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Smart Cities: Big Data, Civic Hackers, And The Quest For A New Utopia

BIG DATA, CIVIC HACKERS, AND THE
QUEST FOR A NEW UTOPIA

SMART
CITIES

"Terrific."
—Architecture Today

ANTHONY M. TOWNSEND

WITH A NEW EPILOGUE
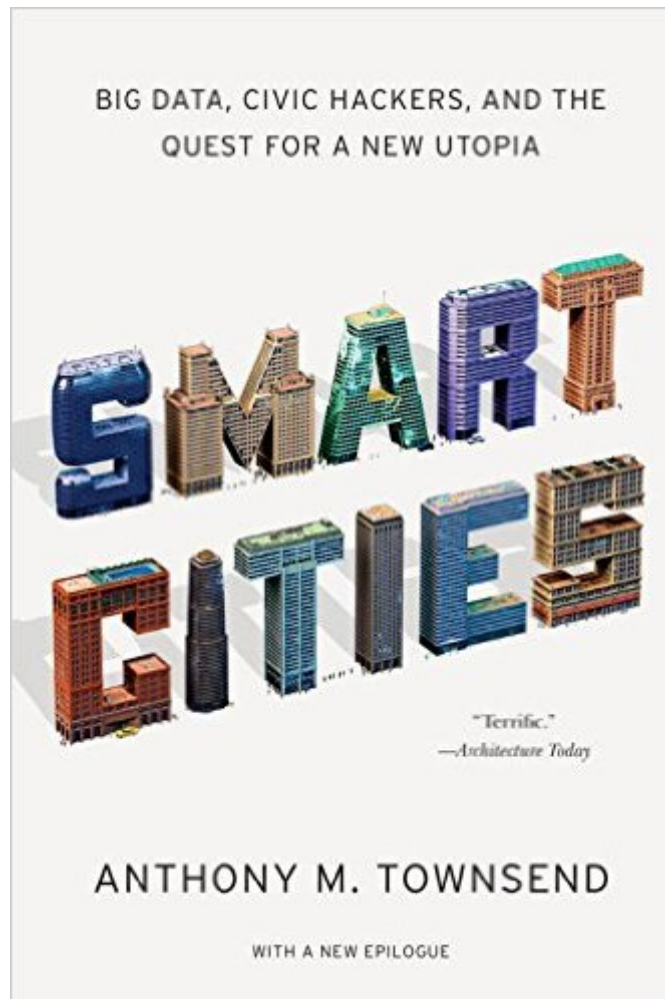
Synopsis

An unflinching look at the aspiring city-builders of our smart, mobile, connected future. We live in a world defined by urbanization and digital ubiquity, where mobile broadband connections outnumber fixed ones, machines dominate a new "internet of things," and more people live in cities than in the countryside. In Smart Cities, urbanist and technology expert Anthony Townsend takes a broad historical look at the forces that have shaped the planning and design of cities and information technologies from the rise of the great industrial cities of the nineteenth century to the present. A century ago, the telegraph and the mechanical tabulator were used to tame cities of millions. Today, cellular networks and cloud computing tie together the complex choreography of mega-regions of tens of millions of people.In response, cities worldwide are deploying technology to address both the timeless challenges of government and the mounting problems posed by human settlements of previously unimaginable size and complexity. In Chicago, GPS sensors on snow plows feed a real-time "plow tracker" map that everyone can access. In Zaragoza, Spain, a "citizen card" can get you on the free city-wide Wi-Fi network, unlock a bike share, check a book out of the library, and pay for your bus ride home. In New York, a guerrilla group of citizen-scientists installed sensors in local sewers to alert you when stormwater runoff overwhelms the system, dumping waste into local waterways.As technology barons, entrepreneurs, mayors, and an emerging vanguard of civic hackers are trying to shape this new frontier, Smart Cities considers the motivations, aspirations, and shortcomings of them all while offering a new civics to guide our efforts as we build the future together, one click at a time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Required reading not only for urbanists, but for futurists as well. Anthony Townsend has written the book, now literally and figuratively, on the "21st century's first new industry - the multi-trillion dollar Smart City industry."At the dawn of this new century, three things have come together accelerating us into our urbanized future - for the first time in 2008, more people now live in cities; mobile computers (AKA smartphones) are now pervasive; and the Internet of Things is on its way to being ubiquitous. And instead of us living in remote islands telecommuting in this flat world, it has actually made Cities even more attractive as it provides the connective fiber to support a vibrant, social, digital nervous system.And everyone who has anything to do with running cities has taken notice - from City Hall, to civic hackers, to urban planners, to academia, entrepreneurs, and of course - giant system integrators.Going from the Crystal Palace in Victorian London, to the shiny skyscrapers of South Korea's "smart city from scratch" Songdo, and even touching on Gelernter's "Mirror Worlds", Asimov's psychohistory and

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