BIOGRAPHY
and Personal History

Rich Allcorn

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Born in the small West Texas town of Coleman Texas, in November 1958, Richard Allcorn grew up in cattle country, and spent a great deal of his early childhood "cowboying" on their 675 acre ranch just outside of town. While he loved the outdoors, Rich in his younger years spent a great deal of time making things! He was different from the other boys his age. Like the time the neighbors wondered about a large 50ft tower he erected at their home in Ballinger Texas. It was out-fitted with what appeared to be a satellite dish, shortwave receiver, and a CB base station antenna, to name a few. His bedroom closet looked like a communication center for NORAD! But this was "the norm" for this young man, a true Jack-of-all-trades who loved to spend his past time building "things".

His bedroom had a large desk, with a chemistry set, a microscope, and all sorts of electronic "things" that he used to build "stuff". His younger brother Mike said that he could just about build anything he wanted to! "One time I remember he was building something that looked like a 'ray gun'! We'd call is a 'phaser' now. Anyway, as he finished it he pointed it at me! I'd seen him build some really strange stuff before that worked, so for all I knew this thing was functional! I jumped and dove for cover behind the bed! He just started laughing! But he was always building stuff like that!"

Richard now goes by "Rich", a nickname his closer friends always used to call him. Rich, joined the United States Air Force, after a year of college at Angelo State University, studying Computer Science, and there he continued to build things ... peculiar things, and with a sheet metal shop and electronic parts galore, what limits did he have? Once in the sheet metal shop he built an equipment rack to hold various forms of test equipment. It looked like a dash panel straight out of the movie "2010 – The Year We Make Contact". He had installed their shop radio's control panel as well, so they began to use it as the shop "communications console"! It has an oscilloscope, an RF generator, a UHF radio, and various other items used by his field as an "Avionic Communications Tech".

Once in preparation for a mobility deployment to Korea, he developed a device he called the "KFE-2311". It was shipped with all of the other gear mobilizing to South Korea, and when it arrived he took it to the large field tent where they were all assigned for quarters. When it was opened up, they were all surprised, and elated, to see that they now had the only "in-tent" under-cabinet coffee maker, complete with supplies! Now in the cold mornings they could wake up to the smell (and taste) of a fresh cup of coffee, without ever leaving the tent! They were also the only tent with "Telex" communications! He took a Tandy Model 100 notebook and using an acoustic modem coupler he was able to Telex back and forth with his wife back in the United States. This, at the time, was state-of-the-art technology!

Years went buy, and Rich's "tinkering" continued. His Suzuki Touring Bike looked like something right out of Battlestar Galactica, with scanning lights, switches, and on-board radar detector, CB, intercom, entertainment system, and control devices on both handlebars!

After leaving the military, Rich began a career in computers. As the pc was beginning to become popular, he took a liking to these devices, and spent a great deal of time working on his first, an Eagle 2000 running the CP/M operating system! Later he purchased the newly released Radio Shack Model 4P, a portable computer about the size of a portable sewing machine. It had a built-in 300 baud modem, and 2 floppy drives, and he learned just how far you could take something like this, utilizing the onboard JCL language, similar to mainframes of the day. By the time he was done, this computer was upgraded to a single floppy, a hard drive, a 1200-baud build-in modem, and a voice synthesizer so it could "speak"! He even had an external 9600-baud modem that sat on top when he wanted some real speed! This device prepared him for his first exposure to the UNIX operating system.

The company he was working for at the time used a CP/M system for their accounting, and it just wasn't working out. He persuaded them to replace it with Radio Shack's new Model 6000b, a Motorola 6000-based PC capable of running the first version of UNIX ever to run on a PC ... the Xenix operating system. With 2 Adds25 terminals, they had their first multi-user system for accounting! And Rich got to be the system admin! He used the Model 4P to "dial-in" when at home so he could check on things, and play with the system to learn more about this new Xenix (Unix) operating system, it's file system, emailing, etc.

