## GLOSSARY

### A

**Active window**: a window that is currently being worked with by a user.

**Address bar**: a text area provided in an Internet browser window for entering Internet addresses of web pages.

**Address line**: in Internet Explorer, the text box that contains the address of the website being viewed on the World Wide Web.

**Adware**: software installed on a computer that displays ads to the computer’s user.

**Application**: a computer program that allows a user to process certain kinds of information to achieve a particular objective. For example, a word processing application is a computer program that allows a user to enter and modify text.

**Arithmetic logic unit (ALU)**: the part of the central processing unit that performs arithmetic or logical operations.

**Associated**: in a database, field properties for a particular field are associated to that field. All data entered in this field in any record will be affected by all associated field properties.

**Asymmetric multiprocessing**: a multitasking method in which application processes are assigned to specific CPUs with their own memory.

### B

**Backup**: a program that copies files or entire disks onto tape or disk cartridges for safekeeping.

**Bit**: the smallest measurement of information that a computer can understand: either a 1 or a 0. A series of bits together forms a pattern that computers understand as input.

**Blog**: a webpage containing online journal entries that often reflect the personal beliefs or tastes of its author. Abbreviation of the word weblog.

**Blogger**: a blog’s author.

**Bookmark**: a shortcut to a web page added by the user to return to a page quickly.

**Broadband technology**: any technology that provides high-speed network or Internet connectivity, e.g., cable, DSL, or T1 connections.
**Buffer**: a temporary memory storage area.

**Byte**: a string of eight bits. See bit.

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**Cable broadband service**: Internet access that is made available through the unused portion of a television cable connection.

**Cache**: disk space that is reserved to store information that the computer’s memory needs to access often.

**Cascaded windows**: a setting that allows windows to overlap each other.

**Cascading menu**: an additional menu that appears when certain menu options are selected; cascading menus are designated with a right-pointing arrow.

**CD**: compact disc, an optical storage medium for computer or musical information.

**Chevrons**: arrows that indicate movement or a direction. For example: << and >>.

**Chipset**: a group of **microchips** on the **motherboard** called that controls the flow of data and instructions to and from the CPU, providing careful timing of activities.

**Chip**: a set of circuits fused to a thin strip of semiconductor material that is used to store and transport information in a computer.

**Client**: a program.

**Clipboard**: a feature of Windows that retains content that has been cut or copied so that it can be pasted in a different location or program.

**Collapse**: showing less content in a view of a list.

**Column**: in a database, a column is the vertical component of a table. It is a type or category of information. Database columns are often called “fields.” In a spreadsheet, a column is labeled with one or more letters at the top of the spreadsheet.

**Computer**: a device that receives data inputs, processes them using programs or applications, and produces data outputs.

**Context switching**: a multitasking process in which multiple processes can be open but only one process is active.
Control unit: the part of the central processing unit that coordinates or directs processing and calculations.

Cooperatives: multiple processes that switch back and forth automatically when they reach logical break points.

Central processing unit (CPU): a processor that controls the operation of a computer by performing logical operations and decoding and executing instructions.

Criteria: in a search or query, this is the words or numbers for which search or query looks. Advanced searches and queries can use criteria composed of formulas and comparisons.

Cursor: a flashing vertical line that indicates the location where text will appear as you start typing.

Custom software: software designed and developed to meet the specific needs of an organization.

Database: a collection of information, usually numbers and text, which is organized into tables.

Data cable: a cord or wires that allows transfer of data among different devices.

Data type: the kind of data a particular field in a database holds.

Datasheet view: a Microsoft Access view type that displays a table as a spreadsheet in rows and columns.

Denial-of-service attack: a malicious action by a hacker that prevents legitimate users from accessing an Internet-based page or resource.

Desktop: the main window of the Windows workspace; the Windows desktop can contain shortcuts and icons for the Recycle Bin, My Computer, My Documents, and so on.

Design view: a view in Microsoft Access that lets you design a database.

Device drivers: programs that translate inputs into data a CPU can understand.

Dial-up: a connection to the Internet using a phone-based modem to transmit analog signals over phone lines.

