

Art 109 Computer Terminology Glossary

(●) should know by midterm

A

● **active window** - a graphic rectangle in which computer activity is reflected in text or images, and is open to current activity, as opposed to an inactive window in the background.

algorithm - a set of instructions likened to a formula or recipe required to carry out a specific function. Relative to computer digital imaging the term is used most frequently to refer to the data processing procedure involved in **compressing** or expanding image data files.

● **aliasing** - the effect in a digital image made up of essentially a grid of square pixels defining a diagonal line with a jagged stair step effect. the jagged appearance may also effect parts of curved lines. the term for the effect is popularly referred to as the jaggies.

● **anti-aliasing--** A technique for smoothing the rough edges (the infamous jaggies) of bitmapped graphics, usually by blurring the edges.

● **analog** - electronic information devices which operate on the basis of a continuous modulated flow of current or radio waves. Used more broadly analog refers to differences like that between a traditional time-piece with a face with printed symbols for the minutes and hours which are pointed to by hands indication to the current time. Compared to an electronic watch, a digital display shows the time in numbers which change continuously as time progresses.

● **analog to digital converter** - a device, usually an add-in circuit board for a personal computer, which converts an analog electronic signal, like a still/video image, into digital information comprised of zeros and ones. these devices referred to as ASC's or digitizer boards are essential to inputting such electronic media as stereo sound, video, and still/video into a computer for multi-media playback and authoring, as well as digital imaging processing. See **digitise**.

● **apple menu--**the menu at the left end of the menu bar in the Finder and within applications. You can make any file, folder, or hard disk appear on the apple menu by adding it or its Alias to the apple menu items folder in the system folder.

● **AppleTalk--**The network protocols built into every Mac. The Mac uses AppleTalk to talk to laser printers and other Macs connected to it via a cabling scheme such as LocalTalk or **Ethernet**. Compare **TCP/IP**.

● **application** - a computer software program designed to provide ready-made functions which perform specific tasks. Examples of preprogrammed off-the shelf applications are the many name-brand word processors like WordPerfect and WordStar.

ASCII - American Standard Code for Information Interchange (pronounced askee). ASCII primarily refers to the sets of computer code assigned to provide a universal response to keyboard input. Text recorded in ASCII format is intended to be accessible by all IBM compatible personal computers running the DOS operating system. In practical terms ASCII permits data to be written and read by different programs which are otherwise utilize incompatible language systems.

aspect ratio - the relative size relationship between length and width of a rectangle

defining the edges of an image. For example the standard 35mm film aspect ratio reflecting the 1x1 1/2 inch size is 2:3.

- **backup** - a safety or precautionary function accomplished by saving data file information created with a computer in a second, separate file usually on a medium different than the memory storage used to save the primary copy.

B

- **bezier curve** - a curve that is irregular, the shape of which is defined mathematically by the connection of more than two points on a line describing the shape. See [Vector Graphic](#).

- **binary** - an image composed of just two values. Binary generally applied to computers refers to the primary characteristic of the machine's language which consists of just two values, one and zero.

- **bit** - a shortened reference to a binary digit, the smallest reducible part of an element of computer data, and is either a one or zero. In computer language bits are usually arranged in groups referred to as a string, frequently eight bits in length, to make up a single piece of useful information (data), referring to as a byte. In digital imaging the density of information describing each picture element is defined by the length of the bit string defining a pixel, 4bit, 8bit, 16bit, 24bit, etc.

- **bitmap** - a computer image made up of individual pixels having differentiated values defining the content of a visual field as represented by a video monitor screen. The basic format of a digital image comprised of pixels making up a data file, with the file format usually designated by the suffix .BMP, popularly referred to verbally as a bump file.

- **bitmapped font**-- A font in which each character is made up of a pattern (map) of dots. To display it correctly, you must have a separate set of character maps for each size (10 point, 12 point, and so on)—otherwise, you'll have a bad case of the jaggies. Also called a fixed-size or screen font. Compare outline font

- **bitmapped graphic** -- An image made up of dots (bits) rather than discrete objects. Typically produced by paint, image-editing, and 3-D graphics programs. Sometimes called a [raster](#) image. Compare object-oriented graphic.

