MOBILE COMPUTING

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MOBILE COMPUTING

edited by

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PREFACE

The rapid development of wireless digital communication technology has created capabilities that software systems are only beginning to exploit. The falling cost of both communication and of mobile computing devices (laptop computers, hand-held computers, etc.) is making wireless computing affordable not only to business users but also to consumers.

Mobile computing is not a "scaled-down" version of the established and wellstudied field of distributed computing. The nature of wireless communication media and the mobility of computers combine to create fundamentally new problems in networking, operating systems, and information systems. Furthermore, many of the applications envisioned for mobile computing place novel demands on software systems.

Although mobile computing is still in its infancy, some basic concepts have been identified and several seminal experimental systems developed. This book includes a set of contributed papers that describe these concepts and systems. Other papers describe applications that are currently being deployed and tested. The first chapter offers an introduction to the field of mobile computing, a survey of technical issues, and a summary of the papers that comprise subsequent chapters. We have chosen to reprint several key papers that appeared previously in conference proceedings. Many of the papers in this book are being published here for the first time. Of these new papers, some are expanded versions of papers first presented at the NSF-sponsored Mobidata Workshop on Mobile and Wireless Information Systems, held at Rutgers University on Oct 31 and Nov 1, 1994.

Many people and organizations assisted us in this project. Ron Ashany and Maria Zemankova of NSF helped provide support for the workshop that spawned this project. Bob Holland of Kluwer Academic Publishers has assisted in seeing the effort through to completion. We conducted a formal refereeing process for original papers in this book and would like to thank those referees, though they remain anonymous. S. Viswanathan assisted us extensively with text formatting. Above all, we thank the authors who have contributed their papers to this collection.

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