

ICT Glossary



ADSL	<i>(Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line)</i> A high-speed technology that allows large volumes of data to be sent over existing copper telephone lines . ADSL allows data rates of 1.5 to 9 Mbps when receiving data (known as the downstream rate) and from 16 to 640 Kbps when sending data (known as the upstream rate)..
Application	A program or group of programs (also known as software) designed to carry out a particular task. For example, a word processor is used for inputting and editing text.
Anti-virus software	A software program designed to identify and remove a known or potential computer virus
Attachment	A file that is sent as part of an email message but that is not part of the main message. Usually images, programs, or word processor files are sent as attachments, because most email programs allow only plain text in the body of a message.
Backup	To create a copy of a disk's contents on another location for safe keeping usually to removable media.
Bandwidth	The amount of data that can be transmitted over a network connection in a fixed amount of time. For digital devices, the bandwidth is expressed in bits per second (bps) kilobits per second (kbps), or megabits per second (mps).
Bit	<i>(Binary Digit)</i> . Either 1 or 0 in the binary system. In processing and storage, a bit is the smallest unit of information handled by a computer.
BPS	Bits per second is a measurement of the rate at which data is transferred from one place to another. For example, the data rate of a modem and computer affects the speed of information transmitted or received over the Internet.
Broadband	A term for high-speed, high-capacity Internet and data connections. It is a communications medium that uses wide-bandwidth channels for sending and receiving large amounts of data, video or voice information.
Buffer	A storage device, or an area on a storage device which temporarily stores data until needed for printing or processing. It helps compensate for differences in the rate of transfer of data from one device to another
Bug	An error or fault in computer software or hardware, which causes a program to malfunction.
Bus	The main communication avenue in a computer: A collection of wires,an electrical pathway through which data is transmitted from one part of a computer to another.
Byte	<i>(Binary term)</i> A unit of storage capable of holding a single character. A byte is equal to 8 bits. Large amounts of memory are indicated in terms of kilobytes(10^3 bytes), megabytes (10^6 bytes), gigabytes (10^9 bytes)and terabytes (10^{12} bytes).
Cache	A special computer data storage area (memory or disk) where frequently used data values are duplicated for quick access.
CAD	<i>(Computer Aided Design)</i> Drafting and design through the aid of a computer, which can handle technical geometric detail. It allows the user to manipulate drawings and view them from all angles.
Cards	Circuit boards that plug into computers to provide additional functionality, such as sound and video input and output.
CAT-5	Category 5 describes network cabling that consists of four twisted pairs of copper wire terminated by RJ45 connectors. Cat-5 cabling is the current networking standard.

CD-ROM	Computer Disk Read-Only Memory. A type of optical disc read by a laser beam which is capable of storing large amounts of data - such as words, graphics and sound - up to 1GB, although the most common size is 650MB (megabytes). This equates to up to 250,000 pages of text.
Compatibility	A situation whereby different pieces of equipment and/or software are capable of being used together without special modification or adaptation.
Compression	A technology that reduces the size of a file in order to save disc space or transmission time. For example MPEGS compress video data.
Computer	An electronic device that accepts structured input, processes it according to prescribed rules and produces the result as output.
Domain name	This is the text name that corresponds to the numeric IP address of a computer on the Internet.
Download	The process of transferring a copy of an electronic file from a remote computer to the requesting computer by means of a modem or network.
Driver	A program that determines how a computer communicates with a peripheral device. Every device, whether it be a printer, disk drive, or keyboard, must have a driver program.
DVD	<i>(Digital Versatile Disc or Digital Video Disc)</i> An optical disc of the same physical size as a CD but much greater storage capacity (approx seven times CD capacity on a single side) a minimum of 4.7GB, enough for a full-length movie. A DVD player or drive is required to read the contents of a DVD.
Electronic mail	<i>(E-mail)</i> The transmission of messages over a communications network.
End user	The final or ultimate user of a computer system. The end user is the individual who uses the software after it has been fully developed.
External bus	A bus (collection of wires) that connects a computer to peripheral devices. Two examples are the Universal Serial Bus (USB) and IEEE 1394.
Filtering software	A program developed to sort and block access to undesirable material on the Internet. The software company generally compiles a list of banned sites and keywords.
Firewall	A system designed to enforce security policies which prevents unauthorized access to or from a private network. Firewalls can be implemented in both hardware and software, or a combination of both.
FTP	<i>(File Transfer Protocol)</i> A set of rules by which documents, images and applications can be transferred from one computer to another over a network.
Gigabyte	<i>(Gb)</i> 1,024 megabytes or one thousand million bytes. The amount of hard disk space in a computer is usually measured in gigabytes.
Graphics card	A printed circuit board that plugs into a computer to give it display capabilities and to allow graphics output
Hard disk	A fixed magnetic disk generally fitted internally in a personal computer, on which computer data is stored on rotating magnetic surfaces. The term hard is used to distinguish it from a soft, or floppy, disk. Hard disks hold more data (anywhere from 10 megabytes to several gigabytes) and are faster than floppy disks.
Hardware	Refers to the physical components of a computer system, including both mechanical and electronic parts: the processor, memory, keyboard, monitor, mouse and printer.
Home page	The entry point or the first/main page of a Website. It serves as an index or a table of contents to other documents stored at a site.
Hub	A common connection point for all devices on a network. Hubs are used to connect segments of a Local Area Network (LAN)
Hypertext	A system in which objects (text, pictures, music, programs, and so on) can be creatively linked to each other, permitting the user to browse through related topics regardless of the presented order of the topics. A hypertext link (hyperlink) is the point of access to additional information on a Web page or CDROM.
IP address	<i>(Internet Protocol Address)</i> A unique identifier/the numeric address for a

