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The Trouble with Computers: Usefulness, Usability and Productivity

By Thomas K Landauer

MIT Press Ltd, United States, 1996. Paperback. Book Condition: New. New edition. 221 x 150 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Despite enormous investments in computers over the last twenty years, productivity in the very service industries at which they were aimed virtually stagnated everywhere in the world. If computers are not making businesses, organizations, or countries more productive, then why are we spending so much time and money on them? Cutting through a raft of technical data, Thomas Landauer explains and illustrates why computers are in trouble and why massive outlays for computing since 1973 have not resulted in comparable productivity payoffs. Citing some of his own successful research programs, as well as many others, Landauer offers solutions to the problems he describes. While acknowledging that mismanagement, organizational barriers, learning curves, and hardware and software incompatibilities can play a part in the productivity paradox, Landauer targets individual utility and usability as the main culprits. He marshals overwhelming evidence that computers rarely improve the efficiency of the information work they are designed for because they are too hard to use and do too little that is sufficiently useful. Their many features, designed to make them more marketable, merely increase...



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