

Barb's Virtual Web Glossary

This glossary is written, compiled and maintained by Barb Tomlin, President of Westward Connections. Barb's goal in producing this glossary is to further clarify our company's publications and to help our readers gain a better understanding of the online world. To keep up with the rapid changes in the technology affecting our industry, the glossary is updated often. We try to keep a downloadable copy of our latest version in our company's online archives¹.

As a complement to her 10 Steps to Successful Web Promotion (online at <http://www.westward.com/promoteit/prsteps.htm>), Barb has also published a glossary of terms used in web promotion. In case you are unfamiliar with those terms, you can download a Word version of that glossary from the web at <http://www.westward.com/byob/promoglossary.doc>.

For a general comprehensive glossary of terms indicative of the computer and telephony industries, please visit the PC Webopaedia Web at <http://www.pcwebopedia.com>. Another comprehensive glossary featuring terms used frequently in the online world can be found at whatis.com, <http://www.whatis.com/nfindex.htm>.

ActiveX™

A component software platform introduced in 1995 and trademarked by Microsoft for use in developing interactive web applications.

ad click rate

The percentage of time visitors follow a banner ad link to its destination and browse the content advertised. Also referred to as "click through" rate.

ad clicks

The number of times a web visitor clicks a mouse button to follow the hyperlink associated with a banner ad.

ad views

Also referred to as "impressions", ad views represent the number of times a banner ad is retrieved from the web server in response to a request for the page the HTML

¹ The latest version of Barb's Virtual Web Glossary can be downloaded from the Westward Connections corporate web site at <http://www.westward.com/archives/> or from Westward.Net web hosting site at <http://www.westward.net/archives/>.

page the banner appears on. Ad view numbers are not necessarily reflective of the number of times visitors actually see the ad since images are cached by web browsers and recorded as served even if a request for the corresponding HTML document is aborted.

ADSL

Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line. One of the latest telephony technology acronyms to gain popularity. ADSL is used to identify the transmittal of a digital signal over a dedicated portion of a telephone service subscriber's existing phone line that enables a user to surf the Net and receive phone calls over the same line simultaneously.

animation

Dynamic data file formats which produce motion during display. The simplest and most cross-platform compatible form of animation encountered on the web is an animated .gif file. Animated .gif files are the most popular form of banner ads on the web.

anti-aliasing

A bit map file preparation technique applied to reduce the jagged effect around the edges of objects appearing within the graphic as well as the edges of the graphic itself.

API

Acronym for application programming interface. The API is a set of routine or function calls that allow an application to control or be controlled by other applications.

applet

A small program that can be delivered across a network and launched on the fly.

ARIN

In reference to domain registration activities, ARIN stands for American Internet Registry. A non-profit organization, ARIN was founded to administer and register Internet Protocol (IP) numbers to the geographical areas previously managed by Network Solutions, Inc. (InterNIC).

ASCII

A text file format absent of binary characters necessary to render graphics or executable programs. ASCII stands for American Standard Code for Information Exchange. All HTML files should be transferred to web servers with file transfer protocol software set in ASCII mode.

ASP

The file extension and acronym for Active Server Pages, terminology introduced by Microsoft Corporation to refer to pages which contain ActiveX server components.

attachment

An attachment refers to an ASCII or binary file sent through the Internet or proprietary online communication environments as a separate item accompanying an e-mail message.

authentication

A process of verifying whether a user ID and password are supposed to be granted access to a particular computer system, web server or web domain address.

AU

A sound file format developed by Sun Microsystems and used primarily to serve sound from a UNIX operating platform. In the early days of the Internet and World Wide Web, it was the preferred sound format; however, today better sound quality can be rendered in smaller byte files in other sound formats.