As the years went by, Rich began work at Dell Computer Corporation. He first worked as a technical writer there, and later came onboard full-time in the Tech Support department. There he rapidly gained a reputation at being somewhat of an expert on modems, notebooks, and the mobile computing technology that was rapidly becoming popular. After working with Dell for almost 4 years, he decided to go it on his own and began consulting. He took on various jobs with Unix and Microsoft servers, and took a fancy to a new and emerging operating system called "Linux"! He worked with various temp agencies to find contracts, and began working a great deal with Tek Systems. He discovered that it didn't matter what the job was, he could do it – even if he'd never seen it before!

Somehow, he was able to just "jump in and learn it", with little or no training at all! For the next few years Rich made a good living at consulting through Tek Systems. They hired him on full-time as a consultant, and he took various assignments, fielded calls for new techs, and checked them out over the phone for the marketing reps. He even documented networks and server room equipment for companies, on a contact basis. Only when they had a contract he wanted that required he be 'available for hire' did he elect to cease being full-time, and He returned to contract status to take the assignment. It wasn't but a year later that the 9-1-1 incident occurred, and work after that for a consultant became very, very scarce.

For the next few years that followed, Rich worked as a Nextel Sales Manager, building a sales force of reps that stormed the area with Nextel phone devices. Later he got his Realtor's license and began selling real estate with RE/MAX. After a time, the consulting business began to pick back up, slowly, and he returned to his true area of expertise. Still having proved himself a "Jack-of-all-trades", he prefers the IT field of work and continues to pursue that area of contracting and employment.

Rich has a wide array of experience, ranging from the pc's and their operating systems from CP/M v2.2 to Dr. DOS, PC/DOS, and MS-DOS. Then he went on to Windows, Windows for Workgroups, Windows 95, 98, NT, XP, and beyond. He has worked with server operating systems from XENIX, UNIX, Linux, Solaris, and the various Windows server platforms to include NT BackOffice, Small Business Server, MS Proxy Server, Windows Professional Server, Advanced Professional, and Microsoft Exchange Server.

In the network fields he's worked with token ring, coax, IPX, NetBios, some packet protocols, and IP networks. He's worked extensively with Cisco routers, and with various hubs, switches, and firewall/router combo units. He's designed, documented, and managed forms of cable modem networks, DSL networks, ISDN networks, UUCP networks, dial-up networks, and various forms of LANs and WANs. He's also worked with WiFi, WWAN, and WAPS (wireless access points). Additionally he's worked with signal repeaters, relays, dial-up bridges, and ISDN bridges, as well as VPN networks.

In the hardware arenas, he's worked with pc equipment and components from building pc's from cabinet models, with power supplies, hard drives (ESDI, SCSI, IDE, SATA), floppy drives, ZIP drives, JAZZ drives, tape drives, and SCSI drive arrays. He's also worked with various audio systems, mic systems, webcams and video systems, and video teleconferencing, including the Polycom systems based on ISDN, IP, and T1 connectivity. He has also maintained tape backup systems, Solaris hardware, various multi-user terminals to include ADDS25, VT100's, WY60's, to name a few.

Rich is a "learn all I can" type of person, so if you don't see listed here what you're looking for, he's either also done it, about to do it, or will do it some time soon! It's just a matter of getting the opportunity ...

He maintains a working website for technical reference to allow the curious to obtain access to his resume, bio, references, etc. and the variety of his job experience, right there from his site he calls the "IT Guy" site, at: http://www.richallcorn.com/ITguy

For additional information, please refer to the following websites:

His personal IT website: http://www.richallcorn.com/ITguy
A new consortium he's put together for IT folks: http://www.itnetworking.info
LinkedIN profile: http://www.linkedin.com/in/richardallcorn
His mobile computing blog: http://imgoingmobile.blogspot.com
His Houston Examiner column : http://www.examiner.com/x-19515-Austin-Mobile-Computing-Examiner