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Bryan Pfaffenberger

THE NAME YOU TRUST

Dedication

For Suzanne, always

Webster's New World™ Dictionary of Computer Terms,
8th Edition

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Suite 400
Foster City, CA 94404

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Library of Congress Catalog Number: 98-68180

ISBN: 0-02-863777-1

Manufactured in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 00 1 02 03 04

microkernel In Unix and Unix-like operating systems, a kernel that is kept as small as possible by moving functions such as file systems and device drivers to external processes. This design seeks to maximize kernel performance and reliability by reducing the kernel's complexity. See *Mach* and *monolithic kernel*.

micron One-millionth of a meter (about 0.0000394 inch).

microphone A device that converts sounds into electrical signals that can be processed by a computer. Commonly found on Macintosh computers but less often seen on IBM PC-compatible computers, microphones can be used to record new system sounds or to add voice annotations to documents.

microprocessor An integrated circuit that contains the arithmetic-logic unit (ALU), control unit, and sometimes the floating-point unit (FPU) of a computer's central processing unit (CPU). Fabricated on a small flake of silicon and mass-produced at low cost, microprocessors can contain the equivalent of several million transistors and are unquestionably one of the twentieth century's greatest technological advances.

microprocessor architecture The overall design concept of a microprocessor. The two top-level architectural options are complex instruction set computer (CISC) and reduced instruction set computer (RISC).

Microsoft The world's largest and most successful publisher of operating systems and application programs for personal computers, headquartered in Redmond, Washington. Key products include Microsoft Windows 95/98, Microsoft Windows NT, Microsoft Windows 2000, Microsoft Access, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Internet Explorer, and Microsoft Outlook. Formerly perceived by many corporations as primarily a provider of single-user operating systems and applications, Microsoft is now penetrating the enterprise client/server market, thanks to the increasingly popular pairing of Microsoft Windows NT and powerful Intel-based servers.

Microsoft Access See *relational database management system (RDMS)*.

Microsoft BackOffice A package of file server and Web server programs and utilities from Microsoft Corporation designed for Windows NT-based networks. The package