IT Administration Career Guide

A guide for computer and information systems managers, computer network support specialists, computer user support specialists, database administrators.
Finding Your Way to a Career: IT Administration

Information technology administrators maintain access to vital IT services and networks. They work to maintain both hardware and software in the workplace. Admins and specialists often provide technical assistance to technology users and analyze, troubleshoot, and evaluate technological issues. These individuals help to ensure that technology in an organization stays in working order so the business can function at a high level.

How to use this document to learn more.

As one of the Top 100 Hot Jobs for 2022, IT admins & specialists is a promising occupation for job seekers in West Michigan. To find out if this might be a good career choice for you, use this Career Map to examine:

• Who might enjoy this kind of work.
• Qualifications needed in this career field.
• Growth potential and levels of pay.
• Valuable skills for this type of work.
• Common tools and technology used in this work.
• Occupations, responsibilities, and other job titles.

This information is drawn from national data and insights from West Michigan employers. It is meant as a starting point for job seekers and career coaches to work together in the exploration of meaningful and fulfilling careers.

Exploring Occupations in IT Administration

IT administrators, also known as system administrators, configure and maintain a company’s computers, servers, networks, enterprise software and security systems. They might also optimize internal IT infrastructure for greater productivity and help the company stay compliant with cybersecurity regulations. Almost every organization uses operating systems, email servers, and the Internet, all overseen by an IT administrator.

The Path to Success

Who might enjoy this type of work?

People who work in the IT administration field tend to enjoy:

• Following set procedures and routines.
• Working with data and details more than with ideas.
• Having a clear line of authority to follow.
• Mental problem solving.
• Working with ideas and using cognitive (thinking) skills.
• Practical, hands-on problem solving.
• Working with real world materials like wood, tools, and machinery.

Qualifications needed in this career field.

Nationally, most people working in an IT administration role have a Bachelor’s degree. The next largest group has earned an associate degree. Sample certifications also include:

Computer and Information Systems Managers credential sample: Microsoft Certified Professional, Microsoft Certified IT Professional, Project Management Professional Certification.

Computer Network Support Specialists credential sample: CompTIA Network+, ITIL Certifications, ITIL Foundation Certification.


Database Administrators credential sample: Salesforce Certified Administrator, CompTIA Security+, Microsoft Certified IT Professional.

Growth potential.

In the West Michigan counties of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa, there were 3,597 IT administration jobs in 2020. That number is projected to grow by at least 7% to 3,848 by 2025.

Valuable skills for this type of work.

Tasks and functions performed by IT administrators include:

• Interacting with computers.
• Getting information.
• Making decisions and solving problems.
• Updating and using relevant knowledge.
• Communicating with supervisors, peers, or subordinates.

Common tools and technology used in this work.

Tools: Powershell, network analyzers, Access servers
Technology: communications server software, data mining software, help desk software, network monitoring software

Information Skills

Adaptability

Responsibility

Innovation

Information Skills

Adaptability

Responsibility

Innovation
Mapping a Career:
IT Administration
Information Security

- **Computer and Information Systems Administrators**: $43.53 - $68.28
- **Database Administrators**: $37.92 - $41.58
- **Network and Computer Systems Administrators**: $26.50 - $40.11
- **Information Security Analyst**: $33.77 - $49.41
- **Computer User Support Specialist**: $19.47 - $29.35

Wage ranges represent 25th - 75th percentile. Timeframes represent the typical education and experience combined. See page 6 for detailed description of occupations.
IT Administration: A Field Guide

Occupations, responsibilities and other job titles.

Computer and Information Systems Managers
Plan, direct, or coordinate activities in such fields as electronic data processing, information systems, systems analysis, and computer programming.

Examples of locally used job titles: application development director, computing services director, data processing manager, information systems director (IS director), information systems manager (IS manager).

Computer Network Support Specialists
Analyze, test, troubleshoot, and evaluate existing network systems, such as local area networks (LAN), wide area networks (WAN), cloud networks, servers, and other data communications networks. Perform network maintenance to ensure networks operate correctly with minimal interruption.

Examples of locally used job titles: computer network specialist, IT consultant, network specialist, network support specialist.

Computer User Support Specialists
Provide technical assistance to computer users. Answer questions or resolve computer problems for clients in person, via telephone, or electronically. May provide assistance concerning the use of computer hardware and software, including printing, installation, word processing, electronic mail, and operating systems.

Examples of locally used job titles: computer specialist, computer support specialist, computer technician, desktop support technician.

Database Administrators
Administer, test, and implement computer databases, applying knowledge of database management systems. Coordinate changes to computer databases. Identify, investigate, and resolve database performance issues, database capacity, and database scalability. May plan, coordinate, and implement security measures to safeguard computer databases.

Examples of locally used job titles: database administration manager, database administrator (DBA), database analyst.