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Mastering

Spreadsheets

Second Edition

Peter Gosling

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Preface

Now that more and more PCs (personal computers) are finding their way onto the desks of more and more (and more senior) managers, the time has come for a book to be written, not about particular pieces of software in detail, but about the ideas behind the use of a generic type of program. Already in the Macmillan Master Series we have two books in this vein. *Mastering Computer Programming* (now in its third edition) tells the aspiring programmer about the various sorts of computer languages and why they are suited to certain types of tasks. *Mastering Word Processing* (also in its third edition) describes the jobs that a word processing program can do for us. The programs we buy to run on our PCs are nothing more than solutions looking for problems to solve, and we are in no position to make a judgement on whether or not we are likely to need such a program if we are unaware of the power available to us through these programs.

This new edition of *Mastering Spreadsheets* will give a general, but detailed, description of what the latest spreadsheet programs can do. The last chapter describes the main features of the four most popular spreadsheet programs at present on the market. No attempt will be made to say whether one program is better than another. It is well known that when somebody purchases a piece of computer software for their PC, they will only use some 20% to 25% of the full potential of the program. This book will allow you to make the correct decision when you come to select a spreadsheet program. There are still some suppliers of software who will try to sell you a program because it is expensive, and, hence, their profit is greater, not because it does the job you require it to perform simply and cheaply. Do not be put off a program just because it is cheap. It may do exactly what you want without the need to plot three-dimensional graphs or perform matrix inversion.

Special emphasis is given in this edition to the requirements of the NVQ (National Vocational Qualifications) in Accountancy.

March, 1994

P.G.

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