Inkjet printer	computer or device on a TCP/IP network. A non-impact printer that sprays tiny drops of ink onto paper thus forming text and images.
Internet	The Internet is a network of networks consisting of many millions of computers around the world connected together by telephone lines, cables and satellites whereby any computer can communicate with any other computer .
Intranet	An Intranet uses the same technology as the Internet over a private or internal network and is not accessible by users outside the network.
Internet service provider	(ISP) A company that provides Internet connection to its customers. ISPs normally provide e-mail accounts and Web site space as part of the service.
ISDN	<i>(Integrated Services Digital Network)</i> An agreed standard for sending voice, video, and data over digital or normal telephone lines. ISDN connections consist of two 64Kbps lines, both lines can be used the simultaneously to offer speeds of 128Kbps.
JPEG	A JPEG(Joint Photographic Experts Group) or JPG is a standard image compression mechanism. JPEG compression is 'lossy' which means that image quality is sacrificed in exchange for a reduction in the file's size. Art and photos are generally encoded as JPEG files.
Laser printer	An electro-photographic printer based on the technology used by photocopiers. It is faster and produces better quality documents than an inkjet printer.
Leased line	A telephone channel leased from a telecommunications provider for private use.
Local area network	(LAN) A communications system linking computers within a restricted geographical area such as a building or campus. This also allows computers to share information from a central source.
LCD	<i>(Liquid Crystal Display)</i> . A display that uses liquid compound located between two transparent electrodes. For example, a digital camera has a LCD for viewing and editing photographs.
Megabyte	(Mb) 1,024 kilobytes or one million bytes.
Mbps	Abbreviation for Megabits per second, which measures the speed of data transfer.
Memory	The storage medium used by computer systems to hold programs and data. Usually RAM (a form of volatile memory, which is erased when the system is switched off) and ROM (which is a form of permanent memory).
MIDI	<i>(Musical Instrument Digital Interface)</i> A software standard that allows musical instruments such as synthesizers and drum machines to be controlled from a computer screen.
Modem	<i>(Modulator-demodulator)</i> A device that translates digital signals into ordinary telephone signals (and vice versa) so that data can be carried over ordinary telephone lines.
Monitor	A device, also known as a VDU (visual display unit) for viewing visual input to and output from a computer.
Mouse	A device, moved by hand across a flat surface, which control the movement of the cursor or pointer on a display screen.
MPEG	<i>(Moving Pictuer Experts Group)</i> The standard for compression of motion video and audio.
Multimedia	The use of computers to present text, graphics, video, animation, and sound in an integrated way. A multimedia machine is fitted with hardware such as a sound card and a CD-ROM drive to allow the full use of a multimedia product.
Operating system	(OS) Software which provides all the basic control functions to supervise the computer system. Not all computers use the same operating system.

