

# Glossary

**controller**

Something in your home that generates signals. This could be a keypad or a motion sensor for example.

**current**

In HCA terminology, current means the schedule that is in effect, the one that is working or active at the time.

**design**

In this user guide, refers to what you create using HCA to run your home. The design includes the displays, devices, programs, groups, schedules, schedule entries, and so on. Your design is stored in a file with the type HCA.

**design pane**

The left hand pane of the HCA main window. The design pane shows the names of all your displays, devices, programs, groups, controllers, schedules, and schedule entries

**device**

The term used in HCA to represent something that receives signals. A device can be any item that you want to control: a lamp, toaster, heater, etc. For more information, see the Devices Chapter.

**display pane**

The right hand pane of the HCA main window. This pane shows displays. Each display can be an arrangement of icons, messages, or HTML.

**DXF**

Abbreviation for drawing interchange format. This is a widely used file format that was originally developed for use with the AutoCAD program. DXF is also the standard file type/extension used for typical floor plan drawing programs.

**element**

*See program elements*

**entries**

Schedules have entries. There are two ways to create schedule entries: through the Schedule Entry Wizard, and with the Visual Scheduler. Refer to the Visual Scheduler chapter for more details.

**execute**

While a program is running, each element is executed, that is, whatever the element is supposed to do, is done. If it is an element that turns on a light, when the element is executed, the light comes on.

**expression**

A programming language like piece of text that assigns a value to a flag or tests the value of a flag. See the expression chapter

**flag**

A persistent state object that can be manipulated in a program. In a traditional programming language, this is called a variable. A flag can take on values that are dates, times, yes or no value, numbers, or text. A program can use flags like pieces of note paper. Each flag has a name and a value.

In the way that you might make notes to yourself while doing a complex task, programs can use flags to record things. A program can set a flag to a value and that value remains true as long as HCA is running. For example, one program can set a flag to Yes while it runs. Much later another program can test the value of that flag to see if it's Yes or No.

**group**

A collection of devices that you want to control as one system (unit). A group can have its own house code and unit code, and be controlled from the HCA or with a control panel. For more information, see the Groups chapter.

**HCA**

An abbreviation for the Home Control Assistant.

**home**

What the Home Control Assistant refers to your design as—your house, your home.

**house code**

Part of the address for your device, this is set on the module, and referenced in HCA. The house code works with a unit code.

**Insteon**

A protocol for sending and receiving signals over the powerline.

**Magic Module**

The name for a specific piece of hardware manufactured by Elk Products and supported by HCA. Also used to refer to all the various hardware items in the Magic Module family.

**members**

Groups have members. These are the individual devices within a group. *Group members* can be devices or programs, but **not** another group.

**module**

Refers to the electric switch that you plug in to the wall socket, and to which you connect a device. See the Devices chapter for more information.

**Network Device**

A device on your network – wired or wireless – that has an IP address that can be queried to see if it can be contacted or not. This can be useful to know, for example, if a mobile phone is in the house or not and from that if the phone's owner is home or not.

**PIM**

Powerline Interface Module. The name given to the UPB powerline interface. Also called a CIM

**PLC**

Powerline controller. The PIM is often referred to as a PLC. The PowerLinc also is called a PLC

**Powerlinc**

The name very over used by SmartHome to name just about anything – from a power adapter to the Insteon PowerLinc.

**primary address**

The address assigned to a device or controller.

**program**

A series of instructions for HCA that allow it to control several devices in sequence and be scheduled or activated remotely. Programs are logical, and sequential, and can be set up to have a delays or waits, and may have conditional steps. Programs have names, and can be started when HCA receives one of the triggers defined for it. For more information on creating programs, see the Programs chapter.

**program elements**

Each action that the program executes (does) is an element.

You draw programs by placing elements in the programming canvas, and link them together by drawing connecting lines. The program begins with the “Start Here” element and flows from element to element following the connecting lines in the direction of the arrows.

**properties**

Nearly all things in HCA have properties, that allow you to determine how the design works.

**repeat**

An element that allows one or more elements to be executed (done) a number of times.

**right-click**

Click the right mouse button, not the left, that you usually use. Of course, if your mouse is set up for left-handed use, click the left mouse button.

**run**

Between the time a program is started and the time it finishes, it is said to be running.

**scene**

A preset illumination level and (optionally) the rate at which the light changes illumination levels. Scenes are stored in the switch hardware and can be programmed by HCA.

**schedule**

Tells when things will happen. When devices will turn on and off, when programs will start, what the “time plan” for HCA is. HCA can have only one schedule current at any time. You can suspend a group or device or program so the current schedule doesn’t see it. For more information on schedules, see the Schedule and Visual Scheduler chapters.

**start**

When a program is started it begins running. Programs can be started in several ways. The first is from the HCA display by using the popup menu from right clicking a program icon in the display pane or on a program icon in the design pane. You can also start a program that has a house code/unit code address by sending that home code/unit code from a control panel.

**sun-relative time**

As used in the Visual Scheduler, refers to a time based upon sunrise or sunset. For example, you can set a schedule entry as 10 minutes before sunrise, or 30 minutes after sunset.

**test**

A test is an element that allows the program to analyze a condition and execute different elements based upon the outcome of that test.

**time markers**

On the Visual Scheduler, the three sets of markers below each bar. The ones on the left of the bar are used to create specific times (10 a.m., 3:15 p.m., etc.) and the ones to the right are used to create times relative to sunset and sunrise (at sunset, at 30 minutes before sunrise, etc.).

**trigger**

A event used to cause a program to start, a group to pass the signal to it’s members, or a device to send the command to it’s primary address.

**UPB**

Universal Powerline Bus. A protocol for sending messages over the powerline.

**unit code**

Part of the address for your device, this is set on the module, and referenced in HCA. The unit code works with a house code.

**Visual Programmer**

Is an accessible, visual method of constructing programs for HCA. It helps you see the sequential steps you are creating and placing in a grid that graphically represents the program.

**Visual Scheduler**

Provides a graphical manner for adding entries to a schedule. You can see the current on/off entries for all devices in a particular schedule. And you can see markers for the entries you are adding.

**X10**

A protocol for sending commands over the powerline.