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# Computer Dictionary

Fifth Edition

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**delimit** *vb.* To set the limits of some entity, generally by using a special symbol called a delimiter. Programming languages typically delimit such variable-length elements as comments, strings, and program blocks. *See also* delimiter.

**delimiter** *n.* A special character that sets off, or separates, individual items in a program or set of data. Special characters often used include commas, semi-colons, tabs, and paragraph marks. *See also* delimit, field (definition 1), record<sup>1</sup>.

**Del key** *n.* *See* Delete key.

**delta channel** *n.* *See* ISDN.

**demand-driven processing** *n.* The processing of data immediately as it becomes available or ready. Such real-time processing avoids the need to store data that has not been processed. *Compare* data-driven processing.

**demand paging** *n.* The most common implementation of virtual memory, in which pages of data are read into main memory from an auxiliary storage device only in response to interrupts that result when software requests a memory location that the system has saved to auxiliary storage and reused for other purposes. *See also* paging, swap (definition 2), virtual memory.

**demand priority** *n.* A network access method in which hubs control network access; a feature of 100Base-VG Ethernet networks. With demand priority, nodes send requests to hubs and the hubs give permission to transmit based on priority levels assigned to the requests by the nodes. *See also* 100Base-VG.

**demand publishing** *n.* Producing print copies of publications on an as-needed basis rather than in a single long press run. Demand publishing is a by-product of desktop publishing and advancements in printer capabilities.

**demo** *n.* **1.** Short for **demonstration**. A partial or limited version of a software package distributed free of charge for advertising purposes. Demos often consist of animated presentations that describe or demonstrate the program's features. *See also* crippled version. **2.** A computer in a store that is available for customers to test, to see if they wish to buy it.

**demodulation** *n.* In communications, the means by which a modem converts data from modulated carrier frequencies (waves that have been modified in such a way that variations in amplitude and frequency represent meaningful information) over a telephone line. Data is converted to the digital form needed by a computer to

which the modem is attached, with as little distortion as possible. *Compare* modulation (definition 1).

**demon dialer** *n.* *See* war dialer.

**demonstration program** or **demo program** *n.* **1.** A prototype that shows the on-screen look and sometimes the proposed capabilities of a program under development. *See also* prototyping. **2.** A scaled-down version of a proprietary program offered as a marketing tool.

**denial of service attack** *n.* *See* DoS.

**denizen** *n.* A participant in a Usenet newsgroup.

**dense wavelength division multiplexing** *n.* A data transmission technique in which multiple optical signals, each assigned to a separate color (wavelength frequency), are multiplexed onto a single strand of optical fiber. Because each signal travels separately in its own color band on the fiber, dense wavelength division multiplexing allows for the simultaneous transmission of different types of signals, such as SONET and ATM, each traveling at its own rate of speed. Dense wavelength division multiplexing can greatly increase the carrying capacity of a single optical fiber. Depending on the number, type, and rate of the signals involved, bandwidth can range from more than 40 Gbps to projected highs of 200 Gbps or more. *Acronym:* DWDM. *Also called:* wave division multiplexing, WDM. *Compare* time division multiple access.

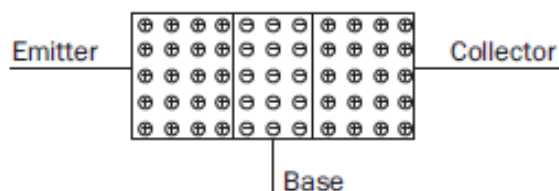
**dependence** *n.* The state in which one entity relies upon specific hardware, software, or specific events for its own definition or functionality. *See also* context-dependent, dependent variable, device dependence, hardware-dependent, software-dependent.

**dependent variable** *n.* A variable in a program whose value relies on the outcome of another operation.

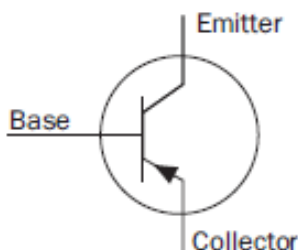
**deployment descriptor** *n.* In the Java J2EE network platform, a deployment descriptor is an XML file provided for each module or application describing how it should be deployed. The deployment descriptor directs a deployment tool to deploy a module or application with specific container options. It also describes the specific configuration requirements that an administrator must resolve when installing modules and J2EE applications into an operational environment. *See also* container, J2EE, module, XML.

**depth queuing** *vb.* **1.** In computer graphics and modeling, giving a two-dimensional object a three-dimensional appearance through such techniques as shading and hidden-

Internal diagram



Schematic diagram

**PNP transistor.**

**pocket Active Server Pages** *n.* A scaled-down version of the Active Server Pages optimized for server-side Mobile Channels scripting. *Acronym:* pASP.

**pocket Excel** *n.* A scaled-down version of Microsoft Excel for the Pocket PC. *See also* Microsoft Excel.

**Pocket PC** *n.* A personal handheld computing device based on specifications designed by Microsoft and running the Microsoft Windows for Pocket PC operating system. Pocket PCs maintain the look of a Windows operating system display screen and offer compact versions of many of the applications that run on Windows-powered personal computers. A number of manufacturers produce Pocket PCs, including Hewlett-Packard, Compaq, and Casio.

**pocket Word** *n.* A scaled-down version of Microsoft Word for the Pocket PC. *See also* Microsoft Word.

**point<sup>1</sup>** *n.* **1.** A unit of measure used in printing, equal to approximately  $1/72$  of an inch. Character height and the amount of space (leading) between lines of text are usually specified in points. **2.** A single pixel on the screen, identified by its row and column numbers. **3.** A location in

a geometric form, represented by two or more numbers that constitute its coordinates.

**point<sup>2</sup>** *vb.* To move an arrow or other such indicator to a particular item or position on the screen by using direction keys or by maneuvering a pointing device such as a mouse.

**point-and-click** *adj.* Enabling a user to select data and activate programs by using a mouse or other pointing device to move a cursor to a desired location ("point") and pressing a button on the mouse or other pointing device ("click").

**PointCast** *n.* An Internet service that delivers and displays a personalized set of news articles to individual users. Unlike the World Wide Web and other Internet applications, PointCast is a *push* technology, where the server automatically uploads data without a specific command from the client. *See also* server (definition 2).

**point chart** *n.* *See* scatter diagram.

**point diagram** *n.* *See* scatter diagram.

**pointer** *n.* In programming and information processing, a variable that contains the memory location (address) of some data rather than the data itself. *See also* address<sup>1</sup> (definition 1), handle (definition 1), mouse pointer, reference<sup>1</sup>.

**pointing device** *n.* An input device used to control an on-screen cursor for such actions as "pressing" on-screen buttons in dialog boxes, choosing menu items, and selecting ranges of cells in spreadsheets or groups of words in a document. A pointing device is often used to create drawings or graphical shapes. The most common pointing device is the mouse, which was popularized by its use with the Apple Macintosh. Other pointing devices include graphics tablets, styluses, light pens, joysticks, pucks, and trackballs. *See also* graphics tablet, joystick, light pen, mouse, puck, stylus, trackball.

**point listing** *n.* A database of popular Web sites categorized by topics of interest and often rated by design and content.

**point of presence** *n.* **1.** A point in a wide area network to which a user can connect with a local telephone call. **2.** A point at which a long distance telephone carrier connects to a local telephone exchange or to an individual user. *Acronym:* POP.