

# Researcher says computers misunderstood

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A U.S. computer historian says new computer technology is still often poorly understood by business leaders.

Professor Thomas Haigh of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee found new computers have sometimes been oversold as offering complete solutions for all business programs, and at other times have been dismissed as too advanced or expensive for practical use.

"There's this feeling that anything more than five years old is irrelevant," said Haigh, adding people today face the same types of problems as they did decades ago: Projects using new technology are usually late and filled with bugs, the return on investment is hard to measure and computer specialists are expensive and speak an alien language.

Haigh is currently working on a social history of the personal computer. "Despite the shelves of books on the history of the personal computer there has been no serious historical study of how people used their computers or why they bought them," he said.

His latest research appears in the journal *Business History Review* published by the Harvard Business School.

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