

# Learn to talk tech with our IT Jargon Buster

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Our A-Z of some of  
the terms you might  
hear when talking  
about technology



**merit.**  
Technologies

# A few words of a foreign language can get you a long way in a strange land

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We know that IT jargon is an alien language to a lot of people, and we do our best to keep the tech talk to a minimum when we're working with our clients.

In any case, you probably have enough of your own office jargon to start worrying about ours.

But in a tech-led world, a lot of IT terms are cropping up more and more in everyday conversation. And if you do have a problem you need help with – or just a question

you'd like to ask about your business IT – you may find it useful to have a few words of lingo at your disposal.

Our new guide is a great place to start. It won't tell you everything, but if you need an easy A-Z of some of the most common terms you'll hear when you're talking about technology, then you've come to the right place.

**Let's start at the beginning...**





### **Adware**

**Software** that automatically downloads advertisements when you're online, such as banner ads and pop-ups

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### **AI (Artificial Intelligence)**

Systems and devices that simulate human behaviors and decisions. This can include creating systems, language processing, speech recognition, writing text and machine vision

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### **Antivirus**

**Software** that identifies and removes **viruses** from your device. Also known as anti-**malware**

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### **API (Application Programming Interface)**

**Software** that allows two or more applications or programs to communicate with each other and share information



### **Backdoor**

A vulnerability in a security system that allows unwanted access to files and data

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### **Bandwidth**

The maximum amount of data you can send and receive in a given amount of time, over an internet connection. Imagine a big pipe compared with a small pipe

### **Botnet**

A network of private computers infected with **malware** and controlled as a group to spread the **virus** further



### **Cache**

A temporary file that stores information on your device to speed things up. For instance a web cache might remember the last thing you were doing so it can reload a page where you left off

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### **(The) Cloud**

Data storage and computing power that lives on remote **servers**, which are accessed via the internet

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### **Corrupted**

An unusable data file

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### **Cybersecurity**

Any and all security measures put in place to protect your devices, systems, and network from cyber attack



### **Dark web**

A hidden part of the internet, accessed using special **software**. It's rife with criminal activity. This is where stolen data, such as credit card details, is often sold

### **Data breach**

A security incident where private data is viewed or stolen by unauthorized persons

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### **DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service)**

A type of cyber attack that harms or stops a network by flooding it with data from numerous other devices

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### **Downtime**

The period of time a network or systems are offline (or “down”), preventing the normal running of a business

## **E**

### **Encryption**

The process of encoding data to make it unreadable without the right access information – usually a password, passkey or authentication app

## **F**

### **Firewall**

A security measure that controls what data can come in and out of your network

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### **FTP (File Transfer Protocol)**

**Protocol** used for transferring files from a **server** to a computer across a network. This is usually authenticated with usernames and passwords

## **G**

### **GIF (Graphic Interchange Format)**

A type of image file that can be either animated or static

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### **Gigabyte (GB)**

Unit of data equal to one thousand million bytes. A typical movie download might be between 1 and 4 GB

## **H**

### **Hardware**

The physical devices in your IT world – computers, printers, phones, tablets

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### **Hotspot (Wi-Fi)**

A physical location where you can gain internet access via Wi-Fi

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### **HTML (Hypertext Markup Language)**

The universal language of the internet, used to structure web pages, tell your web browser how to display them and create links between them

## **I**

### **Infrastructure**

Your entire system – your network, **servers**, and all your devices

## iOS

**Operating system** manufactured by Apple and used exclusively on its **hardware**

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## IP (Internet Protocol) address

A unique number that identifies a device connected to the internet



## LAN (Local Area Network)

A network of connected devices that spans a small area, such as your office or home



## Java

A widely used programming language used in millions of applications and devices around the world

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## Javascript

Unrelated to Java, Javascript is used everywhere on the internet. It's a programming language used within all web browsers to perform a whole range of functions



## Malware

Malicious **software**, a type of **virus**, designed to infect your system and disrupt, damage, or gain access to your device, **server** or network. This can lead to the unauthorized access or theft of data and private information

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## Megabyte

Unit of data equal to one million forty-eight thousand, five hundred seventy bytes



## Keylogger

**Software** used by cybercriminals to record the keys pressed on a keyboard. This information can be used to access login credentials and other sensitive information



## NOS (Network Operating System)

A specialized **operating system** for a network device, like a **router** or **firewall**