AVI

A proprietary audio/video file format developed by Microsoft to enable Windows users to create and play movies on the PC.

bandwidth

The maximum amount of data allowed to transfer through a communication transmission channel during a fixed period of time. In developing web sites, great care must be given to the preparation of graphic components to insure that the least amount of bandwidth is used to make them viewable from a web page. For suggestions on how to conserve on your use of bandwidth, visit the Bandwidth Conservation Society Web at <http://www.infohiway.com/way/faster/>.

banner ad

A type of advertising placed on web sites. Banner ads have become the standard advertising medium to attract web visitor attention. They typically consist of a graphic element surrounded by a hypertext link that when clicked will send the reader to another destination to view more detailed information. Most of the larger, popular

sites sell banner ads whereas smaller sites tend to exchange banner ad placements with others. According to Jupiter Communications banner ads represent over 80 percent of the advertisements on web sites today. The two most common sizes for banner ads are 468 wide by 60 pixels high (a standard size set by the Internet Advertising Bureau; also used by The LinkExchange in its LE Deluxe Program - maximum file size 9 Kb) and 400 pixels wide by 40 pixels high (original size required by The LinkExchange to participate in its free program; maximum file size 7Kb).

bitmap

A graphic file format in which an image is rendered as an array of binary digits (bits). Common bitmap file extensions are .gif, .pcx, .bmp, .psd, and .jpg.

branding

Making your identity memorable through consistent visual representation. While branding is well known in traditional media venues, it has yet to come of age on the Web. You can build brand much faster and cheaper by carrying your identity through all your web publishing endeavors.

bookmark

The process of storing the URL addresses of web sites in a specially-designated HTML document. Most often, bookmark files are stored on a local computer.

browser

A software program designed for accessing and viewing documents on the World Wide Web.

cache

Temporary storage space created on your computer during program operation to store data frequently requested by the program for that session. Of particular importance to web developers is the cache that collects during web browser operation.

cascading style sheets

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) are a new HTML layout and formatting feature developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). CSS enable web designers to control the formatting and layout of a web page or entire site without the knowledge of complex programming languages or using multiple HTML scripting commands.

CERT

CERT, also recognized as the Computer Emergency Response Team, is a registered service mark of Carnegie Mellon University. The original computer emergency response team was started by DARPA (Defense Applied Research Projects Agency, a part of the United State. Department of Defense) in 1988 as a result of the Morris Worm (a computer virus) crippling over 10 percent of all the computers connected to the Internet at that time. It is the premiere group called upon by governments and industry when responding to large-scale computer and network security incidents. To learn more about CERT, read the FAQs online at the CERT® Coordination Center (http://www.cert.org/faq/cert_faq.html).

certificate authority

A trusted third-party responsible for issuing digital certificates which serve as authentication that a person with a matching digital signature is who he or she claims to be.

CGI

The acronym for Common Gateway Interface. Having CGI capability for web space is essential in creating interactive sites for the least cost. Programmers have written numerous scripts that they make available to web publishers for free or moderate fees. These scripts enable web publishers to add such features as generating automated and personalized responses, conducting surveys, process sales orders, etc.

click-through

The percentage of time visitors follow a banner ad link to its destination and browse the content advertised. Also referred to as "ad click rate" and CTR (click-through ratio).

community

A friendly association of people, loosely connected through the Internet and proprietary interactive networks with the purpose of communicating for social or economic advantage.

convergence

This term has gained popularity in the high technology industries as the reference to the union of computer, telephone, cable, and satellite technologies to enhance communications and productivity in our work and living environments.

cookie

A string of numbers generated by a web scripting program on the web server and stored on the client computer to identify a web visitor and his or her preferences in browsing a particular web site. Cookies are a popular method used by web advertisers in tracking results and providing better customer service.

cookie crumbler

A utility program that searches and destroys cookies residing on a computer.

CORE

CORE (Council of Registrars) is an alternative domain registration service set up primarily to offer new top level domain alternatives to .com, .edu, and .org. The CORE proposed alternatives as of March 1, 1998 are .firm, .shop, .web, .arts, .rec, info, and .nom; however the US Government intends to block the CORE alternatives by setting up others which would be administered by a newly organized non-profit corporation.

CPM

The acronym for Cost Per Thousand, CPM is a well known advertising measurement used by traditional media. For web advertisers and it is the cost per thousand visitors to their ad placed on a particular web site. For instance, if a web site publisher charges a monthly CPM of \$35 and 100,000 visitors click on your ad during that time, your cost would be \$35,000. Most of the larger web sites charge an up-front fee for placing your banner ad and guarantee you a certain number of ad clicks or CPM.

