

Definitions

More about computer software

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cracker	A person who breaks into computer systems, using them without authorization, either maliciously or to just to show off.
database	A large collection of data organized for rapid search and retrieval. Also denotes a program that manages data, and can be used to store, retrieve, and sort information (<i>e.g.</i> , Lotus Approach, Microsoft Access, Filemaker, and dBASE). A “relational database” is a type of database that uses tables to store data, much like a spreadsheet program.
desktop publishing	A.k.a. DTP. Using a desktop computer to produce camera-ready copy (documents) for printing. Desktop publishing makes use of word-processing programs, page-layout programs, and a printer. Desktop publishing can also involve use of a scanner for the replication of images as well as graphics programs for the creation of images. Two programs often used for desktop publishing are Pagemaker and QuarkXPress, as both make the laying out of text and graphics simple.
hacker	Someone who is knowledgeable about computers and creative in computer programming, usually implying the ability to program in what’s called assembly language or low-level languages. “Hacker” can also mean an expert programmer who finds special tricks for getting around obstacles and stretching the limits of a system. To some people, “hacker” also means an unconventional programmer or one who is not formally trained, or one who jerry-rigs programs (making temporary fixes that are not well-done). Incidentally, at MIT (and elsewhere), a “hack” means a practical joke, especially one that requires intelligence and technological skill to carry out.
piracy	The illegal copying of software for personal or commercial use.
spreadsheet program	A program which uses tables to display numbers in rows and columns. A spreadsheet program, typically, can convert these tables into charts and graphs. Spreadsheet programs are used for accounting, budgeting, financial analysis, scientific applications, and other work with figures. Each location in a spreadsheet is called a cell, and each cell has a number, such as A3, B4, <i>etc.</i> The value of a cell may be calculated from a formula involving other cells; for example, C5 may be the sum of A5 and B5. If the data entered in A5 changes, then C5 would be automatically recalculated by the program. This feature makes it possible to use a spreadsheet to project the results of a change in one or more factors.

definitions continue on opposite side...

word processor	A computer program used to produce formatted textual documents. (However, newer word processors also enable a user to include graphics and multimedia in a document.) Examples of word processors include ClarisWorks, Microsoft Word, and WordPerfect.
Y2K	<i>Year 2000.</i> The year that many computers may develop problems because of lack of foresight on the part of programmers. In the 1980s and before, most computer programs were designed to store only the last two digits of the years on all dates. When the Year 2000 comes, these programs will show dates of 00, which may be interpreted as 1900. This discrepancy may cause widespread problems, especially in the large computer systems used by governments and large industries. For some reason, few people thought to do something about this problem until the 1990s. Even though many programs have been updated (fixed), it will be difficult to track down all the places the “date problem” occurs.