
Book Review: The Revolutionary Guide To Delphi 2

reviewed by Chris Frizelle

This is one of the first Delphi 2 books to come out, with an impressive list of authors (Paul Hinks, Douglas Horn, Arjan Jansen, Dave Jewell, Brian Long, Ewan McNab, Bob Swart, William Wako and Colin Winning), four of which you will know as contributors to The Delphi Magazine, of course. In fact, I should warn you that you will recognise some of Bob Swart's material as based on his articles for us (with permission of course).

There are 18 chapters, covering Delphi, the ObjectPascal language and Application Design (thankfully these are fairly brief – this is a book aimed at more experienced developers who will be well able to suss out the basics from Delphi's own documentation), Debugging (by Brian Long), Database Apps and the BDE, ReportSmith, SQL and InterBase, Writing Components (Bob Swart), Data-Aware Components (Arjan Jansen), Component

and Property Editors (Bob Swart), Experts and VCS (Bob, who else!), the Windows API (Dave Jewell), Interfacing with other Applications (Brian Long), 32-bit topics, DLLs (Brian Long) and Optimization (Bob Swart). The CD-ROM has all the source code plus a complete copy of the book in Win95 Help format as well as loads of Delphi sample components and tools.

The quality of the authors means that there is bound to be a lot of excellent material here. The book attempts to cover both Delphi 1 and Delphi 2, which is a mistake in my view: readers will either be confused (because it is not always clear what applies to Delphi 1 and what to Delphi 2), frustrated (because they have already bought Delphi 1 books) or both! I would have liked to see better coverage of 32-bit- and Win95-specific issues.

If you are an experienced developer, but a new Delphi user, who

has just bought Delphi 2, you may find that this book is not the best place to begin. The multi-author nature of it means that it doesn't always flow so well. Some chapters are pitched at an entry level (eg the Interbase/SQL one) and others much more advanced.

However, once you get going with Delphi you will find lots of useful information, some of it quite difficult to find elsewhere. I suggest you spend a few minutes browsing before buying.

Scores out of 5:

Technical contents	4
Quality of writing	4
Value for money	3
Overall assessment	4

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