



# PAUL BARAN

Had the ideas of distributed networks and packet-switching. This server is named after him.

Several years before the ARPANET was created, Paul Baran had two ideas that became very important in the development of the ARPANET. The first was the idea of building a **distributed network**. The second was a technique for data transmission that later came to be called **packet switching**.

Baran thought he could design a more robust communications networks using digital computers and by introducing redundancy. Many of his colleagues knew little about the new field of digital computing and were very skeptical of Baran's ideas. Baran later recalled, "Many of the things I thought possible would tend to sound like utter nonsense, or

impractical depending on the generosity of spirit in those brought up in an earlier world." (Baran in Hafner & Lyon, 55) Baran's other ground-breaking idea was to divide messages into "message blocks" before sending them out across the network. Each block would be sent separately and rejoined into a whole when they were

received at their destination. A British man named Donald Davies independently devised a very similar system, but he called the message blocks "packets," a term that was eventually adopted instead of Baran's message blocks. Source: <http://ibiblio.org/pioneers/baran.html>