

ETLO Internet Glossary

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Most schools and districts use AUPs, or Acceptable Use Policies, to govern the permissible uses of the Internet in classrooms and labs. All users must sign this document.

Acronym

Literally, an acronym is a word formed by the initial letters of a phrase or title. In the online environment, acronyms are used to conserve time and space in an electronic message as well as to express humor. Examples of commonly-used acronyms are BTW (by the way) and FYI (for your information). For a longer list of acronyms, visit <http://help.prodigy.net/help/email/emoticon.html>.

Asynchronous Communication

Online discussions occurring independent of time or location. Participants send messages to a central location (discussion forum) where they are archived for later retrieval from other participants. An example of asynchronous communication is email.

Attachment

An attachment is a file that has been added to an email message as a means of transferring it to another computer. Workshop participants may send coursework as email attachments.

Browser

A browser is software that allows you to view Internet sites; the most common browsers are Netscape and Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Cable Modem

Much like a standard analog modem, a cable modem serves as a connection between a personal computer and an ISP by sending data over cable television lines. However, cable modems can be more than 30 times as fast as analog modems, and the computer can remain continuously connected without tying up a telephone line. See also modem.

Chat

In cyberspace, chat refers to live online discussion. See synchronous communication.

Cohort

In ETLO lingo, "cohort" refers to the group of OPD or OCD participants who trained together with a specific facilitator. Typically, cohorts consist of four or more teams.

Collaborative/Cooperative Learning

The process of getting two or more students to work together to learn. Sometimes a distinction is made between the two terms based on the age of the learners: cooperative learning for K–12 education and collaborative learning for adult education. Some practitioners contend that there are important differences between the two based on the unique pedagogical needs of each corresponding age group. However, the terms are often used interchangeably.

Cookie

A cookie is a small piece of information sent from a Web server to your browser; your browser stores the information on your computer and makes it available to the server whenever it is requested. In many cases, cookies store information about you so that the Web server can "remember" you the next time you visit. You can choose not to accept any cookies, but common sites like Mail.com and Amazon.com require cookies to work properly.

Cyberspace

Cyberspace is a term used to refer to the world of the Internet. Author William Gibson coined the term for his novel *Neuromancer*.

Deep Links

"Deep links" are complex, detailed links that bypass a website's main page in order to go directly to a subpage or article.

Download

When you "download" a file, you transfer a file from another computer (possibly one on the Internet) to your own computer. You have probably downloaded updates for your Internet browser, for instance.

DSL

Digital subscriber lines, or DSL connections, are becoming extraordinarily popular as an alternative to dialup modem access. DSL moves data over standard phone lines without tying up your phone; a DSL connection is also substantially faster than a dialup connection.

EDC

The Education Development Center is the parent organization of EdTech Leaders Online.

Email

Email, or electronic mail, is a method of sending messages via the Internet.

Emoticon

Also known as smileys, emoticons are keyboard characters used in combination to produce whimsical symbols representing a range of emotions that can show humor and to express

emotions that are difficult to communicate in a text-based environment. Examples can be found in Chapter Five. For a comprehensive list of emoticons, follow this link:
<http://www.chatlist.com/faces.html>

Ethernet

If you use an Ethernet connection, you probably connect your computer to a larger in-house network that is in turn connected to the Internet via a high-speed outside line. These T1 or T3 Ethernet lines are significantly faster than dialup, cable, or DSL connections.

ETLO

The abbreviation for EdTech Leaders Online.

Face-to-Face (F2F)

The term "face-to-face," or "F2F," is often used to describe the traditional classroom environment. You may also hear it used to refer to face-to-face sessions used in conjunction with online courses.

Facilitative Tools

Electronic applications used in online courses as part of the course delivery. Examples are mailing lists, chat programs, streaming audio, etc. Facilitative tools should be selected according to their added value to the course material and whether they are useful in achieving the course's learning outcomes.

