

Terms reference guide for retailers

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ADSL: (asymmetric digital subscription line) is called “asymmetric because most of its two or duplex bandwidth is devoted to the downstream direction, sending data to the user. A small portion of the bandwidth is available for upstream or user interaction messages.

ARTS: The Association of Retail Technology Standards. The mission of ARTS is to develop global technology standards that can be used by suppliers and retailers to ensure that new technologies are rapidly deployed and can interface effectively and cost efficiently with retailers’ existing systems.

ASCII: American Standard Code for Information Interchange. ASCII is a standard code that allows the interchange of 128 alphanumeric and related characters between different information systems.

ASP: Is a company that provides access over the Internet to software applications that would ordinarily have to be located on their own computers. The ASP model in some instances offers a more cost-effective method for companies to deploy software application software.

Bandwidth: Is a measure of the range of frequencies that a communications signal occupies. All signals whether analog or digital, have a certain bandwidth. The bandwidth of a signal is a measure of its potential to carry information.

Bar Code: Information coded into a pattern of varying width parallel bars and spaces that can be read by scanner. Common symbologies used in retail are UPC-A for merchandise, code 128 (also 2 of 5) for shipping containers. Others include Code 39 and EAN (see EAN).

BizTalk: Is an industry initiative headed by Microsoft to promote Extensible Markup Language (XML) as the common data exchange language for e-commerce and application integration to the Internet. The growth of e-commerce requires that businesses using different computer technologies have a means to share information. XML is a platform neutral way to represent data transmitted between computers. BizTalk will provide guidelines, called BizTalk Framework.

Broadband: Transmission facility in which a wide band of frequency is available to transmit information.

BSP: Is a company that rents third party software application to their customers. A BSP is similar to an ASP in that it provides a cost-effective way to procure application software via the Internet. A BSP differs from an ASP in that it tailors a software package to meet its customer needs. BSPs usually have lower monthly fees than ASPs.

Cable Modem: This is a device that enables a user to hook up a PC to a local cable TV line and receive data at about 1.5 Mbps. This data rate exceeds that of 28.8 and 56 Kbps telephone modems and the data rate of up to 128 Kbps of ISDN and is about the same speed of DSL service.

Capacitive: Touchscreen technology using a glass overlay with a thin metallic coating. When a finger or other object touches the screen, it breaks the electronic circuit.

Check 21: The Check Clearing for the 21st. Century Act (Check 21) became effective October 28, 2004. Check 21 is designed to enhance efficiency of check processing. The law facilitates check truncation by creating a new negotiable instrument called a substitute check. The substitute check is the legal equivalent of the original. Check 21 will help reduce check fraud and clear funds faster.

Check Readers: Electronic devices that read MICR encoded checks and transmit that information to a PC or terminal for further processing.

Client/server: An arrangement used on local area networks that makes use of distributed intelligence to treat both the server and the individual workstations as intelligent. The clients are typically used for using the application software, while the server provides the centralized, multi-user functionality.

CPU Speed: Pentium 4 family runs at clock speeds of 2.8-3.8 GHz. Clock speed is only one factor when determining speed. The other factor is built in Chip memory (Cache). Cache memory governs the speed between the CPU and the components.

CRM: Customer relationship management. A strategy designed to build customer loyalty by capturing customer data and purchase history.

Disk duplexing: This is a variation of disk mirroring in which each storage disk has its own SCSI controller. This differs from Disk mirroring (known as RAID-1) because RAID-1 has one controller for multiple disks. Disk duplexing overcomes this problem with the use of redundant controllers. An additional benefit of disk duplexing is increased throughput.

DSL and xDSL (Digital Subscriber Line and its variations) is a technology for bringing high bandwidth information to homes and small businesses over ordinary copper telephone lines. XDSL refers to different variations of DSL, such as ADSL, HDSL, and RADSL. Assuming your office is close to a telephone company central office that offers DSL service, you may be able to receive data at rates up to 6.1 megabits (millions of bits) per second allowing a continuous transmission of motion video, audio, and even 3-D effects.

EAN: European Article Number. International product marking barcode. Most scanning devices that can read UPC codes can read EAN. (see Bar Codes)

EAS: Electronic Article Surveillance. The protection of merchandise by the attachment of

electronically sensed tags.

