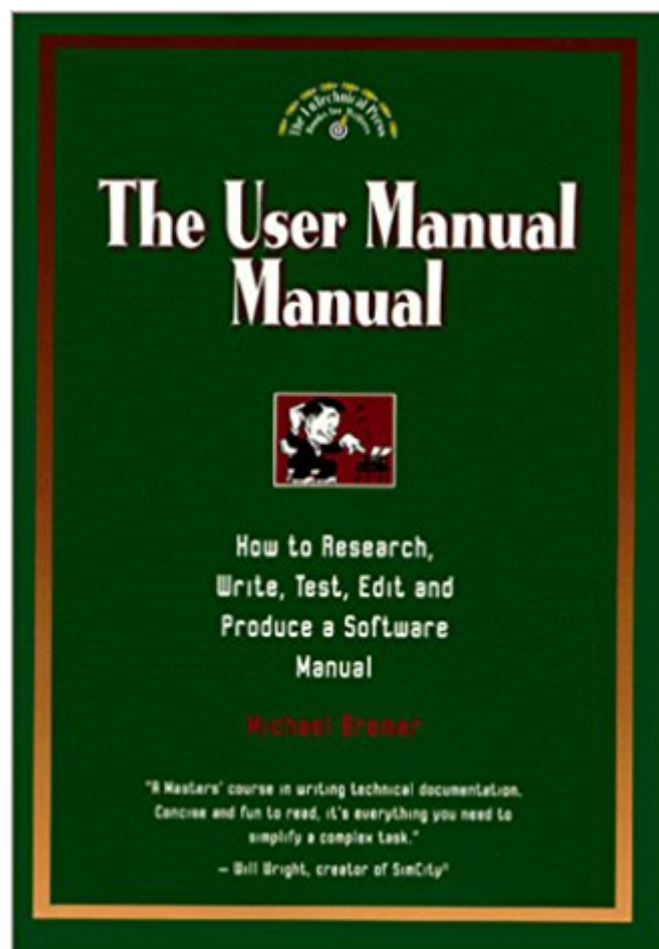The book was found

The User Manual Manual : How To Research, Write, Test, Edit & Produce A Software Manual (Untechnical Press Books For Writers)

Synopsis

The User Manual Manual is a master's course on software manuals. It describes the grammar, style, techniques and tricks needed to write a manual the gets read. It explains how to understand and target readers, technicaly inclined or not--even if they're kids. Plus, it covers special topics including: dealing with rush projects, preparing for internationalization, and handling projects with multiple writers, multiple platforms and multiple bosses. The User Manual Manual is a guided tour through the entire process of creating a user manual from initial concept through writing, testing, editing and production to postmortem. It contains sample documents, worksheets and checklists to help writers work smarter and faster.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For nearly 10 years as writer, editor, writing manager and Director of Creative Services at Maxis software (the SimCity(R) company), Michael Bremer developed proven techniques to write and produce readable, understandable, and even enjoyable technical writing. He is now an independent author and consultant, specializing in communicating complex technical subjects to a non-technical (consumer) audience.

The User Manual Manual is Michael Bremer's follow-up to Untechnical Writing. Unlike Untechnical Writing, this book is focused solely on the development process for a software manual. He

describes and demonstrates how to create a software manual from the planning phase through publication.Bremer takes the reader through the entire process, from planning to writing and editing to final production. Unlike many books on technical writing, The User Manual Manual assumes that you can write. Bremer doesn't waste a lot of time going over grammar lessons. The focus of this book is more on processes such content editing and testing. Also, Bremer is focused solely on the software manual. He includes instructions on writing specifically for that genre, such as how to write quick-start guides, online help and readme documents. Bremer is also careful to give plenty of examples throughout the book so that you can see his advice in action.This is an excellent guide to the process of writing software documentation. Any technical writer can benefit from reading it. It is especially useful for those just entering the field and for those who are taking on leadership roles in their documentation projects

The User Manual Manual contains excellent guidelines for producing a Software User Manual to suit your needs and requirements. It not only tells you how and what to include in your manual, but also gives you easy examples of how it should look. I thought the price was a little high for what you get and discovered that the price was lower based on the order form in the back of the book itself. However, for excellent guidelines and examples for producing your software users manual, this is really the book to get. The prose is easy to follow and the technical jargon is minimal. I highly recommend it for the serious producer of software user manuals; especially if you are a novice to such work.

I bought this for the communications department at my company. Myself and two other co-workers have referenced it and found the information useful on a handful of occasions. Most of the manuals we write are not for software, yet despite that, this book contained useful information we were able to leverage in our hardware documentation. The only thing that could make it better is if it discussed more about writing user manuals for a global audience, i.e. manuals that will be translated from English to a variety of other languages. That is a pretty specialized niche though so no points deducted for that.

Whether you are in the technical field or not, this book is a MUST for all Project Managers. This book was not only helpful as a Project Manager, but helped me in general. This book is great for beginners (which is what I am), but I think even an expert can pick up a tip or two from this book. Excellent!!

The User Manual Manual - How to Reserch, Write, Test, Edit andProduce a Software Manual by Michael Bremer. UntechnicalPress. 1999. 314 pp.; 7" x 10" (0-9669949-1-4). charts, illustrations, appendices, bibliogaphy, index. In this second book for writers by Michael Bremer, he continues his guidance on writing about technical subjects for lay readers. Bremer's first book, Untechnical Writing, covered the field of technical writing in general; this The User Manual Manual, as the title says, deals with manuals for lay persons on how to use computer software. The importance of such manuals for computer users these days is apparent. Bremer makes the points that easy-to-follow manuals obviously make it easier for lay persons to operate computers using the software; which means that such manuals are clearly to the benefit of computer makers and software developers. And he makes the second point that easy-to-follow manuals reduce the support computer manufacturers and software producers have to provide to customers. As self-evident as these points are, Bremer wonders if companies in the computer and software business have grasped them--as probably do the majority of lay persons trying to make sense of most user manuals. With more than 20 years in technology industries, including manager of writing teams, Bremer knows the elements, slant, and aims of user manuals inside out, including how they are developed by teamwork among segments of a company and also the creativity and skills of individual writers. He gives experienced, detailed, relevant advice and directions for making a user manual satisfy its ultimate aim of being reader-friendly and therefore contributing to the place of computers and software in individuals' lives.Henry BerryBook ReviewerEditor/Publisher, The Small Press Book Review END

I had this book on my wish list for at least a year and received it at Christmas. I have been writing user's manuals for a few years now and I was expecting to get fresh ideas from this book. I read it all the way through to only say to myself, "well that was interesting but how much did I get out of it?" I realized that I already knew most of what is in the book. So, am I disappointed? No. Bremer has done a great job of explaining the process of writing good user manuals. It is well organized and gives good examples. It reminded me of what is important in a good manual. The one exception that I have though is, Bremer often writes about the technical writer who writes the text and then turns the project over to a designer to format the manual. These days, it is the writer who often does the writing and formatting. I do not know too many writers who does otherwise. This book is a must for anyone who has not written a software manual. For the people who have written successful manuals, they will not get a lot out of it.

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