CTR

The acronym for Click-Through Ratio. See definition for *click-through*.

cyberphobe

An individual who is intimidated by cyberspace technologies.

cyberspace

The virtual work and living space created when computers connect with networks. The term was created by William Gibson and introduced to the world through his 1984 novel, Neuromancer. In the book, Gibson described cyberspace as "a consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts. A graphic

representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the nonspace of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding."

DHTML

The acronym for dynamic hypertext mark-up language. When you see web pages ending with the .dhtml extension, it is a signal that the page you are reading has been created on the fly.

digital certificate

An authenticated digital signature attached to encoded electronic message used to assure the recipient that the sender is the person he or she claims to be.

digital signature

An encrypted fingerprint that can be authenticated by the corresponding digital certificate.

DVD

The acronym for Digital Video Disc or Digital Versatile Disc. It is the technology destined to replace CD-ROM. A storage device for multimedia content, the DVD storage capacity is approximately 17 gigabytes compared to the 600 megabytes of a CD-ROM. Data stored on a DVD can also be retrieved much faster than that from a CD-ROM.

EDI

The acronym for electronic data interchange. EDI is the standard developed by the American National Standards Institute for exchanging routine business transactions and documentation between one entity's computer to another. The mission of EDI is to reduce operating costs and transaction processing errors while increasing productivity.

electronic commerce

The act of two or more parties or processing their business communications and transactions through online venues such as the Internet, proprietary interactive networks and electronic bulletin board systems. The primary focus of concern today is on those transactions taking place via web sites and electronic mail. Typical transactions include buying goods or services, performing tasks within a bank

account, investing in stocks or other negotiable instruments, providing customer support, and performing accounting tasks. Also referred to as "e-commerce".

emoticon

Icon created from the computer keyboard to express emotion in online communication venues, such as discussion groups, chat sessions, and e-mail correspondence.

extranet

An extended intranet. A network application that connects multiple locations of an enterprise through the Internet to facilitate intranet activities on a remote server, typically provided and maintained by a third party.

geospace

The word coined by online communications pioneer Barbara Tomlin in 1986 to refer to the physical world in which our human forms occupy space. It is the term most often used by technology writers to illustrate the contrast between experiences in the real world and cyberspace.

gross exposure

The total number of hits to the web server resulting from a request for one HTML document, including each graphic element, each sound file, and any other file called for in delivering the page for viewing through the browser. Most webmasters refer to hits in the form of gross exposure, therefore, the resulting number is not an accurate measurement for advertising purposes.

hit count

An expression used by the Internet marketing community to express the number of times a web page has been retrieved for viewing from a server. Also referred to as a "hit", this method of measuring web page visitor traffic is extremely unreliable.

ICANN

Acronym for the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers. ICANN is the non-profit formed in 1998 to take over government's role in overseeing the technical management of assigning domain names and allocating Internet Protocol (IP) addresses to servers connecting to the Internet.

IETF

Acronym for Internet Engineering Task Force. The IETF is the organization concerned with the development of the Internet infrastructure as a whole. While there is no one governing body over the Internet, the IETF is considered the focal point for setting universal standards in the use of the Internet.

impression

An impression is a counting expression used by the Internet marketing community to reflect the number of accesses to a web page by a unique Internet address.

INI

Short for initialization, INI is an ASCII text file and the name of a computer file extension. INI files are used by programs operating under Microsoft Windows to store program preference settings.

internet

The world's largest network of computers residing in separate locations throughout the world linking together through communication lines governments, educational and scientific institutions, businesses and individuals for the purpose of sharing information and processing transactions.

intranet

A network of web servers storing documents and files that can be accessed by anyone connected to the network and serving the information to the requester via web browsers. Intranets are typically located on premises; however, they can be extended to the Internet (extranets) or be set up as externally on a third party's web servers, exclusive access to network subscribers (virtual private networks).

ISDN

ISDN stands for Integrated Services Digital Network. Telephony technology that enables simultaneous digital transmission of voice, data and video signals over a pair of copper wires.

legacy documents

Important documentation archived in older file formats that is still useful and must be integrated into the current computer or information network infrastructure in compatible file formats.

meta tag

An HTML element which contains important information about the properties of the document upon which it is placed or the content of the web publication as a whole. Meta tags should be used on any documents you want to be indexed by popular search engines or for online researchers to find.

