From the TechnoManor

I feel like drawing this week.

In articles about technology (including mine), you probably see words like *megabytes*, *megapixels*, *gigabits*, and so on. Usually after the 2nd word, your eyes glaze over (or you skip the article altogether).

I'd like to wave a wand and make that technobabble go away, but ya need to know about it. So let's see if some pictures help. Let me introduce “Dave's Anti-TechnoBabble Table”.

Most technobabble words are actually broken into 2 parts:

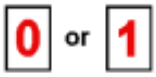
the size *the thingy*

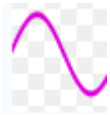
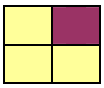
Like

kilobyte

Here, *kilo* is the size (as in, how big is this thingy), and *byte* is the thingy.

So, my Anti-TechnoBabble Table will show you the sizes and the thingys.

Dave's Anti-TechnoBabble Table		
Sizes	***Looks like***	***What it Means***
Nothing at all		No need to multiply the thingy.
Kilo		1024 x the thingy Abbreviated: k or K
Mega		1024 x 1024 x the thingy Abbreviated: m or M
Giga		1024 x 1024 x 1024 x the thingy Abbreviated: g or G
Tera		1024 x 1024 x 1024 x 1024 x the thingy Abbreviated: T
Thingys	***Looks like***	***What it Means***
bit		Basic piece of information. Can only be a zero or one. Abbreviated: b (lowercase)
byte		Basic unit of storage. Composed of 8 bits. One byte can represent a number, letter, computer instruction, or anything a designer

		intends. Abbreviated: B (uppercase)
hertz		A count of the master clock pulses driving the CPU. With each pulse, the CPU does something. Traditionally, this count represented the "speed" of a CPU. The higher the number, the faster the CPU, and the faster the overall computer. Can also mean the pulse rate of a radio signal. This is useful in wireless networks (Wi-Fi). Abbreviated: Hz
pixel		Smallest identifiable picture element. Photos, computer screens, and other visual devices aggregate pixels to present you with an image.

<u>Here are some examples.</u>

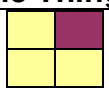
Let's say your computer only has 512 megabytes of memory, but you really need 1 gigabyte. Here's a way to visualize this:

	How Many	The Size	The Thingy
512 megabytes (MB) =	512 **X**	 **X**	
1 gigabyte (GB) =	1 **X**	 **X**	

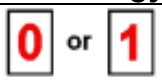
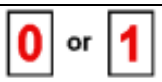
You're trying to decide between an 80 GB hard drive and a 200 GB hard drive:

	How Many	The Size	The Thingy
80 gigabyte (GB) **=**	80 **X**	 **X**	
200 gigabyte (GB) **=**	200 **X**	 **X**	

Your digital camera shoots pictures with a resolution of 4 megapixels:

	How Many	The Size	The Thingy
4 megapixels **=**	4 **X**	 **X**	

You get a flier from Verizon, offering you their 10 Mbit/s FIOS Internet service. This means 10 megabits per second. You currently have Verizon's DSL service giving you 3 Mbit/s. (These are download speeds into your computer.) This would look like:

	How Many	The Size	The Thingy
10 megabit (Mbit) =	10 **X**	 **X**	
3 megabit (Mbit) =	3 **X**	 **X**	

So, the next time you see technobabble, take a deep breath, pull out this table, and look up the words. Then you'll have a mental picture of the technobabble. Hopefully, that picture will help you make a better choice in dealing with the babble.

I gotta hurry up and finish this article. My greyhounds are starting to stir. You can help ease my creative agony by dropping me a technical question at:

frenchygrey@gmail.com

I'll answer one question each week in *The Link*.

Dave Gillen