

Foreword

Computers are everywhere.

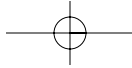
This fact, of course, is not a surprise to anyone who hasn't been living in a cave during the past 25 years or so. And you probably know that computers aren't just on our desktops, in our kitchens, and, increasingly, in our living rooms holding our music collections. They're also in our microwave ovens, our regular ovens, our cell-phones, and our portable digital music players.

And if you're holding this book, you probably know a lot, or are interested in learning more about, these embedded computer systems.

Until not too long ago, embedded systems were not very powerful, and they ran special-purpose, proprietary operating systems that were very different from industry-standard ones. (Plus, they were much harder to develop for.) Today, embedded computers are as powerful as, if not more than, a modern home computer. (Consider the high-end gaming consoles, for example.)

Along with this power comes the capability to run a full-fledged operating system such as Linux. Using a system such as Linux for an embedded product makes a lot of sense. A large community of developers are making it possible. The development environment and the deployment environment can be surprisingly similar, which makes your life as a developer much easier. And you have both the security of a protected address space that a virtual memory-based system gives you, and the power and flexibility of a multiuser, multiprocess system. That's a good deal all around.

For this reason, companies all over the world are using Linux on many devices such as PDAs, home entertainment systems, and even, believe it or not, cellphones!



I'm excited about this book. It provides an excellent “guide up the learning curve” for the developer who wants to use Linux for his or her embedded system. It's clear, well-written, and well-organized; Chris's knowledge and understanding show through at every turn. It's not only informative and helpful—it's also enjoyable to read.

I hope you both learn something and have fun at the same time. I know I did.

Arnold Robbins

Series Editor