- **booting** --Starting up a computer, which loads the system software into memory. (The idea is that the computer is "pulling itself up by its own bootstraps.") Restarting the computer is called [rebooting](#) or a warm boot.

- **browse** --1. To read messages posted in the public message area of a bulletin board service, or the libraries in such a service. 2. To surf pages on the World Wide Web and Usenet newsgroups.

- **browser** --An application which reads and displays World Wide Web pages.

bus - the physical wire connection with a microprocessor that routes and transmits data between the components of a computer. Often referred to as the data bus, this physical component of a main board is the main path for data transfer from various input device, to and from both volatile and permanent memory storage, and the video monitor. The width of the interface is defined by the number of connections providing the movement of one bit of information at a time, with standard data bus sizes of 8bits, 16bits and 32bits.

- **button** -- A control inside a dialog box that lets you give a command or select options. The standard rounded-rectangle shape commonly referred to as a "button" is actually a push button; radio buttons and check boxes are other kinds of buttons.

- **byte** - a standardized single piece of computer information comprised of 8 bits. A byte is the single digit measurement used to define computer data storage space.

C

cache - a small amount of high speed memory directly accessible by the main processor, and accessed to store frequently used data required for processing to avoid having to refer to the larger slower memory in **RAM**.

- **card** - circuit board devices which are installed in slots or long multi-contact sockets which are a part of the main or motherboard of a personal computer.

- **CD-ROM** - Compact disk, read-only memory. A type of storage device that looks just like an audio CD (in fact, you can play audio CDs on a CD-ROM drive) and stores as much data as a large hard disk (600MB or so), making it a popular means of distributing fonts, photos, electronic encyclopedias, games, and multimedia offerings. As the name indicates, however, you can't save or change files on a CD-ROM, only read them. Pronounced "see-dee rom."

- **Central processing unit** - the single primary micro-chip at the heart of the system which does all of the primary data processing. It is popularly shortened to the acronym CPU. Designations used in conjunction with various IBM compatible computers like 486 or 286 are references to Intel's microprocessor nomenclature, chip model number like 80386. See **processor**.

- **check box** - a small square in a video monitor screen dialogue box providing the computer user with the ability to activate or deactivate the associated function.

- **click** - an action performed with a computer's digital input device, like a mouse or digitizer tablet, which involves pressing a button or similar switching device to signal the activation of a selected function.

- **clipboard** - a specially defined memory capability used to temporarily store data copied from one document so it may be transferred and placed in another document or location in that document.

clone - a word often used to describe a computer constructed on the same basic design basis as a popular brand name model. All IBM compatible personal computers fall within the reference field of clone.

- **CMYK** - the three primary offset/lithographic printing colors. (cyan, magenta and yellow, plus black) In computer photo-editing programs CMYK refers to an image format having the image data separated into four separated channels, one for each of these primary printing colors.

- **color monitor** - a computer video display having a screen imaging capability of reproducing color.

- **color palette** - a selectable range of colors represented in a chart-like form usually in a small window which is part of the working screen of a computer paint, draw or photo-editing program.

command - a general computer term referring to a single instruction or integral set of instructions that when initiated cause a processor to perform a specific single or series of functions.

- **compressor** - an auxiliary microchip similar to the CPU chip that is used in conjunction with

the central processor to speed up the processing of certain kinds of numerically intensive data, like the computations involved in some computer aided engineering design applications. A popular term referring to this kind of data processing is number crunching.

- **crash**--the accidental physical contact of the read/write head with its spinning magnetic disk, causing physical damage and the loss of data stored in memory on the magnetic disk. In broader terms it refers to a general malfunction of the whole computer.

cross-platform -- Refers to software (or anything else) that will work on more than one platform (type of computer).

