

Conversational Geek



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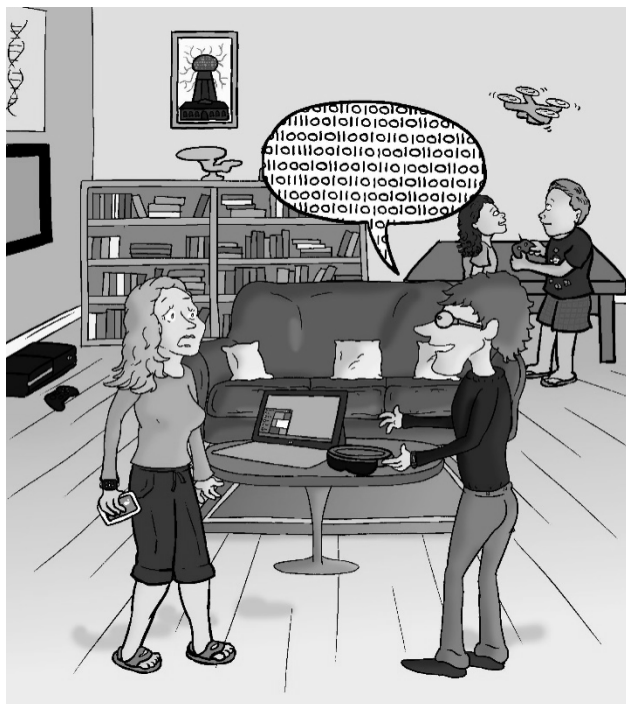
- **Geek technology:** Computers, Networks, the Internet and more.
- The “Founding Fathers” of geek lore.
- **Geek entertainment:** movies, books, comics, games.

By J. Peter Bruzzese (Microsoft MVP)

Conversational Geek

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Conversational**Geek**

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Publisher Acknowledgments

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Note from the Author

Let's clarify the term "geek" right at the outset.

Definition of a Geek: A person with an eccentric devotion to a particular interest: "a computer geek". The people you pick on in high school and end up working for as an adult (UrbanDictionary.com)

My motive in putting this book together to try and give folks a primer for geek terminology and technology. I also wanted to ensure some of the key players (the geek founders) are mentioned to help provide a little bit of geek heritage.

This book is not the be all and end all of things geek. It's a starting point. However, if you would like to learn more you can read the full 150+ page version: "Conversational Geek" (Geekier Edition!).

At the end of this book is a list of people, technology, and terminology you might want to research further. My encouragement is for you to use Wikipedia and dive deeper into each.

It is my hope that you enjoy this book. May it bridge the gap between geeks and non-geeks.

J. Peter Bruzzese



The “Conversational” Method

We have two objectives when we create a “Conversational” book: First, to make sure it’s written in a conversational tone so that it’s fun and easy to read. Second, to make sure you, the reader, can immediately take what you read and include it into your own conversations (personal or business-focused) with confidence.

These books are meant to increase your understanding of the subject. Terminology, conceptual ideas, trends in the market, and even fringe subject matter are brought together to ensure you can engage your customer, team, co-worker, friend and even the know-it-all Best Buy geek on a level playing field.

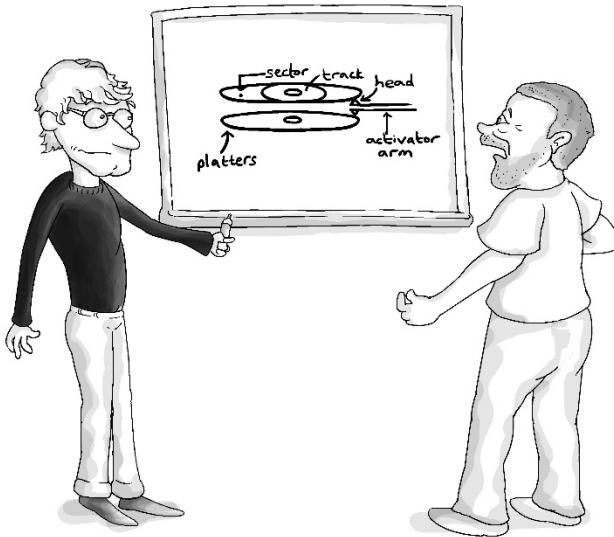
“Geek in the Mirror” Boxes

We infuse humor into our books through both cartoons and light banter from the author. When you see one of these boxes it’s the author stepping outside the dialog to speak directly to you. It might be an anecdote, it might be a personal experience or gut reaction and analysis, it might just be a sarcastic quip, but these “geek in the mirror” boxes are not to be skipped.



