>> With inexpensive inkjet printers running about $100 each, just giving each user his or her own printer is tempting. However, you get what you pay for. Instead of buying $100 printers for 15 users, you may be better off buying one high-speed $1,500 laser printer and sharing it. The $1,500 laser printer will be much faster, will probably produce better-looking output, and will be less expensive to operate.

Web servers

A *web server* is a server computer that runs software that enables the computer to host an Internet website. The two most popular web server programs are Microsoft's IIS (Internet Information Services) and Apache, an open source web server managed by the Apache Software Foundation.

Mail servers

A *mail server* is a server that handles the network's email needs. It is configured with email server software, such as Microsoft Exchange Server. Exchange Server is designed to work with Microsoft Outlook, the email client software that comes with Microsoft Office.

Most mail servers actually do much more than just send and receive email. For example, here are some of the features that Exchange Server offers beyond simple email:

>> Collaboration features that simplify the management of collaborative projects

>> Audio and videoconferencing

>> Chat rooms and instant messaging (IM) services

>> Microsoft Exchange Forms Designer, which lets you develop customized forms for applications, such as vacation requests or purchase orders

An increasingly popular alternative to setting up your own mail server is to subscribe to Microsoft's Exchange Online service. With Exchange Online, Microsoft takes care of all the details of setting up and maintaining an Exchange server. Your Microsoft Outlook clients are configured to connect to the Exchange Online service through the Internet rather than a local Exchange server within your network.