**Interacting with computers**

The extent to which computers have become part of our world and our lives has meant that the ways of communicating with computers have moved far beyond the usual input and output devices that we have already learnt about. The keybord, mouse and moniter are not the only way that we get information into and out of computers.

Listed below are some of the less obvious ways that we use to communicate with computers on a daily basis:

**Automatic Teller Machine (ATM)**

An ATM uses a card reader and a numeric keypad. The ATM provides an ‘always open’-24-hours-a-day way (24/7) to acess the money in your bank account. Can now also be used to pay accounts, buy cellular airtime and more.

**Touch screen**

Uses a special screen that can detect where you touch it. Smartphones and tablets use touch screens as default input. Many new home computers and laptops include touch screens as well. Frequintly seen at restaurant till points as the fastest, easiest way for waiters to add up your bill.

**Fingerprint identification**

Pensioner’s information and fingerprints are stored in a database. When pensions are paid out, small sensors are used to read the fingerprints to ensure that only the right person receives the money and to prevent fraud. The payment of pensions to the elderly has been made more effective and secure.

**Bar-coded ID document and driver’s license**

Documents are read with a bar-code scanner. The ID documents are particulaly important for use at events such as elections.

**Smart card**

We see smart cards being used in many places in South Africa today. They make cellphones, phone cards, pre-paid electricity and water supplys possible.

**Bar code scanner at till point**

Fixed-point scanners at the till of almost every big supermarket make the paying process faster and also help with stock-control.

**E-tag on toll road**

Registered users are given small tags that can be detected when they drive through the tolgate and deduct the fee from their credit cards. This speeds up the whole process as you do not have to wait to pay at the toll.