Greetings. They call me J. Within these boxes I can share just about anything on the subject at hand. Read 'em!

Computers, Networks and the Internet



"Dude, why does the hard disk look like the Enterprise?"

First came the "computer"... and that was good. Then they connected a bunch of these computers together to form a "network" and that was better. Then they connected multiple networks around the globe and called it the "Internet". And that was awesome!



There are many brilliant people who contributed to the technology we use every day. For example, Alan Turing, who is credited as the "father of theoretical computer science and artificial intelligence".

The 10 Parts of a Computer

Computers are made up primarily of 10 parts. It's true! Sure there are specialty items like water cooling systems and fancy glow lighting you can add if you want to trick out your system ("pimp your computing rides" so to speak). But only 10 key pieces are needed.

The 10 parts include the following:

- **Power Supply:** The power supply doesn't really supply power. It dummies down the power from the outlet to run low voltage items inside (motherboard, hard drive, etc.) at 3V, 5V or 12V (volt) increments. It also changes alternating current (AC) from the wall and converts to direct current (DC), which is more stable for the computer to handle.
- **Motherboard:** A board of circuits that looks like it has mini highways of copper running everywhere connecting all the components together. Components include the processor, memory, peripherals and so on. The motherboard has instructions built into it called the BIOS (basic input/output system) or, in modern times, the UEFI (unified extensible firmware interface). Note: Don't touch a motherboard without wearing an ESD (electro static discharge) strap to dissipate static electricity or you might zap the board with a shock.
- **Processor:** Also known as (aka) the CPU or central processing unit, the processor is like the brain of the computer and it sits firmly on the motherboard. It processes all the bits (0's and 1's) that come through it. Two key players are Intel and AMD processor manufacturers.
- **Fans, Heat Sinks and Cooling:** Processors get hot, so we use different methods to cool the processor and

the entire computer down. Heat sinks pull heat off the processor into the coils. The fan blows the heat away from the processor and heat sink to help cool it. Internal fans and other cooling aids (like liquid cooling) help to cool down the entire system.

- **Memory:** Helps you take data from your hard drive and put it closer to your processor (to improve speed). Memory might be 2GB, 4GB, etc. There is also a smaller amount of memory called the 'cache' that is one step closer to the processor.
- **Hard Drive:** This is the 'file cabinet' for all your data. The data is written in binary (0's and 1's) and the data is non-volatile (which means if you lose power that data will still be there, as opposed to volatile data in memory and cache). Hard Drives are getting larger and larger and now you might buy one with 500 GB's or even 1 or 2 TB's.



Bits (0's and 1's) are the starting point. 8 bits equal a byte (4 bits are a nibble... not kidding). 1024 bytes equals a KiloByte (KB). 1024 KBs equals a MegaByte (MB). 1024 MBs equals a GigaByte (GB). 1024 GBs equals a Terabyte (TB). And so on... PetaBytes, ExaBytes

- **Optical Drives (CD/DVD/Blu-ray Burners):** An optical drive might be a CD, DVD or Blu-ray player and/or burner. There are many different types of speeds and prices; and all this depends on what you need in your computer.
- **Video Card:** The ability to connect a monitor may be built right into the motherboard (or a video card will come with the system). A purchased video card

typically provides more than what you get with onboard video. The video card fits into an expansion slot on the motherboard that is specifically designated for the video card. You might need a powerful card for playing video games or you might need a card that allows you to plug in multiple monitors. Modern video cards typically have their own processor called a Graphics Processing Unit or GPU.

- Additional Cards (Sound, Network, etc...): Your motherboard has expansion slots to add other cards for sound, networking (LAN or Wireless), additional USB ports, or other types of cards.
- Peripherals: Keyboard, mouse, speakers, web cams, printers and such can all be plugged in and these are called peripherals.



The goal here was not to make you an expert on every little detail involving computer parts but rather, give you a better understanding of how each part is used.

Binary Code

Binary is all about 0's and 1's (bits). Think of them like on/off switches for a light switch. Put together, 8 bits is called a byte or an octet.

The way you take a number in binary and convert it to decimal is simple. Just apply a code to each bit in the number.

