Who is Nathan?

Nathan is a creative, stunning, professional, determined, motivated, challenged, passionate, and focused individual who focuses on becoming the impossible in web design and other passionate fields he enjoys. This biography is only but a glimpse of who he really is. Back in the day, which was about around 1998, He began his growth as a young, talented, individual in computers. He has always loved computers to the point of sleeping with them (not in an awkward way...:P). He joined a magnet-middle-school when He was in seventh grade. Excelling was what He did the most. He then got into high school where he joined a beautiful program called the Design and Technology Academy or DATA. This high school was no ordinary high school. In fact, it housed some of the most brilliant individuals in Texas. Yes that is right! He is in the beautiful state of Texas. Proud of it! Anyways, You could say that DATA was like Eureka, a popular Science Fiction series on SYFY, to which he enjoys more than any other channel on the television tubes. A society of teenage-dreamers who wanted to shape and build the world to their liking while receiving the best benefits. He then graduated, after 4 years, and went off to discover and build the new world.**.**

Hi! I am Nathan, the creator and founder (President and Head Webmaster) of Nat4an.com. I am interested in a wide variety of topics and notions. Some of which are computers (such as Web Design, Programming, Gaming, Music, and Video), sports (such as golf, tennis, and racquetball), and lifestyle (such as living life, taking photos of the beauty of creation, and spending time with friends and family because they are all you can take from this world).

My life has been pretty straight forward with many winding twists and turns that any normal life would have. There is nothing normal about my life. Let's see, I was born and raised in the San Antonio, TX area, can’t remember what hospital but what can I say? I was very young to the point that I was this sentient being who came from a place of perfection into a broken world, I was more worried about the feeling than about where I was. I was raised in a Christian home and pretty much forced to go to church (not entirely) all my life. I LOVE to code! I first took on coding when I got my first ever computer at the age of 12. It was an old Pentium Computer Chip-set, you know the really big white one, and I went berserk with it. I took it apart and put it back together more times than I could count on my fingers (at that age). Wait a minute, I remember way back, my grandfather built me this big white box (made out of wood...as if boxes were made out of stone) that had all sorts of lights, switches, buttons, a radio, and circuits. Oh man! That was the best toy I had ever received at the time, especially for a young boy. It lasted for a good 6 years. I was about four or five when he made it. That being said, from then on I believed I always attracted a knack for messing with computers, building them, and learning from them in a very orderly way. Then of course back to the basics., I got another computer when I was a freshman in high school. An eMachine computer (for free). My neighbor was throwing it out. I learned DOS on it. DOS is a specific command-based version of the popular Microsoft Windows that allows you to have a computer in pure command-based form. In DATA my first class, as a freshman, was Intro to Design and Computers or something like that (shows how long it has been since I have been in high school). I earned an achievement in that class (Best Achievement in Design Technology, 2005). The story to that is one day I was in another class doing some work, I believe it was English, when the teacher of the design class came to me and gave me the certificate and told me well done. I quickly became a level 12 Flunky in that class. Sophomore year hit like a ton of bricks and I started to dive into code with OOP (otherwise known as Object Oriented Programming) languages such as C++. Then junior year hit and I got into more graphical languages like Java. Java is used to run about a billion devices now a days such as your phone, microwave, car stereo, room surround sound, watch, and more. And then as a Senior I worked on more advanced languages like PHP (PreHypertext Programming or Markup depending on what the web calls it) and CSS (Cascading StyleSheets), UX (User Experience – the look and feel of interfaces and websites), building websites, and making some cool stuff (like video with Final Cut Pro, but that's not code - so I won't go into that). Coding has been apart of me all my life and I continue to use it as I grow. I believe that coding is going to be something that I will ultimately use to build the human race 2.0 (ha...I like dreaming).

