

COMPUTER MEDIA By Rachel Singer Gordon

Ballew, Joli. **Degunking Your Mac**. 268p. ISBN 1-932111-94-8.

Ballew, Joli & Jeff Duntemann. **Degunking Windows**. 310p. ISBN 1-932111-84-0.

Duntemann, Jeff. **Degunking Your Email, Spam, and Viruses**. 334p. ISBN 1-932111-93-X.

ea. vol: Paraglyph, dist. by O'Reilly. 2004. pap. \$24.99.

Paraglyph's new, slightly irreverent "Degunking" series offers tips on cleaning up, organizing, securing, and otherwise getting computers in better order. Each begins with a one-page "Degunking 12-Step Program"—prioritizing ideas for time-pressed readers—and a list of "Spare Moment Degunking" tasks that can be done as time allows. While the information is readily available online and elsewhere, these guides do a nice job of collecting it in one place. *Degunking Windows* primarily addresses intermediate XP users who want to improve performance (with tips for earlier versions). It offers straightforward, step-by-step instructions on topics ranging from defragmenting the hard drive to repairing a Windows installation. Appendixes cover doing a fresh installation, recovering from a corrupted registry, and troubleshooting. *Degunking Your Mac* addresses OS X users (plus a chapter on OS 9), even those who believe Macs cannot get gunked up. Step-by-step instructions range from cleaning up the desktop to using third-party maintenance and cleanup applications; an appendix lists troubleshooting techniques. *Degunking Your Email* duplicates some material in *Windows* and *Mac*, both of which include information on spam, viruses, and email use, but it gets more in-depth, dividing email users into groups, e.g., public professional, private professional, student enthusiast, and casual communicator. Tips are targeted toward each group, depending on usage patterns. Plain-language explanations of spam-filtering and other jargon are welcome, as is the clear discussion of what viruses are and tricks used by virus writers. Recommended for all libraries; *Mac* and *Windows* are appropriate for medium and larger libraries.

Kasser, Barbara & Frank Fiore. **2005 Online Shopping Directory for Dummies**. Wiley. 2004. 652p. ISBN 0-7645-7495-7. pap. \$24.99.

Miller, Michael. **Bargain Hunter's Secrets to Online Shopping**. QUE. 2004. 320p. ISBN 0-7897-3201-7. pap. \$19.95.

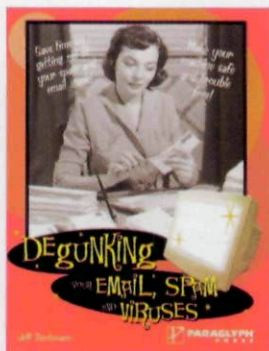
We tend to carry our favorite activities over into the online environment, shopping being no exception. These guides to online shopping aim to help readers find bargains, deals, and that perfect one-of-a-kind item. Doomed to be outdated soon after printing, *2005 Online Shopping Directory* annotates and organizes nearly 1500 sites from the major to the obscure, providing added tips on security, privacy, fraud prevention, and comparison shopping. Sidebars end each chapter with what appear to be extended ads for sites on a subject, disguised as helpful tips; each chapter begins with a very basic list of suggested keywords for finding further resources (those for drinks, for example, include "beer," "coffee," and "soda"). An optional purchase. For newer to intermediate online shoppers, *Bargain Hunter's Secrets* discusses how-to points (e.g., security and researching purchases), moves into ways to save money (e.g., using price comparison sites, getting auction bargains, and finding closeout sales), and then concludes with a briefly annotated subject directory of sites for bargain hunters. A nice introduction to online bargain shopping; for all libraries.

McFedries, Paul. **Formulas and Functions with Microsoft Excel 2003**. QUE. 2005. 486p. ISBN 0-7897-3153-3. pap. \$34.99.

Shepherd, Richard. **Excel VBA Macro Programming**. Osborne/McGraw-Hill. 2004. 319p. ISBN 0-07-223144-0. pap. \$29.99.

Webb, Jeff. **Excel 2003 Programming: A Developer's Notebook**. O'Reilly. 2004. 294p. ISBN 0-596-00767-1. pap. \$29.95.

Overview guides to Excel give short shrift to more advanced topics like VBA and VB.NET programming and working with XML data; these targeted titles fill the gap. A hands-on guide for intermediate developers, *Excel 2003 Programming* is heavy on sample code (available online) and light on background; it nicely highlights new advanced features and capabilities. In "Notebook" fashion, mock handwritten notes add information; step-by-step how-tos, plentiful screen shots, and succinct explanations of real-world activities help readers hit the ground running. Recommended for larger libraries. For intermediate Excel users, *Excel VBA Macro Programming* provides a fairly quick run-down of VBA functions, showing example



Clean up your inbox with industrial-strength guidance; shopaholics, boot up and get down with Internet merchants

Bargain Hunter's
**SECRETS
TO ONLINE
SHOPPING**



code for each. While straightforward explanations are welcome, the final section on practical uses is very short, unfortunately; more detail and examples would have been useful. An optional purchase for larger libraries. For beginning to intermediate users, *Formulas and Functions* aims to simplify and explain the use of complex formulas and functions, allowing users to go beyond the basics and begin to unlock the software's potential. Tips, notes, cautions, *See references*, and case studies add extra information and real-world examples; clear annotations make this a good choice for medium and larger libraries.

Perry, Greg. **SAMS Teach Yourself OpenOffice.org All in One**. SAMS. 2005. 515p. ISBN 0-672-32618-3. pap. \$29.99 with CD-ROM.

As businesses, individuals, and government agencies pay more serious attention to open source and free alternatives to Microsoft software, libraries should invest in guides to the most popular of them. OpenOffice.org is the major free competitor to the Microsoft Office suite (and reads/writes common Office format files); it contains a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation software, and drawing software. This straightforward introduction to the main features of each component is appropriate for all libraries. Step-by-step instructions aid beginners; notes, tips, *See also* references, and definitions add information. Handy "Before You Begin" sidebars start each section with a list of tasks to complete before undertaking the current task. The CD contains OpenOffice.org 1.1.2 for Linux, Mac OS X, Solaris, and Windows. (OpenOffice.org is currently on 1.1.4; readers can download the newest version.)

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