

## GLOSSARY of Information Technology

- Access point** .....A device to which your computer or printer connects wirelessly in order to use a network (i.e., a connection for WiFi)
- App (application)** .....A computer software package that performs a specific function, such as a word processor, game, photo editor, etc. Many companies have apps to help us connect with their services easily, such as your bank, a news service, the weather, etc.
- Asset or property tag** .....A number assigned to your device which is displayed on a tag placed on the bottom of it. It begins with 20-, 50-, 60-, or 70-. When you ask for help, you should provide it to the IT staff who can then connect to your device.
- Authentication**.....The process of identifying yourself and verifying that you are who you say you are (e.g., using your username and password)
- Backup** .....A copy of your files and applications made to avoid losing your data and allowing you to recover them in case there is a failure.
- Biometric authentication** ....Using a physical or behavioral trait, such as a fingerprint or your face, to identify yourself.
- Cache**.....A set of web pages saved on your hard disk that allow you to visit these same web pages again - more quickly. It brings up files from your hard disk instead of from the web.
- Cloud** .....Software and other services that run on the Internet instead of on your computer. This gives you access to them from any computer connected to the Internet.
- Cookie** .....A small packet of data which is used to identify you and keep track of your use of the server that created it. You may be asked to accept cookies when you connect to certain servers, and they are used only by that server.
- Copy**.....see *File*.
- CPU** .....**Central Processing Unit**: the part of the computer that is responsible for all operations and calculations.
- Data** .....The information stored on the computer system.

- Database** .....A collection of information which is organized so that it can be easily accessed and used.
- Desktop** .....The background on the screen of PCs and Macintoshes where icons for disks and applications are visible.
- Document** .....This is usually a file which is primarily textual and includes its structure and format (e.g., fonts, colors and images).
- Download**.....The process of transferring one or more files from another computer to your local computer. Transferring in the opposite direction is called **upload**.
- Electronic mail (email)**.....Any communication sent or received within an electronic mail system.
- Encrypted data** .....Data which has been changed in such a way that someone needs specific information to interpret it (a key and algorithm). This process is used to make the data secure.
- Encryption** .....A process used to change data in such a way that it is confidential. The process is numeric – changing the numeric value of each byte which stores the data. The data has to be decrypted in order to be read by whomever receives it.
- File (print, copy, scan)**.....A file is a container for storing information – similar to a paper document. Files can be read, modified, saved, and deleted. **Printing** a file puts the content on paper (using the printer) and can show it on the screen (with *print preview*). **Copying** a file allows you to put (*paste*) a copy of it in another location. **Scanning** a file uses a beam of light to create an image of a printed version of the file. That image can be saved, printed and copied.
- File Explorer**.....A program you can use to see the list of your folders and files, and to search through them.
- Firewall**.....A piece of software or hardware which blocks certain types of traffic, such as blocking everything except that which comes from a specific address.
- Flash drive**.....A small device which functions as storage drive (also called pen drive, thumb drives). It plugs into a computer’s USB port.  
**Note:** Not all devices have a USB port.

- Folder** .....A location for documents, programs, data, and other sub-folders. They can be compared to the folders you have in a physical file that provide a way to organize your materials.
- Gigabyte (GB)** .....2 to the 30<sup>th</sup> power (1024 x 1024 x 1024) bytes. You can think of it being approximately 1 billion bytes or 1000 megabytes. To be exact, it is 1,073,741,824 bytes.
- Help Desk** .....A resource (can be both persons and documents) that troubleshoots problems with computers and similar products (e.g., phones).
- HTML** .....**H**ypertext **M**arkup **L**anguage: A language used for creating web pages.
- HTTP**.....**H**ypertext **T**ransfer **P**rotocol: The standard set of rules used by web browsers and the web itself. These rules make it possible for all the different devices to communicate with each other.
- HTTPS** .....**H**ypertext **T**ransfer **P**rotocol **S**ecure: The **S** indicates that security is added to the HTTP rules.
- iOS** .....This is an operating system used for mobile devices manufactured by Apple, Inc., such as an iPhone. (The operating system is the software on which the computer runs.)
- Information security** .....Protecting information so that only authorized people can see, change, delete or copy it, and which places are authorized to contain it.
- Information system** .....The software and equipment (e.g., files, computers, tablets, servers, removable thumb drives, hard drives, cloud drives, etc.) that are used to collect record, process, display, and transmit information.
- Internet** .....A global system which connects computers and computer networks. Companies, colleges, organizations, government agencies, etc., can link to each other anywhere in the world.
- IP Address**.....**I**nternet **P**rotocol **A**ddress: Each of our computers and other devices connected to the Internet has its own numerical address to which other devices can connect. This is similar to our telephone system in that every telephone has a unique number and can be reached from anywhere.