Facilitator

The online course instructor is often referred to as the course facilitator. Online instructors do not retain their traditional "teacher-centered" roles from the face-to-face paradigm. Instead, they become the medium through which discovery learning is facilitated in a student-centered environment.

FAQ

A FAQ is a document consisting of frequently asked questions about something. Whenever you are seeking help with software, hardware, or something online, look for a FAQ to see if your question is covered there.

Firewall

Firewalls are composed of software (and occasionally hardware) components that protect internal networks by tightly controlling access to them, making it more difficult for a hacker to compromise the entire network. If you are behind a firewall, you may also have trouble accessing legitimate sites and servers because of this security protection.

Flame

To "flame" someone in a discussion board or chat area is to make an insulting, derogatory, or otherwise critical remark that is intended to incite anger. You should discourage this kind of negativity in your course or workshop.

Frames

Frames are the bars you may see on a website that divide the site into separate, individual pages. Frames may also be invisible; for instance, Blackboard courses use frames to separate the side bar from the main section of the course window.

FTP

FTP, or File Transfer Protocol, programs transfer files from computer to computer.

GIF

A GIF is a format commonly used for image files, especially online. GIFs are often smaller than JPEGs, but quality may not be as good.

HTML

HTML, or HyperText Markup Language, is the coding language used on the World Wide Web to create websites. The Blackboard system accepts HTML tags, which can be used to change things like text style, color, and size.

Hyperlink

Hyperlinks are images or phrases that link you to another website or file when you click on them. For instance, the underlined session headings in your Blackboard course are each hyperlinks to take you to the session content. Hyperlinks rely on programs that read HTML (your browser, for one, or newer versions of Microsoft Office) to "translate" the link.

Internet

The Internet refers to all of the networks and computers worldwide that are linked together electronically.

ISP

An ISP, or internet service provider, provides your computer with access to the Internet. (For example, AOL and Earthlink are ISPs, as are many cable companies if they offer cable modems. Your school or university may also act as an ISP if you use a high-speed T1 or T3 Ethernet line to connect to the Internet.)

Java

Not to be confused with JavaScript (see below), Java is a programming language used to write applets (or "little applications") that can run equally well on Macintosh, Windows and UNIX

computers. Online, Java is often used to create things like chat rooms; you will need a Java-enabled browser to access these.

JavaScript

JavaScript is a scripting language used primarily for webpages; it allows websites to perform more complex tasks like highlighting images as a cursor rolls over them. In order to perform JavaScript functions, browsers must be able to read the language. Some older versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator cannot handle JavaScript.

JPEG

JPEG is an alternative format for online images, and is often chosen for photographs. JPEGs take more disk space than GIFs, but the image quality is much better.

Logging In

You "log in" to a computer, website, course, or other online environment by supplying specific credentials—usually a username and a corresponding password.

Lurking

A person is lurking when he or she reads the postings in a discussion forum but does not contribute to the discussion. It is important for an online instructor to be somewhat accepting of lurkers since students have different learning styles and some learn better by listening. However, it is also important to encourage lurkers to become active participants in order for them to take full advantage of the online paradigm.

Modem

A modem is a networking device that connects your computer to a phone line so that it can communicate with your ISP. Cable modems work through cable lines instead.

Netiquette

People navigating in a virtual environment must follow proper protocols and have good online "manners" generally known as Netiquette, or etiquette on the Net. For a lesson in Netiquette basics, you can visit <http://www.glowworms.com/~vez/neti.html>.

Netizen

A Netizen is essentially a citizen of the Net, or someone who uses Internet resources. As a Netizen, you have responsibilities to the online worldwide community, just as a citizen has responsibilities to the local community.

Network

A network consists of two or more computers that are sharing files and resources.

Newsgroup

Newsgroups (many of which live on Usenet) are online forums for discussion and file exchange. See asynchronous communication.

Onground Environment

This term is used to describe the traditional classroom environment. See Face-to-Face.