Digital subscriber (or signal) line service (DSL): the technology that enables data to be sent over the same phone lines as a voice communication but at a different frequency, so that both data and voice can co-exist on the same line without interference.
**Digital versatile disc (DVD)**: digital video (or versatile) disc, an optical storage medium for computer or musical information. Often used for very large files (such as movies) because of its large storage capacity.

**Directory tree**: an analogy for the hierarchical structure of folders in a computer, with a root folder and branching subfolders.

**Domain name**: a portion of a web page’s address that represents a numeric IP address or range of addresses, or location of the page.

**Dragging and dropping**: clicking and dragging a file or folder icon or selected text to change its location.

**Drop-down arrow**: a control in a menu that allows you to expand the menu from a single line to a list of options. Click an option from a drop-down menu to select it.

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**E**

**Expansion cards**: Circuit boards that can be installed on the motherboard to expand the capabilities of the computer.

**Expansion slots**: Narrow opening on the motherboard to accommodate expansion cards.

**Extension**: three letters following a period at the end of a file’s name that indicate the program the file was created. Extensions also direct Windows to use a certain program to open the file.

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**F**

**Fault-tolerant computer**: a system with separate CPUs that can continue to operate even if one of its components fails.

**Field**: in a database, a single unit of data. Several fields together make up a record.

**Flavors**: versions of software.

**Floppy disk**: small-capacity removable media for information storage.

**Floppy drive**: a device that reads and writes floppy disks.

**Folders**: directories on a hard drive, removable storage media, or a network server where you can store or access files; also, the icons that represent directories.

**Foreign key**: in a database, this is a column that provides the relationship between two tables.
Form view: a Microsoft Access view that displays a single screen that shows the fields for a single row.

Frozen: unresponsive; computers are said to be frozen when they do not respond to mouse clicks and keystrokes.

G

Gigabyte: 1 billion bytes; an increment of storage size.

Gigahertz: 1 billion hertz; an increment of processor speed.

Graphical user interface (GUI): an interface that allows a user to carry out commands by clicking, dragging, or otherwise manipulating images on the computer’s screen.

Graphics applications: software you can use to create or edit images and photos.

H

Hacker: people who gain access to computer systems without authorization to steal and/or corrupt data.

Hard drive: a storage vessel for data that is composed of platters or disks that rotate at a high speed and are enclosed in an airtight sealed case.

Hardware: computers and their physical components and accessories.

Heat sink: a device that absorbs heat, used in a computer to absorb heat generated from the components of the computer to protect the components from melting or otherwise malfunctioning.

Hertz: a measurement of the speed of a processor.

Home page: the website specified as a user’s start page.

Hyperlink: text that contains a link to another page or location in a file. Click a hyperlink to follow the link.

Hypertext mark-up language (HTML): a language used to create pages on the World Wide Web.
Icons: images that represent such items as documents, spreadsheets, programs, and folders.

Input device: an item such as a keyboard or mouse that a computer user employs to enter information into a computer.

Instant message (IM): a program that allows users to type and send messages to be received by another user immediately. Also called chat.

Internet: a worldwide assembly of networks of computers, all of which are connected using various means.

Internet browser: an application used to view pages on the World Wide Web.

Internet Explorer: a Microsoft application used to browse the Internet.

Internet Protocol (IP): the standard that allows all the computers on the Internet to communicate with each other.

Internet service provider (ISP): entities that offer a means for organizations and individuals to connect to the Internet.

Keyboard: a device used to input data into a computer using numbers and letters (and sometimes function keys, such as F1 or F3).

Keyword: a word entered in a search to find related pages or topics.

Kilobyte: 1,000 bytes; an increment of storage size.

Layout: in databases, the general style of a particular report.

Local area network (LAN): a network that is owned by a single organization and usually operates in a small physical area (usually no more than 2 to 3 miles in diameter). It is privately wired (i.e., not part of the telephone system) and transmits data only.
Megabyte: 1 million bytes; an increment of storage size.

Megahertz: 1 million hertz; an increment of processor speed.

Memory: The chips within a computer where data and instructions are stored for processing.

Memory card: A module that includes circuit board containing memory chips. You can insert these into your computer’s motherboard to increase the available memory.

Memory slot: The socket on a computer’s motherboard into which a memory card is inserted.