- **cursor** --1. The little shape that moves around on the screen when you move the mouse. The most common is the pointer, the black arrow that you use to select things on the desktop and from menus. 2. The blinking vertical bar that indicates the insertion point in text. (There are really no such thing as a cursor on the Mac—it's used on more primitive computers—but people often say cursor when they mean pointer.)

- **cut**--to cut something as a computer command, is to copy it and in so doing, remove it from the original. The cut command is used when a computer user wants to remove a piece of data and move it to another location. The cut command stores data cut in a special automatically designated area of RAM, the clipboard for instance, until it is assigned to another location.

D

- **data** --The generic name for anything you input to a computer, or anything it outputs to you. It's the plural of datum, a single piece of information.

database --A file created by a database manager that contains a collection of information organized into records, each of which contains labeled categories (called fields). It's sort of like an electronic Rolodex, or a set of 3-by-5-inch file cards.

- **data compression**--the application of a processing formula based on an algorithm which connects the data by removing noise and redundancy so the file will require less storage space, and can also be transmitted by communication media more rapidly.

- **desktop**--the computer video display screen metaphor for an actual desktop working surface. Instead of physical tools and appliances found on a typical physical desktop, a computer desktop uses icons and menus which represent instruction sets to carry out functions corresponding to those done by hand at a real desk.

desktop publishing--the computer creation of a variety of different kinds of documents containing both text, graphic design elements and illustration, which is then reproduced in printed form directly by the computer (desktop publishing frequently involves creating a master which is then duplicated in quantity using more or less traditional printing facilities). Desktop publishing programs are computer software packages which emulate traditional typesetting, layout design, paste-up, strip-in, halftone, and color separation functions.

- **dialog box**--a video monitor screen window that contains specifically identified function controls consisting of on/off radio buttons, selection lists, and text input partitions. Dialog boxes provide a graphic user facility to instruct the computer efficiently to perform certain standard functions like commanding a printer to print a document, often with one or more options defining function parameters.

- **digital**--a term virtually synonymous with the word computer, referring to the nature of the information medium structure being a binary system of zeros and ones. The use of the term digital in combination with other terms like image, recording and communications specifies that as modified, the referent functions on the basis of a binary language or signal.

A digital recording for instance, is one that records the information in a binary encoded format consisting of a series of strings of ones and zeros.

● **digitise** -- To turn something from the real (analog) world into digital data on a computer. You might use a scanner to digitise pictures or text, a sound digitiser to record music or a human voice, or a video-digitising board to input video from a VCR or camcorder. Also [see sampling](#).

● **dithering**--the conversion of a continuous-tone bitmap image into a pattern of dots whose distribution and density represents different tone levels of density, and allowing the image to be printed to simulate a continuous tone image using a two-tone (black & white) printer. Dithering is a computer shorthand method of half-toning using a fixed translation method.

● **dot**--the smallest element in a computer graphic image. A dot is the area defined in size by the statement dots per inch or DPI. If the DPI is 300, the size of the dot would approximate 1/300 of an inch in height and width, and would define the area represented by a pixel (picture information element) in a digitized image.

● **download**--1. To retrieve a file from another computer using a modem. For instance, you might download some shareware from an on-line service. Opposite of upload. 2. To send a font or Postscript file from the Mac to a printer. In general, any font installed on your Mac is a downloadable font, and downloading can be done automatically or manually.

● **drag**--a function of graphic user interface (GUI) programs using a digital input device (mouse) to move an object on the video monitor screen from one location to another.

● **Drag-and-Drop** --1. The capability, introduced in System 7.5, that lets you drag selected items directly from one document to another (even across applications) or onto the desktop. 2. Also refers to the editing option in some word processors that lets you drag selected text and drop it elsewhere within the same document. 3. Formerly used to identify the ability to drag a document icon onto an application icon and have it open.

E, F

EPS -- Encapsulated Postscript, a standard file format for high-resolution Postscript illustrations. It usually has two parts: the Postscript code (which tells the printer how to print the graphic) and a PICT image (for on-screen previews).

