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**Burger, J. (1995). *Multimedia for decision makers*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, \$16.95, pp. 156, (ISBN 0-201-40836-8).**

*Multimedia for Decision Makers* is a sister publication to *The Desktop Multimedia Bible*. Where the goal of *The Desktop Multimedia Bible* is to act as a detailed reference for those who want to immerse themselves in the utilization of multimedia technologies, *Multimedia for Decision Makers* serves as an overview for business leaders and decision makers. Burger focuses on providing information on how much multimedia costs, how to invest in equipment, and how to locate, hire, or contract the necessary personnel to meet the needs of an organization.

Burger begins by defining multimedia and the technologies associated with multimedia, while assuming little or no experience on the part of the reader. Graphic, audio, and video tools are discussed in terms of the basics, associated hardware, and software. Platform costs also are presented within two major categories: production machines and delivery machines.

Business presentations, major productions, and business communications are covered illustrating possible technologies and suggestions on the appropriateness of these technologies for certain desired applications. "Reaching the Customer" is another chapter in the book which focuses on both retail and direct marketing strategies. From the use of slide presentation to the implementation of kiosks, the author provides the advantages and disadvantages, as well as the strategies for the proper utilization of multimedia. This is done in order for the decision maker to be able to realize the maximum benefit from the investment.

A short chapter on training discusses the benefits of computer-based training, internal training, and outside training. This book, however, is not intended as a guide to the training needs of multimedia. The training issue is covered more broadly in respect to whether it would be required for different types of multimedia projects.

One of the most valuable chapters, "Investment Decisions and Preliminaries," emphasizes that quality and efficiency are the two main issues that should be considered when making investment decisions. "In my experience, the greatest requisite is the acknowledgment that aesthetics are important, the possession of some basic creative ability, and the desire to learn" (p. 93). The importance of the

aesthetics section emphasizes that the more important the production, the more sophisticated its aesthetic needs become. Utilizing existing resources and expanding internal resources versus outsourcing are two more sections of this chapter that provide direction and multiple scenarios on what types of options a decision maker has when it comes to the development of a multimedia project. Burger also provides a set of production visualization questions aimed at helping the reader determine their actual need. In these questions, time is an issue that becomes apparent. In the section on trade-offs, time is added to the main issues of quality and price. "If time and money are inflexible, then quality should be examined—not literally, but in terms of what you expect to integrate into the production" (p. 100). Multimedia is in this respect no different from printing or video projects with which many decision makers already have had experience. Amortization is discussed as one way of keeping the cost down on a multimedia production.

Although the author covers topics that are essential to understanding multimedia, the book lacks real world situational examples in the form of case studies which would only enhance the reader's ability to grasp and apply the information. In addition, the choice of graphics used could be more exciting and better displayed. Certain figures presented appear to have been developed without much effort and give the book a less than desired appearance.

Professional educators who have little or no experience with multimedia would profit from reading this book. For the cost, this book is an outstanding value. Technology educators constantly are faced with the challenge of incorporating more knowledge in less and less time. As our technologies grow, our fields expand. Communication technologies continue to increase in their capabilities and become less and less expensive. It seems fitting that the use of technology becomes the solution to the information dispersion problem that technology educators face every day. Multimedia techniques will likely become more and more prevalent in our day-to-day communications, lectures, labs, and, presentations. The question is not whether multimedia is the answer; it is the question of when.

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