Book Review

Hackers and Painters: Big Ideas from the Computer Age

Venn's Diagram of Intellectual Commonwealth,

"Hackers and Painters" is Dr. Paul Graham's take on big ideas and how it all relates back to computer programming. Yes, the jacket cover categorization is /programming so if you are wondering how come "Revenge of the nerds" and "How to make Wealth" are part of programming education, don't be surprised if you are recommended to read Heidegger for etymology enlightenment as a software developer.

Reading Paul Graham is an addiction and an intellectual fix for most of us who may find themselves lost in the mundane code mazes of our day job and go out looking for answer. These are the pearls from a Harvard Computer Science PhD who made Bayesian inference a household name. This ~250 page book is a collection of seminal/web style writings on a diverse array of topics in fifteen essays. The book is all about ideas, thoughts and questions for instance in "Good and Bad Procrastination" Paul states

1. What are the most important problems in your field?

2. Are you working on one of them?

3. Why not?

For book reviews, please feel free to contact Adnan Masood at adnan@nova.edu

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http://www.amazon.com/Hackers-Painters-Big-Ideas-Computer/product-reviews/0596006624/ref=cm_cr_pr_btm_link_3?ie=UTF8&pageNumber=3&showViewpoints=0&sortBy=bySubmissionDateDescending

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How simpler can you get but yet, reader would find analogies from anglo-saxon nobles to modern day architecture and renaissance paintings. Reading Paul Graham is important if you are a technology enthusiast; its imperative providing that programming is merely not your day job but a passion for life. It's not a book for learning lisp, hacking or programming for that matter, but a very different genre. So without going all elite, if you are not sure this is a right book for you, add his writings to your RSS aggregator and you'll soon find the book sitting next to your pillow. And I just couldn't resist quoting this about writing

"I think it's far more important to write well than most people realize. Writing doesn't just communicate ideas; it generates them. If you're bad at writing and don't like to do it, you'll miss out on most of the ideas writing would have generated.".
About the Reviewer

Adnan Masood works as a web architect and technical lead for Green Dot Corporation where he develops SOA based middle-tier architectures, distributed systems, and web-applications using Microsoft technologies. He is a Microsoft Certified Trainer holding several technical certifications, including MCPD (Enterprise Developer), MCSD .NET, and SCJP-II. Adnan is attributed and published in print media and on the Web; he is technical editor for "Microsoft Windows Server AppFabric Cookbook" and also taught Windows Communication Foundation (WCF) courses at the University of California at San Diego.

Adnan regularly presents at local code camps and user groups. He is actively involved in the .NET community as cofounder and president of the of San Gabriel Valley .NET Developers group. Adnan holds a Master’s degree in Computer Science; he is currently a doctoral student working towards PhD in Machine Learning; specifically interestingness measures in outliers using Bayesian Belief Networks. He also holds systems architecture certification from MIT and SOA Smarts certification from Carnegie Mellon University.