The code is $128 - 64 - 32 - 16 - 8 - 4 - 2 - 1$

When you see the number 01000001 you only add up the numbers that have the bit turned on. So 128? Nope. 64? Yes.

32, 16, 8, 4 and 2? Nope. 1? Yes. Add up 64 and 1 and you come up with the number 65.

Let's try a few: 01010101? 10001000? 11111111?

The answers are: 85, 136 and 255.

It's important to note that all 0's (00000000) = 0 and all 1's (11111111) = 255. That gives you 256 different options. But you can string them together too. 192.168.1.1 is an IP address (discussed soon). That is called dotted decimal but when converted into binary looks like this:

11000000.10101000.00000001.00000001

What about taking a decimal number and making it into binary? It just takes a little effort using the code to work backward. To make decimal 27 in binary, you will need a 1 in the 16's place, a 1 in the 8's place, a 0 in the 4's place, a 1 in the 2's place and a 1 in the 1's place. It looks like this 11011. You may think of it like this; add, $16+8+0+2+1$. Each binary 1 can be a "yes" in that place holder in the chart, and a binary 0 is a "no" in that place.



While binary is used within the computer itself and is important to learn, another type of numbering system is called hexadecimal and is based off groupings of 16 ranging from 0 through 9 and then a, b, c, d, e, f which represents numbering 10-15 (0-15 for a total of 16).

Networking and the Internet

Networking is all about connectivity. Homes, small businesses, enterprise environments with thousands of computers, the Internet (a global network) all utilize similar technology regardless of the size. They all connect to a router using either an 'Ethernet' connection or a wireless connection. They all use

TCP/IP as the underlying protocol to connect. They all use Domain Name Services (DNS) to find other computers on the Internet. The questions you may have now are “What’s Ethernet, Routers, TCP/IP and DNS?” Ok, hold on tight.

Let’s talk about the physical pieces to a network (and to the Internet). These might include the following:

Cables: Common today is Category 5 Ethernet cable (and yes, there were categories 1-4 but we don’t use those anymore). Future categories are, you guessed it, 6 and 7. Cat 6 is used for Gigabit Ethernet and is compatible with 5.



Why is it called Ethernet? Ethernet was developed in the early 1970’s at Xerox PARC by Robert Metcalfe and others. The reason it was called Ether-net was based on the concept of luminous “ether” which was once thought to carry electromagnetic waves through space. At that time, many networking systems were proprietary (that is, unique to a given environment) and the idea was to indicate that the Ethernet was designed for all systems.

Connectors: Cable have connectors on the end that resemble a phone connector (RJ11 / 4 pins). Ethernet cables use an RJ45 connector with 8 pins.



RJ11 RJ45

Routers: To connect computers together you have to have either a network connection in your computer or a wireless connection for WiFi. And then you have to have a place to

connect to, called a “router”. A router allows for cable connection or WiFi connectivity. The router allows for connections between networked computers and the Internet.

Note: Connections to the Internet can be made through a cable modem, DSL and other means but you still need a router between your home/business and the Internet.



Once you have the physical pieces in play it’s important to understand how communication actually takes place.

First off, all computers/devices on a network have unique addresses. All devices that are on a network, or on the Internet have a built-in MAC address (Media Access Control). These are typically assigned by the manufacturer of the device and are assigned using hexadecimal numbers, for example: 00-21-6A-3E-D5-5E.



On a PC you can find a computer’s MAC address by opening a command prompt and typing **getmac** or **ipconfig /all**

As you can see, the MAC address numbers are not that easy to work with; and there is no order to them amongst devices. A more organized way to distinguish computers was developed called a TCP/IP Address. These are given manually or dynamically to computers. The computers locate each other using TCP/IP addresses and only then does it acquire the true MAC address of a computer to link for communication.

TCP/IP stands for transmission control protocol/Internet protocol and it is actually more than two protocols but a whole suite of them. “Protocols” are sometimes used to mean a language or a set of standards. Having standards causes the different manufacturers to follow a protocol when developing things that will work together on a network.

Using TCP/IP, packets that go out on the wire will find their destination because the router will use the TCP/IP address to locate or route its packets to the proper recipient.

Your router is like a post office. Communication is handled through ‘packets’. Your router will send packets from one computer to another computer; and from the Internet to your computers. These are like pieces of mail that travel from one home to the next. If you want to mail something officially to your neighbor you would take your mail to the post office and put it in the Local box. If you want to mail it to another state or country you would put it in the Out-of-Town box. The post office would handle it from that point. But how do computers find each other?