● **Ethernet** --A network cabling scheme for AppleTalk networks (as well as other types of networks) that's much faster than LocalTalk. Ethernet support is built into some Macs (otherwise you must install an Ethernet card), and it can be used with a variety of wiring systems.

extension -- Software (including many popular commercial utilities) that extends the system's capabilities by, say, enabling it to display Quick Time movies or use a particular type of printer. There are two main types: system extensions (Quick Time, Apple Script, and so on) and Chooser extensions (such as printer drivers and Apple Share). Extensions in the Extensions folder in the active System Folder are automatically loaded into memory when the Mac starts up. (Some extensions are also control panels.)

● **file format**-- The structure that the data for a particular document is stored in (e.g., ASCII, RIFF, PICT, TIFF, JPEG, GIFF). Most applications can save documents in one or more standard formats as well as in their native format.

● **filter**--a set of instructions which when activated to effect data, inputs data and processes it according to a specific formula, changing certain attributes by interpretation represented by the data, then outputs the data in a new format. The most commonly used filters used are

those which change a data file from one program's format to another. Typical computer graphics image editing filters include those which effect sharpness or softness of an image. other special effects filters translate image data derived from a photograph and change the relationship of the pixels to simulate the look of painted brush strokes, or a watercolor painting.

- **finder**--The basic program that generates the desktop and lets you access and manage files and disks. Together with the System file and the ROMs, it comprises the Mac's operating system.
- **force quit** -- A System 7 feature that lets you return safely to the Finder (usually) when a program **hangs** or crashes. The command is (option + apple + esc.). You lose unsaved work in the crashed application, but you'll usually be able to save work in other programs before restarting the Mac.
- **font**--a complete set of (keyboard) characters having one particular type face design.
- **format** -- All storage devices and media must be formatted or initialized to prepare the disk to store Macintosh data. [See file format.](#)
- **formatting** --1. For text, all the information above and beyond plain text that's added to a document, including character styles (bold, italic), spacing, indents, tabs, and so on. 2. Another term for initializing a disk.

G,H

- **gigabit**--a storage space of one billion bytes.

grabber--the function of capturing the whole or part of the data information represented by a computer video screen display. Grabbers can also be the function of an instruction set in a program which carries out the capture action automatically as part of a larger instruction sequence. Screen grabbers are sometimes utility programs designed to capture still image frames from motion video.

● **gray scale**--the number of levels of gray reduced by the system, which can be as few as four or as many as 256, which in digital imaging is considered a true representation because the human eye cannot make any finer distinction of tone differences.

halftone--a printing technology term which refers to the result of a process which translates a continuous scale of photographic tones into representative patterns of dots whose distribution density simulates the appearance of a range of gray values. Halftones are created physically by traditional methods by copying a photograph onto high contrast film through a glass plate which has a fine pattern of etched lines creating a grid. This halftone screen is held a small fraction of an inch in front of the film being exposed, and the resulting image is a pattern of slightly out-of-focus dots representing the gray value range of the image. This process is emulated by a kind of filter program in a computer which interprets a gray scale image, and outputs a simulation of the gray scale values in an image composed of dots. The fineness or coarseness of a halftone reproduction is expressed by a figure representing the number of halftone screen lines per inch, and is usually shortened to LPI. Common halftone counts range from approximately 85 lpi for newspaper reproduction, to 133 lpi for mass media magazines, to as much as 300 or 400 lpi used to reproduce high quality art books.

- **hang** --A crash where the Mac ignores input from the mouse and keyboard. Sometimes you can escape with the **force quit** command; otherwise you must restart the Mac. Also called a freeze.

