▣ COMPUTER MEDIA ▣

BY RACHEL SINGER GORDON

Andrews, Philip. **Adobe PhotoShop Elements: A Visual Introduction to Digital Imaging.**
Focal Pr. 2002. 246p. ISBN 0-240-51686-9. **pap.** $29.99.
This full-color beginner's guide to the Elements version of PhotoShop (intended for amateur photographers and digital-image hobbyists) opens with a brief introduction to digital imaging, then delves into foundational image manipulation techniques such as adding text, working with selections and layers, and preparing images for both the web and print. Useful features include a "jargon buster" glossary and a companion web site (www.guide2elements.com) that walks readers through step-by-step demonstrations of highlighted techniques. Public libraries should consider.

Ater, Mark P. & Betty Ater.
Internet User's Handbook 2002.
130p. ISBN 0-7864-1326-3.
Fielden, Ned L. & Lucy Kuntz.
Search Engines Handbook.
107p. ISBN 0-7864-1308-5.
ea. vol: McFarland. 2002. **pap.** $22.50.
Although featuring some useful tips and tricks for newbies, *Internet User's Handbook* also contains some questionable assertions (e.g., that over 50 percent of all web sites contain pornography). As a brief, nonthreatening alternative, consider *The Rough Guide to the Internet* (Computer Media, *LJ* 2/1/01). *Search Engines Handbook*, however, will make a worthy addition to any library. Besides describing major search engines, directories, and search strategies, it explains how search engines work and provides commentary on the importance of learning from the process of rethinking failed searches. Recommended as a supplement to more comprehensive Internet searching guides.

Badre, Albert N. **Shaping Web Usability: Interaction Design in Context.**
Addison-Wesley. 2002. 276p. ISBN 0-201-72993-8. **pap.** $39.99.
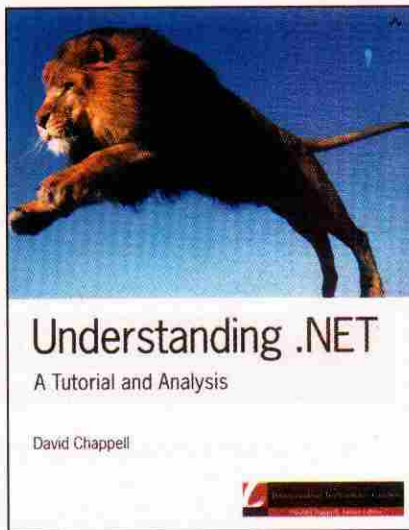Price, Jonathan & Lisa Price. **Hot Text: Web Writing That Works.**
New Riders. 2002. 507p. ISBN 0-7357-1151-8. **pap.** $40.
Sachs, Tammy & Gary McClain.
Back to the User: Creating User-Focused Web Sites.
New Riders. 2002. 360p. ISBN 0-7357-1118-6. **pap.** $34.99.
There is no shortage of material on web site usability (see Computer Media, *LJ* 3/1/02). *Hot Text* shines in its comprehen-

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Understanding .NET
A Tutorial and Analysis
David Chappell

Tame the beast that is .NET with this thorough introduction to its integral parts

sive coverage of online writing. One will find information on XML and writing for database-driven sites; creating FAQs, blogs and newsletters, and online résumés; and becoming a web writer or editor. Although it does not break any new ground, *Back to the User* is a solid summary of current thought on the "user-centered" approach, covering both writing and design. It largely focuses on business sites, with additional information on e-commerce and branding. Both titles are appropriate for public libraries. *Shaping Web Usability*, while more academic, also addresses specific issues such as designing for older adults and handheld devices. Recommended for larger public and academic institutions.

★Chappell, David. **Understanding .NET: A Tutorial and Analysis.**
Addison-Wesley. 2002. 348p. ISBN 0-201-74162-8. **pap.** $34.99.
Guides to Microsoft's .NET technologies abound (see Computer Media, *LJ* 4/1/01), but most focus on only one piece of the colossus. Chappell's book is different because it offers a lucid overview of every aspect of .NET. Intended for developers and technology managers but accessible to lay readers, it describes how existing languages and technologies (such as ASP) are transformed in the .NET environment and explains the reasoning behind creating new languages such as C#. Touchy topics like the privacy issues created by .NET My Services and .NET's seeming similarity to Java are also squarely addressed. Highly recommended for all libraries.

Ford, Jerry Lee, Jr.
The Book of WinZip: File Compression and Archive Management Made Easy.
No Starch. 2002. 161p. ISBN 1-886411-75-1. **pap.** $14.95.
At first glance, WinZip seems operable sans instructions. However, the popular file-compression utility contains more complicated, advanced features and optional add-ons, which Ford covers here. These include the capacity to create self-extracting archives (with add-on), saving Zip files across multiple floppies with the disk-spanning tool, and the Internet browser support add-on (which runs WinZip automatically when an associated archive is downloaded). Treatment of command-line support and keyboard shortcuts is especially helpful for advanced users, as are tips and notes provided as asides throughout. A useful public library purchase.

Fuller, Robert.
HTML Virtual Classroom.
273p. ISBN 0-07-219256-9. **pap.** $39.99 with CD-ROM.
Jamsa, Kris & others. **HTML & Web Design Tips & Techniques.**
665p. ISBN 0-07-219394-8. **pap.** $49.99.
ea. vol: Osborne/McGraw-Hill. 2002.
The title of *HTML & Web Design* is somewhat misleading, as the bulk of the book focuses more on advanced technologies such as Java, PHP, ASP, and XHTML. Although the first three chapters do cover HTML basics, tables, and forms, beginning designers will be better served by *Virtual Classroom*, owing to its clear, indepth coverage of HTML. The video lessons on the CD-ROM are a fantastic addition, building on concepts introduced in the text and providing an alternative learning method for auditory learners. Recommended for all libraries; larger libraries might consider *HTML & Web Design* as well.

Perry, Greg.
SAMS Teach Yourself Beginning Programming in 24 Hours. 2d ed.
SAMS. 2002. 479p. ISBN 0-672-32307-9. **pap.** $29.99 with CD-ROM.
The first half of this useful introduction concentrates on inculcating general programming concepts through Liberty Basic examples. The second half familiarizes readers with Java and takes them on a whirlwind tour of Visual Basic, C and C++, DHTML, XML, and .NET, with some attention paid to the business of programming. A companion CD-ROM contains Sun's Java Software Development Kit and Liberty Basic, plus source code from the book. Recommended for public libraries.