

## Chapter 6. The new technologies

### 1. Computer technology is developing

#### 1 Digital information is everywhere

- Data, files, videos and music can now be exchanged via e-mail or downloaded onto a computer from a website.
- Computer users can transfer songs from a CD onto an MP3 player.
- Data files can be transferred from one computer to another using a flash drive or USB key.
- The documents which are sent by e-mail, downloaded or transported lose no quality when they are duplicated/cloned because they are digital.

#### 2 People can buy powerful and user-friendly equipment

- Digital equipment has become progressively more compact and user-friendly.
- Desktop computers are equipped with wide flat-panel screens.
- Mobile lightweight computers (palmtop, tablet/pocket PCs, notebooks and PDAs) are also developing, sold with powerful batteries.
- Most computers, including laptops, come equipped with built-in CD-ROM and DVD burners, allowing the user to manipulate large amounts of data and to work easier and faster with audio and video files.
- Data can be stored on internal and external hard drives, flash drives/USB keys, CDs and DVDs.

#### 3 Costs are falling

- The price of hardware and software equipment regularly declines, thanks to the miniaturisation of components, and to the outsourcing of production in countries where labour costs are low.
- Computer and software companies manufacture very similar products which cannot differentiate themselves easily from competitors. In consequence, products such as digital cameras, web-cams, scanners, printers, copiers, DVD recorders, PCs and digital music instruments have become cheap commodities, low-margin products which people buy on price only.
- Freeware services are provided on the Web.
- The cost of phone service itself is plummeting as companies provide nearly free phone services together with broadband delivery of the Internet.

#### CAN YOU ANSWER?

1. What has changed in digital equipment recently?
2. Why does the price of digital equipment regularly decline?

### Words, words, words...

#### 1

**data:** données  
**digital:** numérique  
**to download:** télécharger  
**to duplicate/to clone:** copier  
**file:** fichier  
**MP3 player:** lecteur MP3  
**website:** site Internet

#### 2

**battery:** pile  
**burner:** graveur

**desktop computer:** ordinateur de bureau  
**drive:** mémoire/disque  
**flat panel:** écran plat  
**laptop:** ordinateur portable  
**lightweight:** léger  
**pocket/palmtop/notebook/Personal Data Assistant:** ordinateur de poche  
**ROM (Read Only Memory):** mémoire morte  
**user-friendly:** convivial  
**wide screen:** écran large

#### 3

**broadband:** haut débit  
**commodity:** marchandise  
**component:** composant  
**digital camera:** appareil photo numérique  
**freeware:** logiciel libre  
**low-margin:** à marge réduite  
**to outsource:** externaliser  
**to plummet:** chuter  
**printer:** imprimante  
**recorder:** enregistreur  
**software:** logiciel