- ISP** .....Internet Service Provider: The company that provides you with your Internet connection. You pay a monthly fee for this service. A *modem* and/or a *router* are often used with this connection; they are defined under *Network*.
- Link** .....A connection between two pages on the internet. Clicking on a link in one web page takes you to the other web page. Links are underlined.
- Local area network (LAN)**..A small network in a local area. Examples include a network in an office or school. This allows them to share programs, documents and printers.
- Megabyte (MB)** .....2 to the 20<sup>th</sup> power (1024 x 1024) bytes. You can think of it being approximately 1 million bytes. To be exact, it is 1,048,576 bytes.
- Microsoft 365**.....Microsoft 365 offers Microsoft Office and email and many other services from their cloud server. We get free upgrades and can use the Office and other programs from anywhere where there is an internet connection. You can also work offline.
- Microsoft Teams**.....A program which gives groups the possibility to collaborate, meet, and share files and applications. They can be private for only invited users, or public for anyone within an organization. (This is similar to Zoom or BlueJeans.)
- Microsoft Windows**.....A group of operating systems that offer a graphical user interface (GUI), the ability to run more than one application at the same time (multitasking), and support for several peripheral devices.
- Modem** .....See *Network*.
- Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) / Two Factor Authentication (2FA)** ..... This method requires two or more pieces of evidence to grant access to a computer. It identifies who you are, to prevent illegal access to your account.
- Network** .....A group of connected computers that can exchange information. A network can be from a few computers to a worldwide network. A **router** is a device that connects two Local Area Networks and passes traffic back and forth. A **modem passes** traffic from a phone line to a computer; that is, from an analog signal to a digital signal.
- Offsite storage** .....Critical data is stored in a location geographically different from the campus where it resides. This avoids the two copies sharing the same disaster threat event.

**Panda (System Management, Adaptive 360)** ..... A cloud-based remote device for monitoring and managing an IT department. It allows IT technicians to remotely see and work with the computer of a user, saving the time that would otherwise be necessary to work locally on the computer.

**Password**.....A string of characters used to verify a person's identity. The password must be complex enough to make it difficult to figure it out. Often requirements are used to make it as complex as possible, such as specifying the necessary **length** (e.g., at least 12 characters). **Password complexity** describes which types of characters can be used (upper/lower case letters, numbers, with special characters), the length, and how the characters are chosen (e.g., do not use your name in the password).

**Patch**.....An update or a fix for a software program. Usually, they involve a security issue.

**Phishing** .....A message which is designed to trick a human victim into revealing sensitive information. Using that information, the attacker may then use malicious software to lock the victim's system, and a ransom could then be required for them to be able to use their computer. See **Ransomware**.

**PII** .....**Personally Identifiable Information**. Any data that could potentially be used to identify you, such as your full name, Social Security number, bank account number, driver's license number, e-mail address.

**Portable computing device**..A handheld portable device that can perform computer tasks such as email, web browsing, chat, and storing information.

**Print**.....See **File**.

**Program**.....Instructions written in a computer programming language that perform a set of commands to accomplish something.

**RAM**.....**Random Access Memory**: The space used by the computer to read and write data that it can then find quickly and easily. The programs and data currently being used are using RAM in this way. In contrast, sequential memory, such as a tape with songs on it, requires that you fast forward through the first song to get to the second. A random-access CD with music allows you to go directly to the beginning of any song.

**Ransomware** .....A type of malicious software, or malware, which is designed to deny access to a computer system or data until a ransom is paid. It typically spreads through phishing emails or by unknowingly visiting an infected website.

**Router** .....See *Network*.

**Scam** .....A dishonest scheme or fraud that attempts to take money or something of value from a person.

**Scan** .....See *File*.

**Server** .....A computer that serves others on the network

**Smartphone** .....A mobile phone that performs many of the functions of a computer. They usually have a touchscreen interface, internet access, and an operating system that can run downloaded applications.

**Smishing** .....Sending a fraudulent message claiming to be a reputable company in order to induce an individual to reveal personal information such as passwords, account numbers, etc.

**Software**.....A program that performs a specific function, such as word processing, spreadsheet, a game.

**Spam**.....Junk or unsolicited e-mail sent in bulk to large groups of recipients.

**Spyware** .....Software that is installed secretly on a computer to seize or take partial control over the user’s interaction with the computer, without the user’s informed consent. It can collect various types of personal information, change computer settings, interfere with your control of the computer, and redirect your web browser activity.

**Strong password** .....The *complexity* of a password makes it strong. See *Password*.

**Tablet** .....A tablet is a portable computer that uses a touchscreen as its primary input device. An iPad is considered to be a tablet.

**Trojan** .....A destructive program hidden in an attractive program or a program such as a game or graphics program. They are often obtained from someone else who isn’t aware of them, or from a download off the internet.

- USB**.....**Universal Serial Bus**: a connector found on most computers that allows you to connect external devices to the computer, such as mice, printers, joysticks, speakers, cameras, etc.
- Virus**.....A program that enters your computer and copies itself, spreading throughout your computer and files. It often enters through email or Internet downloads and can be damaging or merely annoying.
- Web page**.....A hypertext document on the World Wide Web.
- Web server** .....A computer that uses HTTP (see ***HTTP***) to serve web pages to users.
- Website** .....A location on the World Wide Web. It always includes a home page and may contain additional documents or pages.
- Wi-Fi (Wireless networking)** .....The ability to access the Internet without a physical network connection. (You still need to have your computer plugged in or to have a charged battery.) Wireless devices use a wireless Internet connection which uses a protocol called WAP (Wireless Application Protocol).
- World Wide Web**.....A system of computers having documents in HTML and contain links to other documents, allowing users to search for information by moving from one document to another.
- Worm** .....Similar to a virus, it makes copies of itself, but different from a virus, it does not need to attach itself to files. Some are security threats.