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Glossary of Internet Terms

The following are common and general terms used in relation to the Internet. You can scroll down the list of terms and definitions, or you can click on the term and go directly to the definition.

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Active Document

A Web document that is created using an applet. An active document is actually the user's interface to the applet that is running on the client. Active pages provide the highest level of interactivity with the user.

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Applet

A small program that is downloaded to the browser and automatically deleted from memory after use.

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BPS (Bits Per Second)

A unit of measure for the rate that information is transferred over a network. This may range from 14000 bps for a slower dial-up Internet connection to over 1 million bps for a local area network that connects computers in an office. The higher the rate, the better as far as Internet transmissions are concerned.

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Browser

Software, such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer, that allows a user to navigate the Web and retrieve documents.

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CGI (Common Gateway Interface)

Refers to program that runs on a Web server which transfers information to and from a browser program running on a client. CGI programs are used to provide interactive, dynamic documents on the Web, such as information request forms and online access to databases.

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Client

A computer or machine connected to the Web and used to display information located on a remote computer, but which does not host a site or distribute files to other computers.

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Dial-Up Connection

A temporary connection to the Internet, usually established using a computer modem that connects to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) over a phone line. Depending on the speed of the modem used, the connection may range from around 14,000 bits per second (bps) up to around 56,000 bps.

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Domain Name System (DNS)

An Internet addressing system that uses a system of names listed with dots (.) between them in the order of the most specific to the most general group. In the United States the most general domains are network categories such as com (commercial), edu (education), and gov (government).

EXAMPLE: webbsite.com

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Download

To receive on your computer a copy of a file that currently exists on some remote computer.

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Dynamic Document

A Web document that is generated by program running on the Web Server each time the document is requested. A program that produces dynamic documents is often called a CGI program. A dynamic document may contain different information each time it is viewed, and it may allow the user to enter information to be sent to the Web server.

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E-Mail (Electronic Mail)

Private messages delivered via computer networks to an individual's e-mail address.

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FTP (File Transfer Protocol)

A system designed to transfer copies of files from one computer to another on the Internet.

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HTML (HyperText Markup Language)

A standardized set of syntax rules and commands used for encoding text files with formatting and document linking information. These documents are encoded for use on the World Wide Web to be viewed with a Web Browser.

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HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol)

A standardized set of rules for transferring and processing HTML documents on networks. The most commonly used method for transferring Web data.

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Internet

A digital communications network connecting over 60,000 other smaller networks from many countries throughout the world.

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Internet Service Provider (ISP)

And individual or company that provides Internet connections to other individuals or companies. The connections may be temporary connections such as a dial-up connection or a permanent connection such as an ISDN line.

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ISDN Connection

A fully digital phone line which can be used to transfer information at rates up to 128,000 bits per second. Often used as a full-time Internet connection to an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

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Java

A programming language that allows browsers to execute programs. These programs are transferred to the client computer as an applet and automatically deleted after the program has been executed.

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Links

Connections from one information file or site to another.

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Multi-homed

Refers to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) having more than one full time connection to the Internet. This provides a backup connection in case one connection fails providing more reliable service.

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Netiquette (Network + Etiquette)

Customs and socially accepted practices for Internet users. Practices such as spamming are considered a breach of Netiquette and are likely to offend other users in the Internet community.

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Online

Any activity undertaken while your computer is connected to another computer or network. Most often used in connection with activities undertaken while connected to the Internet.

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Provider/Web Presence Provider

A person or company that establishes web sites for other individuals or companies. EXAMPLE: WebbSite, Inc.

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Server/Web Server

A computer that stores Web documents and provides them to client computers which are running Web browsers. Usually powerful computers with a full time connection to the Internet

are used as web servers. EXAMPLE: WebbSite Inc. has its own Web Server

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Site/Web Site

A group of web pages linked so that you may easily follow from one Web page to the next. Also used to describe the information one individual, company, or entity puts on the Web.

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Sysop (System Operator)

The person who is responsible for making sure a computer system, or some portion of it, is operating correctly.

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URL (Uniform Resource Locator)

The addressing system that names most files found on the Internet. It may include a protocol name (such as HTTP), plus a site name (such as www.webbsite.com), a subdirectory path, and a file name (about.html). EXAMPLE:
HTTP://www.webbsite.com/about.html

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Webmaster

The primary person who is responsible for setting up and maintaining a web server. This person is often listed as a contact for issues that concern the operation of a web site.

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WWW (World Wide Web)

A client/server system designed to use hypertext and hypermedia documents via the Internet. It uses the HTTP to exchange images and documents. The WWW is the fastest growing segment of the Internet for business use.

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