- **hard disk**--the primary, permanent memory storage device used in personal computers. The term refers to a rigid magnetic coated disk which spins at a constant speed, and which is read by a read/write head positioned close to but not touching the surface of the disk. The head moves much as the arm of a phonographic record player tracks to intersect various information segments recorded on the disk.
- **hot spot**--a word or image found on an H.T.M.L. page or web page that when clicked on will take your web browser to another part of that page or a whole new page
- **home page** --The default page, which Net surfers first see when visiting a World Wide Web site.
- **H.T.M.L.**--(hyper text mark-up language) the language that web browsers can understand to display text and images on a web page.
- **Hue**--Color, the main attribute of a color that distinguishes it from other colors. In the HSV and HSL color models, the attribute of a color in purest state (without the addition of white or black), based on the wavelength of light it reflects. Color, the main attribute of a color that distinguishes it from other colors.
- **HSL**--A color model based on hue, saturation, and luminance.
- **HSV**--A color model based on hue, saturation, and value.
- **hypertext** --A text-linking strategy that lets you jump between related information in a document by clicking on a button or highlighted word. On-line help systems often use hypertext links, as do some programs designed for the electronic distribution of files (see PDF). On the Internet, Web pages use hypertext, typically to link to text at another location, locally or at another site, but also to link to graphics, downloadable files, and so on.

I

- **icon**--a small graphic symbol or logo used on-screen by a graphic user interface (GUI) to stand for a program, device or command function.
- **import** --To bring data into a document from another document, often generated by a different application. For instance, you can import text and graphics into a page layout program, or import spreadsheet data into a word processor. This data sharing is made possible by the applications' support of common file formats.
- interlacing**--the type of video monitor which writes every other line in a single scan, and then writes to the alternate lines in the next scan. By this interlaced method, a video monitor that only refreshes the screen 36 times per second, will have the same refresh rate as a 72hz monitor.
- **initialize**--to set up a disk (any kind of media, Hard drives to floppies) to receive information. When a disk is initialized, its magnetic media is divided into tracks and sectors, and a directory and desktop file are created. Also called **formatting**.
- integrated software**--a single application that includes several types of basic programs, such as a word processor, spreadsheet, database manager, draw, paint and communications.
- **interface**--a.k.a. user interface. The way a computer user interacts with their computer. For example, the Mac OS provides a graphical user interface that uses pictures (icons) to simplify overall computer use.

- **Internet** --A worldwide super-network that links thousands of individual networks and on-line services. You can gain access to the Internet, and its millions of users and thousands of news-groups (discussion forums), databases, directories, and other digital goodies, if your computer is on one of the corporate, government, or university networks it connects to, or if you have an account with an Internet service provider. You also can send e-mail across the Internet from almost any on-line service.

- **Intranet** --A network inside an organization based on Internet protocols. Network users thus use Internet tools such as Web browsers to access network documents.

- **interpolation**--a formulated process which assumes, on the basis of the data making up a digitized image, what a sharper version of the image would be, and rewrites the data representing the image accordingly. This process is used frequently with scanners to give a scanner which actually scans at 300 ppi the effective resolution of 600 ppi. The effectiveness of interpolation to actually effect a sharper image simulating a higher ppi count is often dependent on the nature of the data relationships representing different image characteristics. In other words, interpolation can more effective with some images than others.

J, K, L

jaggies --The blocky, stair-stepped look common to bitmapped graphics and bitmapped fonts. Anti-aliasing can minimize this effect.

- **JPEG** --A sophisticated technique (it's not really a **file format**, per se) for compressing full-color **bitmapped** graphics, such as photographs. It stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group.

- **kilobyte**--almost universally shortened to kb is an abbreviated way to express a memory storage size in increments of 1,024 bytes. In other words, 4kb equals 4,096 bytes. 1000 kb = 1 **megabyte** (MB).

- **LAN** --Local Area Network. A network that's physically connected (via cables) and confined to a relatively small area, like one office or one building. Often just called a network. Compare **WAN**.

- **landscape** -- Most monitors display a landscape view, which is wide from left to right with a short height. A television monitor has a landscape orientation as well.

- **laser printer**--a computer printer that utilizes the basic technology of a photocopy machine. A focused laser beam is directed by instruction by the computer to expose an image on a photosensitive drum. The image is converted to an electrostatic charge which captures toner and transfers it to paper to print the image.

- **launch** --Open (start) an application—that is, load it into memory from a disk.

- **log on** --Establish a connection to a server, BBS, or on-line service, usually by entering a user name (or identification number) and a password. Disconnecting is called logging off.