What do I think about the web? I think that is a good question for every web designer to answer. I think the web can be both an enhancement and a determinant to society. In one way a web page or something on the web can help someone, such as a web search for "how to feed a gold fish" can help someone learn how to feed their gold fish. Now on the other hand it can be a determinant because you can say something to someone or about someone and mean it one way and they could take it the another way which could mess up friendships and relationships. People tend to communicate more on the web than they do in real life to the point that they have lost the art of communication. It use to be that you would have asked, back in the late 90s, "do I need a website?". Now you don't even think twice about not having a website. What the web really is, to me that is, is it is an old fashion catalog but digitized in a sense that everything is compressed together to form a back-ended, connected system, that anyone can use to look through. Hmm...that really flowed well.

In my experience, I have always taken the tough route (it seems like). I am a strong believer in the fact that people make "split decisions" based on the "one-two-point". What I mean is people seem to (even me) make decisions based on the moment they do something. For example, if I get in trouble at work for something I would make a decision based on that to quit my job. Those kind of "split decisions" can get someone into trouble and might even make their journey a bit tougher. If I would have (hypothetically) quit my job, I would have kicked myself because I wouldn't have a job and I would be up a creek without a paddle. When it came down to writing this biography, I had to think about a few things: “What best describes me” and “How can I show the world who I am”. Based on those two "questions", I am writing this biography about myself, my achievements, goals, and life-worthy topics. I believe that the best thing that would describe me is abstract. I like to be creative and make things (whether it is a cool world in Minecraft or making my own CMS with my own named variables and cool functions). How can I show the world who I am? Yikes...that is a tough one. I am going to have to think about that one while you read the rest of this sentence.   
  
 Back to the part about the big white box that had all the lights, sounds, buttons, knobs, and switches on it - for a long time I deeply thought about how I should go about making and designing my portfolio, which can be found at nat4an.com, my own little slice of the web. How should I draw it out? What bests describes me, or my life? Is there a single instance of something that would best fit me? Those questions came to mind when building the website. Then it hit me, like a ton of bricks, I thought about how that big white tech box object that made me so happy (the one I mentioned earlier) and how my whole life has revolved around tech things so much that I knew, I just had to, build and design my website (my portfolio) with buttons, knobs, switches, and all kinds of things. Make it a tech theme, make it fresh, crisp, have perspective, and best of all - make it me. After all, it isn't just a web portfolio; it is my life. The same thing could go about my biography about my life. Don't just take the easy road or the simple route; Be creative, do something different, and find what you are passionate about and own it. This white box also served it's purpose of holding some materialistic value to me in life. I believe that white is clean and a way to setup a minimalist feel on either a website or in a room or even in life. So the fact that the box was white really set up a standard of what I would like in things to come.

I am also an avid fan of Doctor Who. What is Doctor Who? Or a better question would be “Doctor Who?” since that is the entire recollection of the series. Doctor who is a science fiction based, British infested show about a guy, nay a sentient being whom travels the world, solar system, galaxy, universe, throughout time and space in a blue police box looking spacecraft. Doctor Who has existed since the dawn of time, or at least since 1960s and continues to evolve with every passing season. The popular thing about Doctor Who is there is this man called “The Doctor” or “Doctor” who travels with a companion or companions. He carries this thing called “The Sonic Screwdriver” which can pretty much do anything from unlocking doors to messing with electronic equipment. The only two things it can't do is: wound people and do anything with wood. That being said Doctor Who isn't the only science fiction series I watch and come to love, I also enjoy other science fiction series such as Eureka and Battlestar Galactica. My favorite of all of these has got to be Battlestar Galactica or BSG as some of us “trekkies” call it. BSG portrays, fictionally of course, 200,000 years before this world existed twelve colonies of a powerful fictional god named Kobol. Long story short, this society (or societies) existed in harmony and perfection until they created something that in turn made them out to be gods and goddesses and ended up destroying them to which they required new settlement. BSG carried a popular belief of “this has happened before and this will happen again” at least until the cycle was broken and of course it was broken when they settled on this planet. They call us the “final chapter in humanity” because they believe that dark times are among us. Most of BSG follows some sort of Hindu belief system (?).