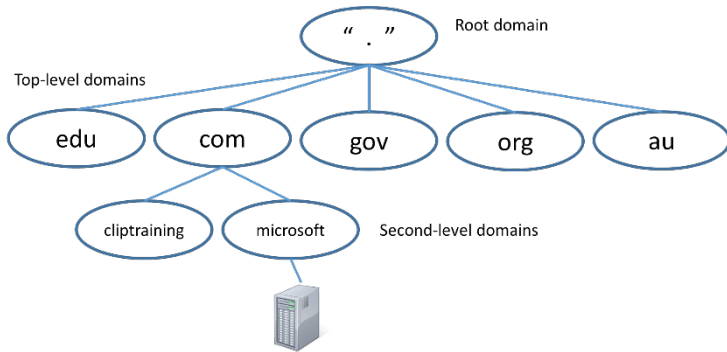


We could go much deeper on all of this, especially with regard to TCP/IP addressing but this is a 101 guide after all. Read the full version to go to the next level(s).

Domain Name Services (DNS)

Rather than go too deep on how TCP/IP works and the addressing side where you need to provide an IP address, subnet mask and default gateway (all important stuff) let’s answer the following questions: When I type ‘www.conversationageek.com’ into my browser, how does my computer know where to go? And when I send an email to jpeter@conversationageek.com how does my email find him?

Great questions. The answer is DNS (domain name services). DNS is provided through high-powered computers called 'servers' that are on the Internet to help us find the IP addresses of web sites or send emails to mail servers and so on. These servers are organized by domain, just like an alphabetical phone directory.



Websites are officially registered and TCP/IP addresses have to be included so that when your computer wants to a website or send an email it can use the TCP/IP address to do it. You put in the name but DNS gives your computer the address.

You can register your own website name through a domain registration site like GoDaddy.com but the name has to be unique. Many names are already taken as you can imagine.

Important People in Internet History

There are so many people we could put into a discussion of Internet history but here are a collection of key people and their contribution:

- Al Gore: Invented the Internet. (Kidding) Although he did support Internet growth and development. He popularized the term 'information superhighway'
- J.C.R. Licklider (from MIT): Wrote about an "Intergalactic Network" that connects everyone on the

planet. In 1962 he becomes the first head of research for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

- Leonard Kleinrock (also from MIT and UCLA) worked on packet switching technology.
- Lawrence Roberts (also from MIT) connects computers from Massachusetts to California using dial-up.

The first operational packet switched network was called ARPANET (funded by DARPA) and included four different universities and grew from that point.



Ever wonder who invented the @ symbol we use when we send email? It was Ray Tomlinson in 1972!

- Robert Kahn and Vint Cerf created TCP in 1973
- Tim Berners-Lee (from CERN) developed a protocol for information to be distributed using hypertext pages. The protocol is still in use today as the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (http) which you see at the beginning of every web site address you type in, and THIS was the beginning of what we know now as the World Wide Web. The original goal of the HTTP protocol was to get pages written in HTML (hypertext markup language).

It's important to note that there is a difference between the Internet and the World Wide Web. The Internet is a global network that uses TCP/IP to transmit data between systems. The World Wide Web is a computer network that has sites available on the Internet that allow you to see sites using HTTP.

The Internet is used for more than just the WWW; it is also used for email and a host of other services.



There is a really cool poster that shows the History of the Internet and how it has grown over the past 30 years. The poster can be found at the Computer History Museum, located in Mountain View, CA. To learn more about the first 30 years of Internet development in much greater detail go here:
http://www.computerhistory.org/internet_history/

The Big Takeaways

We could talk for days about computers, networking and the Internet. This was just a primer to get your feet wet and your mind thinking about the core knowledge needed as a ‘geek’.

