U.S. senators and governors have recently expressed their resolve to stand up to Bank of America's expansion plans if that is what is required to protect the interests of their constituents. Why is our governor unable or unwilling to do the same? Why does Lingle seem willing to sell us out?

Bank of America knows that its delinquency on its Hawaiian commitment is a major potential obstacle to federal approval of its acquisition of Fleet. Why is Lingle trying to help BofA off the hook? As a Republican, why is Lingle claiming to be a champion of maintaining federal Hawaiian entitlements, while simultaneously undermining a private-sector, grass-roots effort to enhance Hawaiian economic independence.

On this 10th anniversary of the U.S. government's apology to the Hawaiian people, I ask Gov. Lingle to apologize to our kupuna and to answer this question for them: Why?

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Pu'uhonua "Bumpy" Kanahele lives on Hawaiian homelands in Waimanalo. He is a long-time advocate for economic sovereignty. Reach him at pu.uhonua@verizon.net.

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Do homework before buying a new computer

Mac or PC:?

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With the holidays nearly upon us, the notion of buying a PC for the family or for your home business, might be dancing in your head.

The good news is that you can get a great PC for a reasonable price. You'll need to sort out a few things, however, before you open up your wallet. What I'd like to do is make some buying suggestions, particularly for end users who are going to use their computer to surf the Net.

First off, the biggest shift in the PC market entails the addition of features that better manage music, photos and video. One of the newest trends is for manufacturers to provide software and hardware that can deal with memory cards used in cameras, music players and PDAs. Many of us will be able to find ways to use these features. On the other hand I believe you can get carried away with too many bells and

whistles. For example, you can get high end "media center" PCs that offer TV tuners.

Obviously this is not for everyone. Thus, I'm going to make the assumption that you're an average "end user," one who doesn't want or need a TV tuner built in your PC. The computer you want will enable you to run a word processor, surf the Web, retrieve e-mail, play MP3 files, edit photos and other basic activities.

That said, it's possible to buy a perfectly good Windows computer for around $500 without a monitor. Sometimes you can find sales online that will throw in a 15-inch flat-screen monitor for free. (Figure that an entry-level flat-screen monitors cost about $500, sometimes less). Here's what to look for in a PC:

Processor speed

The current entry level processor speed (this week) is about 2 gigahertz. An Intel Celeron or an AMD machine will be just fine for most users. You might feel better getting a Pentium but chances are, you're not going to notice the difference in performance. (Note that processor speed has no impact on bandwidth or Internet performance. Thus, buying a more expensive, 3 gigahertz computer is not going to make your Web pages load much faster than a 1 or 2 gig machine.)

Memory

You can never have enough RAM. You'll need at least 256 megabytes and I'd even spring for 512 if your budget allows it. If you buy a PC with only 128 MB of built-in memory, you'll find you'll soon need to add.

Storage

You'll want at least 40 gigabytes of hard drive, but for a few extra dollars it makes sense to upgrade to a 60 or even 80 gig drive. This makes particular sense if you're buying your machine to store digital photos or MP3 files. The brand of hard drive doesn't really matter. If performance is an issue, you may want to look at getting a 7200 rpm drive.

Operating System

The standard issue OS is XP, the latest iteration of Microsoft Windows. Many people still run Windows 2000, but XP is better set up to handle digital cameras, MP3 files and the like. It comes standard with most PCs and it's very reliable. Although some people tout the benefits of Linux, which is free, I don't think it's ready for prime time. Even if you're not a fan of Bill Gates, Microsoft is the way to go.

Video System

Lower-end PCs use "integrated video," which means you share memory with other parts of the computer. This is fine for most people, but if you play computer games or work with photos or home movies you'll want a PC with a separate video card. These control the graphics display. Make sure you get one that has at least 32 megs of memory.

Those are the basics, in Part 2, we'll break it down further.

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Kiman Wong, general manager of Internet services at Oceanic Time Warner Cable is an engineer by training and a full time computer geek by profession. Send questions or comments to kiman.wong@oceanic.com.

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Macintosh or PC, which one is better for you?

It's a controversy as old as the PC market itself. Do you need a Mac or a PC?

To clear the air, I'm currently a PC user and this column essentially caters to the PC market. However, Macs have their strengths and place in our world. Mac enthusiasts are often loyal to their brand and that's great. So let's take a quick look at the pros and cons of this issue.

Macs tend to be hassle-free

Mac users will tell you that you will get everything you need in your Mac even if you're doing sophisticated video editing or production. There's no need to purchase extras such as a video card, Ethernet card, modem card, USB card, or even a FireWire card. Everything you need is there, and the OS can deal with it all. The other good thing is that you're not going have to search the Internet for drivers. I can attest that with a PC, you could spend days getting new hardware such as a video card or a portable drive to work. Macs will also fit neatly into an existing network (be it Mac, Windows, or Unix) without needing additional software, or additional employee training. Just plug and play.

Anti-virus bonus

For some reason, perhaps it's because Mac's represent such a smaller share of the market, those awful people who write virus code tend not to bother with Macs. It doesn't mean that if you buy a Mac you won't get a virus but chances are a lot less that you will.

Cons

Macs are more expensive than PCs. However, they hold their value longer than PCs and Mac users claim they tend to not have to upgrade existing hardware as often as do PC users. Do they last longer than PCs? Perhaps, but PC users would say this is debatable.

The pros of PCs

Given that they have 90 percent-plus market share, PCs have a greater selection in the marketplace. Whether you choose Dell, IBM, HP or a box built in Kaka'ako, you can configure to it your needs. Competition means lower prices. PCs also offer more applications. Mac users will counter that they provide all the same core apps, which is true. However, you'll find more varieties on a PC -- especially when it comes to games. A fully loaded PC will cost almost $1,000 less than a high-end Mac.

Peripherals

It's true that core users will get all the hardware they need on a Mac, but if you want to upgrade -- maybe install a faster video card or a CD burner -- a PC is better and cheaper.

The cons

The virus issue is a hassle with PCs. The older Windows OSs were less stable than the Mac OS, but with Windows XP, things have evened out. When it comes to high-end multimedia applications such as video editing, Mac wins.

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