Menu: a text-based listing of program options found in most Windows-based programs.

Merge: in a table, to combine two or more cells into one cell.

Microchips: An integrated circuit; small, thin piece of silicon onto which the transistors making up the microprocessor are etched. A microprocessor chip might consist of a few thousand transistors etched onto a chip just a few millimeters square.

Motherboard: the primary set of circuits that run a device such as a computer. A motherboard connects all the chips that run the computer together, providing power and organizing the processing power of the chips.

Mouse: a hand-operated input device for a computer with a graphical user interface. A user moves a mouse on a flat surface, which triggers a track ball inside the mouse to register the movements onto a computer screen. Buttons on the mouse allow the user to perform actions (such as clicking, dragging, or hovering) on the objects found on the screen.

Multiprocessing: performing more than one task simultaneously on computers that have more than one CPU (multiprocessors).

Multitasking: performing several instructions at once on a computer.

Multithreading: multitasking with a single program.

Multiuser timesharing: operating systems that allow multiple users to run the same program at one time (used on servers, minicomputers, mainframes).

My Computer: a window that allows you to locate and manage your files and folders.

My Documents: the default folder in Windows where you can save files.
Native program: the program in which a file is created.

Navigation toolbar: a series of buttons with icons that represent commonly used options to move around in an application.

Newsgroups: Internet-based public discussion forums that may be read by anyone at any Usenet site worldwide using a program called a newsreader.

Newsreader: a program used to participate in a newsgroup on the Internet.

Object link embedding (OLE): inserting a graphic, picture, sound, and so on into a file.

Operating system: a specific set of instructions programmed into a computer to make it perform rudimentary functions.

Operations: tasks to be carried out by the computer.

Packaged software: a program or group of programs developed to be used by a variety of users, and to be sold to the general public.

Page: a fixed number of bytes used in the paging process.

Paging: a process in which a fixed number of bytes called a page is transferred from the disk to memory each time data or program instructions are needed.

Peripheral device: an item temporarily connected to a computer that allows the computer to perform specific tasks, such as scan a document or store data outside the computer. Peripheral devices are not permanently connected to the computer.

Piracy: the practice of obtaining software illegally.

Playlist: a list of files that can be played or viewed in a media player.

Port: sockets to which a peripheral device such as a printer or keyboard can be connected. Ports are usually attached to expansion cards inserted into the computer’s motherboard.
Precedence: the order in which calculations are performed.

Preemptive: operating system prioritizes the processes to be performed and assigns a set amount of CPU time for the execution of each process.

Primary key: in a database, a column where no two records can have the same value. This ensures that every record is unique.

Primary storage: memory; the chips within a computer where data and instructions are stored for processing.

Process: a program or part of a program that can be executed (run) separately.

Process management: a function of the operating system that distributes system resources so each task receives enough processing time to run correctly.

Processing: storage, analysis, and/or dissemination of inputs.

Processor: a device that controls the operation of a computer by performing logical operations and decoding and executing instructions.

Property: a description of the type of data a database field can contain.

Public-domain software: software that is not copyrighted.

Query: a request for information from a database.

Queuing: a process of input management in which a spooler lines up jobs and processes them individually.

Random-access memory: memory that processes information as the user gives commands, and is erased when the computer is shut down.

Range reference: refers to all the cells between and including the reference. A range reference consists of two cell addresses separated by a colon.

Record: in a database, a collection of related fields. For example, in a phone database, the name, number, and street address fields of a store would make up the store’s record.
Recycle Bin: a folder for temporary storage of files to be deleted. Files placed in the Recycle Bin are not actually deleted until the user “empties” the Recycle Bin.

Read-only memory: memory that contains the built-in applications that run whenever the computer is turned on, and remains in the computer when the power is shut down.

Registers: memory that is integrated into the CPU. Used for storing data needed by the CPU itself.

Relationship: in a database, a relationship between two tables means that at least one of the columns in each table refers to the same information. Generally, this relationship is between a foreign key and primary key.

Report: in a database, the formatted output of a query.

Restart: a selection that ends a session, shuts down the operating system, and quickly starts the operating system again without shutting off the computer.

Return: to provide the results of a query in a database.

Root: the topmost directory in a file system.