M

- **marquee** --The rectangle of moving dots (called “marching ants”) that surrounds a selected area in some graphic programs. Also referred to as **marching ants**.

- **media** --1. The physical component of a floppy disk, hard disk, cartridge, tape, or CD-ROM that stores computer data. see **removable media**. The main storage strategies are magnetic and optical. 2. The various ways of communicating, including print, video, and

audio. [See multimedia.](#)

- **megabyte**--usually written in abbreviated form, MB referring to increments of approximately one million bytes, or precisely 1,048,576 bytes.
- **megahertz**--a measure of frequency indicating increments of millions of cycles per second, and abbreviated, MHz. A CPU microchip's clock speed is stated by this measure.
- **memory**-- In general, another word for permanent storage or dynamic RAM, the chips where the Mac stores system software, programs, and data you are currently using. Other kinds of memory you may encounter are parameter RAM (PRAM), video RAM (VRAM), and static RAM (SRAM). Most computer memory is volatile—that is, its contents are lost when the computer shuts down. Also see ROM.
- **menu**--a list of optional commands provided by a software program which can be selected and initiated by the user. The currently most popular video screen representation of a menu is a box containing the list of options which drops from a bar at the top of the screen containing the menu names.
- **modem**--a short form of the term modulator/demodulator, referring to a device which allows a computer to communicate with other computers via external media including telephone lines, but not excluding direct hard connection with another computer.
- **motherboard**-- The heart, soul, and brains of the Mac. This plastic board resembles a miniature city, but its buildings are actually chips for things such as the processor, RAM, and ROM, CPU microchip and the tiny roads connecting them are circuit traces. Also called the logic board.
- **mouse**--a digital input device which enables the physical movement of the mouse body to directly translate into the movement of a pointer on the video screen. Two or three buttons located for finger tip control on the mouse body, which when clicked singly and doubly, signal the initiation of a selected computer software command through the mouse's hard-wire connection with the computer.

multimedia--personal computer integration of text, graphics, sound and motion.

- **multi scan monitor**--a monitor that can operate at different resolutions and scanning frequencies, allowing it to be used on a variety of computers.

multitasking--the computer that can do more than one thing at a time, such as sorting a database and recalculating a spreadsheet.

N,O

- **network**--a number of personal computers and support devices (like printers) connected together via a special communications link or in general, a group of computers set up to communicate with one another. Your network can be a small system that's physically connected by cables (a LAN), or you can connect separate networks together to form larger networks (called WANs). The Internet, for example, is made up of thousands of individual networks.
- **object-oriented graphic** -- An image made up of individual, mathematically defined objects, rather than a collection of bits. Typically created by draw programs, which are based on either Postscript or Quick Draw. Also called a vector graphic; compare bitmapped graphic.

OCR--Optical Character Recognition. Optical character recognition is a computer translation

function of a program (which may or may not require its own hardware device), which reads a text document as a graphic pattern recognizing each letter from its shape to rewrite it as computer text data. OCR programs are usually used in conjunction with an optical scanner to convert paper hardcopy text documents into digital text data.

- **on-line** --Actively connected to other computers or devices. You're on-line when you've logged on to a network, BBS, or on-line service. A device such as a printer is on-line when it's turned on and accessible to the Mac. (It can even refer to software: An on-line help system is one you can call up via your software, as opposed to opening a manual.) If you're not on-line, then you're off-line.

- **one-pass scanner** --A scanner that only needs to scan the original once, rather than once each for red, green, and blue.

- **operating system**--The basic software that runs the computer itself. On the Mac, it consists of the system file, the ROMs, the Finder, and related system software.(extensions, control panels, etc..) Often called the OS or just the system.

- **optical scanner** - a computer input device which reads a two dimensional object by reflected light focused onto a photo-electronic sensor which moves over the page to be input. the most popular designs are flatbeds utilizing a CCD linear array on a bar the width of the scan path (typically the width of the paper format to be scanned,of 8.5 X 11 in. or larger.) The scan is accomplished by the movement of the bar over length of the paper format.

