book reviews

Slamming Spam: A Guide for System Administrators

Robert Haskins, Dale Nielsen

Addison-Wesley Professional, 2004, \$44.99

ISBN: 0131467166

First of all, before reading this book, you must realize there is no magic bullet to counteract spam. As the authors point out, "The problem is largely based upon your perspective." One person's spam is another's legitimate mass mailing. Until society—and its laws, regulations, and technology—decides to address the issue, spam will be a fact of life. In this book, the authors set out to advise system administrators on how to combat this adversary. The authors have set up a Web site (<http://www.slam-mingspam.com>) with updates, including URLs, errata, and other information. This is to be commended, as the fight will be played out on a moving battlefield.

The book focuses on the server side and has a decided Linux/Unix bias. Readers are not expected to be "Unix geeks," however, since in most cases, step-by-step instructions are given with accompanying explanations. The explanations should also be of interest to those who are not working with Linux/Unix.

The book is organized into 12 chapters and seven appendices. Chapter 1 sets the scene and tempo of the work. Chapters 2 through 6 cover Procmail, SpamAssassin, native MTA (message transfer agent) anti-spam features, SMTP issues, and distributed checksum filtering. Chapters 7 and 8 discuss Bayesian filtering and how this technique is used in the fight against spam. Although Chapter 7 provides a good introduction to Bayesian analysis, and is probably sufficient for this work, a dedicated reader might wish to consult a probability textbook. For those who don't care to understand the theory, the authors kindly grant permission to skip the discussion entirely and focus on the way Bayesian filtering applies to the problem.

Chapter 8 describes, in turn, three filtering packages. Chapters 9 through 11 cover aspects of Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Outlook Express, Microsoft Exchange (including a description of McAfee SpamKiller for Exchange 2.1.1), and Lotus Domino and Lotus Notes. Chapter 12 describes a collection of lesser-known open source products. The appendices provide extra detail;

Appendix G consists of a very complete set of references, including the URLs for each chapter.

This is a good book, and should be useful for the accomplished administrator. It might even be useful to residential or small office users, as they try to deal with the spam avalanche. The inclusion of the Web site offers the promise of continuity; one can hope the authors carry through with their intention.—*J. S. Edwards*

Official Eclipse 3.0 FAQs

John Arthorne, Chris Laffra

Addison-Wesley Professional, 2004, \$34.99

ISBN: 0321268385

This is a book of Eclipse 3.0 FAQs, organized into 20 chapters. The book may be read by chapter, front to back, or used as a reference. The FAQs may also be found at <http://www.eclipse.org> for quick reference.

For those planning to use this book for education about Eclipse, I suggest reading chapters 1 through 5 and the overviews of the remaining chapters, and scanning the FAQs of interest. Topics covered include Java development, plug-in development, rich client platforms, SWT (standard widget toolkit), JFace, the Eclipse IDE platform, the workbench IDE, and creating your own editors, applications, and products.

This book is a starting point for learning about Eclipse, but not how to use the software. Refer to FAQ 17 for a list of other books on Eclipse. Prerequisites for reading this book include a knowledge of HTML, XML, Java, DOM (document object model) as used in JavaScript, and Visual Basic or C++. FAQ examples show some Java and XML sample screens. A CD-ROM for Windows or Linux comes with the book. This CD contains Eclipse SDK 3.0 downloads for Windows, Linux, and Macintosh; sample plug-ins; Eclipse documentation and articles in PDF; a plug-in version of the book; a sample application; and a TocViewer, used to view the book in XML format.

The challenge, however, is installing Eclipse and getting it to run. The JRE (Java Runtime Environment) is not supplied on the Eclipse CD-ROM and must be downloaded. A Java compiler (javac) is supplied with Eclipse (FAQ 316), so a full Java SDK does not have to be downloaded.—*Neil Karl*

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