

Peer-to-Peer

A peer-to-peer network does not have centralized control. Resource sharing, processing, and communications happen at all computers. All clients on the network are equal in terms of supplying and using resources. Each workstation authenticates its users.

Peer-to-peer networks are easy and inexpensive. However, they are only practical in small companies. A peer-to-peer network is more commonly referred to as a workgroup. More recently, the industry uses the term SOHO (Small Office Home Office).

In peer-to-peer networks, users need a username and password on each computer. Suppose you created a peer-to-peer network in your home. You're logged in on your laptop. You would like to print to a printer connected to a desktop in a study. If the study computer has a user with the same username and password as the laptop, you will be able to print with no issues. If the username or password is different, you would need to login to the study computer to print.

Effectively, each user needs the same username and password at each machine. This makes running a peer-to-peer network difficult. As the network grows, it gets more difficult.