MIDI

MIDI stands for Musical Instrumental Digital Interface, a serial communications protocol that enables musical instruments to share data with the PC, resulting in a variety of instrument sounds that can be emulated by the PC. Because these files are merely commands to send signals to the PC's sound output device, they are quite small. Web developers frequently use midi files for background music.

MPEG

MPEG is one of the most popular audio/video file compression formats used by Internet and multi-media developers. One of the biggest benefits in using MPEG file compression is its ability to reduce a file size from 1/3 to 1/24 of its original without sacrificing sound quality. The MPEG file encoding and compression method was developed by the Moving Picture Expert Group of the International Standard Organization (ISO).

netizen

A citizen of the Internet community.

netpreneur

Individual who conducts his or her business exclusively through the Internet.

ODBC

ODBC, the acronym for open database connectivity, was developed by Microsoft as a transparent independent interface between word processing programs, spreadsheets, graphics packages and other productivity desktop software solutions and the corporate database.

page view

The resulting contents of a request for an HTML document through a web browser. Because a page view counts not only the HTML document but the associated graphics and multimedia files, it is not considered reliable in determining advertisement value or costs.

PCS

Personal Communication Service. A broad range of communication services that enable voice and data communication without geographic limitation.

PDF

PDF is the acronym for Portable Document Format. It is a proprietary file translation and compression method developed by Adobe Systems. It is the most popular format for compressing, transferring and rendering documents in existing proprietary formats across the Internet.

PERL

PERL (Practical Extraction and Reporting Language) is a popular language used in scripting common gateway interface (CGI) applications that require text and data manipulation.

PICS

PICS stands for Platform for Internet Content Selection. It represents a set of protocols established by the World Wide Web Consortium to rate the type of content published on a web site. The goal is to filter controversial content that should be restricted to consenting adult readers.

PKI

PKI is the acronym for public key infrastructure. Created by the Internet Engineering Task Force, it is a system of registration authorities who verify the validity of the parties involved in a secure Internet transaction.

PNG

A patent-free bit-map image file format specification which is earmarked by the online industry as the replacement for the popular GIF file format. Pronounced "ping", PNG stands for Portable Network Graphics. The PNG format was developed by the World Wide Web Consortium to be adopted as the standard for browsers in the near future. While the file format share much of the characteristics of the GIF format, its file sizes are smaller and color translation capabilities far more advanced.

portal site

A term coined by Netscape and accepted by the Internet publishing community at large as the reference to a web visitor's first point of access on the World Wide Web. Publishers of popular portal sites have a distinct advantage in the sale of web advertising real estate. Since they are the first web page visitors see upon launching their web browsers, portal site

publishers have a captive audience from whom they can gather all sorts of valuable marketing statistics to share with advertisers.

QuickTime

A proprietary animation file format created and trademarked by Apple Computers for displaying movies on the Macintosh, PC, and certain UNIX platforms. In February 1998 it was accepted by Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG) of the International Standards Organization (ISO) as the starting point for the development of a unified digital media storage format for entertainment quality video and audio. More information is available on the Web at <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/>.

RBOC

RBOC stands for Regional Bell Operating Company. This phrase was introduced to refer to any of the seven regional telephone companies formed as a result of the first AT&T divestiture in 1984. Those seven regional companies, also known as "Baby Bells", were: Ameritech, Bell Atlantic, BellSouth, NYNEX (since merged with BellSouth), Pacific Telesis Group (since broken up and some merged with SBC and Pacific Northwest Bell merged with US West), Southwestern Bell (Renamed SBC Communications), and US West.

RDBMS

The acronym for relational database management systems, a database language developed by IBM in the 1970s along with its declarative query language SQL. A declarative language allows the user to say what he wants and then the RDBMS query planner figures out how to get it. The RDBMS is allowed to store the data however it wants.

