

# Computer User Support Specialists (SOC 15-1151)

Computer support specialists provide help and advice to people and organizations using computer software or equipment. Some, called computer network support specialists, support information technology (IT) employees within their organization. Others, called computer user support specialists, assist non-IT users who are having computer problems.



**Sample of reported job titles:** Information Technology Specialist (IT Specialist), Support Specialist, Computer Technician, Computer Support Specialist, Help Desk Analyst, Technical Support Specialist, Network Support Specialist, Electronic Data Processing Auditor (EDP Auditor), Network Technician, Computer Specialist

## Job Responsibilities

- Pay attention to customers when they describe their computer problems
- Ask customers questions to properly diagnose the problem
- Walk customers through the recommended problem-solving steps
- Set up or repair computer equipment and related devices
- Train users to work with new computer hardware or software, such as printers, word-processing software, and email
- Assist users in installing software
- Provide others in the organization with information about what gives customers the most trouble and about other concerns customers have

## New Hampshire Outlook

- Average Hourly Wage\*: \$25.31
- Estimated Employment 2012: 2,469
- Projected Employment 2022: 3,029
- Expected 10-Year Growth: 22.7%
- Projected Average Annual Openings: 95

## Top industries in NH for this occupation:

- Computer Systems Design and Related Services
- Publishing Industries
- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Insurance Carriers and Related Activities
- Hospitals

## Education and Training

Education requirements for computer support specialists vary. Computer user support specialist jobs require some computer knowledge, but not necessarily a postsecondary degree. Applicants who have taken some computer-related classes are often qualified. For computer network support specialists, many employers accept applicants with an associate's degree, although some prefer applicants to have a bachelor's degree.

Large software companies that provide support to business users who buy their products or services often require a bachelor's degree. More technical positions are likely to require a degree in a field such as computer science, engineering, or information science, but for others, the applicant's field of study is less important.

To keep up with changes in technology, many computer support specialists continue their education throughout their careers.

\* Wage estimates based on surveys conducted from November 2011 to May 2014.

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## Interests (Holland Code): RIC

- **Realistic:** Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.
- **Conventional:** Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.
- **Investigative:** Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

**Career Cluster:** Information Technology

## Work Environment

Computer support specialists held about 722,400 jobs in 2012. They work in many different industries, including information technology (IT), education, finance, healthcare, and telecommunication. Many help-desk technicians work for outside support service firms on a contract basis and provide help to a range of businesses and consumers. Faster computer networks are making it possible for some support specialists, particularly help-desk technicians, to work from a home office. However, a few specialized help-desk technicians may have to travel to a client's location to solve a problem.

## Additional Information Sources\*\*

Technology Services Industry Association, <[www.tsia.com](http://www.tsia.com)>

Help Desk Institute (HDI), <[www.thinkhdi.com](http://www.thinkhdi.com)>

Association of Support Professionals, <<http://asponline.com>>

## To Find a Job

Contact the nearest NH Employment Security office or go online to [www.nhes.nh.gov](http://www.nhes.nh.gov)

\*\* Inclusion of this information is intended to provide a convenient resource for research, but in no way constitutes an endorsement for any organization, nor is the list all-inclusive.

## Sources:

NH Employment Projections, base year 2012 to projected year 2022

Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics



For more information:  
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