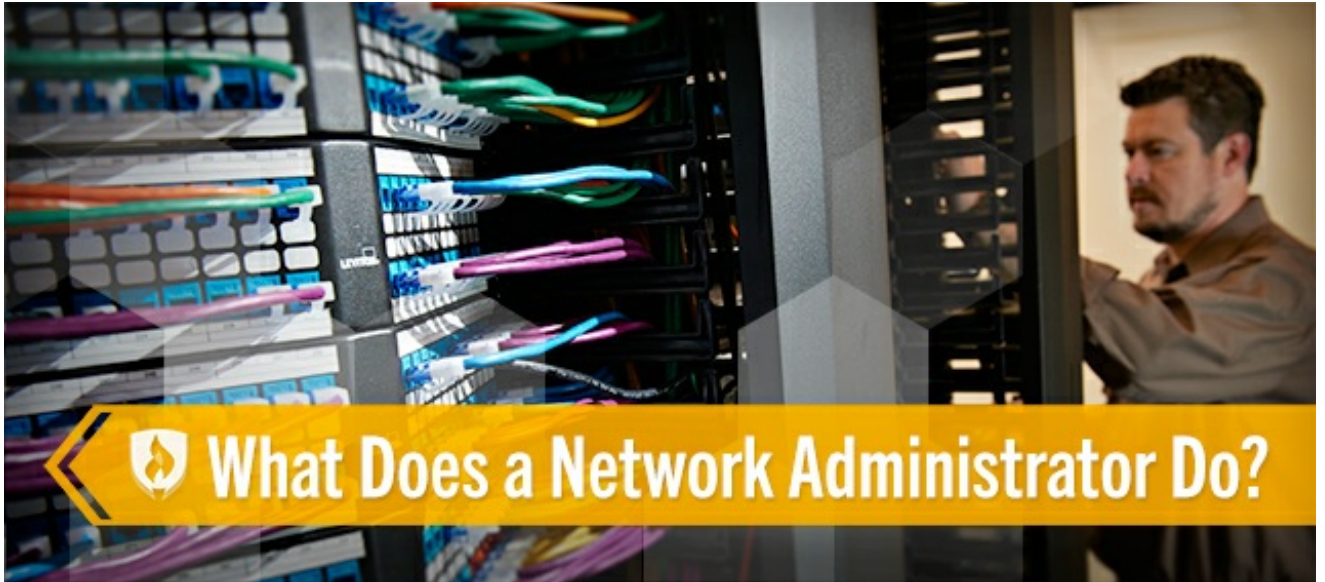


What Does a Network Administrator Do? A Behind-the-Scenes Look

 www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/technology/blog/what-does-a-network-administrator-do/

You
have a
passion
for



computers and technology and are curious about merging the two into a career. You've been considering the information technology (IT) field as a great place to blend your skill in computers and your love of technology. The field of computer systems design is a fun, fast-changing world that we interact with every day. From scheduling doctor's appointments to checking your bank balance online to reading an online article—behind each computer network is a network administrator who keeps things running smoothly.

You're interested in becoming one of those network administrators. You have all the right characteristics to make this career work for you—you're an analytical thinker, you love helping others and you adapt well to change.

Even so, you're probably still wondering, "*What does a network administrator actually do?*"

We're here to help you answer that question. We gathered real-time market intelligence and government data to help provide a realistic look at what life would be like working as a network admin.

What exactly is a network administrator?

A network administrator, sometimes called a systems administrator, is responsible for keeping an organization's computer network up to date and running smoothly. Any company or organization that uses multiple computers or software platforms needs a network admin to coordinate the different systems. (That's a *lot* of job opportunities!)

This explains the promising job outlook for network admins. Demand for these professionals is projected to increase by up to 8 percent through 2024, and the salary for the position ranges from \$47,460 to more than \$120,000, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\)](#).*

Network admins will especially be in high demand as companies and organizations invest in newer, faster technology and mobile networks. Growth is also expected in the healthcare industry as the use of information technology increases.

What are the job duties of a network administrator?

A network admin's job can be wide or narrow depending on the organization and how complex its networks are. But in general, a network admin is responsible for the following tasks, according to [ONET](#):

- Installing network and computer systems
- Maintaining, repairing and upgrading network and computer systems
- Diagnosing and fixing problems or potential problems with the network and its hardware, software and systems
- Monitoring network and systems to improve performance

What skills does a network administrator need?

Network admins are responsible for both the back end—networks, software and hardware—as well as for the teams and end users they support. That means a network admin should have a combination of problem-solving and people skills.

In addition to the necessary technical knowledge, here are some common skills employers are looking for in a network admin:

Analyzing and critical thinking

Network admins need to explore and solve problems logically and consistently. “[The] ability to take the concepts you’ve learned in school and understand how they work and affect other concepts is the bread and butter of being a network administrator,” says Brad Meyer, systems administrator at [TechnologyAdvice](#). Even if you don’t yet know the solution, he believes thinking critically will help you get there.

Time management

Network admins juggle several projects, people and problems simultaneously. This means it’s essential to be organized in the present and looking ahead to prepare for what’s coming next. It’s like spinning plates—with a little practice, a network admin can keep everything balanced.

Interpersonal skills

Network admins work with a range of people, from network engineers to help desk employees to end users, explains Eric Jeffery, founder of IT solutions firm [Gungon Consulting](#). He says bridging the gap between diverse groups of people requires patience and understanding.

Lifelong learning

The technology field is constantly changing, which means network admins must be willing to learn and evolve with it. Good network admins are able to adapt to new techniques and technologies throughout their careers.

Where do network administrators work?

If you’re considering a career as a network admin, don’t feel like you have to box yourself into a particular industry—network administrators are in demand in many business sectors. We used real-time job analysis software from [Burning-Glass.com](#) to examine more than 194,000 network admin jobs posted over the past year.**

Based on the data, here are the top industries hiring network administrators over the last year:

- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Insurance
- Education
- Hospitals
- Transportation equipment manufacturing

As you can see, earning a [degree in network administration](#) means you won't be tied down to working in one industry your entire career. You have plenty of options when it comes to choosing a field.

What is a typical day like for a network administrator?

As seen in the job duties above, a network admin has a broad job description: managing an entire network, preventing and fixing network problems and supporting a number of teams and individuals. This means there's rarely a "typical day" in the life of a network admin.

"No two days are ever the same," Meyer says. He says a "normal day" might include checking logs, auditing processes, putting out fires that arise from your end users and working on projects. Projects could include creating new programs to make the network more efficient or researching technology and brainstorming creative solutions for the organization's network needs.

Taking the next step

The next time someone asks you, "What does a network administrator do?" you can confidently answer that they do a lot of things! Network admins are constantly analyzing, monitoring and creatively solving problems, while looking for ways to improve in an always-changing field.

Now that you had a sneak peek into the life of a network administrator, does it sound like a good fit for you? [Learn how you can launch your career as a network admin in as little as 18 months!](#)***

** Salary data represents national, averaged earnings for the occupations listed and includes workers at all levels of education and experience. This data does not represent starting salaries and employment conditions in your area may vary.*

*** Burning-Glass.com (analysis of 194,908 network administrator job postings, March 30, 2015-March 28, 2016)*

**** Completion time is dependent on transfer credits accepted and courses completed each term.*