RTF

Also known as Rich Text Format, this is a document file format which can be read and printed easily under most computer operating platforms, including but not limited to MS-DOS, MACINTOSH and UNIX. RTF is one of the more common file formats offered for downloading when publishing documents for distribution on the World Wide Web.

SHTTP

SHTTP stands for Secure Hypertext Transfer Protocol. URLs with the SHTTP prefix are an indication that the web visitor is entering a secure area; they are typically encountered on pages offering order processing or electronic payment options. However, without a valid form of authenticity verification such as a public key certificate, there can be no assurance of security.

SET

SET is the acronym for Secure Electronic Transactions. It is a protocol to insure secure electronic credit card transaction processing and other digital payment schemes over the Internet. SET has been accepted as an electronic commerce standard by such companies as VISA, MasterCard, IBM, Microsoft and Netscape.

SGML

SGML stands for Standard Generalized Markup Language. The global standard set by the Geneva Publishing Convention for creating a document structure to enable publishers around the world to share written communications more effectively. HTML and XML are subsets of SGML.

smiley

Another name for the emoticon.

site map

An HTML page designed to create a coherent hierarchical organization to the content of a web site, making it easier for visitors to find information. The sitemap.smp file specification was proposed to the World Wide Web Consortium as a new standard by Microsoft Corporation.

site rot

Stale information on a web site. The most common evidence of site rot are dead links to external sites.

SSL

SSL stands for Secure Sockets Layer which is a secure transaction technology developed by Netscape and incorporated in its server and client web software.

style book

Also referred to as a web style guide or site book, a notebook compiled for a particular web site. It is filled with pertinent information to guide the web publisher or development team in maintaining and expanding a website infrastructure that will last through the dynamic transitions of the web society and Internet technology.

VAR

VAR stands for Value-Added Reseller. It gained popularity in the early days of computing as the definition for a computer consultant who resold software and

hardware by adding unique functionality and repackaging it first. Today it is prevalent on the web in reference to web developers who resell the services of Internet service providers and Internet software.

VBScript

Created as a powerful alternative to JavaScript, VBScript is a web scripting language written in visual basic by Microsoft and trademarked as VBScript. It is used in conjunction with ActiveX controls to add functionality and interactivity to web pages. Because it acts as a web browser interpreter, its functionality is only recognized by compatible browsers such as Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Web

When beginning with a capital letter, the Web is short for the World Wide Web. When beginning in lower case, web refers to a web site on an intranet (not accessible to the entire public world).

web architect

A visionary individual who understands and designs website infrastructures that allow for easy construction, expansion and ongoing maintenance while reflecting the intent of the website developers and owners.

web author

An individual with a visual understanding of the computer screen format who codes content in HTML to conform to that format and to be compatible with current specifications set by the World Wide Web Consortium.

web developer

An individual or entity responsible for developing a web site or portions thereof.

web entry

The first page viewed by a web site visitor.

web exit

The last page viewed by a web site visitor.

web merchant

A retailer who sales merchandise on the World wide web.

web page

One HTML document and accompanying graphic elements prepared for viewing through a web browser.

web site

A collection of HTML documents and accompanying graphic elements joined together by a primary page and published on a web server.

web server

A network connected computer that stores one or more web sites and serves their HTML documents for viewing by users of the network.

webmaster

An individual who has overall responsibility for development, maintenance and security of a web site.

webpreneur

Individual focused on doing business through the World Wide Web through web publications and transactions.

website audit

An examination of a particular web site by an Internet research expert to determine the effectiveness of site content, design, marketing, and technical applications.

WWW

Acronym for the World Wide Web.

XDSL or xDSL

The term used to refer to the evolving family of Digital Subscriber Line technologies, including ADSL (Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Line), HDSL (High bit rate Digital Subscriber Line), MDSL (Moderate Speed Digital Subscriber Line), RADSL (Rate Adaptive Digital Subscriber Line), SDSL (Symmetric Digital Subscriber Line), VDSL (Very high rate Digital Subscriber), etc.

XML

The acronym for Extensible Markup Language. This markup language is being developed under the auspices of the World Web Consortium to provide web

publishers with a more flexible, easier-to-use document formatting environment designed for delivery over the widest variety of operating platforms of computers connected through the Internet or within private networks within individual organizations.