

TECH-KNOWLEDGY



All you need to know
to buy it, fix it, or ask an expert

A self-help guide to
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

BY DANIEL GAUTHIER^{MCP, A+}

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Daniel Gauthier is the president and owner of TwinBytes Inc., a company that provides computer support services in York Region and the Greater Toronto Area. He wrote this book to inform business owners and home computer users about all aspects of computer technology and to level the playing field between computer technicians and the end user. He hopes you will become more comfortable with computers, save money with the information in this book, and avoid being taken advantage of.

Daniel has more than ten years experience in the computer technology industry. During this time, Daniel's expertise also expanded from technical support provider to ISP manager, web designer/host and software trainer. He has trained sales reps, martial arts students, and small groups of people on how to use some industry specific software. Daniel's teaching ability has received an appreciative and enthusiastic response from many of his students.

You can learn more about Daniel's company by visiting www.twinbytes.ca and this book at www.tech-knowledgebook.com.



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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is organized for easy access to specific information. Every chapter is divided into subcategories and sections and contains definitions of terms used (in order to avoid having to flip to the back of the book to consult a glossary). Each section contains product information as well as descriptions, basic troubleshooting information, and tips.

You should consult this book before purchasing any hardware or software, or hiring someone to service it, so that you can communicate effectively with sales representatives and technicians and avoid being taken advantage of by them.

Throughout this book you will also find prices which, of course, are subject to change. The purpose of listing prices is to indicate the difference in value between products, rather than give you an accurate estimate of what they'll cost. It's good to know one product's advantages over another, but you also need to know whether they're fairly similar in price or one is much more expensive. This book will help you make more informed buying decisions (based on product quality and value).

As you progress from chapter to chapter, information is written in a way that assumes you have read the previous chapters. It is suggested you read this book from start to finish at least once, so that when you need to flip to a certain chapter to quickly look something up, you will understand it better.

DISCLAIMER: At the time of printing: prices, types of products, product information, product websites and other references were current; however some information will have already changed by the time you read this book. Such is the world of computer technology. Please make sure to double check all time sensitive information. With that said, this book has been written in such a way that it is filled with information that will remain valuable for many years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'd like to thank my family for their love and support. Thanks to my beautiful wife Katherine and my twin daughters, for whom my company, TwinBytes Inc., was named. I practically had to put my entire personal life on hold to write this book and keep the business running at the same time. Thanks for putting up with me Katherine, I Love you! But I have two great women in my life... I can't forget to mention my totally amazing assistant Heather Nicol, who has made tremendous contributions to the level of customer service my company provides and she kept things under control while I focused on my book. Also, I want to thank you Heather for doing such a great job of editing and proofreading this book to get the final manuscript ready for print. Finally, we're done! I'm proud to have you on my team.

I want to thank my brother for his input during the early stages of this book and also my parents for doing such a fine job of raising me. Look how I turned out, I'm an author and a successful business owner! Thanks to my clients for sharing their experiences regarding all of the issues that small businesses encounter – they made it easier for me to decide what information had to be in this book.

I want to acknowledge, in no particular order, a few other people who helped me to write my first book: Kevin Huhn of Fire N' Idea who showed me how easy it can be to write a book; Tammy Mang of Media Diversified who was my project manager for this book; Pam Godfrey, my former I.T. boss – a great manager and a terrific person. She encouraged me to take a job "on the side" by referring my first customer and providing me with my first taste of entrepreneurship, which sharpened my appetite for a business of my own. Thanks to Rick Bell for being a great manager and friend. He was the V.P. of technology at the company I worked at previously. I still remember him telling me and the other technicians to take the time to "think things through" before we do anything. As confident as anyone can be with something, there's always room for error. I remember these words and use them as my business motto so that I don't mess up by quickly rushing into things. Unfortunately, there are too many techs out there that already make this mistake.

Thanks to Professor John Kucharczuk for checking the book for technical accuracy, plagiarism, current information and offering his suggestions for additional material so that this book could be used in business courses.

PREFACE

by John Kucharczuk

About a year ago I was asked by Daniel to review and provide input for an early draft of this book, which was an honour. Daniel, like me, is very passionate about technology, enjoys training and teaching people, and has been through the most interesting time in the ever changing world of computer technology. This book was designed to bring both novice computer users (individuals, home, and small business owners) and experts to a common playing field.

Now, as a University and College Professor, I will use this book in my teachings to help students understand their own computers, because the answers to many of their questions are addressed within it. Understanding the computer hardware, software, and what it's used for has always been a major undertaking for students to tackle. For the long term this book will become an indispensable reference for future courses and for the students' future employment, since there is valuable information for them to use.

The benefits of the book for everyone are quickly realized, especially for home and business users, just after reading the first chapter of the book. You can save the cost of the book and then more by using the money saving tips found within it.

I can't tell you the number of times I have been asked this question, "what type of Computer should I buy?" This book will answer this question and will help you figure out what you really need. In other words, it will give you the "Biggest Bang for your Buck".

For those that use a computer, this is a book that can help you every day.

JOHN KUCHARCZUK

John Kucharczuk (BSc, MBA) has over 25 years of working experience in the Computer field, performing many jobs and management functions. After graduating as a programmer he worked his way up the ranks to: Systems Analyst, Systems Management, Application Software Designer, Systems Sales and Management, and Project Manager for over 19 major ERP Software installations throughout the world.

With his knowledge of Computers, Business, Marketing, and Accounting, John has been a Professor for over seven years at Seneca College, Centennial College and York University, in Toronto.