You’re furious! You just bought an expensive digital camcorder only to find out that it can’t connect to your computer because your computer apparently doesn’t have a Firewire port. Don’t worry—you can easily add a Firewire port to the computer by buying an expansion card. Expansion cards allow you to add more gizmos and capabilities to a computer. You can also use expansion cards to replace a component of a computer that breaks, like a modem. Expansion cards plug into expansion slots on a computer’s motherboard. A computer talks to its expansion cards—and everything else on the motherboard— through its bus. A computer’s bus is an electronic pathway that carries information between devices in a computer. Two factors determine how information flows through the bus: the bus width and the bus speed.

• Bus Width The bus width determines how many “lanes” there are on a computer’s electronic highway. Actually, the bus width isn’t measured in lanes, but in bits. The wider the bus, the more information can travel across it at the same time.

• Bus Speed The bus speed determines how fast information can travel through the bus. The higher the bus speed, the faster information can travel through it. Bus speed is measured in MHz