



# Nerds Are Us

Blaine Homer

The other day, a couple of my colleagues and I went out to a restaurant for lunch. We were a sight to behold—four nerds, hovering over chips and salsa like we were having our last meal. (Thankfully the chips and salsa were “bottomless.”) None of us have seen a gym in nearly six years, and since we go out for lunch together at least twice a week, we are all slightly overweight.

We all work long hours and never have time for our hobbies anymore. In fact, if we combined all of our tans (from the elbows up), we might—if we exaggerated a little bit—be one shade darker than our natural color. Even more pathetic, we probably had seven beepers and six cell phones among the four of us—not counting the Palms, MP3 players, and iPAQs in our possession.

As we sat around eating chips and salsa, we began wondering what had happened to our childhood aspirations of becoming a doctor, a lawyer, or even a professional athlete. At what point had we given up on those esteemed professions and become nerds?

Sure, you can try to cloak the truth with titles such as marketing guy, computer guy, IT guy, and public relations guy. But that day, I had to face the facts: When I stepped back from the table and took a good look at my colleagues and me, the best way to describe us was *nerds*.

In our defense, I have to say that technology is changing everyone’s life. In fact, at a nearby table, a mother and her three-year-old son demonstrated just how deeply technology is affecting everyone—including the young and innocent.

## YOU CAN HEAR A PIN DROP

This mother and son were sitting in the booth right behind my buddies and me. Not surprisingly, the mother was proud of her son and wanted him to recite the ABCs for the people sitting in the booth with them. The mother helped him start—A, B, C—and the boy continued—D, E, F, and so on.

I was only half listening; after all, this conversation wasn’t about technology. It was almost more distracting than interesting. When the boy got to end, however, I overheard the boy saying,

“T, U, V, WWW, dot, X, Y, Z.” I couldn’t help it: I started laughing so hard I almost spit my Diet Coke all over my lunch buddies.

## MY NAME IS STANLEY

Anyway, back to my story, we were sitting around reminiscing on how we had become nerds. I finally spoke up and said, “It isn’t my fault I became a nerd; it’s my parents’ fault.”

You see, I go by Blaine, but my first name is Stanley. With a name like that, I had no choice other than to become a nerd.”

At that moment, each of my buddies started to laugh. I thought they were laughing because my first name is Stanley. As it turns out, however, I was sitting at lunch with three people who were also forced into nerd-dom: One has a middle name of Melvin; the other has a middle name of Francis; and the last one has a first name of Eugene.

You see, being a nerd wasn’t our choice; it was fate. If you are reading this article, what is your excuse?



## TOP TEN SIGNS YOU’VE BECOME A TECHNOLOGY NERD

If you are afraid that you have become a technology nerd, you may want to see how many of the following apply to you:

1. When you turn off your basement lights, your basement resembles Christmas (red and green LEDs all over the room).
2. Your first name is Stanley.
3. Your cell phone doesn’t ring; it vibrates.
4. Getting a “Love Letter” is a bad thing.
5. Your cell phone is also your alarm clock.
6. When test driving a car, your first thought is, “Where can I mount the hands-free kit?”
7. You have taken the cover off all your six computers.
8. Your recreational reading is a 1,500-page, six-inch-thick technical manual.
9. Your idea of exercise is playing a game of Quake.
10. You use a remote control for your MP3 player even though the player is strapped to your belt. ●