

## COMPUTER INFORMATION SERIES NO 2

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To complete your computer system purchase, you'll need to choose the right printer for your needs. Since there is such a wide variety to choose from with prices ranging from \$120 to \$6,000 we need to look at what each one is, and how much it costs to operate and maintain.

= Dot-Matrix Printers. These printers print using a series of dots. There are 9-pin and 24-pin dot matrix printers. A 9-pin will print 9 dots per inch on your paper, where a 24-pin will print 24 dots per inch on your paper. Naturally, a 24-pin is going to make your print-out with more detail and clarity because there is more printing per inch therefore if there is only a small difference in price \_ you should get the 24-pin. Dot-matrix printers don't cost much to maintain. They use a printer ribbon similar to a typewriter ribbon at an average cost of \$12 each. The ribbon has about the same life as a typewriter ribbon, so you be the judge as to how long they'll last you. A dot matrix printer is a perfect investment if you plan to use your computer for mailing lists and occasional writing of letters.

There is also a software you can buy called "Emulaser" (purchase from TigerSoftware for \$69.95 by calling 1-800-888-4437) that will make your dot matrix printer think it's a laser printer. The print-out will almost be of the same professional quality but your printer will print much slower. (Emulaser is not recommended for older computers with a 8086 or similar processor. A minimum of a 286 or 386-based computer system is recommended)

= Daisy Wheel Printers. Don't get stuck with one of these. Remember the old IBM Selectric typewriters that used a wheel to type a character instead of a typewriter key?

This is what a daisy wheel printer uses. You can NEVER print a photograph or picture and it's not too great at drawing lines and boxes either. Besides, you can get a dot matrix printer for a much lower price and print anything you want to!

= Inkjet and Bubblejet Printers. Both of these printers use a WET ink to print onto the paper. There is no danger in smearing because the ink dries instantaneously \_ however, if the printed page draws moisture or something is spilled on it, you could have a few problems and have to print the page again. Although they are not costly to maintain, if you have a mail order business the chances of ink smearing during the mailing process is greater. Therefore, injet and bubblejet printers should not be used \_ especially for printing labels to apply to the outside of the envelope.

= Laser Printers. If you plan to do more with your computer than maintain mailing lists, keep records and write occasional letters; you will want to seriously look at purchasing a laser printer. A laser printer hardly ever wears out and is one of the best investments you can make if you're in for the long-haul. A laser printer is like a mini-computer. It has a memory board in it and will accumulate an entire page in it's memory

banks BEFORE it prints the page. Just like making sure you have enough RAM in your computer to operate the software, you need enough RAM in your laser printer to print a page. How much memory do you need? If all you wanted to print was a 1-page letter containing only words you could print it on a laser printer with 512K of memory. However, if you want to print that same letter with a graphic (cartoon, photograph, lines, boxes, etc.) you would need more memory in your printer. The "safe" amount to purchase would be 1MB but we highly recommend 4MB. This way, you won't be in any trouble when you are trying to print something that takes up 2MB of memory and you only have 1MG on your printer.

