

John Leishman,  
Chief Executive  
Geek



## Geeks prefer flexibility

Callers to Calgary Geeks on the Way likely never think that their calls are being answered by a receptionist working out of her basement in Vancouver. Or that the technician who makes house-calls to cure computer problems works three 12 hour days, leaving him the rest of the week to audition for parts in local plays.

It's all part of Geeks' knack for accommodating its employees' Type I (for independent) personalities. Technicians log onto company's internal website, see what's available, and sign up for the work they want. In their 'non-Geek' time, technicians are free to take on private clients – a practice that few in the computer service industry allow.

Chief executive geek John Leishman can't compete with the bigger companies on salary. But, he says, they can't compete with him on flexibility. "One of my technicians, who was with

me since I started the company, left to take a position elsewhere. Sure, he received a 20 per cent increase in salary but it came with a 100 per cent reduction in autonomy," says Leishman. The technician lasted only a few months in the 9-to-5 lane before returning to Geeks on the Way.

Leishman admits he spends more on recruitment these days given Calgary's tight labour market. He introduces new benefits as cash flow allows like increasing annual vacation time from two to three weeks, purchasing equipment and furniture that is user-friendly and ergonomical, and optimizing scheduling to reduce the time spent driving between calls.

Leishman believes it's more about culture than cash. "We offer an atmosphere of openness and tolerance – it costs almost nothing and the returns are incredible."

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"Working at Geeks on the Way really fits my lifestyle. I prefer to spread my work out over the day and have some down time between clients to run errands or see friends. Having the freedom to set my own schedule is worth so much to me and I think that the quality of my work is higher because of it."

Lloyd Innes, Senior Technician

