

[PDF] Foundation Actionscript

Sham Bhangal - pdf download free book

Books Details:

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Description:

One of the best tutorials available for designers and nonprogrammers, *Foundation ActionScript* is perhaps one of *the* finest introductory programming books ever written--but programmers and Flash experts will be bored stiff by the baby-step teaching methods this book exhibits.

The book assumes the you have no knowledge of programming concepts going in, and introduces the basics using simple, real-world examples to show you that programming is nothing more than breaking down what you want to do into the smallest elements. Author Sham Bhangal takes the example of making tea and sections it out into its composite elements. Then, he writes a pseudoprogram that makes tea, using very clear, accessible, and, above all, comforting language. If you've always been nervous about the seemingly scary idea of "programming," then *Foundation ActionScript* will reassure you.

Bhangal then brings this idea of simplicity into ActionScript programming, at first showing you how

to accomplish simple tasks--like stopping a ball from zipping across the screen--and then gradually turning up the heat as he begins to probe ActionScript's more advanced functions.

The key word here is "gradually," since fundamental programming ideas like variables aren't even mentioned until chapter 6. This gradual process works marvelously in some ways, since Bhangal goes over each topic so thoroughly and exhaustively that you never lose track of what you're learning--and the repetitiveness pays off not only in spades, but also in hearts, clubs, and diamonds.

Suffice it to say that when I started to write this review, I originally said that the book didn't really do anything all that complex because the most complex project was a full-fledged *Space Invaders*-style game, complete with object-oriented programming, sprite manipulation, and reusable code. Only in retrospect did it occur to me that this involved some fairly heavy-duty tweaking for a beginner--but *Foundation ActionScript* makes it all seem so easy that programming a video game, albeit a simple one, seemed a trivial thing to do.

Still, there are some definite problems. For one thing, if you *are* a programmer or understand these concepts, the glacial pace at which the book retreads familiar (to you, at least) ground will be maddening. For another thing, it's very nice to program video games, but one of the things that this book lacks is examples from real-world Web pages. A lot of the examples *can* be used in real Web sites, but there are also a lot of throwaway examples that are simply used as teaching tools--things like little games, the inputting of passwords, overly-simple bouncing ball loops, and so on. Although this focus provides a lot of basic programming skills, it doesn't really give designers the methodology they need to translate grand topics into simple mathematics. It might have been nice for the book to take some really cool effects from live sites and then deconstruct them to show you how they work, thus giving you the tools you need.

But if you're a novice, there really is nothing better available to teach you Flash scripting and what you use it for. It's easy, it's informative, and it's even a darn fun read--by computer book standards, that is. Highly recommended. --*William Steinmetz*

Review You'll be amazed at the Flash you'll be producing after reading this book. I can't recommend it highly enough! -- www.pixelsurgeon.com

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