

puters a critical part of their business, and 36 percent ranked them as their highest priority in technology spending.

In addition, Mr. Gilroy said, *small-business* owners are more comfortable with technology today. And in many cases, their large customers require that they offer certain abilities, like online billing and ways to look up product information electronically.

Despite Home Office Solutions' optimistic expectations for sales this year, Mr. Burke said, only continuing investment in technology can sustain the growth.

"We need to have the right systems in place or else we'll fall short on the service end of our business," he said. "That's what it's all about."