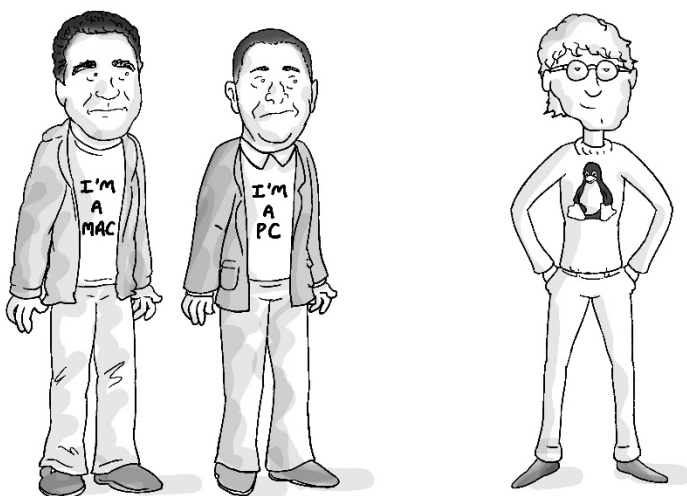
Computers (PCs and laptops) have about 10 parts to them. The parts are made by different manufacturers and have different designs and strength/size levels. Go to a store (online/in-person) to see these parts for yourself or open (with permission) and old computer to look inside. Unplug it first!

Networking is all about communication. You need to be physically connected through Ethernet cabling or a WiFi connection. And if you want to get out to another network or the Internet you will need a router. The underlying communication method is TCP/IP which relies on DNS to locate systems out on the Internet.

All of this (computers, networking, the Internet) is the result of many, many smart people. It’s important we don’t forget them.

In the end, it’s all 0’s and 1’s (binary). But look the amazing things people have done with 0’s and 1’s.

OS's, Mobile Devices, Tablets and Apps



Your PCs, laptops, tablets, mobile devices... all run an operating system. Operating systems are not new. Before the PC age there were mainframes that had their own operating systems. With modern PCs there are so many different types that it's not worth reviewing them all. However there are a few that stand out. Unix/Linux, Mac OS and Windows. There are others like Chrome OS by Google (which is Linux-based, as many are).



Along with famous inventors and innovators there are also nefarious or notorious computer users called "hackers". One, now reformed, hacker is Kevin Mitnick. His books on social engineering are fascinating!

Unix/Linux

It was developed by a team at AT&T Bell Laboratories in 1969. It was eventually coded in a programming language called C, which was developed by Dennis Ritchie from AT&T. The value of this new OS with C was its programming language was portable, meaning it could be installed on other hardware. Variations of Unix, like Linux and Mac OS, have been created over the years and you may have heard of some like the Berkeley Software Distribution (BSD) variants and its descendants: FreeBSD, NetBSD, OpenBSD and DragonFly BSD; along with Android, which is also a variant.

Linux is a variant of Unix. It was first created and released by Linus Torvalds. Linux as an operating system is open sourced, meaning people have the right to freely use it, study it, and make changes to it and so on. The source code is open to all.

Apple | Mac OS and iOS

Everyone knows Apple. It's recognized globally. What many forget is how it got started. Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. They formed Apple computers in 1976 and created the very first Apple computers in Steve Job's family home garage as their workspace.

It was in that garage that they would develop the Apple I, released April 1, 1976, and later on the Apple II. Initially it was meant to be a hobbyist machine that could be purchased cheaper and be smaller than existing systems. The Apple I was the first computer that used a single circuit board. Both the Apple I and the Apple II were engineered completely by Steve Wozniak. The company would go on to create many more systems (PCs, laptops, tablets, mobile devices) over the years (Lisa, Macintosh (in 1984), iMac, Macbook Air, iPod, iPad, iPhone, Apple Watch etc...) Mobile devices use iOS, which is a variety of the Mac OS X, which is based on Unix.

There is an incredible story to be told about the life of Jobs and Wozniak. It's been told in books and movies and continues to be the inspiration for every tech startup down to today. Steve Jobs died in 2011 and the current CEO of Apple is Tim Cook.



A man who helped Jobs realize his vision of streamlined products is Jonathan (aka Jony) Ive. He was the lead designer for many of the iconic Apple products that appear clean, crisp, and futuristic.

One thing about Apple that makes it different from Microsoft is that they build and distribute both the hardware and the software (the operating system). Microsoft is focused primarily on software.

The first Mac OS X system (10.0) was released in 2001 and it was called Cheetah. The idea to keep using big cats stuck but they must have run out at the end:

- 10.0 Cheetah
- 10.1 Puma
- 10.2 Jaguar
- 10.3 Panther
- 10.4 Tiger
- 10.5 Leopard
- 10.6 Snow Leopard
- 10.7 Lion
- 10.8 Mountain Lion
- 10.9 Mavericks
- 10.10: Yosemite
- 10.11: El Capitan

There are some interesting features to the Mac OS X operating system that make it distinguishable from every other major player. One key element is the Dock. When you look at the desktop of an Apple you see a really cool dock down at the bottom of the desktop that allows you to add and remove applications for quick click access.

