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From your Editors

Dear Readers!

Help us to close the information gap!

You, dear reader, are probably a competent specialist hoping to acquire an overview of the systems field. In our Newsletter we intend to inform you about exciting concepts and developments in the world of systems and about the role our members play in the global intellectual community. The 'Newsletter' is not an academic journal, its content is of more general interest - but we don't intend to reduce complex developments to simplistic and meaningless information fragments.

Our goal is to present the following items:

- Ongoing or proposed or recently completed studies.
- Trends and tendencies in various areas of the systems field.
- New ideas from conferences or journals.
- Major book publications and new periodicals.
- Aims and activities of our member societies.
- Upcoming conferences and seminars.

We feel that we have the right combination of experience and talents for undertaking this task, Gerhard Chroust is a professor of computer science, and an expert in desktop publishing. Stephen Sokoloff is a university lecturer in biology, an environmentalist, a multilingual journalist and an English native speaker.

But we won't be able to do it all alone - we'll need your research and project ideas, congress reports and your news articles - and it will be our policy to pay for longer items that we publish. The quality of the Newsletter ultimately hinges on your commitment, your interest, your involvement!

Gerhard Chroust, Stephen Sokoloff

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Computer Aided Systems Theory (CAST)

A Better Future with Toolmaking Software Tools

Interview with Prof. Dr. Franz Pichler,
University of Linz, A-4040 Linz-Austria



Prof. Dr. F. Pichler
University Linz, Austria

Photo: Sokoloff

QUESTION: Professor Pichler, you are a leading proponent of CAST. Of what practical value is this branch of systems science?

FRANZ PICHLER: CAST is concerned with the development of software tools which are based on systems theory. These aid in the designing of complex technical systems. Some important applications of CAST can be found in communication and automation engineering. It can, however, also be used in other fields of the natural, social and economic sciences; wherever one is dealing with the construction of models.

Q: What precisely can one do with CAST?

F.P.: It is comparable to a tool making machine which can be programmed to carry out different production processes. CAST-software provides the designer with tools that are as universal as possible. Using them, he can improve the quality of his products.

Q: Can you give me a practical example?