The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable, Patrick Lencioni. In this book, the author offers a leadership fable centered on teams. The protagonist's CEO faces the ultimate leadership crisis: uniting a team in such disarray it threatens to bring down the entire company. Throughout the story, the author reveals the five dysfunctions that go to the very heart of why teams, even the best ones, often struggle. Will she succeed? Will she be fired? Will the company fail?

The author’s narrative reminds us that leadership requires courage as much as insight. He outlines a powerful model and actionable steps that can be used to overcome these common hurdles and build a cohesive, effective team. This compelling fable with a deceptively simple yet powerful message will speak to all who strive to be exceptional team leaders.


Wild West 2.0: How to Protect and Restore Your Reputation on the Untamed Social Frontier, Michael Fertik and David Thompson. The Internet is like the Old West—a frontier rich with opportunity and hope, but also a rough-and-tumble land of questionable characters, dubious legal jurisdictions, and hidden dangers. And just like the Old West, if you want to stake out your territory, you have to get there first and fend for yourself.

On the Web, this means defending your good name and reputation before the attacks start. Despite the excellent product or service you provide, all it takes is one unhappy customer, jealous acquaintance, or unsavory competitor to start the rumors flying. Before you know it, search engines are regenerating that negative publicity every time someone researches you or your business.

Wild West 2.0 offers simple yet extraordinarily powerful ways to proactively protect your online reputation, determine the extent of reputation damage and identify its original source, offset even the most savage attacks, and control how search engines rank and display results about your business and name.

Amacom; www.amacombooks.org; 0-8144-1509-2; 264 pp.

Interactive Data Visualization: Foundations, Techniques, and Applications, Matthew Ward, Georges Grinstein, and Daniel Keim. This book provides the theory, practical details, and tools necessary for representing data, information, and knowledge in a visual form to support the tasks of exploration, confirmation, presentation, and understanding.

Sample programs provide starting points for building one’s own visualization tools. Numerous datasets have been made available that highlight different application areas and let readers evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different visualization methods. The book concludes with an examination of several existing visualization systems and projections on the future of the field.


Self-Reconfigurable Robots, An Introduction, Kasper Stoy, David Brandt, and David J. Christensen. Self-reconfigurable robots are constructed of robotic modules that can be connected in many different ways. These modules move in relationship to each other, which lets the robot as a whole change shape. This shape shifting makes it possible for the robots to adapt and optimize their shapes for different tasks. Thus, a self-reconfigurable robot can first assume the shape of a rolling track to cover distance quickly, then the shape of a snake to explore a narrow space, and finally the shape of a hexapod to carry an artifact back to the starting point. This book collects and synthesizes significant progress from more than 20 years of existing research previously available only in widely scattered individual papers, thus offering an accessible guide to the latest information on self-reconfigurable robots for researchers and students interested in the field.

The authors focus on conveying the intuition behind the design and control of self-reconfigurable robots rather than technical details. Suggestions for further reading refer readers to the underlying sources of technical information. The book includes descriptions of existing robots and a brief history of the field; discussion of module design considerations, including module geometry, connector design, and computing and communication infrastructure; an in-depth presentation of strategies for controlling self-reconfiguration and locomotion; and exploration of future research challenges.


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