Microsoft | Windows

The story of Bill Gates, Paul Allen and Steve Ballmer is completely different from Jobs and Wozniak and yet no less entertaining.

Gates played around with software programming even in his youth, spending time on a GE computer at school and programming in BASIC. He went to Lakeside School, a private school where he met Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen. The two would work together in their youth on a variety of different ventures, including one called Traf-O-Data, which was a traffic counter that would generate reports. They didn't make a million on that one, but they were only 17, so that was ok. It was a good start to what would come later.

In 1973 Gates went to Harvard University, this is where he met Steve Ballmer. It was the January 1975 issue of Popular Electronics that changed all of their lives because right on the cover was the Altair.

Originally, the Altair was programmed in binary using the switches with the results being shown on the front LED. The programming would take days or even weeks and it was horrendous. They needed a better method to work with, thus Gates and Allen contacted Ed Roberts. Ed was the president of Micro Instrumentation and Telemetry Systems (MITS), the company that manufactured the Altair. Gates and Allen said they were working on a BASIC interpreter. The truth was they didn't have any type of working BASIC code for the Altair. In fact, they didn't even have an Altair. Instead they had a simulator. Well, they wrote up the interpreter and ran out to New Mexico to try it out on the real Altair. They got it to work on the second day of testing and that was the first product Microsoft (then called Micro-Soft) created.



Because MITS was in Albuquerque New Mexico, Microsoft was first established there. In 1979 they moved to Bellevue, Washington which is where the headquarters remain to this day.

Microsoft's main focus was BASIC interpreters up until the 1980's. Microsoft BASIC was the key to their earlier success. In June 1980 Ballmer becomes Microsoft's 30th employee and is the first business manager. He would go on to become President of Microsoft from 1998 to 2001 and later CEO. The current CEO is Satya Nadella.

Microsoft purchased a simple OS called DOS (disk operating system) from Tim Paterson of Seattle Computer Products and turned around and licensed it to IBM (not sold it, licensed it!) which turned out to be a game changer for them and set their business model for software going forward.

Initially Windows ran on top of DOS (although that isn't the case today). There have been so many versions of Windows it's hard to recount them all, but here are the main ones:

- Windows 3.x and Windows for Workgroups
- Windows 95, 98, 98 SE, ME (Millennium Edition)
- Server/Workstation: Windows NT (aka new technology) 3.5x, NT 4.0, Windows 2000/2003/2008/2012 (with R2 flavors)
- Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8, 8.1 and 10



It's worth mentioning that Microsoft is currently working on some cool technology called HoloLens that works off Windows 10 to provide a holographic environment that lays on top of the real world.

Tablets and Mobile Devices

Most folks today don't remember the term PDA (personal digital assistant) but these were big in the 90's and companies like PalmPilot were the king. Fast forward a bit and BlackBerry had a good run at being king of the mobile world for a time. Then it all changed.

The iPhone was first released in 2007. It was revolutionary (still is) and continues to introduce new and exciting mobile features like Siri, a personal assistant you can talk to. The iPhone runs on iOS. The iPad, released in 2010 is a tablet running iOS. There are several versions of iPhone and iPad that have been released over the years (currently at iPad Air, iPad Mini and iPhone 6).

Google has the Android OS, built off Linux, the variant of Unix. Android OS is used on both smartphones and tablets by a variety of manufacturers.



All Android OS nicknames are named after sweet foods or desserts like: 2.3 Gingerbread, 3.0 Honeycomb, 4.0 Ice-Cream Sandwich, 4.1/4.2/4.3 Jelly Bean, 4.4 KitKat, 5.0+ Lollipop. Hey some folks like to use big cats for their OS nicknames and others like desserts!

Latest versions of the Windows Phone and Windows Surface (Microsoft's tablet) are both running versions of the Windows OS (Windows 10).



Applications and Apps

It's impossible to list out the different applications and apps that have been rolled out over the years. Certainly a popular line of business applications/apps is the Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, etc...). These are installed directly on your PC, and now there are Office apps for your tablets.

There are also online productivity apps like Google Apps that run in the "cloud" (didn't think we would go through the whole book and not mention the "cloud" did you?) which means it runs in your browser and the application is running in someone else's datacenter and isn't installed on your computer or tablet.

Social networking sites offer solutions in the "cloud" like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and so forth.

