Use of computers continues to expand

When you consider the speed with which microcomputers have become established in business and home use, it's hard to believe that they have been on the market for only seven years.

But, most of us can barely perceive how profound the next 10 to 20 years will be. We are experiencing an “information age,” which is changing forever the way we work, play and educate our children.

As society rapidly shifts from what was an industrial society, concerned with the production and distribution of goods, to an information or service-oriented society, the need to process, store and provide information efficiently and economically is of primary importance. Everything from processing bank statements and electric bills, to putting men in space, is made possible by a computer.

As a result, American society is absorbing more technology with greater speed than ever before. Penetration levels it took the telephone 60 years to reach, were obtained by the television in 20. The International Data Corporation has predicted that the computer will go the same distance in 10.

But, when you consider that an industrial-age invention such as the automobile currently has more effect on our daily lives than the computer, you might start to wonder when the computer will be integrated as a permanent aspect of American business and family life.

Much will depend on how quickly and accurately we can define our computer needs. "Computer phobia" is on the decline, and the words "floppy disk" might well be in every American's vocabulary. However, in order to fully utilize the computer, we must be comfortable with it as a permanent fixture.

There is no doubt that part of becoming comfortable with the computer is determining what needs you want it to fulfill. Only then can you begin to weed through all the different software. Keeping an eye on computer magazines, newspapers and newsletters for software reviews, as well as visiting your local computer store for information, will prove helpful.

There are more uses for home computers than meet the eye. Many people opt for using their home computers for profit. Operating a computer service business from your home can be a rewarding, money-making experience. You can provide a variety of services to pay customers ranging from basic word-processing — including resumes, letters and mass mailings — to billing and office management, to the more fantastical idea of running a winery.

The time is ripe for starting a home computer service business because computer owners are still in the minority. Opportunities for making money with a computer service are limited only by your imagination!

Uses for home computer technology vary, but computer owners are finding that they have access to a myriad of services and sources of information through telecommunications. By hooking up their computer to the telephone, computer users can shop, get stock market updates and make business deals, all from their living rooms.