The PC has outgrown its function as a pure computer and has become an all-purpose machine. This book is targeted towards those people that want to control existing or self-built hardware from their computer.

Using Visual Basic as Rapid Application Development tool we will take you on a journey to unlock the world beyond the connectors of the PC.

After familiarizing yourself with Visual Basic, its development environment and the toolset it offers, items such as serial communications, printer ports, bitbanging, protocol emulation, ISA, USB and Ethernet interfacing and the remote control of test-equipment over the GPIB bus, are covered in extent. Each topic is accompanied by clear, ready to run code, and where necessary, schematics are provided that will get your projects up to speed in no time.

This book will show you advanced things like: using tools like Debug to find hardware addresses, setting up remote communication using TCP/IP and UDP sockets and even writing your own internet servers. Or how about connecting your own block of hardware over USB or Ethernet and controlling it from Visual Basic. Other things like internet-program communication, DDE and the new graphics interface of Windows XP are covered as well.

All examples are ready to compile using Visual Basic 5.0, 6.0, .NET or 2005. Extensive coverage is given on the differences between what could be called Visual Basic Classic and Visual basic .NET / 2005.


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