

# TOO SMART

## *How to Take Charge of the Smart Tech in Your Life*

TOM PYKE

### *Illustrative Q&A's*

**Q. What is smart tech? Is it anything with a computer in it?**

**A.** Smart tech is any device that interacts with us and responds to our requests for action by doing things for us. Smart devices generally have a computer or computer-like components inside them, and they are often connected to the internet. Examples include smartphones, smart thermostats, smart lights, smart speakers, smart doorbells, and PCs.

**Q. Are we setting ourselves up for trouble if we use our smartphones and PCs a lot?**

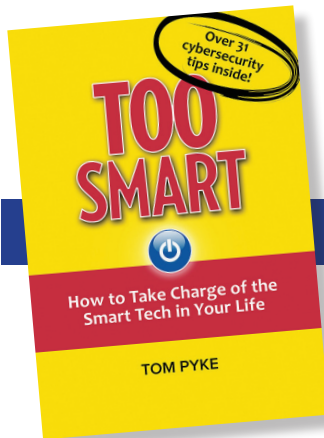
**A.** The risks of using a smartphone or other device way too much include potentially relating more to smart tech than to people, becoming too dependent on technology, developing an addiction to smart tech (as recently reported by German researchers), and developing separation anxiety when you are away from your smart tech devices. We need to be careful to avoid letting high-tech things take over our lives!

**Q. How about the threat of cyberattacks as we use smart tech?**

**A.** By using smart tech we are setting ourselves up for possible cyberattacks. Cyber attackers are stalking smartphones, PCs, and other devices, attempting to break into them to steal data or disable them. It is essential to take precautions to protect against such attacks, including installing anti-malware software and watching carefully for signs of possible phishing or smishing attacks.

**Q. When we use smart tech, are we giving up our privacy?**

**A.** We risk giving up some of our privacy, especially when using smart devices that are always watching or always listening, like smart TVs and smart speakers. It is important to become familiar with privacy settings on our smartphones and other devices, to minimize the collection and retention of voice and other data, while still maintaining desired functionality. Also, consider turning off microphones and cameras when you don't need them. And be careful what you post on social media. For example, posting vacation photos in advance or while you are away may be an invitation to burglars who will know you aren't home.



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### ***Illustrative Q&A's*** *continued*

#### **Q. What inspired you to write *TOO SMART*?**

**A.** I have always enjoyed developing and following the latest technological developments, especially as the technology has become more useful in our lives. And I have always enjoyed helping friends, colleagues, and others appreciate and understand technology and to be well-prepared to benefit from it. To make this interaction especially meaningful, I have lots of stories, based on my personal experience, to tell about how the technology we now take for granted came to be. It is important to me that I share what I know in a way that helps others.

#### **Q. What experiences have you drawn on as you wrote *TOO SMART*?**

**A.** I have over 40 years of experience as an engineering and science leader. I have spent my career keeping up with and ahead of new technology. I began my career by leading research and standards development in computer networking, systems, and software at the National Bureau of Standards (now known as the National Institute of Standards and Technology). I then led the nation's civil weather satellite program as assistant administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), created NOAA's high-performance computing program, and was NOAA's first chief information officer (CIO). Following NOAA, I became the CIO of the Department of Commerce and then the CIO of the Department of Energy, and I was an executive advisor with Booz Allen Hamilton. I have served on the editorial board of a professional journal, am a member of several professional honorary societies, have been a leader within a major professional society, and have received numerous awards for my accomplishments. I received a BS in electrical engineering from Carnegie Mellon University as a Westinghouse Scholar and an MSE from the University of Pennsylvania as a Ford Foundation Fellow.

#### **Q. Where can more information be found about you?**

**A.** The most detailed biographical information can be found in my full LinkedIn listing and in my *Who's Who in America* listing. I have been listed in *Who's Who in America* for over 25 years! My website, [www.tompyke.com](http://www.tompyke.com), also has useful information about me.