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Apple Training Series: AppleScript 1-2-3



Synopsis

We know what you're thinking. You've heard about AppleScript. You've heard that it can do amazing things. You've heard that it can automate away the tiring, redundant, repetitive tasks you do with the computer. All true. But you're not sure about what's involved with using it. Is it difficult? Is it programming? After all, you're just a better-than average computer user. You know what you know, and your expertise serves you pretty well. But recently you've reached the point of asking yourself "Is there a better way?" The answer is "Yes." And relax, you just got lucky. This book is for you. If you've never written a single line of computer code this book is for you. If the most technical thing you do on the computer is calculate a column in Excel this book is for you. If you're tired of doing the same thing over and over this book is for you. It's about being motivated to explore, understand, and take advantage of the tools you already own. AppleScript is free—the only price for its use is your desire to finally sit down and take a few moments to absorb and activate its magic. This book starts at square one and walks you through the process of understanding and writing AppleScript step by step, one concept at a time until you find yourself suddenly creating powerful and useful automated solutions. And the lessons in this book are based on a decade of experience teaching hands-on classes to folks just like you. You can do this. You can become Master of your Computer Universe! Still don't believe us? Open the first chapter and start reading. You'll see.

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Customer Reviews

"Can you build us an AppleScript to do that?" That question has been put to me dozens of times over my ten-plus years doing Macintosh support, and in almost every instance, the answer has been "yes." AppleScript has literally helped me to earn my living, in the sense that I've been hired to build customized applications that--to name just a few--scan the entire content of a weekly newspaper and flag any prohibited words for later exclusion, pull records from a database and turn them into a fully-formatted 32-page pamphlet of health-specific Web sites, and convert the SGML-tagged text from a medical journal into XPress Tags coding for import into QuarkXPress. I first got turned on to AppleScript at a Macworld Expo back in the 1990s, when I attended a presentation given by a very enthusiastic service bureau employee by the name of Sal Soghoian. Not a programmer by trade, Sal had discovered the joys of AppleScripting while trying to free himself from some of the redundant tasks he was faced with while outputting his client's documents. I was so excited about what I saw him do with his QuarkXPress scripts that I ran up to him after his talk and starting peppering him with questions. Evidently recognizing my enthusiasm, he offered me a free copy of his "Sal's AppleScript Snippets," a 3.5" floppy disk containing a few dozen simple QuarkXPress AppleScript routines and some brief but helpful documentation. From that point forward, I was hooked on AppleScript. So who better to author an AppleScript training guide for beginning scripters?

This book was not worth the money, for me. When I purchased the book (recently) I was new to Applescript, but had experience programming in Visual Basic on the PC. This book did not help me very much at all. I can't see in it what other reviewers have reported. It was not organized very well. It was well written and you can see the author(s) knows the subject well, but just didn't present it in a simple, organized way suitable for a beginner. Moreover, I can't see how this book would be much help for experts either. The book is over 800 pages long, and you have to read over half of it before you even get to the basics. It's sort of like a massive tutorial, focused mainly on programming Finder. I thought two other books are much, much better - Beginning AppleScript (Programmer to Programmer) (WROX) which was I thought an almost perfect book for beginners, and AppleScript: The Definitive Guide, 2nd Edition (O'REILLY), which seemed excellent for beginner and expert alike. Both of those books are a little out of date (e.g., they refer to Script Editor which has been renamed AppleScript Editor, and to AppleScript Utility, which has been discarded and incorporated into AppleScript Editor). But they are still worth a lot more than this book, despite a few minor things like that.

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