From the very beginning, I was born on November 28 in the year of 1990 to a Mr. And Mrs. Jeff and Malesa Smyth. My middle name is William to whom I was named after my grandfather. The story of how my name came to be will be coming up right after I tell you the story of how my middle name came to be. When I came home from the hospital, or where ever else children who are young of age come home from when they are born, the week or so after my grandfather got wind of my middle name being named after him. He wasn't too thrilled, but eventually he warmed up to the idea. Now he is very proud of his name being in his grandson's name.

The story of my name comes from earlier on when my dad was struggling with his life at the age of I believe late 20s to middle 30s, he kept asking himself and God what was going on. He had several girlfriends and relationships, not at the same time, and they would always end in disaster and or not go in any deeper than what he wanted. Finally he decided that, and I quote this from him directly, not that I there, “God, if you want me to be single the rest of my life then give me the strength to do so and if you have somebody for me, please send me a sign. P.S. Please let there be someone for me”. Within about a month to maybe 6 months, he had broken up with his recent fiance and had gone over to his aunt's house where he saw a stunningly-beautiful, young women there living at his aunt's place due to certain circumstances. You see, unknowing to my father at that time, she had just gotten out of a terrible engagement with this one guy who was kind of abusive (verbally) (?) and well, was just a plain jerk. My father didn't think about that when he saw her and his aunt told him to stay away from her. He did and in turn got to know a little bit more about her each and every day. Then comes the really interesting part, when my dad was “seeing” her, he heard, I believe it was in a dream, God told him a name and that name was Nathan. So he immediately pondered this dream to see what relevant implications it might hold in his life. He then read on in scripture about Nathan (or Nathanael) the prophet and what my name meant. Long-story-short he ended up interpreting that dream into him using Nathan as my name. Pretty cool? You tell me. I get chills every time I think of it. In the end, he and this beautiful young flower, I say that only because she likes to garden, got married in 1984 and then lived happily ever after. Wait that sounds way to good to be real life and what happened to the part about me? Okay, fine. Soon after, they had their first child, a girl. To which Jeff, my father, thought – okay God you said I would have a son when you gave me his name, you didn't say what order. He ended up taking it as a blessing because two children is better than one. I came later, and the rest is history. Oh, more? Sure. Let's skip about 3 years or so to the good part, I was starting to do all the unique things that make up a young sapling. Wait did I really just say “sapling”? Oh well. Showing signs of intelligence, I remember using the white box, messing with the buttons and the phone that was on it. Playing with the lights on it. I was first introduced to the popular item for ages 3 to 999 – Legos. Oh man I had so much fun with those. I would build these cities with buildings, cars, people, and animals in them and pretend – that use the be a cool thing to do when I was little (pretend). I would pretend I was either an architect or a city manager and run the town. That was fun and thus brought me into somewhat of what I do now.

At the age of 5, I was able to attend kinder garden, to the fact I was actually in pre-kinder before that since I was so smart, at Alamo City Christian Academy. Another fact is this school does not exist anymore but the church that it resided in still does and you can visit it in San Antonio off of IH-35 and Rittiman. My kinder garden teacher liked me as a student and said i had more talents than I knew what to do with. I won't go into those since they are a little personal to me. I was involved in sports at this church/school when I was 6 to 9 to which my father was coach of mostly all of them – basketball, softball, and even soccer. When I was 10 to 12 I was involved in the churches preteen class to which again my father was in charge of along with his good friend Dominic Torres. In this group, I was then introduced by a friend named Skylar Moon, to Cybiko. Cybiko was a popular pre-mobile communication device that worked off of almost the same spectrum as a radio and could be used to send messages to another Cybiko. Truth is Cybiko did not last long since not many people had them and they were expensive. On the plus side, they had tons of features that would, although make the iPhone look like a futuristic gadget, came in handy and were pioneering technologies of everyday mobile devices now such as having a built in camera, touchscreen, and apps. Back to the story, Skylar and me would communicate over these Cybikos and soon became friends. Truth is now a days, I don't see him much anymore. In this preteen group I also was given the righteously deserved honor of being DJ for the group, playing music and all sorts. This led into me having a yearning for making music. During my 5th grade year, I met a best friend, Matthew Noland, who would pretend with me that we were in some sort of magical forest as knights. What 5th grader wouldn't do that and he stayed my friend for a little bit longer, at least until 7th grade when the school had to close down due to lack of funds from their overly-priced tuition. I then went to a public middle school named Kruger under a magnificent, magnet program. Try saying that five times as fast as you can. I learned, after being in a private (sheltered) school all my childhood, that there were other kids who were different than me - those who came from broken homes, those who put on a mask when they came to school. I eventually had fit in if it weren't for the gracious magnet program I was in. My English teacher in 7th grade was really friendly, nice, and funny. I believe I brought a laser to class and shown it at him to which he took it up and told me if I wanted it back I would have to have my parents come get it. Truth is it was my father's and I had “borrowed” it without permission and wasn't going to tell him. I never got it back. Long time after when I was older I eventually told him. Besides the usual getting into trouble stuff in middle school, I was a pretty good kid.