Mobile/Tablet apps include all sorts of free and paid-for games you can use for just about anything. For example, the Evernote note taking app, the Kindle eReader app, the Netflix video streaming app and so on.



There are more people to learn about including Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Larry Page and Sergey Brin (Google), Sean Parker (Napster), and others.

The Big Takeaways

Hopefully you're starting to see that the technology we use is heavily connected to the people who created it and/or enhanced it. Some of these folks were true developer geeks. Some of them were geek lovers with a business focus who knew how to take the dev geeks products and get them out to the masses.

It's important to remember the history. You work on your PC at school/work running Windows 10 with Office 2016, take out your iPad to play "Clash of Clans" during your lunch break, call your friend on your Android phone on the way home... but do you know the story behind all these "geek" toys?

Now you do. You know the tip of the iceberg. Dig deeper to learn more!

Geek Entertainment



"Are you dressed up for Comic-Con?"



"No. Why do you ask?"

It's impossible to cover every aspect of geek entertainment from the Big Bang Theory to Dr. Who, but here is a list that may help you get started.

Movies and TV Shows

Here are a list of movies you can watch to get a better understanding of geek life.

- WarGames (1983)
- Sneakers (1992)
- The Net (1995)
- Pirates of Silicon Valley (1999)
- The Social Network (2010)

- The Theory of Everything (2014)
- The Imitation Game (2014)
- Jobs (2013) and Steve Jobs (2015)

In addition you can add to that list every Star Wars, Star Trek, Marvel/DC, type movie you can imagine. Oh... and Tron/Tron:Legacy



It's important for you to understand the basics of these two "geek" sci-fi genres:

Star Wars: Long ago, galaxy far, far way... lightsabers, Skywalker/Vadar, R2/D2, C3PO "May the Force Be with You", Solo in carbonite, Yoda, Wookies, Ewoks (little wookies), the Force (dark/light), Jedi/Sith, Millennium Falcon "I've got a bad feeling about this."

Star Trek: Future, current galaxy, humans/Vulcans (pointy ears/logical)/Romulans (angry cousins of Vulcans)/Klingons, "Live long and prosper" (Vulcan greeting), "I have been and always shall be your friend", Kirk/Spock, McCoy, Scotty "I need more time Capt'n"

Watch the movies... it will all make sense.

As for TV shows you have Big Bang Theory. But you might also look for current or recent shows like Battlestar Galatica (reruns), Dr. Who and a host of other sci-fi, fantasy focused shows. You might consider superhero shows like Smallville (reruns), Arrow, etc..

Comics and Comic-Con

It's important to know that there are many different types of comics. The traditional comic book heroes like Superman,

Batman, Wonder Woman (all from DC comics) and the alternative (perhaps more flawed) heroes like Iron Man, Hulk, Thor (all from Marvel comics).



If you go see a comic book movie with Superman, don't expect to see Iron Man in the movie. These guys are from two different comic book companies: Marvel and DC

You might hear other words for comics like Manga (the Japanese word for comics) and Anime (the Japanese abbreviation for animation). These are popular in both tame formats (like Pokemon) and ultra-violent/sexual/spiritistic formats. All comics are not equal (logically).

Both Comic-Con and Dragon*Con are conferences that promote the sci-fi, fantasy, and all-around-geek oriented entertainment. The official Comic-Con is held in San Diego, although there are smaller ones held in other locations. Cosplay is common (not required) at these types of shows. Cosplay is short for "costume play" where folks dress up as their favorite characters from movies/TV/books/comics/etc.

Gaming

Gaming goes all the way back to Pong and Atari. Modern gaming and gaming systems (like Xbox/Playstation/Wii, etc.) allow you to play against or with people online. You don't need a gaming system to play, you can use your PC/laptop or your tablet to play any number of games (single or multiplayer).

There are role playing games (RPGs), massively multiplayer online role playing games (MMORPG), app games (like Angry Birds), social network games (like Words with Friends) and more. Some play as a team online with "Clash of Clans", or play online or alone with first person shooter (FPS).



One of the phenomenon's of the modern gaming world is Minecraft. Created by Markus "Notch" Persson (Sweden) and published by Mojang (now owned by Microsoft) this is a 3D game world where you can create and build the world around you, play alone or with others, available on just about every platform (PC/mobile/tablet/game system).

