

The World of Software

'...is the programs and procedure required to enable a computer to perform a specific task...'. The software industry is huge and an ever changing one. Software has been with us since the first computers. Without it, computers cannot operate. Various kinds of software exist in the market today. They can be classified into:

Operating Systems

The lowest level form of software which has direct contact with the computer hardware. It manages resources as well as other software programs sitting on top. The operating system takes care of all the low level functions a computer performs and is probably the most complex piece of software in circulation.

Applications Software

Software which can normally be bought from stores is called application software. These packages serve infinite purposes and can vary from office applications, like word processors, spreadsheets, payroll systems, account systems, anti-virus applications and database driven software, to games, communication and multimedia applications.

Tailor-Made Software

Same as application software, tailor made software is written specifically to perform a particular task and to meet the user's specific requirements. This software fills the gap that application suites leave in the software industry. Certain performances needed by particular businesses and organizations cannot be performed by the standard application suite found on stores' shelves. As a result, several software companies specialize in this area and create software applications designed to perform a specific task for specific sectors in our society.

The Process

Software is normally written by professional programmers working with small to medium companies as well as large corporations. They create standard packages that are then marketed and distributed worldwide. The purpose can vary from general use, like operating systems and office applications to specific use, like software written for hospitals and government departments. The process of writing tailor-made software can be totally different though. Before the programmers put their hands on the keyboard and start coding, a whole process is carried out by systems analyst, normally called feasibility study. This study serves to understand the business requirements of the specific organization to which the software is going to be written. A full documented systems design is then written explaining all these requirements, which will also server as the basis on which programmers write their code in order to produce the end product.

The Works

Software applications need to be loaded through a disk or through a network link from an office server or internet. It loads into the computer memory and normally gets installed on the local computer's internal drive. Once resident there, every time the package is called from the user, it loads into the computer's memory and execution starts. Some applications remain resident in the computer's memory for as long as the computer is functioning. These are normally functions forming part of the operating system and other applications like network applications, anti-virus software and device drivers.

Everything one sees on a computer screen is made up of software. Without it, a computer cannot operate and is useless. Software applications have gone a long way and today many software applications can perform millions of tasks every second, supported by the evolution of computer hardware and the huge leaps forward of technology.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Sandro Azzopardi is a professional author who writes several articles on various subjects on his web site and local newspapers and magazines. You can visit information about this article and others on: <http://www.theinfopit.com/technology/software/software.php>