

Date: / /

Computer network, two or more computers that are connected with one another for the purpose of communicating data electronically. Besides physically connecting computer and communication devices a network system serves the important function of establishing a cohesive architecture that allows a variety of equipment types to transfer information in a near-seamless fashion. Two popular architectures are ISO Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) and IBM's System Network Architecture (SNA).

Two basic network types are local-area networks (LANs) and wide-area networks (WANs). LANs connect computers and peripheral office, laboratory, or college campus, by means of links (wires, Ethernet cables, fiber optics, Wi-Fi) that transmit data rapidly. A typical LAN consists of two or more personal computers, printers, and high-capacity disk-storage devices called the servers, which enable each computer on the network to access a common set of files.