ML for the Working Programmer

By Lawrence C. Paulson

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This book teaches the methods of functional programming--in particular, how to program in Standard ML, a functional language recently developed at Edinburgh University. The author shows how to use such concepts as lists, trees, higher-order functions and infinite data structures and includes a chapter on formal reasoning about functional programming. This is meant to be a practical book; the author avoids dogma, emphasizes efficiency, and provides many useful and interesting programs. These include fast sorting functions and efficient function implementations of arrays, queues, and priority queues. Examples also include a ^D*l-calculus reducer and theorem prover. Most features of ML (including modules and imperative programming) are covered in depth and the book can be used without an ML reference manual. The reader is assumed to have some experience in programming in conventional languages such as C or Pascal. For such individuals, be they students, graduates or researchers, this will be a convincing introduction to functional programming.

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Editorial Review

Review
"If you are an experienced programmer who wants to learn Standard ML, then this is the text for you. The book succeeds on two levels: as an introduction both to the strengths of functional programming in general, and to the intricacies of Standard ML in particular. It is filled with well-crafted programs that reveal the tricks of the functional programmer's trade. There is a readable explanation of the sophisticated modules system, and danger signs warn you of the few remaining infelicities in the language.....There is a fascinating collection of search algorithms, which illustrate with good effect how ML can mimic 'lazy' evaluation. These examples culminate in a wonderful final chapter that presents a theorem prover, of just the kind ML was created to support....Paulson writes with vigour and with humor. The book is spiced with jokes and polemics." Philip Wadler, Times Higher Education Supplement

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