

**RIBBON CABLE** — A cable containing multiple insulated wires arranged side by side and encased in plastic, with connectors at each end and sometimes a connector in the middle. The control/data cable for your drives are ribbon cables.

**RLL (RUN LENGTH LIMITED)** — A specific type of **hard-disk controller**.

**ROM (READ-ONLY MEMORY)** — A **chip** in which computer instructions (software) have been permanently written. ROM contains instructions that the computer needs to operate. The instructions stored in ROM cannot be changed and are used by the computer each time you turn it on or restart it. See also **boot/reboot, firmware**.

**ROM BIOS** — The **chips** that contain the **BIOS** program and the system configuration information for a microcomputer.

**ROOT DIRECTORY** — The first-level **directory** on a diskette or hard-disk drive. All other directories and files come beneath the root within the file system hierarchy used by the MS-DOS operating system. See also **directory**.

**RS-232** — A standard for connectors commonly used in microcomputers and peripherals. **Parallel ports** typically use 25-pin male (the plug with the pins) connectors on the microcomputer and 25-pin female (the plug with the sockets) connectors on the cord. **Serial ports** are less standard, with both 9-pin and 25-pin male and female connectors in use on the microcomputer and the matching connectors on the cords. Compare with **Centronics**.

**SCANNER** — A peripheral input device which reads text and graphics from a printed page.

**SCSI (SMALL COMPUTER SYSTEMS INTERFACE)** — A specific type of **hard-disk controller**. Pronounce "SCUZZY".

**SEATING** — The process of completely inserting a card or chip into its respective connector or socket. For example, an expansion card must be completely seated into the expansion slot connector to make the proper electrical connections with the system board. The insertion of a card while the computer is turned on will normally cause severe damage to the computer.

**SECTOR** — A portion of one track on one platter of a disk. Tracks and sectors are used by the computer to store information at specific locations on the disk for later retrieval. A typical sector contains 512 bytes of usable data and is read into memory in a single **read** of the disk. See also **track**.

**SEEK TIME** — The average time in milliseconds (Msec) that is required to read any given sector on a disk. This includes both the track-to-track time necessary to position the **head** on the required **track** and the "latency" period before the required **sector** moves under the **head** as the disk turns. See also **hard-disk drive, head, sector, track**.