



Significance Arithmetic on the IBM 7090 (Classic Reprint)

By Max Goldstein

Forgotten Books, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Excerpt from Significance Arithmetic on the Ibm 7090 I. Introduction. Scientific computations, except for problems in which no scaling is required or for certain specialized problems which deal with rational numbers only, are generally handled on machines in the floating point notation. This notation affords great range and simplicity of programming. It would be difficult to deny the efficacy of automatic floating point operations as a means for eliminating the rescaling procedures of fixed point computing. But at what price has this convenience been bought? In the era of fixed point computing we knew that our results were more or less justifiable on the basis of all reasonable criteria for judging the number of significant places in a result. Now popular normalized floating point calculations simply avoid the embarrassment of improperly scaled fixed point operations and simultaneously obscure the possibility that the results may be nonsense, because non-significant digits have been introduced at some stages of the computation. It would seem that automatic procedures could be useful for determining whether cancellation has indeed destroyed the usefulness of...



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