Developing Intelligent Agent Systems: A Practical Guide

Lin Padgham, Michael Winikoff

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Build your own intelligent agent system…

Intelligent agent technology is a tool of modern computer science that can be used to engineer complex computer programmes that behave rationally in dynamic and changing environments. Applications range from small programmes that intelligently search the Web buying and selling goods via electronic commerce, to autonomous space probes.

This powerful technology is not widely used, however, as developing intelligent agent software requires high levels of training and skill. The authors of this book have developed and tested a methodology and tools for developing intelligent agent systems. With this methodology (*Prometheus*) developers can start agent-oriented designs and implementations easily from scratch saving valuable time and resources.

Developing Intelligent Agent Systems not only answers the questions "what are agents?" and "why are they useful?" but also the crucial question: "how do I design and build intelligent agent systems?" The book covers everything a practitioner needs to know to begin to effectively use this technology - including an introduction to the notion of agents, a description of the concepts involved, and a software engineering methodology.

Read on for:

• a practical step-by-step introduction to designing and building intelligent agent systems.
• a full life-cycle methodology for developing intelligent agent systems covering specification, analysis, design and implementation of agents.
• *PDT: Prometheus Design Tool* – software support for the *Prometheus* design process.
• the example of an electronic bookstore to illustrate the design process throughout the book.

Electronic resources including the Prometheus Design Tool (PDT), can be found at:
http://www.cs.rmit.edu.au/agents/prometheus

This book is aimed at industrial software developers, software engineers and at advanced undergraduate students. It assumes knowledge of basic software engineering but does not require knowledge of Artificial Intelligence or of mathematics. Familiarity with Java will help in reading the examples in chapter 10.

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