Understanding Networked Applications: A First Course (The Morgan Kaufmann Series in Networking)

David G. Messerschmitt

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Designed for use in undergraduate and graduate courses in Information/Library Science, Telecom, Business, Engineering and Medical Infomatics programs, this textbook offers nonexperts an accessible, thoughtful introduction to the applications and infrastructure in networked computing, providing information to make the right technological and organizational decisions in working with developers to design or acquire effective computing solutions.

Understanding the rich conjunction of networking and computing is essential for anyone involved in the formulation and implementation of new application ideas, whether in business, education, or government. Most non-computer science students entering the IT profession today have not been adequately prepared to work with, let alone take advantage of the computing infrastructures they'll encounter in the real world. The only courses that currently discuss aspects of this environment in any detail are in Computer Science departments, and are at a level that is considerably too advanced for their needs and backgrounds. And these courses are not likely to cover the economic, societal, and governmental issues that are also important for them to understand.

This is probably the first book in computing that takes a top-down approach, starting with applications. The focus is on explaining core concepts and terminology, getting into technical detail only where necessary. Example and analogies from everyday life help students to better understand concepts such as object-oriented programming, data mining, encryption, firewalls, etc. which might otherwise seem intimidating. Peppered throughout are sidebars that contain anecdotes, more detailed explanations, and additional examples that give students a refreshing break from the running text.

* Takes a functional, top-down approach, moving from application opportunities to a forward-looking view of the possibilities and limitations of networking and computing technologies.
* Uses plain English to explain important networked computing terminology and concepts, such as security, middleware, and electronic payments.
* Offers frank and enlightening discussions of general application categories, hardware and software infrastructure, up-and-coming communication technologies, and policy issues--social, economic, and governmental--affecting the future of networked computing.

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