YOU know the problem with technology today? It's everywhere. Now at this point, some of you may be thinking: hang on a minute, Defrag. Did you order a latte with extra weird thoughts this morning or something? You, as a writer of ill-repute on a national newspaper's technology section, have always been more of a champion of technology, and yet today you sound like a grizzled old Luddite.

To which we say: hey, if we wanted to sound like a grizzled old Luddite, we'd use more expressions such as "new-fangled", "by gum" and "consarn it".

But don't be so hasty as to conclude that our opening statement was a dis against technology itself. We are still the sort of person who would email the person sitting right across from us, and we insist on taking our mobile on holidays, even to countries where global roaming is unavailable.

The problem is that now everybody is into technology, it's getting harder to achieve gadget chic.

There was a time when people would be impressed if you mentioned in passing that you knew how to write a program in Pascal that would enable the computer to draw a square in asterisks.

They'd look at you a little blankly because they had absolutely no idea what you were talking about, but they'd also be impressed because they'd seen the Matthew Broderick movie, WarGames and assumed just because you were a bit nifty with a 5.25in floppy, you were also capable of launching a nuclear attack.

These days, every man and his dog, as well as the man's lady friend who he is not yet comfortable describing as his "girlfriend" has a computer. These are computers that actually do fun and useful things, so a pointless asterisks
square just doesn't cut the mustard, the chutney or, indeed, any of your more popular condiments.

Once, owning a laptop was considered amazingly hi-tech, even though it weighed more than a Mini Minor and any actual placing of said item on your lap would result in permanent paralysis from the waist down. These days, waiters use a Palm to take your order in cafes.

Don't get Defrag wrong. We are pleased to know technology has been democratised and is enriching the lives of all stratas of society. It's just that we really enjoy showing off from time to time.

That's not something we'll be able to do in the near future — not unless Defrag can think of a really good reason to sue a multinational corporation, such as Columbia TriStar for the pain and mental anguish that resulted from watching the movie Gigli.

The future of impressive technology is going to take bucks, and lots of them — preferably the ones featuring a picture of Dame Nellie Melba.

According to The New York Times, Sony is about to launch a premium brand, called Qualia. As Defrag understands it, Qualia is Latin for "insists on spending buttloads of money on items that could be purchased a lot cheaper, just for the joy of demonstrating that you are so rich you don't give a rats".

Of course, we should make it clear that by the time Defrag got to Catholic school, they had stopped teaching Latin as a core subject.

The first Qualia items off the (presumably) fur-lined platinum-plated conveyer belt include a $US3900 ($5295) digital camera, a $US15,000 stereo system, a $US12,000 television and a $30,000 home-theatre projector.

Sony is also planning on opening an appointment-only showroom in New York.
"We want to create that feeling of awe, of being inspired," Ella Glassman, a designer for the company, told The Times. "We want that emotional feeling you get looking over an incredible vista or looking closely at a leaf. We want someone to feel the same way holding the Qualia 016 camera."

Which just goes to show that a large proportion of Qualia's R&D budget is spent on marijuana.

In that spirit, Defrag Industries Inc has recently launched its premium brand, Crapola. So far our offerings only include a square generated using asterisks, but rest assured, it's really, really expensive.