- **outline font** -- A font in which each character's shape is stored as a mathematical outline. It can be scaled to any size with no loss of quality and will print at the highest available resolution. Postscript, True Type, and GX fonts are outline-font formats. Also called a scalable font. Compare bitmapped font.

P

- **Paint (program)** - an application who's function is to create graphic images with a computer resulting in a bitmap data file representing an area of pixels.

- **Palette** - in computer graphics programs, a collection of tools and materials (colors, tones and patterns) available and symbolized in a small window dialog box. Usually the mouse pointer is used to select a tool and the material selection to be applied by the tool.

- **paste** - one of the basic edit command functions which places a data entry (a line of text or a select bitmap graphic element) copy or cut from another location into a selected location on the active video screen work area.

- **peripheral** - any device connected to but not usually an essential part o the motherboard, extending and expanding the functions of a computer. peripherals include disk drives, printers scanners, modems, mice, etc.

PC --Personal Computer. While the Mac is, of course, a PC, the term refers almost exclusively to those other computers: IBM PCs and their compatibles.

- **PDF**-- (Portable Document Format) a document created by Adobe Acrobat software that has a high level of portability due to its small size and versatility. PDF's can contain text, images, hyperlinks and multimedia aspects as well.

- **PICT** - a **file format** used in graphic images. One of the most popular file formats used in computer imaging programs and paint programs.

- **program** - as a computer term effectively the same as software, a package of instruction sets which can be acted on by a computer to accomplish specific processing tasks.

- **processor** --The all-important chip that contains the computer's brains, or **CPU**. Sometimes called a microprocessor, it's located on the motherboard.

- **platform**--usually refers to a particular type of computer running a particular operating system. The Mac is one platform, a PC running on Windows is another platform and Unix is yet another.

Post Script--a programming language developed by Adobe Systems that's designed to describe, in precise detail, how the text and graphics on a printed page should look. It's often referred to as a page description language and is used on many types of printers and image setters.

- **pull-down menu**--the kind of menu you find on the menu bar. It pops down when you click on its title.

Q, R

Quick timeTM--Apple's technology for recording and playing back time-based data (video, animation, and sound). It is part of your operating systems extensions.

- **RAM** - random access memory, identifies the volatile memory reference by the **CPU** while a computer is running. RAM is memory which is temporary, holding information only as long as power is supplied to the memory chips by the computer. when computer is turned off all of the data held in RAM is lost. Referred to as main memory, RAM is constantly changed as the computer is used, making its volatility an advantage. In addition, the chips which are used for RAM provide the computer with a very fast access time compared to permanent memory storage like an hard disk.

- **rasterize** - converting mathematical or **vector** based object into a series of pixels. usually defined by the application in terms of pixels per inch resolution.

- **reboot** --**See booting.**

- **removable media**--any physical component that can store digital data and then be removed from the computer. Usually referred to as removable disks, tapes or cartridges.

- **resolution** - referred to using a variety of different measures. One dimension of resolution is pixel count. This however, does not reflect the depth of each pixel, the bit count format of the image. A 32bit image format has a greater information depth than a 8 bit format, and will therefore reproduce with a higher apparent image resolution. Other measured include the dot per inch,, or ppi count related to the ratings of various scanning input devices. some, judge the effective resolution by the data storage size in bytes of an image size relative to its measured format when reproduced. the resolution of images which are half-toned is usually assumed the result of the half=tone screen size count of lines per inch, or lpi.

- **RGB** - the red, green and blue primary colors of light.

- **ROM** - Read Only Memory. an example of the use of ROM memory in a personal computer is the BIOS which is stored in a special microchip on the motherboard.

S

- **sampling** --Taking audio snapshots (called samples) of a sound wave (such as music or a voice) at regular intervals and turning them into a digital recording on the computer. The number of samples taken per second is called the sampling rate. Also [see digitize](#)

- **Save** - the function of copying data file information of a permanent memory media like a floppy or hard disk.

