

What does the “Ae” stand for in AeDebug?

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The name of the registry key for configuring automatic debugging of application crashes is AeDebug. Okay, so it’s obvious what “Debug” stands for, but what does “Ae” stand for?

I can’t prove it, but circumstantial evidence points to AE standing for “Application Error”. The title of the dialog box was originally “Application Error”. And there’s this comment:

```
// This fixes the AE (application error) in component XYZ
```

This evidence lines up with 16-bit Windows, where application crashes were originally called Unrecoverable Application Errors, or UAEs.

So that’s what I’m going to say. It stands for Application Error.

Bonus chatter: The procedure¹ in 16-bit Windows that displayed the Unrecoverable Application Error dialog was named `Display_Box_of_Doom` and it has the understated comment “Display the Unrecoverable Application Error box that everyone seems to dislike so much.” Later, the name of the dialog changed to simply “Application Error”: We gave you a way to try to recover from it, so it wasn’t “unrecoverable” any more.

¹ Note that I called it a “procedure” rather than a “function”. That’s because it, like most of the 16-bit kernel, was written in assembly language.

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