

# Careers in Information Systems<sup>1</sup>

Employment of systems administrators, database administrators, systems analysts, and other information systems fields is expected to **increase much faster than the average** for all occupations as firms continue to adopt and integrate increasingly sophisticated technologies and invest heavily in securing computer networks. Job increases will be driven by very rapid growth in computer systems design and related services, which is projected to be one of the fastest growing industries in the U.S. economy. Job growth will not be as rapid as during the previous decade, however, as the information technology sector begins to mature and as routine work is increasingly outsourced overseas. In addition to growth, many job openings will arise annually from the need to replace workers who move into managerial positions or other occupations or who leave the labor force.

Jobs exist for information systems graduates in most industries. Median annual earnings of computer systems analysts were \$69,760; computer support specialists were \$41,470; database administrators were \$64,670; computer and information systems managers were \$101,580; and network and computer systems administrators were \$62,130 in May 2006.

For example, median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of *network and computer systems administrators* in May 2006 were as follows:

Wired telecommunications carriers	\$70,790
Computer systems design and related services	66,680
Management of companies and enterprises	66,020
Elementary and secondary schools	53,750
Colleges, universities, and professional Schools	54,590

According to a Fall 2007 survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, starting offers averaged \$47,507 for those with a bachelor's degree in information systems.

Many of our graduates take jobs as information systems consultants with international firms. Technical consulting services is the fastest growing industry and one of the highest paying. The median salary reported in the Occupational Outlook Handbook is \$76,606.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition*, Database Administrators, System Administrator, and Computer Systems Analysts, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos042.htm>, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos268.htm>, and <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos287.htm> (visited August 21, 2008)

## Job Titles in IS<sup>2</sup>

**Programmers:** write, test, and maintain the detailed instructions, called programs or software, that computers must follow to perform their functions. These programs tell the computer what to do, such as which information to identify and access, how to process it, and what equipment to use.

**Systems Analysts:** tie together hardware and software to give an organization the maximum benefit from its investment in machines, personnel, and business processes. To do this, they may design entirely new systems or add a single new software application to harness more of the computer's power.

**Computer Support Specialists:** provide technical assistance, support, and advice to customers and users. This group of occupations includes workers with a variety of titles, such as *technical support specialists* and *help-desk technicians*.

**Database Administrators:** determine ways to organize and store data and work with database management systems software.

**Network or computer systems administrators:** install, configure, and support an organization's LAN, WAN, network segment, or Internet system. They maintain network hardware and software, analyze problems, and monitor the network to ensure availability to system users.

**Web developers:** responsible for day-to-day web site design and creation.

**Webmasters:** responsible for the technical aspects of the website, including performance issues such as speed of access, and for approving site content.

**Computer Sales Personnel:** responsible for promoting and selling the products and services provided by the various sectors of this industry.

**Computer and information systems managers:** direct the work of systems analysts, computer programmers, and other computer-related workers. They analyze the computer and information needs of their organization and determine personnel and equipment requirements. These managers plan and coordinate activities such as the installation and upgrading of hardware and software; programming and systems design; the development of computer networks; and the implementation of Internet and Intranet sites.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition*, Computer Systems Design and Related Services, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs033.htm> (visited August 21, 2008)