EBT: Electronic Benefits Transfer. Electronically transmitted money for food stamps, welfare and social security benefits.

ebXML: (Electronic Business XML) is a project to use the Extensible Markup Language (XML) to standardize the secure exchange of business data. As a standard ebXML could encompass and possibly replace a familiar standard, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). EbXML is designed to enable businesses of any size to establish an electronic marketplace in which they can safely and securely transact business through the exchange of XML based messages.

EDI: Acronym for electronic data interchange EDI is a set of standards to control the transfer of business documents, such as purchase orders, invoices, and credit memos.

EEC: Electronic Check Conversion is a process when the customer's blank check is inserted into a POS printer and is electronically transmitted to the store's check file. The voided check is handed back to the customer. The two major benefits are reducing the paper trail and making the funds available to the store much quicker. EEC relies on MICR encoding. EEC with digital imaging scans an image of the check at the point of sale. The image is then archived. Digital imaging provides greater security against bad checks.

EFT: Electron funds transfer.

EtherLoop: Sometimes called next generation DSL or second generation DSL. It combines the features of Digital Subscription Line (DSL) with features of Ethernet to provide both voice and data transmission over ordinary phone lines at data rates faster than DSL. EtherLoop is suitable for a broad range of applications, including local area networks extensions, hotels, campus area networks.

Extranet: An extension of a corporate Intranet that uses the World Wide Web technology to facilitate communication with the corporation's suppliers and customers.

Firewall: Software and or hardware used to protect servers for security purposes. Firewalls make it difficult for viruses and unauthorized users to get into computers and internal networks.

Fourth Generation Language: (4GL) A series of level computer languages that uses menus, drag and drop, point and click, and English like wording to design and develop applications.

Frame Relay: Is a telecommunication service designed for cost efficient data transmission for intermittent traffic between local area networks (LANs) and between end points in a wide area network (WANs).

Gigabit: Is one billion bits of data.

GMROI: Gross Margin Return on Investment. The GMROI is calculated by taking the sale price minus the cost of goods sold divided by the original price or cost of goods.

Gross Profit: Divide your earning by your sale price. A \$25 cost item that retail for \$50 has a 50% Gross profit (\$25 divided by \$50).

HTML: Hypertext Markup language. The language most often used on the World Wide Web to instruct browser applications how to format information.

ISDN: Acronym for Integrated Services Digital Network. A worldwide digital communications network using existing telephone services.

LAN: Local Area Network. A network designed to share data, programs or equipment within a limited area. LANs are usually configured within a physical structure (building)

Linux: A computer operating system distinguished from other operating systems (Windows or Unix) because its source code is available to available to anyone, and anyone can contribute to improving the system.

Mark-Up: Divide your earning by your cost. An item that a \$25 cost and a \$50 retail has a 100% Mark Up (Divide the earning of \$25 by the \$25 cost).

MICR: (Magnetic Character Recognition) readers that are able to read information on checks.

Microsoft.NET: is described as both a platform and an environment Microsoft. Net is a collection of products and services that developers can use to build and run XML Web services.

MYSQL: Is an open source relational database management system (RDBMS) that uses Structured Query Language. Because it is open source, anyone can download MYSQL and modify it to the specific needs in accordance with general public license. MYSQL is noted for its speed, reliability, and flexibility.

ODBC: Open Data base Connectivity is a standard SQL Application Programming Interface (API) defined by Microsoft that allows different software applications to access different types of data in a standard way. An example would be Excel running on a client workstation can use ODBC to obtain data that are in the Pervasive SQL data files on the server.

OPOS: Standard developed by Microsoft, NCR, Epson, PSI and others for Association of Retail Standards (ARTS). OPOS is an acronym for Object Linking Embedding (OLE) for POS applications. OPOS defines an architecture for Win32 based POS devices, and defines a set of device interfaces to support a range of POS devices.

Pentium 4: The latest Intel processors were introduced in November 2004 with clock speeds of between 3.4 GHz and 3.8 GHz.

Pinpad: A Pinpad (Personal Identification Number) is a small keyboard that has numeric keys. The customer enters their pin number to verify identity and allow the transaction to be processed.

Planogram: Is a diagram that shows how and where specific retail products should be placed on retail shelves or displays in order to increase customer purchases. Planograms are developed by using specific information about the product, such as volume of sales, square footage the product occupies and other related sales data

PLU: Price Look Up. A function of an in-store POS system that retrieves the price of an item using a price file.

Random Weight Bar Codes: Random weight bar codes or Type 2 are produced by weight scales that embed the item price within the bar code it prints. When the item is scanned the weight and SKU is recognized.

