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Friendly Macintosh a fashionable computer for personal users

By VICKI RUHGA

Most Lincoln computer dealers agree the latest fashion in computers for personal use is the Apple Macintosh.

Kevin Brown, manager of the computer products division at Electronics Center, said one reason the Macintosh is so popular is because it's inexpensive.

Although the Macintosh retails for \$2,495, Apple has offered 24 colleges, including Harvard, Yale and Stanford, a chance to resell computers to students for about \$1,000 each.

Brown said UNL originally was not selected for the deal, but students still may be offered the deal.

Ron Bromley, UNL buyer for purchasing services, said he probably will meet with Apple representatives in two or three weeks to talk about an agreement.

However, Bromley said, in the past UNL has not reached agreements with Apple because of the company's terms. For example, one agreement called for UNL to spend \$2 million over a two-year period on only Apple products, and UNL officials would not comply.

The Macintosh agreement is new, but Bromley said he will not know if it is acceptable until after he has seen it.

The computer itself teaches people how to use it so they do not have to spend hours reading a manual, Brown said.

The Macintosh currently has only two programs — word processing and graphics. But, Brown said, in six months to a year, more than 100 companies probably will make software for the Macintosh.

Mike Van Donselaar, a salesman at Computer Systems, Inc., in the Atrium, said he thinks the Macintosh eventually will become the company's best seller, surpassing the Apple IIe, which sells for about \$1,595.

Van Donselaar said the Apple IIe currently is most popular with students because of its broad software supplies and low price.

"The Apple IIe has programs for about everything under the sun," Van Donselaar said. "It has spread sheets, word processing, curve-fitting, statistics and more."

Another competitor is the Texas Instruments desktop computer, which is the first computer to feature a speech command option so users can talk to their machines.

But, Brown said, Texas Instruments is competing in IBM's business market, and its computer is basically a clone of IBM, although it trails in sales.

"IBM owns the business market," Brown said. The third best-selling computer is manufactured by Tandy, which owns Radio Shack.

Steve Hartman, a marketing representative for Radio Shack, said the most popular computer for students was the TRS-80 Model 4.

"The TRS-80 has the most programs for post-secondary education and it's in a lower price range — under \$2,000," Hartman said.

Hartman said he thinks the TRS-80 is "far superior" to the Apple Macintosh. The Macintosh costs nearly \$3,000 for only two programs, he said.

For college students with tight budgets, the TRS-80 offers word processing, a complete system of software, a computer that can be used in the classroom or can stand alone at home, and it can be used by everyone — 3-year-olds through those in post-secondary education, Hartman said.

Hartman said the TRS-80 also has more memory expansion capability than the Macintosh.

For a complete Texas Instruments system, Hartman said, buyers must pay \$4,000 to \$6,000.

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