

FIBRE-OPTIC CABLE (FIBRE) — Cable used to connect **network interface cards** and **hubs** in a network using a thin quartz fibre which transmits pulses of light that are generated from and translated to electrical impulses at either end. **Fibre** offers high speed, resistance to interference and resistance to wire-tapping. Compare with **coaxial cable** and **twisted pair**.

FILE — A collection of related information stored on a disk under a given name for later reference and use by the operating system or by an application program. Each application program that you use saves the data you create in files. Files are identified by a file name and optionally, an extension. See also **filename**.

FILE ALLOCATION TABLE — A hidden file on every MS-DOS-formatted disk that is used to keep track of how many files are on the disk, where they are located, and how much storage space remains. If a **file allocation table** is lost or damaged, all other files on that disk can become inaccessible.

FILE SERVER — A computer which provides services to a **network** in the form of files stored on one or more hard disks which may be accessed by software running on other microcomputers connected to that network.

FILENAME — A name that identifies a file. In MS-DOS, the **filename** consists of one to eight uppercase or lowercase characters. A filename can also have an optional extension (a period and one to three upper or lower case characters). THISFILE.DOC is an example of a DOS filename.

FONT — A collection of dot (pixel) patterns which define the shapes and sizes of all characters in a character set. Laser printers typically offer a few built-in fonts such as Courier-10, which looks similar to typewriter output, and Compressed. These are both "fixed-pitch" fonts. Higher quality output comparable to typeset material requires proportional fonts, such as Times Roman and Helvetica, which afford variable inter-letter spacing. Those fonts are usually sold separately in the form of **soft fonts** or **font cartridges**.

FONT CARTRIDGE — A plastic cartridge which, when inserted in the slot of a laser printer, makes available a selection of **fonts** which are stored in ROM chips in that cartridge.

FORMATTED CAPACITY — The amount of storage space that remains on a disk after it has been formatted. Formatting marks and arranges the storage space on a disk so that data can be located and accessed. The formatted capacity of a disk is always less than the unformatted capacity.

GAS PLASMA DISPLAY — See Plasma

GB (GIGABYTE) — A gigabyte is a unit of measure for disk storage capacity. It represents 1,073,741,824 bytes or 1024 megabytes, a number which varies from the normal metric definition of "giga" (one billion) because computer storage is based upon powers of two rather than powers of ten.