

Bauersfeld first outlines approaches to user studies emphasizing the primacy of this step to the overall design and success of the project. This includes observation techniques, interviewing, task analysis, expert interviews and more. Chapters 4 through 6 focus on the various stages of the design process from off-line design work to prototyping. Chapter 7 discusses evaluation methods and Chapter 8 creates a synthesis of the prior stages to advance the quality of the design.

It is not the type of book which one would pick up and read from cover to cover. Not all the information would be fruitful for everyone who used it but it could be a very useful reference guide for the design process in software development. It is also not a technical manual, theoretical position or manifesto of any kind. I would recommend the book as a very useful departure for someone embarking on the design of a software product, but also for the instructional design of material in any media. It is practical with a very hands-on approach. It is uncomplicated without being simplistic. And of course its most redeeming quality is the emphasis on discerning the needs and desires of the end user as being *apriori* to any design.

REVIEWER

Dan Fontaine-O'Connell is a founder of CommonGround Communications, an educational communications firm based in Montreal and a Ph.D. student in Educational Technology at Concordia University.

Utilizing Multimedia ToolBook 3.0, Tom L. Hall. Massachusetts: Boyd & Fraser Publishing Company, 1996. ISBN 0-7895-003 1-0.

Reviewed by Brian D. Kerr

“Why re-invent the wheel?” is an expression that you have probably heard. Well, I say, “Go for it - especially if you can make it better!” That’s exactly what Tom L. Hall has done with his book entitled *Utilizing Multimedia ToolBook 3.0*. He has developed a book that really makes it easy to get to know the ToolBook 3.0 program.

I have spent the past year struggling to master the software known as ToolBook 3.0 - this is an authoring package. As you know, User Manuals are not always easy to interpret and they can also be quite intimidating. So, over this yearlong period a great deal of information was gathered through trial and error, late-night telephone calls and lunch-time meetings with other users, on-line searches, and of course Internet news groups. I did everything short of the Vulcan “mind-meld” to figure this program out! Now, one year later, I spend two nights sitting in front of my computer with this book and it’s all there in black and white

(sometimes purple) - with pictures too! If only I had received Tom Hall's book one year ago...

The book, *Utilizing Multimedia ToolBook 3.0* provides a basic introduction to multimedia and obviously, the newly released Multimedia ToolBook 3.0. Descriptions are also provided of several other commercial multimedia products. I believe that Hall's book will suit any computer user's background, regardless of whether that person is a first-timer, or a real computer "geek". Hall has even included an appendix consisting of instructions to aid those who need a quick lesson on using Microsoft Windows 3.1.

Even though this book was designed to be a textbook, I would consider it to be the best reference book that I have seen for both ToolBook 3.0 and Multimedia ToolBook 3.0. *Utilizing Multimedia ToolBook 3.0* is very versatile. It is clearly written and includes hands-on lessons to introduce many of the software's specific features. As stated by Hall in the Preface, "A primary purpose was to provide as many examples of the software's use and as many illustrations as possible." The book is divided into five parts which, according to Hall, "...provides maximum flexibility to satisfy the needs of beginning and intermediate users."

The first three chapters review multimedia. These chapters on their own provide an interesting and informative overview of the concept of multimedia. Chapters 1 and 2 help provide background to the novice user, but may also fill any gaps within the knowledge base of veteran multimedia users. Definitions abound and Hall attempts to create a familiarity with many up-to-date multimedia tools and equipment. Once you reach Chapter 3, you embark on a journey. You are taken step by step from the construction of a basic application with only one or two pages and only a few objects to lessons that involve heavy user interactivity with the addition of animation, graphics, audio, and video multimedia components. As Hall describes it:

"First, you are introduced to the structure of Multimedia ToolBook 3.0 and the fundamental building blocks of an application. Next, you are given a survey of the important commands to manipulate objects and determine their properties. The lessons then build applications using specific objects and commands. The final lessons add the different multimedia components."

And, as it is in textbook format, each chapter begins with an overview and ends with a summary complete with review questions.

Finally, if all that I have mentioned is not enough to make you run out and buy this book, there's more - a CD-ROM is included. The CD-ROM is loaded with all the tricks and examples you will need to perform tasks asked of you throughout the book. It contains all completed lessons from the textbook, sample ToolBook templates and applications, various media files, a number of sample runtime files for the Multimedia ToolBook 3.0 program, and even several shareware programs

including Paint Shop Pro 2.0. Wait, there is still more! The CD-ROM also contains a course syllabus as a guide for setting up a multimedia course devoted to the Multimedia ToolBook 3.0 authoring system. This syllabus includes a list of topics covered with each chapter along with suggested activities, as well as some scheduling ideas.

All in all, I have no hesitation in recommending this book to any ToolBook user. I am sure it will save a great deal of time and anguish, and will ensure a better end-product. I will conclude with some ToolBook script for you to ponder:

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to handle end
if finished reading
go next Page
else
go to "start"
end if
end
```

REVIEWER

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