Peripheral	Any hardware device, such as a scanner, printer or digital camera, which can be plugged into the computer to perform some additional function.
PDA	(<i>Personal Digital Assistant</i>) A small mobile hand-held device that provides computing, information storage and retrieval capabilities.
Pixel	Short for Picture Element. The smallest part of a digital image – also used in measuring image size and resolution.
Plug and play	Refers to the ability of a computer system to automatically configure peripherals and devices such as video adaptors, sound cards and graphic accelerators.
POP	(<i>Point of Presence</i>) A term used to refer to the location where Internet or network connections are made. The location is in the form of a number which a modem dials in order to connect to a service provider.
PPP	(<i>Point to Point Protocol</i>) An internet protocol for connecting computers over a serial line. It is a kind of Internet connection that defines how a modem connection exchanges data packets with other systems on the Internet.
Portal	A Web site or service that offers a broad array of resources and services, such as e-mail, forums, search engines and links for a specific subject area. For example, www.scoilnet.ie is a portal Web site for Irish education.
Printer Processor	A peripheral device that prints output from a computer on to paper. Short for microprocessor or Central Processing Unit (CPU). The processor is the brains of the computer, where most calculations and computing takes place.
Proxy server	A program that acts as an intermediary between a workstation and the internet so that security can be ensured. A proxy server caches information to provide faster access to web pages and increase network security.
Protocol	An agreed-upon format or set of rules to enable smooth data transmission between computers. (<i>Random Access Memory</i>) The memory required while programs are being run. When the power is removed from RAM its contents are lost. This means that you must save work in progress to the hard disk or floppy disk regularly.
RAM	
ROM	(<i>Read Only Memory</i>) A form of memory that stores data which is permanent and cannot be altered. It can retrieve data after the power has been switched off.
Router	A piece of hardware that routes data from a local area network (LAN) to a phone line.
Scanner	A peripheral device for importing pictures and text into a computer. A type of scanner known as a flatbed scanners works rather like a portable photocopying machine.
Server	A powerful computer on a network that manages network resources and delivers information and software to other computers which are linked by a network..
SCSI card	(<i>Small Computer Systems Interface card</i>) Pronounced as ‘scuzzy’ it is an interface card for attaching high-speed peripheral devices such as scanners to computers.
Shareware	Software that is obtained outside normal distribution channels. It is available for free or for a fee charged by the software developers. A licence may also be needed to use it after an initial period.
Software	The set of instructions that enable computer systems to process information is referred to as software. In simple terms, anything that can be stored electronically is software. However, it is recorded or stored on hardware (such as a hard disk).
Sound card	A printed circuit board that can be plugged into a slot in the motherboard of a computer to expand its capabilities and allow sound output.
Tape drive	A device similar to a tape recorder used for reading and writing data to tapes. Tapes are primarily used to back-up files and applications stored on the hard disk.
TCP/IP	Abbreviation for Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol, the suite

Upload	of communications protocols used to connect computers on the Internet. The process of transferring a copy of an electronic file from a local computer to a remote computer by means of a modem or network. For example, in order to send files across a network they must be uploaded to the network from your computer.
URL	(<u>Uniform Resource Locator</u>) An address that enables Web users to locate information at different Web sites on the World Wide Web. Example: http://www.ncte.ie
USB	(<u>Universal Serial Bus</u>) is a port on a computer that allows external devices to be connected on a 'plug and play' basis. It supports data transfer rates of 12 Mbps. A single USB port can be used to connect up to 127 peripheral devices, such as mice, modems, and keyboards.
VGA	((<u>Video Graphics Array</u>) is an <u>analog computer display standard</u> first introduced by IBM as a standard for displaying information on a display screen that is the lowest common denominator that all <u>PC</u> graphics hardware supports before a device-specific driver is loaded into the computer. It has been technologically outdated in the PC market for some time
	VGA was officially superseded by IBM's <u>XGA</u> standard, but in reality it was superseded by numerous extensions to VGA made by <u>clone</u> manufacturers that came to be known as " <u>Super VGA</u> ".
Virus	A manmade program or piece of code which is loaded onto and runs on your computer without your knowledge written with the deliberate intention of corrupting files. A virus can sometimes replicate itself.
Web browser	A software application used to locate and display Web pages, such as Netscape Navigator, Microsoft Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox.
Windows	A family of operating systems for personal computers developed by Microsoft. The latest version is Windows Vista. Other versions are 95, 98, NT, ME and 2000 and XP.
World Wide Web (WWW)	WWW is a way of publishing and accessing information over the medium of the Internet. It is an information-sharing model that is built on top of the Internet. The Web uses the HTTP protocol, only This system contains a network of servers that supports documents written in a format known as HTML (Hypertext Markup Language).

Relevant Web Sites

Webopedia
www.webopedia.com
 Online Dictionary

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