Online Environment

This term describes courses, discussions, or other communications that occur in an electronic format via the Internet.

Operating System (OS)

An operating system is the brain power behind your computer. In theory, newer operating systems will make your computer's behavior more stable and predictable. Mac OS, Windows, and UNIX are OS examples.

Password

A password is a secret word or phrase that you use to authenticate yourself. Good passwords combine letters, symbols, and numbers and do not include common phrases that can be easily guessed.

PC

Officially, a PC is simply a personal computer, regardless of the manufacturer or the operating system. The term dates back to an era when personal (or single-user) computers needed to be differentiated from large multiuser computers. Colloquially, the term PC now refers to IBM-compatible computers.

PDF

PDF stands for Portable Document Format, and is a file format for transferring information between computers using a piece of software called Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Plug-In

Plug-ins generally refer to small software packages that add functionality to your Web browser. For instance, you will need a plug-in to use features like Flash and Shockwave.

Private Communication

Refers to email to one or more individuals' private email accounts, as opposed to messages sent to a list or posted in a forum.

Public Communication

Refers to electronic communication sent to a public forum, listserv, mailing list etc. where one message is distributed to all list members.

Real-Time Communication

Communication occurring at the moment messages are generated.

Seamless Technology

See transparent technology.

Search Engine

A search engine hunts for material on the Internet based on criteria you submit. Some search engines automatically query all of the networks they can find; others search a pre-approved and filtered collection of sites and documents. Different search engines can be useful in different ways, so try new ones!

Server

A server is a computer that manages and provides services to other computers in a network. Some servers manage and assign printers; others host websites; still others house email software and lists.

Spam

"Spam" is the Internet term for the unwanted mass junk mailing that are often sent from bogus email accounts. (The name comes from an old Monty Python sketch in which spam-loving Vikings drown the other characters out by singing "spam, spam, spam" into oblivion.) To get rid of spam, you can attempt to email the ISP from which the message was sent or set up filters for your email program. For more information on spam and on ways to prevent it, visit <http://www.junkemail.org/> or <http://www.cauce.org/>.

Spambots are programs that automatically (like robots) search for and collect email addresses that may be listed on public websites. If you have a public website, you may want to list a "junk mail" email address instead of a work account. Note that Blackboard courses and workshops are not public sites, since they require a login.

Synchronous Communication

Online discussions occurring independent of location, but at the same time (real time). Participants must agree on a time to log into the discussion forum and messages are received at the moment they are sent. This form of electronic communication is also called "chatting," and can include audio and/or video.

Synergy

The dynamic atmosphere created in an online class when participants interact and productively communicate with each other and in groups. The participants' cooperative efforts create an enhanced combined effect compared to the sum of their individual effects. This atmosphere is highly conducive to learning.

Telnet

Telnet is a protocol for connecting your computer directly to a remote computer. It is primarily used on older, pre-WWW networks.

Transparent Technology

In an online course, technology is said to be transparent (or seamless) when it is easy to use, intuitive in nature, and is *not* the focus of the learning experience. If programs are difficult to use and the system has frequent breakdowns, the technology is not seamless and hinders the learning process. Technology should merely be a means to deliver content.

24/7

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. This term is often used to describe the hours of operation for the discussion board or the online workshop or course.

Upload

When you "upload" a file, you transfer a file from your computer to someone else's computer. For instance, you may upload files to your school's server if you need to access them easily from another location.

URL

A URL, or Uniform Resource Locator, is the online equivalent of a street address. Any resource on the World Wide Web can be located by entering its URL into a browser.

Usenet

See newsgroup.

Virtual Classroom

An online chat area where synchronous conversations relating to the coursework can take place. The virtual classroom is a public forum in the sense that all participants can read and reply to any message posted there.

World Wide Web (WWW)

The World Wide Web is an infrastructure that allows users to navigate the Internet and access various computers and networks. Think of the Web as an "information superhighway" through cyberspace, allowing you to get from resource to resource.