High school came like a thrown sack of potatoes and I was accepted into DATA (Design and Technology Academy) where I focused on harnessing my skills in computers. DATA had a unique structure to it: they believed that Physics should be taken as a freshman and Biology and Chemistry as a sophomore in a intertwined course. I liked this and quickly fell in love with Physics and Chemistry; Biology not so much but what can I say – I am a born, hard-pressed, programmer. As a junior I had more time to take fun and enriching classes like GOOP (Graphical Object-Oriented Programming) and Advanced Animation. There was where I learned what fun the computer can bring us. As a senior I became interested in Technical Theater – lighting, sound, and backdrop. I learned about the different kinds of Gobos and other lighting equipment as well as how to run a setup and what sound is the best for a room – this played into me mixing music later on. I did get in trouble once by the director of DATA, Mrs. Fitzsimon after I purposely cut one of my classes after lunch to go hang out with this one kid, Dillon, who stole my iPod Touch 2nd Generation (back when it was brand new) while it was charging in Technical Theater one time. The teacher asked everyone if they had it and to no avail did anyone. But I knew someone did have it. Later i found out from another friend Sapphire who told me that Dilon took it. I asked for him to repute (?) it but with him being of little finance, reason for him stealing it in the first place, and his parents not caring; he didn't and therefore got suspended for it and I believe went to Juvenile. Years later I found out that he was caught one time with a DUI or something and the police saw him with that on his record. He has since cleaned up a little bit by at least repaying indirectly. One day my father gets a call from the Police Department about a check for $200 that has been sitting there for a while from the same young man who stole my iPod Touch. The rest of the year went by fast, had a few girlfriends – one turned out to be a bit promiscuous and the other I don't talk to anymore. In other words, I was searching for myself. I graduated top 25% of my class with a 3.3 GPA, shows you how smart people in DATA were (about 200 graduates), to which the whole class size was about 600. After that, there was a Project Graduation event at a cool place with go karts, games, and bumper boats that went on all night. Most of which DATA graduates attended as the other 432+ went out partying and getting wasted. After that, the real fun began. I joined the ranks of one of the most prestigious community colleges in San Antonio. Yes, you guessed it – San Antonio College. My mother graduated from SAC with an RN (or at least Nursing) Degree and is now making about $50+ an hour full time. That was a side note. I met a girl, as a friend, named Stephanie my first week there who became my “friend with benefits”. Nah, not really but she was my friend whom I would study with. She has now gone off to another place to shape the world. She was one of the first people to like my music. I am still connected with her on Facebook, to which Facebook was starting its impact on society around this time. I didn't do so well in the first few years of college to the point that my GPA dropped low and I should have gone to the work force or military instead. And that my friend begins a whole new chapter in my life.

