating with. The port number identifies the application.

Port (2)

One of a computer's physical input/output channels.

Posting

An individual article sent to a Usenet news group; or the act of sending an article to a Usenet news group.

PPP (Point to Point Protocol)

A protocol that allows a computer to use the TCP/IP (Internet) protocols (and become a full-fledged Internet member) with a standard telephone line and a high-speed modem. (Replaces SLIP)

Protocols

A formal description of message formats and the rules two computers must follow to exchange messages. Standard protocols allow computers from different manufacturers to communicate, providing programs running on both ends agree on what the data means.

Q

QPSK (Quadrature Phase Shift Keying)

QPSK is a digital frequency modulation technique used for sending data over coaxial cable networks. Since it's both easy to implement and fairly resistant to noise, QPSK is used primarily for sending data from the cable subscriber upstream to the Internet.

Quadratic Texture Mapping

This technique, used with Nvidia-based 3D graphics boards, speeds up texture mapping and redrawing by reducing the amount of work required. Nvidia chips use fewer polygons to render an acceptable-looking rounded object. Filling the screen, therefore, takes less time and CPU horsepower than it would using another rendering chip.

QuickTime

Developed by Apple Computer, QuickTime is a method of storing sound, graphics, and movie files. If you see a MOV file on the Web or on a CD-ROM, you'll know it's a QuickTime file. Although QuickTime was originally developed for the Macintosh, player software is now available for Windows and other platforms. If you don't have a QuickTime player, you can always download versions for either Mac or PC from Apple's Web site.

R

RE

In support of Research or Education (in reference to what the Internet connection is used for).

Recursion

The facility of a programming language to be able to call functions from within themselves.

Resolve

Translate an Internet name into its equivalent IP address or other DNS information.

RFC (Request For Comments)

The documents which contain the standards and other information for the TCP/IP protocols and the Internet in general. They are available at several sites through anonymous FTP.

RFD (Request For Discussion)

Usually a two- to three-week period in which the particulars of newsgroup creation are battled out.

Route

The path that network traffic takes from its source to its destination.

Router

An intelligent interconnection device that decides which of several paths network traffic will follow. Routers use a routing protocol to gain information about the network topology and algorithms to choose the best route based on several criteria known as routing metrics. As internetworking devices, they open a virtual network to connect a sending station with a receiving station.

Routing

Finding an effective or efficient path through a network to a destination computer. Routing is almost always handled by the network or communication software.

S

Search Engine

> A mechanism for finding documents on the Internet. For example, Excite, Yahoo and Alta Vista are search engines.

Server

> A computer that shares its resources, such as printers and files, with other computers on the network but is used only to store and retrieve information.

Shareware

> Computer programs identified by the marketing method of allowing users to try them out, usually for a specific period of time, and if they wish to continue using them, they should register with the author and pay the requested minimal fee, usually ranging from $5 to $50, depending on the complexity of the program.

Signal-To-Noise Ratio

> When used in reference to Usenet activity, it describes the relation between amount of actual information in a discussion, compared to its quantity. (Lots of articles compared to what is useful in a newsgroup)

Signature

> The small, usually four-line message at the bottom of a piece of email or Usenet article. In Unix, it's added by creating a file '.signature' in the user's home directory. Large signatures are a no-no.

SLIP (Serial Line Internet Protocol)

> Allow computer to connect tot he Internet using a modem and a telephone line. Users then explore using Internet navigation software on their own computer. This type of connection simulates a network connection to the Internet.

Smiley

> See emoticon. :-)

SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol)

> The Internet standard protocol for transferring electronic mail messages from one computer to another. SMTP specifies how two mail systems interact and the format of control messages they exchange to transfer mail.

SNMP (Simple Network Management Protocol)

A standard protocol used to monitor hosts, routers, and the networks to which they are attached.

Spam

The act of spewing out large numbers of electronic messages via e-mail or newsgroups to people who don't want to receive them. Spamming is considered a gross breach of netiquette. The term is believed to be derived from a Monty Python skit in which the word "Spam" is repeated over and over again. Its relation to Spam, the much-maligned pork luncheon meat, is uncertain.

Spanning-Tree Protocol

Bridge protocol that uses the spanning-tree algorithm, enabling a learning bridge to dynamically work around loops in a network topology by creating a spanning tree. Bridges exchange BPDU messages with other bridges to detect loops, and then remove the loops by shutting down selected bridge interfaces. Refers to both the IEEE 802.1 Spanning-Tree Protocol standard and the earlier Digital Equipment Corporation Spanning-Tree Protocol upon which it is based. The IEEE version supports bridge domains and allows the bridge to construct a loop-free topology across an extended LAN. The IEEE version is generally preferred over the Digital version. Sometimes abbreviated as STP. See also BPDU, learning bridge, MAC address learning, spanning tree, and spanning-tree algorithm.

SSL

SSL is a transaction security standard developed by Netscape Communications to enable commercial transactions to take place over the otherwise notoriously nonsecure Internet. It's one of a few competing security standards.

Summarize

To encapsulate a number of responses into one coherent usable message. Often done on controlled mailing lists or active newsgroups, to help reduce bandwidth.

Synchronous

Data communications in which transmissions are sent at a fixed rate, with the sending and receiving devices synchronized.

T

T1, T3
Standards that represent 1.544 megabits (T1) and 45 megabits (T3) per second transmission speeds in data communications.

TCP/IP(Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol)
The language used of the Internet to support services such as remote login (telnet), file transfer (FTP) and mail (SMT). Allows millions of people to to use hundreds of computers at the same time.

