

Distance Learning Terminology

Animation - the perception of motion created by the rapid display of still images.

Applet - an application that runs on the World Wide Web, such as a program that displays stock prices periodically.

Asynchronous - term used to describe environment where the interaction between the sender and receiver does not take place simultaneously.

Antivirus Software - program that checks files for computer viruses. (ex: Norton)

Backbone - a primary communication path from which other communications paths branch to users.

Bandwidth - The width, which describes the range of frequencies, of an electronic transmission path or circuit. The wider the bandwidth, the more information can be transmitted.

Bit - a single binary digit used to represent the coding of instruction and data for a computer.

Bitmap - image that is displayed as an array of pixels.

Blog is the contraction universally used for **weblog**, a type of website where entries are made (such as in a journal or diary), displayed in a reverse chronological order. Blogs often provide commentary or news on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic.

Bytes - packets of characters

Client - The user's computer, which communicates, with another computer called the server.

Compressed video - method of reducing the size of a file by eliminating redundant data.

Digital camera - camera used to capture images that can be transferred directly to a computer.

Domain - grouping used to represent type of organization or geographical location. (ex: edu domain is used for educational institutions.)

Downloading - process of receiving information from a server to a computer.

Email (Electronic mail) - basic Internet service that allows individuals to communicate.

Extension - three letters of file name after the "dot." (ex: ZIP, DOC)

FTP (File Transfer Protocol) - allows transfer of files from one computer to the Internet to another.

GIF File (Graphics Interchange Format) - format for the World Wide Web that automatically compresses graphic images when they are created.

Home Page - anchor or first and primary page of a Web site. All of the other pages of the site link to this page.

HTML (Hypertext mark-up language) - language used that provides the formal rules for marking text. The way words are displayed on the computer screen depends on this.

Hyperlink - links to other Internet resources that are presented in context.

Hypertext - used to describe text that links to other text and its location. (ex: <http://www.AMATYC.org> is the URL for AMATYC.)

Interactive - feature that allows the user some control.

Internet - name given to the network of networks that links computers around the world.

IP addresses - address or sender or address of the destination.

Java - programming language developed specifically for the World Wide Web.

JPEG (Join Photographic Experts Group) - standard graphics file format used on the Web to eliminate redundant information. Similar to a GIF file.

Kiosk - computer-based information system that allows transactions or gives information.

LAN (local area network) - Two or more computers connected physically by wire, radio signal or fiber-optic cable.)

Listserv - grouping of computer users. Users communicate and read messages from the entire group through email.

Mainframe - large, complex computer which is accessed by many users.

MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) - standard format that communicates sound information between computers and electronic musical instruments.

MPC (Multimedia Personal Computer) Specifications - computer configuration used to play multimedia titles.

News Aggregators -an **aggregator** or **news aggregator** is client software that uses a web feed to retrieve syndicated web content such as weblogs, podcasts, and mainstream mass media websites, or in the case of a search aggregator, a customized set of search results. Aggregators reduce the time and effort needed to regularly check websites for updates, creating a unique information space or "personal newspaper." Once subscribed to a feed, an aggregator is able to check for new content at user-determined intervals and retrieve the update. The content is sometimes described as being "pulled" to the subscriber, as opposed to "pushed" with email or IM

PDF file - file created using Adobe Acrobat that allows users to download materials using Adobe Acrobat Reader (free software). Creates a common format.

Pixels - the smallest element of a picture that the computer can display.

Plug-in - a program needed to view elements that are not viewable using the browser alone (example: Shockwave, Flash)

Podcasting -the method of distributing multimedia files, such as audio or video programs, over the Internet using syndication feeds, for playback on mobile devices and personal computers. The term was meant as a contraction of "broadcasting" and "iPod."

Protocols - term used to describe specific rules for exchanging information that allows documents to pass from a server to a client.

Public Domain - uncopyrighted materials can be used without permission.

Router - computer used on a network to store information and communicate with other routers, passing the information.

RSS - (Real Simple Syndication) a format for syndicating news and the content of news-like sites and news-oriented community sites.

Scanner - hardware device used to capture images and save them in a graphics format.

Search Engine - programs that search the World Wide Web sites and create a listing of text, titles, hyperlinks and URL's. (ex: dogpile.com, Yahoo)

Server - a computer. Documents are sent from here to the client.

Service Provider - company who allows the user Internet access.

Sound Card - hardware device installed in a computer, which is used to digitize sound from some external source.

Synchronous - term used to describe environment when the interaction between the sender and the receiver is in "real time" or not delayed.

Template - document that is devoid of "content" but has a structure that can be used to place content into it.

Unzip - files that have been zipped must be unzipped before they are used. This can be done by using PKZip or WinZip.

Uploading - process of sending information from a computer to a server.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator) - specific format which links to web page on the World Wide Web.

Video Card - hardware device installed in a computer to allow digital images to be displayed.

Virtual Reality - A computer-generated environment that surrounds the user so that he/she becomes part of the experience.

Virus - infection. Receiving a virus can cause programs to be corrupt. Can be acquired through opening an email or using an infected disc.

WAN (Wide Area Network) - two or more computers connected over long distances.

Web Browser - program that connects the user to the World Wide Web (ex: Netscape or Internet Explorer.)

Web Site - location on a server that is made up of pages.

World Wide Web - a large collection of information that is accessible through the Internet.

Zip - process in which a file is compressed for easy storage.