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A Dictionary of Computer Science (7th edition) (Review) RR 2017/134

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Title: A Dictionary of Computer Science, Seventh Edition
Editors: Andrew Butterfield and Gerard Ekembe Ngondi
Publisher: Oxford University Press
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References:

Daintith, J. and Wright, E. (eds.) (2008) *A Dictionary of Computing*, 6th ed. Oxford University Press.

ICANN (2000) "ICANN Announces Selections for New Top-Level Domains", available at <https://www.icann.org/news/icann-pr-2000-11-16-en> (Accessed 24 February 2017).

Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (undated) "Root Zone Database", available at <http://www.iana.org/domains/root/db> (Accessed 24 February 2017).

Vaughan-Nichols, S. (2014) "Ready or not, here come the new Internet top-level domain names", *ZDNet*, 29 January. Available at <http://www.zdnet.com/article/ready-or-not-here-come-the-new-internet-top-level-domain-names/> (Accessed 24 February 2017).

Part of Oxford University Press's *Quick Reference* series, the seventh edition of *A Dictionary of Computer Science* provides easy access to explanations and definitions of common computer science terms and concepts, and contains approximately 150 new terms not in the previous edition. Significantly, this edition brings a title change that isn't discussed as part of the preface. In fact, the table of contents in the paperback edition still lists the body as being "A Dictionary of Computing." Title choice aside, this updated edition brings readers into the era of Android, SaaS (Software as a Service), and social media – elements that were just emerging at the time the previous edition was published.

The dictionary's brief entries appear in alphabetical order, with clear, bold headings, and definitions also include terms in bold type to indicate major cross-references. Some entries end with additional cross-references (*see also*), while others offer suggestions for comparison. For example, the entry for "hidden terminal problem" (p. 252) recommends that the reader also review the entry for "exposed terminal problem." This feature is particularly useful for a novice who may not already know of the other related concept or term. Terms generally appearing elsewhere in the dictionary are indicated as such with an asterisk at the beginning, however this convention is not explained in the "Guide to the Dictionary."

Six topics have additional information included in a series of two-page spreads. The first, "The Anatomy of an Internet Address," provides useful insight into the elements of a uniform resource identifier (URI), but may be too basic for most users of this dictionary. Other topics are more sophisticated and beginning researchers will benefit from the deeper coverage: computer graphics, object-oriented programming, quantum computing, SQL, and XML.

Some entries indicate that there are additional curated web links on the publisher's website where users can find additional information. Others have small charts, graphs, or illustrations that supplement the definitions.

Entries span a broad range of topics, ranging from terms related to hardware and equipment to programming and logic concepts. Significant companies and individuals have short entries that include histories and biographies respectively.

The appendices include several useful ready-reference lists, which vary in quality but are still useful. Oddly, the appendix listing Generic Top-Level Domains (TLDs) lists the TLDs introduced in 2001 (ICANN, 2000), but does not include or mention the change in 2014 (Vaughan-Nichols, 2014) that allowed introduction of domains based on company names and other words such as .diamond, .surgery, and .read, among numerous others (Internet Assigned Numbers Authority, undated). At the same time, however, lists of Country-Code domains and the File Extensions provide quick access to what are lesser-known but still commonly used abbreviations. A two-page chronology adds a simple summary of computing achievements and breakthroughs since 1821.

Despite some small drawbacks, this volume would be useful for high school and college libraries, and due to its relatively low cost, would be a handy resource for any researcher in the field.