

Software Agent

Definition - What does *Software Agent* mean?

A software agent is an piece of software that functions as an agent for a user or another program, working autonomously and continuously in a particular environment. It is inhibited by other processes and agents, but is also able to learn from its experience in functioning in an environment over a long period of time.

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Techopedia explains *Software Agent*

Software agents offer various benefits to end users by automating repetitive tasks. The basic concepts related to software agents are:

- They are invoked for a task
- They reside in "wait" status on hosts
- They do not require user interaction
- They run status on hosts upon starting conditions
- They invoke other tasks including communication

There are a number of different software agents, including:

- Buyer Agents or Shopping Bots: These agents revolve around retrieving network information related to good and services.
- User or Personal Agents: These agents perform a variety of tasks such as filling out forms, acting as opponents in games, assembling customized reports and checking email, among other tasks.
- Monitoring and Surveillance Agents: These agents observe and report on equipment.
- Data-Mining Agents: These agents find trends and patterns in many different sources and allow users to sort through the data to find the information they are seeking.