# **COMMUNICATION SOFTWARE**

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# **COMMUNICATION SOFTWARE**

When first introduced, it was a hard task just to get the communication software to talk to the modem and get everything worked out just right. As with all computer programs and software, over the years, communication software has leaped forward dramatically in the last couple of years. There have been several things added to the features available with communication software; but, fortunately, the price has remained stable.

Features-- There are a lot of features that you should look for in software for communications. You should try to get auto-dial, screen capture, phone directories, and macros. In this section, I will tell you a little about each of them and how they work.

NOTE: Do not go out right now and try to get your hands on the most fascinating piece of software you can find. You will be wasting your money. There are several programs out there that will do just as well, and will cost you half as much.

You will find that a lot of the programs that come with your computer will already have communication software installed in them. Microsoft Windows has a program that comes with it called Terminal. GeoWorks has a program that comes with it called GeoComm. And there are many others.

The first thing you should look for in software is compatibility. You need to make sure that the software you buy is able to run with both your computer and your modem. If your computer has a built-in communications program, then all you will have to do is make sure that the modem is compatible. It probably will be.

You will also want to make sure that your software is compatible with different BBSes and on-line services. Some software will only run with one kind of on-line service such as CompuServe. It will do you some good to look for a broad-based, general-purpose communications program. If you wish, you may have as many communications programs as you have room for on your computer; there is no limit.

# Choosing Your Software

# Shareware

You will want to look over a lot of different programs that are available. You will definitely want to look at shareware. Shareware is a program where you can use the program, and then pay for it later it you like it. You should check with people who use BBSes and find out what kind of software they use and why they use it. If you can't figure out what software to use, go with shareware.

# DOS vs. Windows

In the past, if you wanted a high quality and fast program, you bought DOS. Now, new Windows programs are appearing that have all the features of their

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DOS counterparts but are easier to learn. Windows programs also boast an ability to take directly from the modem and into your word processor--without even saving it first. Keep in mind, though, that by nature Windows programs require a faster machine than DOS programs do.