

E Commerce and Internet - The Jargon De-Mystified

- Applet - an applet is a small program that can be sent along with a Web page to a user. Java applets can perform interactive animations, immediate calculations, or other simple tasks without having to send a user request back to the server.
- ASP (Application Service Provider) - these offer on-line real-time access to standard packages. Users pay a metered charge to log on and perform tasks using standard accounting, spreadsheet and word processing packages.
- .ASP (Active Server Pages) – A dynamic web page.
- Attachment - an attachment is a file which is appended to an e-mail. The file may be a word-processing document, or a spreadsheet, for example.
The importance is related to the security risks associated with opening attachments, as any program code stored in an attachment is executed. The code can contain a virus which can potentially damage a PC or network (see macro virus and virus below).
- Authentication - a process which is used to confirm the identity of a person, or the integrity of a transaction.
- Bandwidth - the capacity of a system to deal with network traffic.
- Broadband - high speed internet access.
- Blog - Blog (originally weblog) is a diary or history. Blogs are used by all types of entity from corporates to personal users. Most personal blogs are anonymous and typically refer to issues in daily life – usually centred on the working environment.
- Browser - a program which allows you to view web content.
- Cable-modems - a service provided by cable TV companies to allow internet access. TV cable is used to send and receive data, and not the telephone line. The service relies on the provision of cable in the area.
- Cookie - text files which store details about a site visited. They are used to store user settings and preferences and can be used to track user movements on a website for market research or administrative purposes.
- Digital signature/certificate - a method using encryption techniques and a public/private key to verify the authenticity of a person or transaction.
- DSL - is an abbreviation for Digital Subscriber Line (otherwise known as Digital Subscriber Services). It is a method of transferring data over traditional BT copper wire lines. The data is transferred at higher speeds than normal.
- Dot com - an expression referring to the internet industry. Frequently used in the context of 'a dot com company' and 'a dot com millionaire'.
- e commerce - conducting business over the internet and therefore by electronic rather than by paper-based methods.
- EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) - is a standard method of exchanging documents, such as invoices, between companies who may have incompatible hardware and/or software.

Electronic form filling and transmission is far quicker than manually completing a form and then posting it. A further extension of EDI is the processing of electronic funds.

Standards have emerged for different types of funds transfers – for example the SET standard (see below) for credit card transactions.

Extranet	- an intranet accessible from outside the local network (via the internet) but only for 'invited' users. These are set up mainly to cope with B2B (business to business) transactions. One company may have access to a number of different extranets.
Firewall	- a hardware and/or software based security system to prevent unauthorised access to a network or server.
Gateway	- a device or devices which enable two or more different types of network to communicate with each other. Sometimes described as a bridge.
HTML	(Hyper Text Markup Language) - a programming language used to create web pages.
Host	- a computer or network which holds information such as a web site on behalf of a number of different companies. Also see ISP below.
Hyperlink	- a link which can be created in a document, for example, which can then branch to another document, or web site.
Intranet	- an internal network based on the internet, but containing material for company employees only.
ISP	- an Internet Service Provider. An ISP acts as a host (see above) providing e-mail services, web site services and access to information channels.
JAVA	- a programming language which can be run across a variety of platforms. Its interoperability means that applications can be easily installed and run on any computer system.
Local loop	- the last kilometre or so of cable from a telephone exchange to a house or business is known as the local loop.
Macro virus	- a macro virus is a program written within a standard application, which executes a malicious payload when the macro is triggered. This can be done simply by opening the file it is in. A macro virus can perform a variety of unwanted side effects from putting strange messages onscreen to completely destroying data.
Non-repudiation	- provides proof of the origin of a transaction. It protects the recipient against the sender denying that the transaction was originated by him (the sender).
.PDF	(Portable Data Format) – this is a read-only version of an existing document or spreadsheet. As the information is compressed, PDF files tend to be relatively small.
Phishing	- this refers to the stealing of personal security credentials such as usernames, passwords, bank account and credit card numbers via a spoof website, virus or email.
Podcasting	- Podcasting is the downloading of audio broadcasts to the iPod.
PKI	(Public Key Infrastructure) - the framework in which digital certificates are created and used, based on a public/private key.
SET	(Secure Electronic Transaction) - is one of several standards for ensuring credit card payments are secure over the internet.
Spam	- unsolicited bulk e-mail.
TCP/IP	- a protocol designed to allow different computers to communicate with each other regardless of the hardware or operating system platform.
URL	(Uniform Resource Locator) - a standard method of identifying web resources, such as web sites and web addresses.
Virus	- a generic term for a rogue piece of software. The internet has enabled viruses to be transferred from one network to another very quickly. The current crop of viruses rely on using some of the more common applications software to transmit their payload to the largest possible number of users.

- Wireless - the ability to connect to a network or the internet without the need for cables or wires physically linking your computer to them.
- XBRL (extensible business reporting language) – This uses XML (see below) data tags to transmit financial data. HMRC, for example use XBRL for e-filing of CT returns.
- XML (extensible mark-up language) – this allows designers to create customized tags to enable information to be transmitted from one system into another (completely different) system.

How We Can Help

If you would like information as to how we can assist you with your e commerce activities we will be more than happy to provide you with help.

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