

## Preface to the Second Edition

First of all, thank you to all the readers of the first edition of this book who took the time to comment on the usefulness of the book. Some made suggestions for improvement, and this edition is intended to address many of those suggestions.

Some topics have been rearranged to enhance clarity, and many pages have been updated to reflect the latest information and style. A new chapter teaches you how to code embedded SQL inside a free-format section of code and explains how this method differs from fixed format. Throughout the book, changes and additions have also been made to reflect the capabilities of RPG IV in Version 7.1 of the IBM i® operating system.

IBM introduced free-format RPG IV in 2001, so one would think that most, if not all, RPG IV programmers would be using this coding method by now. However, my research indicates otherwise. For those of you who have waited—for whatever reason—it is not too late to start now. The functionality and coding style that are available in free-format RPG IV offer you increased productivity, better readability, and easier program maintenance than traditional fixed-format coding. This book gives you the tools you need to upgrade your programming skills and bring your RPG programs into the 21st century.

If you still have some lingering doubts about whether free format is for you, I encourage you to read Chapter 2, where I discuss the answer to the question, “Why code in free-format RPG IV?” Then, work through this book to upgrade your skills to the powerful free-format style.

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