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because our work environment affects performance. How organized you are and the beauty of your surroundings makes you more efficient," said Carroll, a sales representative at Walker/Buzenberg Fine Furniture in Plymouth.

"People are starting to look now towards the leather because they're taking it more seriously."

And what does a handsomely outfitted office complete with classic credenza, barrister bookcase inset with beveled glass, and a traditional leather sofa and chair say about you to clients?

"It's power dressing for the home office, the business suit look. What you work at says a lot about you as well. It says professional."

"A lot of people have a home office mostly because it organizes your life. Once you have one, you wonder how you ever did without one. It does decrease the stress level."

Determining needs

The face of home offices is changing and that face has many different looks depending on space limitations. Do you need a home office to house a computer system complete with tower, printer, and fax machine? Is the office simply for keeping track of household papers? Does the room do double duty



Desk set: The credenza in this *Sligh* set has a pullout printer shelf. Featured on the desk are hinged right and left doors with adjustable shelves and drawers.

as a den, dining room or extra bedroom? Will the size of the space suffice if you plan on running a small business or meeting with clients there?

Along with measurements of the room, these are some of the questions you'll need to ask yourself before determining the style of furniture. Will it be a hideaway computer cabinet, credenza or rolltop desk, traditional or modular?

"The trend is to more and more modular. A lot of people do go for the hutch because it does give you the vertical space for manuals and books. Fifteen years ago you couldn't find modular for the home, now with the computer it's become available,"

Carroll said.

The advent of affordable home computers is affecting the types of desks and cabinets furniture manufacturers design and produce. Tailoring their pieces with slide-out trays for keyboards, larger areas for work surfaces and equipment such as openers for multimedia computers with CD-ROM, and locking storage for family computers, the manufacturers are trying to keep up with the electronics that seems to change every six months, says Pat Zatina, home office and occasional buyer for Scott Shuptrine in Troy.

"Technology is driving this category of furniture with students and adults

depending more on their computers at home. The number one consideration of people is what components they will need to add eventually. They also need to consider the size of work surface needed for papers, and the type of lighting, determining the correct amount of light to reduce eye strain. A desk lamp is important if you plan to be working with or reading papers," Zatina said.

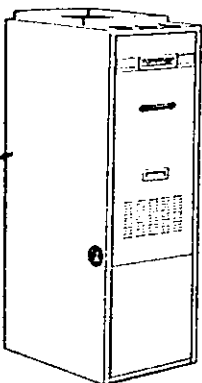
"We sell a lot of the cabinet type set-ups because you can throw this in any room and close it away when it's not in use. When it's closed it's a relatively nice looking piece of furniture."

Corner hideaway computer cabinets offer beauty plus functionality. In general, cherry and oak pieces are the most popular because of the woods' classic look, says Walker/Buzenberg co-owner David Buzenberg, but white-wash is also available.

"People want to do the traditional, and typically by nature, the office is not a room that's contemporary," Buzenberg said.

"We're seeing more wall units and credenzas, the wood pieces. Most address the filing needs, and provide storage for manuals and books. Everyone comes in with different sizes of equipment. If people bring in a floor plan of their room we can suggest a configuration."

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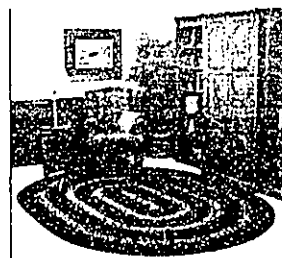
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