Row: in a database, a single “record” of data. In a spreadsheet, a row has a numeric label on the left.

Running: causing a query to be applied to a database so that it returns the desired data.

Search engine: Web portals that allow a user to search the entire Web for topics and information based on the specifications they enter.

Secondary storage: removable or permanent storage that can be used to store data and instructions that are not always actively used.

Server space: file storage that is available to a user when a computer is connected to the server’s network.

Shareware: software that is distributed free of charge for a temporary trial period. After the trial ends, you must either pay for the software or cease using it.

Shortcut menu: a menu that appears when you right-click an object.

Software: a set of instructions that a computer uses to accomplish a particular task.

Source code: the written instructions to the computer that form a program.
**Spam**: unwanted, or “junk,” e-mail.

**Spooler**: a program that queues jobs for processing.

**Spreadsheet application**: software that allows users to manipulate and analyze numbers.

**Spyware**: programs that are installed on a computer without the user’s knowledge that collects and send information about the user or computer to another party.

**Start menu**: a menu that is accessed by clicking the Start button on the task bar, the Start menu displays a menu of programs and folders and options to adjust settings and connections and enables you to shut off the computer.

**Suite**: two or more programs bundled together for distribution by a software manufacturer.

**Surf**: view web pages using an Internet browser.

**System software**: software that controls how a computer operates runs other types of software.

**Symmetric multiprocessing**: a multitasking method in which application processes are assigned to whatever CPU is available.

**Swapping**: moving processes from the main memory to the disk and back.

**System tray**: the right-most portion of the task bar that displays the clock and can show icons for programs and utilities.

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**Table**: in a database, a set of columns and rows.

**Tabular**: a columnar format in a database report.

**Task bar**: a control that appears on the Windows desktop that displays the Start button, system tray, and buttons for every open task.

**Task pane**: a section of a Microsoft Office window that displays links to common functions.

**Terabyte**: 1 trillion bytes; an increment of storage size.

**Text area**: a portion of a word processing window that displays characters, tables, and images.

**Text wrapping**: in a word processing program, the automatic creation of a new line when the characters typed reach the end of a line.
**Tiled windows**: a setting that allows you to view all open windows at once.

**Toggle**: to turn on or off. Often a check mark indicates if an option is on.

**Toolbar**: a section of a Microsoft Office window that displays a row of buttons with icons. These buttons provide access to the most common functions of an application.

**Trojan horse**: a malicious program that masquerades as a desirable program in prompt installation by a user.

**U**

**Uniform resource locator (URL)**: The location of a file on the Web.

**Union reference**: refers to two or more cell references. A union reference consists of two or more cell addresses separated by a comma.

**Universal serial bus (USB)**: a modern standard for the connection and transfer of data between peripheral devices to computers.

**Usenet**: a collection of discussion groups organized by topic and distributed around the world on the Internet and other networks.

**V**

**Validation**: in databases, a field property that forces a person to follow specific rules when entering data.

**Validation text**: an error message attached to a database field that gives the user more information about how to enter information into the field.

**Virtual memory**: a process that uses a portion of the hard disk to store data that normally takes up memory so the memory can be used for other purposes.

**Virus**: a malicious program that executes and replicates itself on a computer without the user’s knowledge.
Webpage: documents tied together by tags or keywords that use an association to link them together in a logical manner.

Website: a group of web pages with related content or purpose written in a coding language that makes it possible to add pictures, sound, and interactivity to plain text.

Window: a rectangular area on the computer’s screen, the contents of which represent an open program or folder.

Windows Media Player: an application that allows a user to play music on a computer with sound capabilities.

Wireless Internet service (WiFi): access to the Internet using wireless access points, or hotspots.

Word processing application: allow users to create, format, print, and save standard documents for business and home use, and include a focus on flexibility in editing.

World Wide Web: an interconnected set of web pages available through the Internet that present content using text, graphics, and hyperlinks.

Word wrap: in a word processing program, the automatic creation of a new line when the characters typed reach the end of a line.

Worm: a malicious program that can tie up resources by replicating and sending itself hundreds or thousands of times without requiring human interaction.

Writing to: indicates that the data you are typing will be saved in the current record in a database. Indicated by a small pencil icon.