

extranet

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extranet

DEFINITION - An extranet is a private network that uses Internet technology and the public telecommunication system to securely share part of a business's information or operations with suppliers, vendors, partners, customers, or other businesses. An extranet can be viewed as part of a company's [intranet](#) that is extended to users outside the company. It has also been described as a "state of mind" in which the Internet is perceived as a way to do business with other companies as well as to sell products to customers.

An extranet requires security and privacy. These can include [firewall](#) server management, the issuance and use of [digital certificates](#) or similar means of user authentication, [encryption](#) of messages, and the use of virtual private networks ([VPN](#)s) that tunnel through the public network.

Companies can use an extranet to:

- Exchange large volumes of data using Electronic Data Interchange ([EDI](#))
- Share product catalogs exclusively with wholesalers or those "in the trade"
- Collaborate with other companies on joint development efforts
- Jointly develop and use training programs with other companies
- Provide or access services provided by one company to a group of other companies, such as an online banking application managed by one company on behalf of affiliated banks
- Share news of common interest exclusively with partner companies

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