

# Microspeak: Net net

 [devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20090929-00](http://devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20090929-00)

September 29, 2009



Raymond Chen

In finance, the *net* is the total after you have cancelled positive values against negative values. For example, if you took in \$30 and paid out \$20, then your net is \$10. In Microspeak, this term has moved into project planning and has undergone redoubling, so it's not just *net*; it's *net net*. The doubling of the word was probably added to create a sense of impatience. Here's an imaginary conversation that illustrates the term:

**Speaker 1:** We're five days over on component X, but component Y is ahead of schedule, and we can have some of them h...

**Speaker 2:** (interrupting) What's the *net net*?

**Speaker 1:** Um, we're two days behind.

The *net net* is not a real estate transaction but rather is a short summary of a complicated situation, what often goes by the term *bottom line*.

Here is an actual citation:

(At the top of a long email message)

Net net, we're delaying the release we had planned for tomorrow to try and get some critical fixes in.

Another use of the term *net net* is to highlight a conclusion from a lot of data.

(at the bottom of a large information-dense PowerPoint slide)

Net Net: Eliminate XYZ from our target set.

Both senses of *net net* highlight the principle of *I know you're impatient, so I'll cut to the chase*.

[Raymond Chen](#)

**Follow**