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## NTFS (Network Transfer File System)

A file system used by Windows for storing and retrieving files on a hard disk

O

### **OS (Operating System)**

**Software** that manages a computer's basic functions, and provides common services for computer programs

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### **Ransomware**

**Malware** that encrypts sensitive data and demands a ransom for its release (ransoms should never be paid – data is often never properly released, or is only partially returned)

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P

### **Phishing**

Scam emails that pretend to be from a credible source and aim to steal personal information and/or login credentials

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### **Router**

A device that directs data to the right places in a network

S

### **Server**

A computer or program that manages access to a network and holds data in one location for multiple users to access

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### **Protocol**

The set of rules that allows different devices to communicate with each other

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### **Software**

Programs and apps that make devices work

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### **Proxy server**

A **server** that sits between a device requesting information, and the server providing that information. For example, it could be a gateway between your laptop and the internet, that stops hackers from reaching your network

### **Spyware**

**Malware** that spies on the actions you take on your device. This can be used to steal data or passwords, or listen in to conversations

R

### **RAM (Random Access Memory)**

A form of temporary computer memory that's usually used to store working data

T

### **Trojan**

A form of **malware** that looks harmless but conceals a **virus**

## Troubleshoot

To analyze a problem with a view to solving it (something we do a lot of!)



## UAC (User Account Control)

A feature that only allows authorized users to make changes to a system or device

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## USB

A type of widely used cable that connects or charges devices. This could be a keyboard connecting to a computer, or a flash drive transferring data



## Virus

A malicious computer program or code that can copy itself and spread throughout a network, corrupting or damaging data and systems

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## VPN (Virtual Private Network)

A more secure way of connecting to a company's network remotely, or using the internet over a public Wi-Fi connection



## WAN (Wide Area Network)

A network of devices that are connected across a wider area than a LAN, and allows you to connect to smaller networks

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## WLAN (Wireless Local Area Network)

A wireless network that connects two or more devices, creating a LAN

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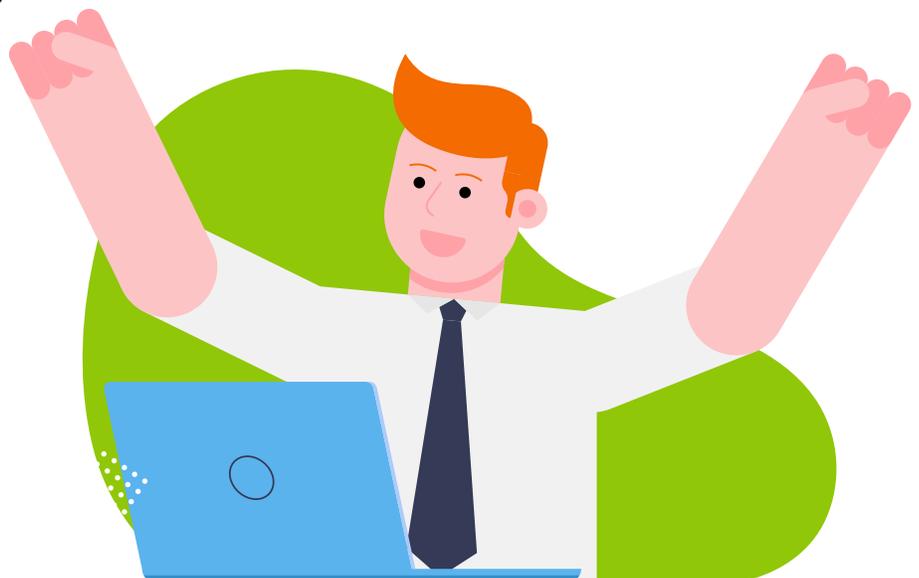
## Worm

A type of malware that replicates itself to spread to other devices across a network without human activation



## Zip file

A file that compresses its contents to create a smaller file that's easier to share or store



# We hope this has helped

Yes, we operate in a technical world with some jargon that can be off-putting if it's not something you're used to talking about.

But your business IT is there to make your life easier and more efficient. We take a lot of pride in our ability to work with our clients, helping them to understand their systems without sending their heads into a spin.

So if your current IT support provider can't do that – or you don't have support you can call on for help and advice whenever you need them – we'd love to have a chat to find out how we can help you.

Contact us anytime to arrange a no obligation conversation. And we'll make sure to keep it jargon-free.



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