Books

Geeks are divided on the best books to read. Flatland, books on string theory, sci-fi books, encryption focused books (like Digital Fortress by Dan Brown) and a host of other geeky books.

Most would agree though that Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy (by Douglas Adams) is a must-read. In it you'll find the answer to life, the universe and everything!

For technically realistic dramatic novels about modern day dangers (hackers/rootkits/viruses/etc.) check out Mark Russinovich's books starting with "Zero Day" and follow it up with the books "Trojan Horse" and "Rogue Code".

Mentioned earlier, there are books by Kevin Mitnick that are quite interesting on social engineering. These include 'Ghost in the Wires' 'The Art of Deception' and 'The Art of Intrusion' and others.

The Big Takeaways

Geek entertainment varies. It's impossible to say exactly what a geek will like. However, it's safe to say there are key elements to geek entertainment. There is a heavy technology base (real, futuristic, or completely implausible like glowing swords). And whether a movie, TV show, comic or game, it is often based in sci-fi, fantasy or comic books.

Research and Remember

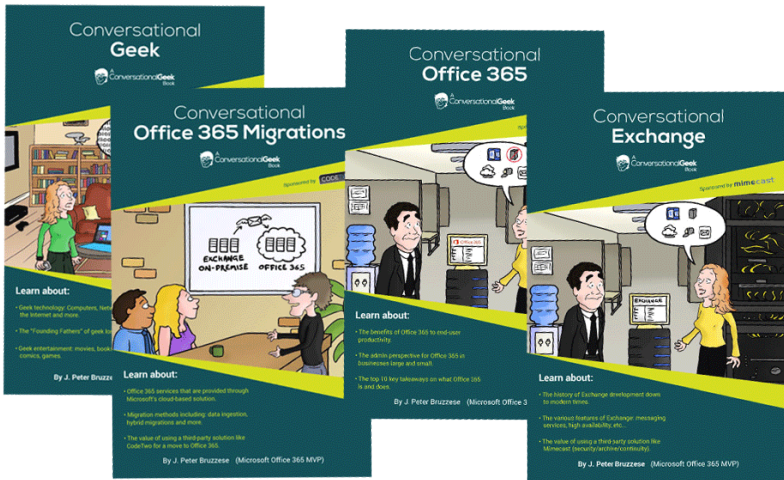
This book is filled with technology, people and terminology that are worth researching and remembering. Here are a few you might want to take a little time to study:

Alan Turing	RJ45 connector	Linux
Power Supply	Router	Linus Torvalds
Motherboard	MAC address	Dennis Ritchie
Processor	Hexadecimal	Steve Jobs
Fans	TCP/IP	Steve Wozniak
Heat sinks	Domain Name Service (DNS)	Tim Cook
Memory	J.C.R. Licklider	Jony Ive
Hard drive	Leonard Kleinrock	Bill Gates
Optical drives	DARPA	Paul Allen
Video card	ARPANET	Steve Ballmer
Peripherals	Lawrence Roberts	Satya Nadella
Binary code	Ray Tomlinson	Altair
Byte	Robert Kahn	Ed Roberts
Kilobyte	Vinton (Vint) Cerf	DC / Marvel
Megabyte	Tim Berners-Lee	Comic-Con
Gigabyte	HTTP	Cosplay
Terabyte	HTML	Hitchhikers Guide
Ethernet	Unix	Kevin Mitnick
Robert Metcalfe		

Learn more by reading “Conversational Geek” 3rd Edition (aka the Geekier Edition!)

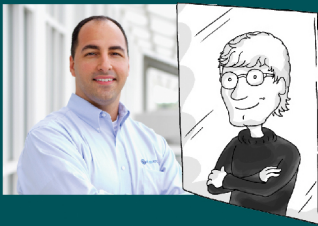


Go to ConversationalGeek.com to download more free books that geeks love from our growing library of subjects!



Easily “converse” about all things geek.

Conversational Geek is a fun and easy-to-read journey through all the main aspects of a tech geeks life. The goal here is to bridge the gap between geeks and non-geeks. Learn to communicate better with the geeks in your life and appreciate to a greater degree when shows and movies include “geek” aspects into their themes. Start off being “conversational” and you’ll soon be fluent.



About J. Peter Bruzzese

J. Peter is an Office 365 MVP, holds a variety of certifications (MCSE/MCITP:Messaging, A+/Network+, etc.), is an internationally published author and conference speaker, InfoWorld journalist, ClipTraining Co-Founder and CIO and more.

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