Advantages and Disadvantages of Networking Computers

Advantages:

- Sharing devices such as printers saves money.

- Site (software) licenses are likely to be cheaper than buying several standalone licenses.

- Files can easily be shared between users.

- Network users can communicate by email and instant messenger.

- Security is good - users cannot see other users' files unlike on stand-alone machines.

- Data is easy to backup as all the data is stored on the file server.

Disadvantages:

- Purchasing the network cabling and file servers can be expensive.

- Managing a large network is complicated, requires training and a network manager usually needs to be employed.

- If the file server breaks down the files on the file server become inaccessible. Email might still work if it is on a separate server. The computers can still be used but are isolated.

- Viruses can spread to other computers throughout a computer network.

- There is a danger of hacking, particularly with wide area networks. Security procedures are needed to prevent such abuse, e.g. a firewall.