

Accessing the Internet

There are two ways to access the Internet: a network connection or a modem connection.

A *network connection* means your PC is part of a network that has a direct connection to the Internet through a UNIX, Windows 95, or Windows NT workstation. Universities, governments, and corporations usually have this kind of Internet connection, which is the most expensive to set up and maintain. Its biggest advantage is reliable and fast access to the Internet.

A *modem connection* is a cheaper and slower connection. Your PC uses a modem and phone line to dial into an Internet provider's computer, which provides the *gateway* to the Internet. The speed of the connection depends on the speed of your modem, but is much slower than a direct connection. With a modem connection you have a choice of how to connect to the Internet:

- You can connect through a commercial online service provider, such as CompuServe or America Online. This type of connection gives you all the services and benefits of the service provider, but you might not have access to all Internet services.
- You can also connect through a dedicated Internet service provider. This type of connection is more likely to provide access to all the features of the Internet.