Telnet
The Internet standard protocol for providing connection to a remote computer (remote login). Telnet allows a user at one site to interact with a remote system at another site as if the user's terminal were connected directly to the remote computer.

Terminal Server
A small, specialized, networked computer that connects many terminals to a LAN through one network connection. Any user on the network can then connect to various network hosts.

Twisted Pair
Cable made up of a pair of insulated copper wires wrapped around each other to cancel the effects of electrical noise.

U

UBE - Unsolicited Bulk Email
Email messages received but not requested from no one in particular about nothing in particular addressed to many, many people.

UCE - Unsolicited Commercial Email
Email messages received but not requested from a company or person trying to sell something.

UNIX
An operating system available for a wide range of computers. It is commonly referred to as the "operating system" of the Internet.

Unix box

A computer that uses an operating system called Unix to perform tasks. When this type of computer crashes, it is common to hear the operators say, "It looks like the box has fallen over."

URL - Universal Resource Locator

Anatomy of an URL

This part of the URL tells your software what protocol to use. (i.e. http* or ftp)

Though not neccessary, www is usually found in front of the domain , indicating web pages.

famvid.com is the domain name

Folders names are between slashes

http://www2.famvid.com/i101/internet101/web.html

"i101" and "internet101" are individual folders found on this server.

This is the name of the document that is being requested. html** is the language.

* http is HyperText Transfer Protocol
** html is HyperText Markup Language

Usenet

A worldwide Unix-based network that supports the distribution of messages.

Username or ID

Address representing a personal account on a large computer, i.e.. santa@north.pole.world.

UUCP (Unix to Unix Copy Program)
> A store-and-forward system primarily for Unix systems but currently supported on other platforms.

V

Veronica
> A Gopher service that provides keyword searching of gopher menu items.

Virtual
> Something that is simulated by the computer, rather than actually being a physical object. Virtual reality is a computer simulation that allows the user to interact with 3D graphics.

Virus
> A program that "infects" other programs by embedding a copy of itself in them.

Vote ACK
> Also known as Mass Ack; in Usenet, the posting of email address of each person that voted for or against a newsgroup proposal.

VT100
> A standard terminal type, supported by many computer systems, and emulated by many terminals or personal computers which are not themselves VT100 terminals.

W

WAIS (Wide Area Information Servers)
> Client software providing searching and retrieval of various databases.

WAN (Wide-Area Network)
> A network spanning hundreds or thousands of miles.

Web Browser
> An application that displays a Web page. Also known as a browser. Internet Explorer and Netscape are examples of web browsers.

Web Quest

A learning activity in which some or all of the information that students interact with comes from sites on the Internet.

Wizard

Similar to guru, although a wizard usually is extremely good at one particular program or computer.

Workstation

A networked personal computing device with more power than standard IBM PC or Macintosh. Typically, a workstation has an operating system such as Unix that is capable of running several tasks at the same time.

Worm

A computer program which replicates itself. The Internet worm was perhaps the most famous; it successfully (and accidentally) duplicated itself on many of the systems across Internet.

WRT

with respect to

WWW (World Wide Web)

A revolutionary Internet browsing system that allows for point and click navigation of the Net information contained on the World Wide Web. The WWW is a spiderweb-like interconnection of millions of bits of information across the Internet. A hypertext document contains text and graphical "links" to information spread out over the WWW.

WYSIMOLWYG (What You See Is More Or Less What You Get)

A common computer industry term for a computer or program which should be WYSIWYG, but does not quite make it. This is not a flattering description.

WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get)

A computer industry term which indicates that the work you do on your screen will appear exactly the same when you print it on the printer.

X

XML (Extensible Markup Language)

XML is the Extensible Markup Language, a system for defining specialized markup languages that are used to transmit formatted data. XML is conceptually related to HTML, but XML is not itself a markup language. Rather it's a metalanguage, a language used to create other specialized languages.

Xmodem

This is a protocol for transferring files during direct dial-up communications. Developed by Ward Christensen in 1977, Xmodem has basic error checking to ensure that information isn't lost or corrupted during transfer; it sends data in 128-byte blocks. Xmodem has undergone a couple of enhancements: Xmodem CRC uses a more reliable error-correction scheme, and Xmodem-1K transfers data faster by sending it in 1,024-byte blocks.

Y

Yoyo Mode

A state in which a computer system rapidly alternates between working correctly (being up) and crashing (being down).

Z

Z-buffer

In a graphics card, this section of video memory keeps track of which onscreen elements can be viewed and which are hidden behind other objects.

ZIF socket (zero insertion force socket)

Here's the problem: when you're swapping microprocessor chips in and out of their sockets (as you do when you're upgrading your CPU), you're in danger of bending a pin or a whole row of pins with the pressure you exert. When the chip is a Pentium worth hundreds of dollars, this is extremely bad news. So the industry introduced ZIF sockets, which use leverage instead of brute force to seat and unseat chips--thus taking the pressure out of chip relocation.

ZIP

An open standard for compression and decompression used widely for PC download archives, ZIP was developed by Phil Katz for his DOS-based program PKZip, and it is is now widely used on Windows-based programs such as WinZip and Drag and Zip. The file extension given to ZIP files is .zip.

Zmodem

This file transfer protocol should be your first choice for sending and receiving files using dial-up connections. Zmodem's speed and error checking recommend it, and it can resume a file transfer after a break in communications, so make sure this protocol is available in your communications software and any BBS you dial into. In case you couldn't tell, it's so named because it's intended to supersede Xmodem and Ymodem.