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# Computer network architect employment trends

The computer networking industry is experiencing constant development, having grown to \$41 billion in 2016 according to Business Insider. Due to this expansion, forward-thinking organizations within the computer networking industry are clamoring to hire talented computer network architects that can design and implement cutting-edge networking solutions for their organizations. To best prepare for a career in this high-demand profession, prospective computer network architects should understand the duties, responsibilities, and general education requirements necessary to secure a desirable position.

**Education & Experience Requirements**When hiring a computer network architect, most firms expect their prospects to have obtained a functional knowledge of connection networks and other related industry best practices. Adequately developing the foundational skills of a computer network architect usually demands the completion of a master's degree in information assurance and security. Further, the knowledge gained with an advanced education can prove far more desirable to companies when it is complemented by at least 5-7 years of hands-on professional experience in the information assurance industry. Another benefit of earning a master's degree in information assurance is that aspiring computer network architects can position themselves for long-term growth and success in the field. Taking their developed knowledge and skills, coupled with more than a dozen years of experience in the information technology field, a computer network security professional can become a candidate for highly rewarding executive positions such as Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) or Computer Technology Officer (CTO).

**Job Duties and Responsibilities**Computer network architects can have complex responsibilities, given their significance to the success and integrity of a company. Depending on the size and intricacy of the organization, a computer network architect could perform any of the following duties: overseeing the design and construction of comprehensive data communication networks, including local area networks, wide area networks, and intranets; connecting employees to a shared drive or cloud-based computer systems; creating networking capabilities that allow employees all over the world to share data and serve international customers, which is becoming more relevant as companies globalize; working closely with a team of computer network architects to complete large-scale network projects; upgrading technology, which can include researching routers and software that fit the unique needs of a company, as well as keeping abreast of changes in technology to remain proactive in safeguarding the company's systems from security breaches. As a computer network architect gains more experience and moves into a management role, he/she can also have the responsibility of directing the overall future of a company's network by working with technology officers to establish network needs and goals, establishing parameters and helping other technology engineers to create maintenance strategies and plans, and creating models to predict future network needs that align with an organization's strategic plans and goals.

**Job Growth**The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the computer network architect career will experience a nine-percent growth through 2024, with 12,700 jobs expected to be added. Additionally, due to the high-demand for a computer network architect's skills, they are often richly rewarded with a higher-than-average salary, with the median pay for computer network architects being \$101,210 in 2016.

**Companies Hiring Computer Network Architects**Several top-tier organizations are hiring computer network architects and offering them a productive environment that positively contributes to their professional growth by allowing them to collaborate with some of the best practitioners in the field.

**Google** - Headquartered in the Silicon Valley of California, Google has offices throughout the entire world and is known for offering its employees fulfilling opportunities to provide valuable services to countless internet users across the world. Given the size of Google, computer network architects work with other talented information technology specialists to support the networking needs of approximately 11,000 staff members. In their role at Google team, computer network architects often find themselves responsible for designing Google's large data communication networks, which entails planning the network's layout, presenting plans to management staff, and researching the best technology to be used in the company's networks.

**Facebook** - Also headquartered in the Silicon Valley, Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg aims to offer his employees significant opportunities for constant growth and ongoing engagement through their work. Facebook's data centers store an enormous amount of user data, with 1.35 billion people currently using the platform. With this much data, Facebook needs computer network architects to help design enhancements for their scalable, high-performance network infrastructure in a fast-paced environment as it is fundamental to the company's growth.

**Cisco** - Cisco is another multinational tech company that is headquartered in Silicon Valley. They develop, manufacture, and sell a massive range of technology products to consumers all over the world. To keep their operations secure and properly organized across such a large network, Cisco hires computer network architects that can effectively design, implement, and maintain local intranets and massive connection networks that allows the company to communicate internally, as well as with their many vendors. Large networks can be difficult to manage, so other important tasks for computer network architects at Cisco include consulting with other network engineers about resolving network faults, tending to operations and maintenance tasks of the networks, performing network health check-ups and addressing network breaches.

