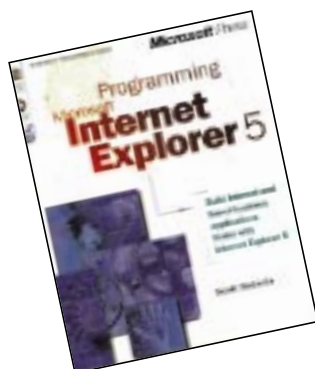




BOOKS

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■ PRICE £32.99 ■ FORMAT Book/CD
 ■ PUBLISHER Microsoft Press
 ■ ISBN 0-7356-0781-8
 ■ WWW www.mspress.microsoft.com

PROGRAMMING MICROSOFT INTERNET EXPLORER 5

Programming Microsoft Internet Explorer 5 is an excellent book in most respects, and it is currently available at significantly lower than its cover price of £46.99. This useful volume is a little short of graphical information (more screenshots would be helpful) but this is compensated for by brilliant examples and lots of appropriate HTML and other scripting source material.

The author never talks down to you and always seems to anticipate the questions you would ask in a classroom. His style is friendly and informative and he never lapses into the complicated technical textbook jargon that so often permeates this type of book. It is excellent as a tutorial but, if that is its main interest to you, we would suggest you have a glance at a copy before committing to it: it is not overly complicated, but it does assume a fair acquaintance with many PC, programming and Windows terminology.

It is a book full of the personal experience of programming for the Internet with Microsoft's familiar browser as a primary tool and, where it was a bit of an oddity in the past, it has come of age with Internet Explorer 5. This is not only a user and platform for Internet programming, but a full development environment itself.

It is the one book you will need to build Web pages featuring Dynamic HTML, and develop HTML applications (called HTAs) themselves.

There is an excellent, clear but succinct introduction to the study of the DHTML object, both from the viewpoint of Internet Explorer 5 and Visual Basic. Though it does not pretend to be a reference book, it serves in that capacity admirably.

Wilf Hey

PC Plus — 9/10

■ PRICE £26.95 ■ FORMAT Book
 ■ PUBLISHER Addison-Wesley
 ■ ISBN 0-201-33140-3
 ■ WWW www.awlonline.com

SOFTWARE TEST AUTOMATION

Software Test Automation is an unusual book, comprehensive and authoritative and yet wide in its scope. It deals with the history, development and practical usefulness of various automatic testing methods, both of systems and of individual programs. Written by two partners in a software testing consultancy, this book looks deeply into the whole subject of automated testing, explodes a few first impressions of what constitutes automated testing and whittles a novice tester's expectations down to size.

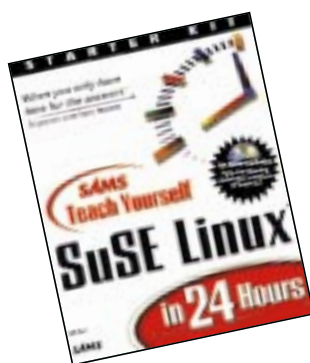
The book is strong in case histories and model examples, both of tragic failures and eminent successes. As you study these examples you will certainly gain confidence in the authors and value the advice provided.

There are peculiarities about the contents of the book: it is almost as if most of the chapters were written as independent pieces, as articles in a journal or lectures in a course. This is helpful if you wish to concentrate on one or two particular

issues, but it is disconcerting at times to find that you are suddenly reading about facts and methods you already knew, but from a slightly different angle. The chief indication of this is that such chapters end with a copyright notice.

This book is not designed for a general computer audience, but one that has decision making authority within a company or project. But that said, it still provides much interest for anybody interested in the whole matter of software testing – especially in the plentiful sections headed Lessons Learnt that pepper the text. Be warned, though: it becomes a very technical read at some points and, when you have finished reading it through, you are likely to find that there are earlier chapters which will beckon you with a view to reappraisal.

Wilf Hey

PC Plus — 7/10

■ PRICE £17.99 ■ FORMAT Book/CD
 ■ PUBLISHER SAMS ■ AUTHOR Bill Ball
 ■ ISBN 0-672-31843-1
 ■ WWW www.mcp.com/publishers/sams/catalog/

TEACH YOURSELF SUSE LINUX IN 24 HOURS

All us PC programmers thought that UNIX had all but expired. And then rather suddenly it has re-emerged in the cloak of Linux – the open source operating system championed by those who want to strike a blow for nonconformity. Linux is 'copyleft' software: in some ways the opposite of copyright because you are invited to use it free of charge. This easy-going, yet informative, tutorial includes S.u.S.E Linux on CD-ROM and gives you, in its first few one-hour sessions, a good guide to installing Linux on your PC.

Over the years, SAMS has introduced many books in the Teach Yourself... in 24 Hours format, and it has almost always been of outstanding value. However, in this instance all involved – particular the well-known author, Bill Ball – have excelled themselves. This tutorial is not only easy and practical, it is delightful, compelling and fun. The structure of each session is familiar (teaching, discussion, step-through

exercise, question and answer, exercises) but seems fresher and more relevant than ever.

The thrill of first using 'emacs' – or rather 'jove' as the S.u.S.E Linux version is called – the world's most popular text editor, is communicated vividly in hour 14. The whole book conveys a spirited approach to programming and system operation – and a virtual love-affair with Linux.

Practical projects in this well-illustrated book include system management and scheduling, hooking up successfully to your printer and getting on to the Internet.

In the appendix there are some valuable Web links to special interest groups for the more than six million Linux users the world over.

Wilf Hey

PC Plus — 10/10