



Figure 9.8 Deployment diagram showing a hardware configuration for the Wheels system

leisure time by means of the computer, and their decisions about which holiday to choose, or which on-line store to shop at, are strongly influenced by the ‘look and feel’ of the interface and the ease with which they can access the information they need. In this book, we only have room for a brief discussion about designing the user interface, so this section simply gives pointers to the principal issues that have to be considered. You can find more information about this subject in books such as Shneiderman (2004).

Designing the interface means putting yourself in the position of the user and trying to see the system from that point of view. The nearest we have come to this so far is in Chapter 3, where we talked about seeing the system from the users’ point of view in order to identify the use cases. When designing the interface we have to consider the type of person who is most likely to use the system. How experienced are they with computers? How familiar are they with the system? How often will they be using it? What sort of tasks will they want to carry out? In the case of Wheels, for example, the main user is Annie, the Shop Manager. Wheels already have a computer, so we can assume that Annie is fairly familiar with it. She will not initially be familiar with the new system that is being developed, but she will have some training and she will be a frequent user, so we can assume that she will soon become proficient at using the system. Annie will generally be carrying out routine tasks, such as issuing and returning bikes, printing receipts and keeping details about bikes and customers up to date. She will need to be able to enter data into the system, issue