CGA (COLOUR GRAPHICS ADAPTER) — A video display standard that can display four colours and 320x200 pixel resolution or two colours (if one of them is black) at 640x200 pixel resolution in two graphics modes. It can also display up to 16 colours and 40 or 80 columns in text mode. CGA resolution is normally insufficient for users doing extensive word processing. Compare with VGA.

CENTRONICS CONNECTOR — A connector typically found on printers which must themselves be connected to 25-pin **parallel ports** on microcomputers. The **Centronics** connector uses flat contacts rather than pins. Compare with **RS-232**.

CHIP — A miniaturized integrated circuit enclosed in a case and containing numerous connector pins for plugging into a socket or soldering directly onto a circuit board. Your computer's microprocessor is one example of a chip.

CLIENT-SERVER — An approach to information sharing over a **network** whereby an application which is running on one computer can access data stored on one or more other computers by making requests of applications running on those other computers rather than accessing the files directly. This approach allows the "owner" of the data to establish and enforce rules with respect to how that data may be accessed.

CLOCK SPEED — The frequency in **Mhz** at which all operations within a microcomputer proceed. This is the major determinant of the processing speed of a microcomputer. The clock can be best imagined as the drummer on an ancient oar-driven ship - with each beat of the drum, all slaves simultaneously pull on the oars. Within the capacity of the slaves, doubling the drum frequency should double the speed of the ship. Each model of **microprocessor** is typically released in multiple versions with increasing clock speed ratings. For example, the **80836** has been released in 16MHz, 20MHz, 25MHz and 33MHz version, with prices increasing accordingly. Manufacturers of inexpensive "clones" often "push" their microcomputers, setting clock speeds higher than Intel's rating for the **microprocessor** concerned. This can result in service and compatibility problems.

CMOS (COMPLEMENTARY METAL-OXIDE SEMICONDUCTOR) STATIC MEMORY — Memory that can be used for low-power, battery-operated storage. Microcomputers use CMOS static memory to store the configuration information maintained by a battery when the computer is turned off.

COAXIAL CABLE (COAX) — Electrical cable used to connect **network interface cards** and **hubs** in a network using wiring which consists of a single conductor surrounded by a shield. Similar to cable television wiring. Compare with **twisted pair** and **fibre-optic cable**.

COM PORT — See **serial port**.

COMMAND — A request to an operating system to start an application program, to run a particular utility, or to perform a specific task, with certain parameters in effect. There are two types of operating system commands: Command-line commands and menu commands. Command-line commands are typed at the system prompt, and menu commands are selected from a window on the screen.