Retail Method: An inventory valuation calculation that includes a percentage markup to the initial retail price. Also refers to accounting that involves such inventory valuations.

Resistive: Touchscreen technology consisting of two layers of coated plastic overlay. When a finger or other object touches the screen it completes the electronic circuit. A five wire analog resistive screen is rated for 35 million actuations at any one point.

RF: Radio Frequency is on-line communication of data using radio equipped computers and hand held devices. Wireless communication. See WLAN.

RFID: Radio Frequency Identification tags also called smart bar codes. These tags have an embedded computer chip than can wirelessly receive and transmit data from a reader. The use has primarily been in warehouse applications where the contents of a large box or pallet can be read without opening the container. The cost of the tags has dropped to less than a \$1 each and experts predict the cost will fall to 5 cents a tag within two years. At that point the technology will become more usable in retail.

- ◆ Active tag: An RFID tag that uses a battery to run the microchip circuitry to broadcast a signal to a reader.
- ◆ EPC: Electronic Product Code is a coding scheme that identifies an item's manufacturer, product category and unique serial number.
- ◆ Passive Tag: A RFID tag with no battery that draws power from the reader.

RSS-14 barcode-Reduced Space Symbology: This is a new barcode being introduced into grocery. It is a stacked omni directional barcode that is encoded with the brand, batch #, weight and price. It will be used initially for fruit and produce.

Signature Capture: A peripheral device that electronically captures a customer's signature for identity and transaction purposes.

Smart Card: A card that has a chip with memory that holds customer account information and a money balance. The card is inserted into a device that can read and write updated information.

SQL: Structured Query Language is a computer language often used in analysis of relational databases. SQL allows the user to request information such as “*all items from a specific inventory category that have a gross margin less than 40%*”.

Sunrise 2005: Is an initiative by the UCC to notify retailers in North America that they need to update their databases and have scanners that will allow 13 digit bar codes. The voluntary implementation date is January 1, 2005.

T-1: A T-1 digital phone line has a data carrying capacity of 24 channels and a data transfer rate of 64 Kbps. A T-3 line has 672-64 Kbps channels. The term fractional T-1 or 3 is a line where only some of the 24 or 64 channels are leased by a customer.

T-SQL: Transact –SQL is a set of programming extensions from Microsoft that add several features to Structured Query Language (SQL) including transaction control, exception and error handling, row processing, and declared variables. All applications that communicate with Microsoft’s SQL Server product use T-SQL statements.

TCP/IP: Transmission Control Protocol/ Internet Protocol. The protocol used by the Internet.

Turns: The total inventory sold in a year divided by the average inventory at retail. Higher turns are usually considered better.

UCCnet: Uniform Code Council is an initiative to resolve product data inaccuracies between trading partners. They endorse universal EAN UCC standards and support a standard format (XML), and other non-proprietary standards.

UPOS: (Unified POS) Created by ARTS as a common device architecture extending across vendors. A standard for interfacing devices to software application software that is operating system independent and language neutral. The guideline for OPOS.

USB: Universal Serial Bus is a universal connector that replaces serial and parallel connections for PC peripherals with a standard plug carrying both data and power. The USB increases number of peripherals that can be attached.

VPN (Virtual Private LAN): A VPN is a technology that connects local area networks over the Internet.

Wan: Wide Area Network. A network configured to extent the local area outside the building.

Wi-Fi: Wireless Fidelity. Allows computer users to access the Internet over radio frequencies without physically be attached to a phone line or a network connection.

Wireless Lan: Wireless Network

- 802.11: Family of IEEE standards for wireless LAN communications.
- Access Point: Interface between devices and the wired LAN.
- Bridge: Access point that relays data to another LAN'S access point.
- Cell: Physical area covered by an access point.
- EAP: Extensible Authentication Protocol. Internet standard (RFC 2284) used by 802.1X to authenticate the identities of WLAN devices.
- Mbps: Megabits per second, a measure of the rate at which data is transferred.

XML: eXtensible Markup Language. A successor to HTML that instructs a browser how to format data, making it possible for content to be passed from one application to an entirely different one. Xtensible Markup Language facilitates the integration of various data sources by efficiently converting them to a common format. XML will allow organizations to better interact with other businesses that employ XML. XML is platform independent.

802.11b: Allows wireless communications in the 2.4 GHz range, at rates up to 11 MB.