



Letter from the Editor

Web Site Hosting - Design - Marketing - Management

News and helpful information from your friends at AmeriWeb Hosting May 2025



WEB NEWS

Old Computer Technology vs Today

Today's cellphones have more computing power than the old mainframes of the '50s-'70s. They pack more punch than the computer used to land Apollo 11, where astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first people to walk on the Moon. Yet, their size and cost continue to shrink.

As odd as it might seem today, commercial computers "back in the day" (1950s - early 1970s) did not have keyboards or screens (except for the operators), because users didn't have direct access to the computers. These were mainframes, which took up entire rooms. This situation persisted until at least the mid 1960s, when terminals started to appear.



IBM 360/50 with tape drives in the background, and a rack of 9-track tapes in the foreground. Each could hold only 45 MB of data on a 2400' reel!

You would typically write your program out on a coding sheet, and turn it into the keypunch department, where a number of operators — usually women — would use a keypunch to punch a card for each line of your program, whether it be FORTRAN, COBOL, etc. — the languages common back then. It was unusual for a programmer to keypunch their own program, but there might be one keypunch outside the computer room where a person could punch a few cards to correct mistakes in their program, before resubmitting.

Typically the jobs, if fairly large, were submitted in a box. Each box could hold up to 2000 80-column cards, like this one:

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For small programs, say 50 cards or so, you could just submit a deck of cards surrounded by a rubber band.

The program decks would then be read into a card reader attached to the computer, and executed as "batch jobs", run one after another. Each program was preceded by a few cards with JCL (Job Control Language), which specified what resources the program needed (such as tape drives), and invoked the necessary compilers and linkers. The cards for your source program would be followed by any cards containing pre-built libraries needed by your program (in binary format), followed by additional cards (if any) with the data needed by your program.

When the program was finished running, perhaps minutes, hours, or even a day after you submitted it, both the original deck and your printout would be available in on a shelf in an output area. Less often, your program might punch cards as additional output.

Card decks for different jobs could be stacked in a reader by the operator, since each one had its own JCL header. On most large systems, the cards would not be read by the computer directly, as that would be too slow but instead, would be read by a separate device and their image written to a tape drive.

When minicomputers appeared in the 1960s, paper tape was often used, instead of punch cards for smaller installations.

By the 1970s, computer terminal access to mainframes became more widespread, and punch card usage dwindled off. Then personal computers appeared, with their individual keyboards and screens in the mid to late 1970s.



IBM 3270 terminal, used to access mainframes using TSO (Time Sharing Option).

What does this have to do with hosting (our specialty)? Well, your website is hosted on a huge server that happens to be connected to the internet, via multiple optical data lines for redundancy. We host "on the cloud" providing additional redundancy should one server experience technical difficulties. In the event of a hardware failure, your websites and applications will seamlessly transition to an operational instance in the cloud. All this included with most hosting plans. [See our info HERE.](#)

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HOW TO

ICANN Approves Elimination of 60-Day Domain Transfer Lock Period

ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) is the private, non-government, nonprofit corporation with responsibility for Internet Protocol (IP) address space allocation, protocol parameter assignment, domain name system (DNS) management, and root server system management functions. They organize the internet and make your domain name work.

ICANN has decided to eliminate its long-standing 60-day domain transfer lock policy following a vote at the ICANN 82 meeting in Seattle. This change stems from the adoption of a comprehensive 163-page report by the GNSO Council's Transfer Policy working group, which includes 47 recommendations to overhaul domain transfer processes.

The 60-day lock, previously mandatory after a domain registration or transfer, will be replaced with a shorter 30-day (720-hour) lock period for new registrations or transfers. The updated policy also introduces measures to combat DNS abuse, modifies terminology, and streamlines notifications and Transfer Authorization Code handling.



MARKETING

Google On Robots.txt: When To Use Noindex vs. Disallow

There is some confusion in understanding the difference between Noindex and Disallow in regards to Google and Bing search engines. You can use them in your area on your website, or your robots.txt file, and are used to instruct search engines.

- **noindex** - The **noindex** directive tells search engines not to include a specific page in their search results. Add this instruction in the HTML head section using the robots meta tag, or the X-Robots HTTP header. Use noindex when you want to keep a page from showing up in search results, but still allow search engines to read the page's content. This is helpful for pages that users can see, but that you don't want search engines to display, like thank-you pages, or internal search result pages.
- **disallow** - The **disallow** directive in a website's robots.txt file stops search engine crawlers from accessing specific URLs or patterns. When a page is disallowed, search engines will not crawl or index its content. Use disallow when you want to block search engines completely from retrieving or processing a page. This is suitable for sensitive information, like private user data, or for pages that aren't relevant to search engines.
- **nofollow** - Just for collateral information, the **nofollow** directive in a website's will stop search engines from indexing any links found on a page. Use nofollow when you want to block search engines from using your page to find additional web pages. This is suitable for a links pages listing external sites, where you don't want to share your mojo with other sites.

It is not necessary to provide positive commands, such as **index**, **allow** or **follow** as search engines assume they are present, unless told otherwise with a **noindex**, **disallow** or **nofollow**.

As always, if you have any questions, contact us!



ASK A TECH

Q: Sometimes my computer can't display a video or graphic because the format is unknown. How can I fix this?

A: The free video editor does it all: VLC is a free, open-source media player that plays almost every graphic, audio or video file format in existence. It runs quickly, and there are no ads. It's also simple to use. [Find it HERE](#)

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If you have a question for our ASK A TECH section, email it to

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