**Microsoft** - When employed by this Seattle based multinational technology company, computer network architects will find themselves interacting with product teams, network security teams, and project management teams to establish the most effective way to deploy modifications to Microsoft's network infrastructure. As a leader in the design of computer networking products, Microsoft's staff have access to many of the most advanced networking tools on the market. With these tools in hand, computer network architects at Microsoft can rapidly develop their ability to deploy network infrastructure like routers, switches, and firewalls, while also advancing their talent for monitoring network health and implementing new network technologies. Rising business technology needs can provide a healthy future for anyone pursuing a career as a computer network architect. Companies of all sizes need employees capable of building communication networks for anything from small inter-office intranets to global, next-generation networking competencies. For individuals looking to advance within this field, entering a master's degree program can expand your knowledge and boost your opportunities in this lucrative and growing field.

**Learn More**As the nation's oldest private military college, Norwich University has been a leader in innovative education since 1819. Through its online programs, Norwich delivers relevant and applicable curricula that allow its students to make a positive impact on their places of work and their communities. At Norwich University, we extend a tradition of values-based education, where structured, disciplined, and rigorous studies create a challenging and rewarding experience. Online programs, such as the Master of Science in Cybersecurity, have made our comprehensive curriculum available to more students than ever before. Norwich University has been designated as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education by the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security. Through your program, you can choose from the five concentrations that are uniquely designed to provide an in-depth examination of policies, procedures, and overall structure of an information assurance program.

**Recommended Readings:** Career Outlook: Information Security Analyst Who are Cyber Criminals? How Nations Use Digital Espionage Against Each Other Sources: Computer Network Architects, Bureau of Labor Statistics Introducing data center fabric, the next-generation Facebook data center network, Facebook CodeTarget credit card hack: What you need to know, CNN Network Architect - Google, LinkedInGoogle Employees Reveal Their Favorite Perks About Working for The Company, Business InsiderThe Benefits and Perks of Working with Microsoft, Business InsiderFacebook is once again putting the \$41 billion computer network industry to shame, Business Insider Learn more about this career path Annual Earnings Percentiles Skill Scores 75 70 57 38 33 Curious about our data? Learn more about our methodology . Showing data from the American Community Survey for the following US Census occupation categories. Bachelor's degree majors are shown. Computer network architects Curious about our data? Learn more about our methodology . Computer network architects design and build data communication networks, including local area networks (LANs), wide area networks (WANs), and intranets. These networks range from small connections between two offices to next-generation networking capabilities such as a cloud infrastructure that serves multiple customers. Most computer network architects work full time. About 1 in 4 worked more than 40 hours per week in 2014. Most computer network architects have a bachelor's degree in a computer-related field and experience in a related occupation, such as network and computer systems administrators. Employment of computer network architects is projected to grow 9 percent from 2014 to 2024, faster than the average for all occupations. Demand for computer network architects will increase as firms continue to expand their information technology (IT) networks. Curious about our data? Learn more about our methodology . This occupation supported 143,400 jobs in 2012 and 146,200 jobs in 2014, reflecting an increase of 2.0%. In 2012, this occupation was projected to increase by 14.6% in 2022 to 164,300 jobs. As of 2014, to keep pace with prediction, the expected number of jobs was 147,500, compared with an observed value of 146,200, 0.9% lower than expected. This indicates current employment trends are about on track with the 2012 trend within this occupation. In 2014, this occupation was projected to increase by 8.9% in 2024 to 158,900 jobs. Linear extrapolation of the 2012 projection for 2022 results in an expected number of 168,400 jobs for 2024, 6.0% higher than the 2014 projection for 2024. This indicates expectations for future employment trends are much worse than the 2012 trend within this occupation. References More Articles

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