



TECH STAR

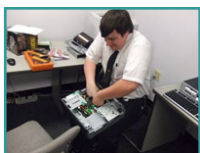


Jon Aumann

[By Akbar Ali]

Jon Aumann, one of Geek Squad's most-accomplished special agents, has been fascinated by computers for most of his life. The inner workings of complex machines have always interested Jon and driven him to understand what allows them to endure and operate as efficiently (and sometimes not so efficiently) as they do. His curiosity directed him, from an early age, to constantly take things apart, though admittedly taking things apart proved easier than putting them back together. Jon recalled that his desire to understand how computers work expanded when he bought his first computer: he learned that the computer was not simply one giant operating system but a network of systems performing multiple tasks at the same time.

Jon began tinkering with computers alongside friends in high school during impromptu sessions in which they would do everything from setting up firewalled corporate networks to creating a LAN (local area network) to play games. He became involved with the computer-repair industry through an internship as an assistant network administrator. In addition to basic repairs, his primary intern duties centered on network-administration setup and helping maintain a large-scale network. Frequently, the computers he was working on were older models than he was used to, so he had to familiarize himself quickly with the systems he was given to correct. This training was essential to Jon's development as a computer technician because it gave him to know-how to fix any computer no matter its make, model, or age.



The most memorable moments on the job for Jon revolve around his interactions with his clients, especially those who have very little experience with computers. One particularly memorable client had never operated a

computer before she met Jon. By the time he was finished, she felt comfortable with the basic operations and had even mastered using her webcam to view pictures of her great-grandson

from across the country. "It's the best feeling in the world when I can give someone a practical, everyday use for their computer and make them truly enjoy it," John said.

Q. What do you do for fun?

A. I go to music shows and concerts. Usually I'll go with my friends and just spend the whole day having fun with them.

Q. What CD is in your CD player right now?

A. *Revolutions Per Minute* by Rise Against.

Q. What is the last magazine you read?

A. Microsoft's *TechNet Magazine*.

Q. What is your favorite TV show?

A. *Eureka*.

Q. Who is your role model?

A. Richard Branson. He is extremely successful but consistently gives back to the community, never forgetting where he came from.

Though technology positions are widely characterized as purely mechanical and isolated in nature, John's advice to those interested in computer repair is to learn to love communicating with others. He believes that too many clients have encountered inattentive and anti-social computer professionals who simply don't understand that customers are already frustrated when they walk through the door. John revealed that, "Fixing the computer is only part of my job. Equally important is making the client feel like a part of the process and having them come away with positive experiences. My job is not just technical, and in fact, people skills are a large part of what I do everyday."

Currently a junior at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, where he is studying computer engineering, John began his professional career working part-time for Geek Squad. Though initially he viewed his job at Geek Squad as simply a temporary college gig, he has developed it into a full



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career path, moving from part-time in-store technician to full-time in-home technician. He said that, "Working for the Geek Squad allows me multiple career possibilities

within Geek Squad itself and with our parent company, Best Buy. Once I get my degree, I hope to continue towards a master's degree while maintaining various certifications."

John envisions his future to be at Geek Squad Corporate, where he plans to provide support for agents around the world.

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