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John December, Neil Randall. *The World Wide Web Unleashed.* Indianapolis, Ind.: SAMS Publishing, 1994. xxix + 1058 pp. $35.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-672-30617-4.

Reviewed by Robert M. Slade

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This is the most complete work on the World Wide Web that I have seen to date. It definitely contains more information than other works on the topic. Be aware, however, that the content quality is not consistent throughout.

Parts one and two are the usual introduction both to the Internet, and to Web browsers. Coverage of browsers is broader than most (although not as exhaustive as, say, "The Complete Idiot's Guide to the World Wide Web." The discussion of different programs has, though, little analysis. Mosaic is presented as "not the only" browser, but its weaknesses in handling email and forms are not mentioned.

Part three gives some very insightful tips on W3 concepts, operation and use. Searching techniques and tools are only part of the scope of what should be required reading for serious Web users.

Part four is the obligatory list of Web sites, complete with page-filling screen shots from each. The material on education, science, communications and government brings up a lot of new content.

Part five, on Web design and creation, may be considered overlong for those wanting to plan a simple W3 server. The "case study" indicates that a project of larger scope is envisioned, and, from that perspective, there is a lot of valuable material here that you will not find elsewhere.

Part six, on future trends, is disappointing. Two chapters touch on security and its importance to commercial use of the net. Neither addresses the inherent security loopholes of the Web, nor the difficulty imposed by the fact of two competing encryption technologies. (Nor, indeed, the use of technologies in a "World Wide" system where one country refuses to let secure systems be exported, while others simply refuse to allow their citizens encryption at all.)

Certainly quite comprehensive, and extremely valuable in places, there are still some holes to be plugged, and repetitive sections that should be reduced.

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