

# tales from the darkside

Hello, my name is Mike and I'm a technophile.

**THE ADDICTION:** I blame the media. Not CNN, FOX, MTV or even NPR — I can't even put the onus on anything that wide-reaching. My media scapegoat is DC Comics. Yes, the reason I adorn my iPod with little white attachments that allow it to do anything but play music; the reason my cell phone is the first thing I use to email someone and the last thing I use to talk to anyone is because of Batman. The way he ruled Gotham with nothing more than an arsenal of personalized grappling hooks, tracing mechanisms and mini-boomerangs gave me an early case of Superhero Utility Belt Envy (otherwise known as SUBE) that I've never been able to kick. I know I'm not the only one, though. Take the test: If you even know what the word *Bluetooth* means, or if the amount of adapters in your shoulder bag exceeds the amount of fingers on your hand, then you and I should probably start a 12-step support group.

Technology makers knew we were out there, too. Why else would JVC dare make a camcorder (with 4 GB of memory, and a 5-megapixel resolution) smaller than a can of Red Bull? Why else would a company like YES feel the need to make a watch that automatically adjusts to daylight savings time, and not only keeps track of the waxing and waning of the moon, but does it until the year 2100? Because they knew they could prey on us, that's why. They knew we were out there, inflicted with SUBE, hoping maybe one day, when our city faces a dire evil, that only we technophiles will rise to defeat the threat with our unstoppable array of MP3-playing Oakley Thumps, Nokia N-Gages, and MPEG4 portable video players (which are totally better than the clunkiness of portable DVD players, by the way).

Instead, Batman will again paint himself across America's media landscape this summer with the release of *Batman Begins*, saving the fair citizens of Gotham with cooler gadgets than I have the imagination for. And all I'll be able to do is sit back and watch it on TV like a sad pedestrian. (Except, of course, I'll be watching it from the beach, because my LCD television has wireless broadband capability.) **MIKE SCALISE**

**THE EXPERT SAYS:** According to Joel Johnson, creator of the internet blog Gizmodo, a tech addiction is the male version of fashion expression. Not only are these gadgets useful, but they can buy or collect as many as they like and never run the risk of being ostracized by their friends for trying to make a fashion statement. There is an entire culture around technology — it's always about the latest and greatest gizmos. It's a never-ending loop because as soon as you buy the gadget, the appeal wears off and the search is on for the next big thing.

**THE FORTUNE COOKIE LESSON TO BE LEARNED:** To avoid a pocket-sized gadget addiction, try buying pocketless pants.

**THE ZINK PRESCRIPTION:** Leave the Batman comics at the convention, and try picking up a style of literature without the words "To be continued. . ." in the final line. You might walk away with a new addiction to thoughtful conversation, though, so be careful.

