Resources

Accidental Empires

Accidental Empires, subtitled *How the Boys of Silicon Valley Make Their Millions, Battle Foreign Competition, and Still Can't Get a Date* is the latest history of the personal computer industry, written by Robert X. Cringely, InfoWorld's gossip columnist. Unlike other such books, this book focuses on the people and personalities who created this remarkable industry "largely without adult supervision," and it is full of great wit and considerable insight—despite a tendency to overstatement and oversimplification. Here's an example:

> "The two programmer subspecies that are worthy of note are the hippies and the nerds. Nearly all great programmers are one type or the other. Hippie programmers have long hair and deliberately, even pridefully, ignore the seasons in their choice of clothing. They wear shorts and sandals in the winter and T-shirts all the time. Nerds are neat little anal-retentive men with penchants for short-sleeve shirts and pocket protectors. Nerds carry calculators; hippies borrow calculators. Nerds use decongestant nasal sprays; hippies snort cocaine. Nerds typically know forty-six different ways to make love but don't know any women.

> "Hippies know women."

The book pulls no punches in its criticism of industry leaders, especially Bill Gates. We're glad we weren't important enough to be included. *Accidental Empires* is published by Addison-Wesley and is priced at $19.95.

Reverse Engineering Seminar

Prentice-Hall Law & Business is sponsoring a two-day seminar titled *Reverse Engineering: Legal and Business Strategies for Competitive Product Design in the 1990's*. The seminar will cover disassembly and decompilation issues, reverse engineering chip designs, effectiveness of clean-room methodologies, and preventative countermeasures. Seminar chairmen are Michael Epstein and Ronald Laurie of Weil, Gotshal & Manges; other speakers include consultant Rich Belgard, Sun Microsystems Deputy Counsel Peter Choy, IBM Associate General Counsel Anthony Clapes, and attorneys G. Gervaise Davis and Richard Stern.

The seminar will be held on April 23–24 in San Francisco, and on May 7–8 in New York. The registration fee is $695; the course book is also available separately for $60. Call 800/223-0231 or 201/894-8260.

Micro Channel Specification

The Micro Channel Developers Association has published the first edition of its *Micro Channel Architecture Specification*. This version does not include the 160-MByte/s streaming protocol, which will be covered in the second edition due in the third quarter. The specification costs $65 per copy; order from MCDA, 2280 N. Bechelli Lane, Suite B, Redding, CA 96002; 916/222-2262; fax 916/222-2528.

Human Factors Conference

The ACM's tenth annual conference on human factors in computing, CHI '92, will be held May 3–7 in Monterey, CA. The conference includes a wide variety of tutorials, workshops, technical sessions, exhibits, and videos. If you really want to make your products easier to use, this is the conference to attend. Registration fees range from $425 for the conference only to $1265 for the conference and four tutorials; discounts are available for students and ACM members. For a detailed brochure, call 510/294-9489 or fax 510/422-5977.