

Newspaper in Education Presents
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Information Technology Trailblazers

Manatee Technical Institute (MTI) has always been at the forefront of bringing up-to-the-minute information technology to the community. Personal computers and laptops have become the standard tools for creating, storing, and managing information. MTI's Network Support Services (NSS) program was developed to fill the growing need for a workforce skilled in computer network installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting.

Tom Howell is at the head of the class in the NSS program. NSS is divided into four separate components which include the Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA) A+ certification preparation, Windows Server, Windows Vista, and Cisco Academy courses. Students are prepared for multiple certifications as they progress through the program, including A+, Microsoft, and Cisco.

Tom is a Cisco Certified Network Associate, Cisco Certified Academy Instructor, and A+ and Network + Certified Professional. "Electronics are my life," he says. "Staying current with technology is a challenge because it is constantly changing. If you can learn to think things through you can always look up the details." "Think logically," Tom adds. "Logical thinking is a wonderful tool!"



DISCOVER the Future



Regional Careers: Here are examples of related occupations and current wages in the Suncoast Workforce Region.

Occupation	Entry Level	Experienced
Minimum wage	\$7.21	-
Computer Software Engineers	\$33.32	\$55.39
Computer Support Specialists	\$13.41	\$22.39
Network Systems Administrators	\$19.43	\$34.30
Network Systems Analysts	\$18.84	\$35.55
Computer Operators	\$14.04	\$23.07
Computer Programmers	\$21.79	\$37.43

Source: <http://fred.labormarketinfo.com>
FL Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics & Wages Program

Career Pathway: Students desiring a career in any of these areas can find related educational programs at these schools*:

Manatee Technical Institute,
State College of Florida,
Manatee-Sarasota
University of South Florida

*Other Manatee schools may offer similar programs. Listed schools are related to today's issue.

WEB Wise

Check out the following websites:

- www.manateetechnicalinstitute.org/programs/career/business/networking.html
- www.linksys.com
- www.cisco.com/web/learning/netacad/index.html
- www.skillsusa.org

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InnoVators

MTI Network Support Services

Computer Connections: the Network

Let's say you open a bank account over the phone. A man named Fred takes your information and sets it all up. Later you call the bank with a question, but Fred doesn't answer the phone; instead, you talk to Sally. How does Sally know anything about your account? Thanks to the concept of *computer networking*, Sally can see the same information on her computer that Fred entered into his.



A *computer network* is a system of interconnected computers that makes data and file sharing much easier. These networks are used in businesses, universities, organizations, and in homes—any place where programs and data are constantly updated and shared between computers.

There are various ways to categorize networks; one way is to define them by the amount of area they cover. A *local area network (LAN)* usually covers a single household or business, while a *wide area network (WAN)* spans across towns, states, or countries. The Internet is actually the world's biggest WAN.

Without the ability to link computers, businesses would function at a much slower, less organized pace, with more room for error. Imagine what would happen if an employee entered data into a computer program, stating that a certain bill has been paid. If that information is only visible on his computer and nowhere else, it's possible that that bill could be paid more than once, thus losing money for the company.

A *network administrator* sets up and manages networks. He or she customizes and configures the network, connecting the necessary hardware and software. The network administrator then installs programs that people need to use for work, such as email or accounting software, for example. He or she monitors performance of the network, solving problems such as slow performance or network crashes. The administrator plans for emergencies by creating data backups and recovery programs. Administrators control access to the network, managing passwords and permissions. They handle security—protecting the network from outside intruders, or *hackers*.

Any business with a complex network needs a skilled administrator—or more than one—to manage it. Computer network administrators are usually in high demand, making this career an excellent choice.



KIDZ Biz & Buzz

Savvy Students

Configuring a Career

Southeast High School graduate Brent Burley is well on his way to a career that he has prepared for nearly all his life, it seems. As a child, Brent always liked to learn with hands-on activities. He enjoyed taking things apart, seeing how they worked, and putting them back together again. If something was broken, he was the go-to guy to fix it. When neighbors and family members needed help setting up their computers, Brent was there.

Brent is now enrolled in the Network Support Services (NSS) program at Manatee Technical Institute (MTI) where he was recently inducted into the National Technical Honor Society. As the state level champion, he represented Florida at SkillsUSA Nationals in the Internet Working event. Attending MTI gives Brent the opportunity to combine his talent for technology with the education he needs to advance his career. Upon completing the Network Support Services program and obtaining certifications in Computing Technology Industry Association's (CompTIA) A+, Microsoft, and Cisco I, II, III and IV, Brent will pursue his dream job of becoming a computer network field technician.

Explore



Reading Comprehension

Fill in the blanks based on the information you just read.

1. A _____ is a network that covers one household or place of business.
2. A computer network is a system of _____ computers.
3. A _____ is a network that spans across towns, states, or countries.
4. Computer networking involves both _____ and software components.
5. The _____ is the largest wide area network in the world.
6. Businesses use computer networking to _____ data.
7. A _____ sets up and manages computer networks.

Answers:
1. local area network
2. interconnected
3. wide area network
4. hardware
5. internet
6. share
7. network administrator



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