- **scroll bar**--the rectangular strip that appears on the right and or bottom edges of a window when there's more information than is currently displayed. You can click in its gray area and or use the scroll arrows and scroll box to move the window's contents.

SCSI - an acronym standing for Small Computer System Interface, pronounced **scuzzy** , and referring to a connection; n device to which peripherals can be connected in series (daisy chained), to communicate with a computer. Identification, addressing,, and control of each device connected through a SCSI adapter is made possible by a separate software program device loaded into RAM when a computer is tuned on.

- **select**--to choose something (text, graphic, object, region) that you want to change. You do this by clicking on an object or button, shift-clicking on several objects, or dragging across an area. The chosen area (the selection) is either highlighted or surrounded by a marquee. Selection by itself doesn't change anything, it just tells the Mac what you want to be affected by the next command or action. You deselect something by clicking elsewhere. see [Marquee](#).

- **scanner** --A device that converts images (such as photographs) into digital form, so that they can be stored and manipulated on computers. When used in conjunction with OCR software, a scanner can convert a page of text into an editable document.

- **Scrapbook** --A desk accessory where you can permanently store material (text, graphics, sounds, movies) and then easily access it from within any program.

sleep-- A powered-down state that saves energy. A fact of life for PowerBook users running on battery power, but it's now available on most desktop Macs.

- **Storage** - any physical device which will hold electronic computer data in memory, including both RAM and ROM.

- **System software** --A catchall term for the basic programs that make the Mac work. It creates the desktop, provides universal commands such as Open, Save, and Cut, and includes features such as the Clipboard. Part of the system software is in ROM, and the rest is on disk in the System Folder. See [operating system](#).

T,U,V

TCP/IP --The network protocols used on the Internet and on many multiplatform networks (especially those with Unix machines). It stands for Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol. The Mac can speak TCP/IP using the MacTCP extension. Compare [AppleTalk](#).

- **telecommunications**--the transfer of information between computers over telephone lines. Just plug in a modem, fire up some communications software, and you can make contact with the rest of the on-line world.

- **TIFF** - Tag Image File Format, which is one of the more popular and well supported graphics file formats.

- **toolbox** - a set of predefined instruction routines which produce predictable graphic changes in a digital computer image, represented by a collection of symbols within a small

on screen window or dialogue box.

- **trash**--the icon on the desktop into which you put files to be deleted; they aren't actually deleted, however, until you choose Empty Trash from the Special menu. You can also eject any removable media from your Mac by dragging its icon to the Trash.

- **Undo** --The Mac's most beloved command (apple + Z), it lets you, well, undo the last thing you did in a program. Undo is often a toggle, so you can flip back and forth between two versions of something, and the cool programs have multiple undo, allowing you to go back more than one step.

- **upload** --To send a file to another computer using a modem. Opposite of download.

- **URL**-- Uniform Resource Locator. A unique address that specifies the exact location of every accessible resource on the Internet.

- **vector graphics**--an image made up of individual, mathematically defined objects, rather than a collection of bits or pixels. Typically created by drawing programs, also see bezier curves and compare with bitmapped.

virus-- A program that replicates itself from one file or disk to another without your consent. Viruses can spread through floppy disks, networks, and on-line services and can go undetected (unless you have an antiviral utility) until something goes wrong. Some viruses deliberately destroy data, and even those designed to be "benign" can cause crashes, slowdowns, and file corruption.

W,Z

- **WAN** --Wide Area Network, a network that spans geographically separated areas, usually by using modems and dedicated, high-speed telephone lines. Compare **LAN**.

- **Web**--short for World Wide Web, the graphical interface portion of the Internet.

word processor--software that lets you enter, edit, and format text. Not only that, but it also provides goodies such as spelling and grammar checkers, as well as a thesaurus.

WYSIWYG--means "what you see is what you get", that is, the image you see on the screen matches what will print on paper. Pronounced "wizzy-wig"

zoom box --A small box at the right end of the title bar in most active windows. Clicking it expands the window to display all the contents; clicking again restores the previous size and shape. Compare close box and size box.