**Topic 5 Software**

***Software Basics: categories and programs. OS Basics.***

The term software was once used for all non-hardware components of a computer. Software determines the tasks a digital device can help you accomplish. The instructions that tell a computer how to carry out a task are referred to as a computer program. These programs form the software that prepares a computer to do a specific task, such as document production, virus protection, file management, or Web browsing.

The two main categories are system software and application software. Operating systems are classified as system software. Device drivers, utilities, and programming languages are also system software. Application software categories include music, graphics, mapping, finance, and entertainment. Application software is designed to help people accomplish real-world tasks, whereas system software is designed for computer-centric tasks.

An Operating System (OS) is the low-level software that supports a computer's basic functions, such as scheduling tasks and performs all the basic tasks like file management, memory management, process management, handling input and output, and controlling peripheral devices such as disk drives and printers. An Operating System is an interface between a computer user and computer hardware.

***Applications and Apps: mobile, Web, local.***

A Web application (or Web app) is software that is accessed with a Web browser. Instead of running locally, much of the program code for the software runs on a remote computer connected to the Internet or other computer network. Most Web apps require no installation at all on your local computer or handheld device.

A mobile app is designed for a handheld device, such as a smartphone, or tablet computer. Most handheld devices can use both Web apps and mobile apps. The difference between the two is that Web apps run on a remote computer, whereas mobile apps run from the handheld device, so they have to be downloaded and installed. Games and entertainment seem to dominate mobile apps, whereas shopping and social apps dominate the Web apps category.

Local applications are installed on a computer's hard disk. When you install a local application, all of its files are placed in the appropriate folders on your computer's hard disk, and then your computer performs any software or hardware configurations necessary to make sure the program is ready to run.

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