

All politics are personal. These days, most politics are purely partisan as well. Its a part of our culture that is becoming as American as apple pie.

Just as American in our culture is our rapid support of our sports teams.

In the blogosphere, it seems like everyone takes sides. The Political Right and Left, and obsessive sports fans all defend their turf by comment bombing any blogger, forum or response enabled website that presents a point of view contrary to theirs or challenges their team or its players.

On this blog, I know that when I take a position about anything even tangentially related to sports or politics, the comment bombs will come.

What I didn't expect was when I took a position regarding a company or its products that the comment bombs would be there. I'm a child of an era when teenagers distrusted anything from government or business and I still harbor some of the same viewpoints from then. So imagine my surprise when in writing about Google, Youtube, Apple and other corporate entities or their products, I got flooded by emails and comments disparaging me for my positions.

I didn't get in depth rebuttals to my position. Those are welcome and encouraged. Its one of the best parts of having a blog. I didn't get an analysis supporting a response. I got typical teenage feedback "You Suck, Google Rocks". "Youtube is the new Internet, you are old school Internet", "BitTorrent is amazing and you are not a geek" and things a lot more personal.

Such was my introduction to today's [fanboy](#).

Whatever happened to Counterculture being a positive attribute ? In today's fanboy culture, **kids are obsessively supporting products. They aren't "fighting the man", they "are the man". They are using their fanboy legions and their inherent purchasing power to persuade and dissuade anyone in their way.** This is from the Urban Dictionary Definition of [Fanboy](#):

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An arrogant person who goes into an outburst every time something he likes is questioned. Fanboys usually accuse others of being fanboys. Usually use [1337](#) and swarm MMORPGs. Fanboys caused alot of fallouts between people when they started arguing about consoles. If you insult something that a fanboy likes, he will spam your computer up and try to insult something that you like. Most words a fanboy uses are in [1337](#) or end with 'X0RZ' and they spell the word 'the' as 'teh' because they think that it is 'teh ro><0|2Z!!!' e.g. Counterstrike is teh rockxorz!

Fanboys usually use the word 'own3d' if they beat someone.

Another annoying feature of a fanboy is that if he is loyal to a console, he usually goes to rival console forums and spams the place up with inlets about how his console is 'better'.

They take the 'console war' very seriously, as if it's a real war.

*Sony Fanboy: omg n00b nintendo is teh suckx0rz becasue its games are for kids because they dont have 100% violence! etc. etc.*

*Nintendo Fanboy: STFU N00B NINTENDO |2O><0RS SONY, TAKE AWAY GTA AND YOU CAN'T SAY ANYTHING! NINTENDO ISN'T FOR KIDS BECAUSE NINTENDO HAVE BEEN GOING FOR 100 YEARS+ etc. etc.*

*XBOX Fanboy: STFU BOTH U N00BS! XBOX is owned by microsoft the richest company in the world, you both suck!*

*Neutral Fanboy: OMG I DIED ON COUNTERSTRIKE WHILE I WAS MACROING! I MUST HAVE BEEN HACKED! I'M REPORTING TO GAMEMASTER!*

*All fanboys: OMFG U WERE MACROING N00B IM TELLING GAMEMASTER!*

The marketing implications of all of this are fascinating. [Wired wrote](#) about what happens when fanboys turn against their product because it didn't live up to the purity of fanboy expectations, as happened with the Fantastic Four movie.

All marketers dream of having a fanboy base for their products. What is more textbook wonderful than passionate customers ? But like trying to create a video that takes off and becomes viral via Word of Mouth, fanboys happen in spite of marketers, not because of them.

The challenge for marketers everywhere is to determine the depth of any fanboy following, how to support it and what the implications are if you don't match their expectations. Gaming companies have Fanboy advisory groups, I don't know of any companies outside the gaming world, and certainly not outside the technology world that do.

Every marketer, particularly in the technology space has to know what fanboys are saying for or against their products. They must recognize that they can be as harmful when "bombing" customers of competitors' products as they are helpful when buying and supporting theirs. Corporate decisions must be made with Fanboys and their impact in mind. Bizzare in so many ways, yet true.

Corporate bloggers have to recognize the fanboy balance as it relates to their company and products. Say the wrong thing and your comments are filled with hate. Turn off your comments to prevent it and you are accused of being bullied by fanboys. "CEO Blogger fears Fanboys" is not the headline you want across the net.

Fanboys are the opposite of the hipsters of 30 years ago in attitude, but I wouldnt be surprised if they are equal in their influence on entertainment and cultural choices of their followers.

I wonder who the Andy Warhol of Fanboys is ?