I began getting more into Networking when I joined a popular cable, phone, and internet company by the name of AT&T. I started out being a Tier 1 or Level 1 Technical Support Representative, promoted to Tier 2 or level 2, answering phone calls from people all around the US who had problems technically with picture not showing on their TV, initial setup, computer not working, internet not working, and a whole list of topics that if I were to list here would take up the rest of these pages. I learned the most important attribute there – focus. I am a character of ADD (Attention Deficit Dis...squirrel. Sorry, Disorder) and all throughout my childhood and even a bit now, I would have trouble focusing. On tests I would start off good then by the end lose focus. In college I started the first few weeks off and then lost interest and instead would work on some coding project. Here at this workplace I acquired the necessary ability to overcome this. I also learned how to not take anything personal. This was extremely easy to adapt to since you would basically have 10,000 people a day yelling at you and saying “AT&T sucks” and calling you names. In life, I believe everyone should learn this skill because it will help you focus on your goals and not worry about what others think of you and your work. I met my best friend Thomas Ibarra at AT&T who is, or back then was, exactly like me in every little way except when it came to focus. Where I was focused in little pinches of areas, he was focused only on one thing at a time and you could not get his attention no matter what, not even if there was a fire, he would still be doing what he was doing; IE. Multitasking vs. One-Track-Mind. This became a mutual benefit in our friendship because he is a coder just like me and we can bounce things off of each other; and the fact that if I had, or would have, a problem with a certain thing and I couldn't, or can't, find out how to fix it – I take it to him and he would focus on that and that alone until he gets it or busts trying to get it. About a year later, I quit the job I was at after an amazing mission trip to the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. That was an amazing trip and it opened my eyes to see some things about me, my life, and my purpose. I enjoyed spending time with the kids (we did a Vacation Bible School for the Navajo kids) to the point that two little kids: Ryshanna and Eli said I was their favorite. Even little Ryshanna told me that her father was in prison and I seemed like the only thing close to her as a fatherly figure which was, although sad, sweet of her to say that. This last summer in 2012, was the last trip that our group would go out of a 40-year-something mission trip because God said that we were done there so I, and most of the rest of the team, were quite depressed after the trip. Back to the job at AT&T, I quit my job because I was feeling burned out and just wanted to have fun, play games, and each Oreos – they are my favorite cookie. After the quitting of my job and after some time playing, I dove back into the code to work on an intense project of building my first ever CMS (Content Management System; basically Wordpress or Blogger type software) that would be for people who wanted to build a website but had little to no knowledge about building a website, the workings of SEO (Search Engine Optimization; Google-ized stuff), Spider-ability, and UX (User Experience; what you see and how you want things to look and feel). Still an ongoing project. With no job, bills to pay, and debt pilling up. I ran to the only place I could make money – The TWC (Texas Workforce Commission) who turned out to be more pain than gain. Still I was making $400 every two weeks to sit at home, work on websites, and eat Oreos. I did have to fill out applications for employment. That lasted until I got a job, where I currently work, at The Wedding Guide, one of Texas's best wedding companies in San Antonio and Austin Area as a Web Assistant; learning more commercial web information and using my talents. I said that this place was a great start to something new because it was not a call center firstly but the fact that I love working there as it feels entirely different in an entirely different space. In the wise words of [Prof. Hubert J. Farnsworth](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0921942/): “This is not a business. I always thought of it more as a cheap source of labor, like a family.” which is a sign that hangs in our office for all to see and to which I feel every single day, no matter how long I am there for, like is the case in the line of work I do. The rest of my life is to be made up as long as I am living and “after I'm gone, your Earth will be free to live out its miserable span of existence as one of my satellites" quoted by the famous Deadmau5, an artist of epic proportions, in other words I am only promised today so why worry about the implications of tomorrow when today is among us and when I am gone you will remember me. The last thing I would like you to take away from reading my biography is how this and me, fit into the grand scheme of things. I believe that one day I will be a renowned leader in modern technology and I would like to grow and shape things around me. The portfolio I mention in this biography serves its purpose of being a collection of the works of me and what I do. And this biography is reiterating what I am spelling out in my portfolio. Hopefully you will read this, if you aren't already reading this, and find yourself interested in getting to know me more which will cause you to want to check out my site and learn more about me. Now that you know all of which that makes the infamous me, if you want more from me then you can always check out my site at nat4an.com for up-to-the-minute info, news, and stories (whatever you want to call them) from me. Thanks for reading and I hope you have enjoyed learning who I am!

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