



Pawn is a big fan of edge development and reportage. In the spirit of *Babylon By Bus*, in which Ray LeMoine and Jeff Neumann chronicle their experience trying to help Iraqi NGOs in the hectic year after “Major Combat Operations” ended, Jon Evans here profiles Ryan Lackey and his efforts to build an ISP in Iraq.

Ryan Lackey wears body armor to business meetings. He flies armed helicopters to client sites. He has a cash flow problem: he is paid in hundred-dollar bills, sometimes shrink-wrapped bricks of them, and flowing this money into a bank is difficult. He even calls some of his company’s transactions “drug deals” — but what Lackey sells is Internet access. From his trailer on Logistics Staging Area Anaconda, a colossal US Army base fifty miles north of Baghdad, Lackey runs Blue Iraq, surely the most surreal ISP on the planet. He is 26 years old.

[Blood, Bullets, Bombs and Bandwidth](#)