Autotools: A Practioner's Guide to GNU Autoconf, Automake, and Libtool

By John Calcote

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The GNU Autotools make it easy for developers to create software that is portable across many UNIX-like operating systems. Thousands of open source software packages use the Autotools, but the learning curve is unfortunately steep, and it can be difficult for a beginner to find anything more than basic reference material on using the powerful software suite.

In *Autotools*, author John Calcote begins with an overview of high-level concepts; then tackles more advanced topics, like using the M4 macro processor with Autoconf, extending the Automake framework, and building Java and C# sources.

You'll learn how to:

- Master the Autotools build system to maximize your software's portability
- Generate Autoconf configuration scripts to simplify the compilation process
- Produce portable makefiles with Automake
- Build cross-platform software libraries with Libtool
- Write your own Autoconf macros

Autotools also includes a variety of complete projects that you're encouraged to work through to gain a real-world sense of how to become an Autotools practitioner. For example, you'll turn the FLAIM and Jupiter projects' hand-coded, makefile-based build systems into a powerful Autotools-based build system.

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- Rank: #596464 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2010-07-20
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .98" w x 7.00" l, 1.51 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 360 pages

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Editorial Review

About the Author

John Calcote is a Senior Software Engineer at Fusion-io. He's been writing and developing portable networking and system-level software for nearly 20 years and is active in developing, debugging, and analyzing diverse open source software packages. He is currently a project administrator of the OpenSLP, OpenXDAS, and DNX projects (open source software available at sourceforge.net), as well as the Novell-sponsored FLAIM database project (open source software available at developer.novell.com).

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