



Understanding Virtual Reality: Interface, Application, and Design (The Morgan Kaufmann Series in Computer Graphics)

By William R. Sherman, Alan B. Craig



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Understanding Virtual Reality arrives at a time when the technologies behind virtual reality have advanced to the point that it is possible to develop and deploy meaningful, productive virtual reality applications. The aim of this thorough, accessible exploration is to help you take advantage of this moment, equipping you with the understanding needed to identify and prepare for ways VR can be used in your field, whatever your field may be.

By approaching VR as a communications medium, the authors have created a resource that will remain relevant even as the underlying technologies evolve. You get a history of VR, along with a good look at systems currently in use. However, the focus remains squarely on the application of VR and the many issues that arise in the application design and implementation, including hardware requirements, system integration, interaction techniques, and usability. This book also counters both exaggerated claims for VR and the view that would reduce it to entertainment, citing dozens of real-world examples from many different fields and presenting (in a series of appendices) four in-depth application case studies.

- * Substantive, illuminating coverage designed for technical and business readers and well-suited to the classroom.
- * Examines VR's constituent technologies, drawn from visualization, representation, graphics, human-computer interaction, and other fields, and explains how they are being united in cohesive VR systems.
- * Via a companion Web site, provides additional case studies, tutorials, instructional materials, and a link to an open-source VR programming system.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Understanding Virtual Reality is truly the most complete reference book to emerge from the VR field in the past ten years."

?Tom DeFanti, Professor University of Illinois at Chicago, Co-Inventor of the CAVE (R)

"Understanding Virtual Reality is the introduction to the medium of VR that we have all been desiring for our beginning courses."

?Michael Zyda, Director, The MOVES Institute

"A comprehensive overview of virtual reality technologies and techniques. Using real-world examples from diverse fields, the book makes a case for VR as an increasingly effective and applicable communications medium. With its broad scope, straightforward style and companion instructional Web site, this book would make an excellent introductory text for students exploring virtual reality applications." - Design Issues

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

William R. Sherman is Interim Director of the Environmental Modeling and Visualization Lab at the Desert Research Institute in Reno, Nevada. Previously he lead the virtual reality effort at the National Center for Super- computing Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has authored several book chapters and papers on the topics of scientific visualization and virtual reality and has taught a graduate-level course on VR at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Dr Alan B. Craig is the Senior Associate Director for Human-Computer Interaction at the Institute for Computing in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (I-CHASS) and a Research Scientist at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA). He is also the Humanities, Arts, and Social Science sSpecialist for the Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment (XSEDE). His work centers on the continuum between the physical and the digital. He has done extensive work in virtual reality, augmented reality, and personal fabrication, as well as educational applications of data mining, visualization, and collaborative systems.

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