

EGI Community Forum Invited Talk

Prof. Dr. Horst Zuse on The Origin of the Computer

FMI Building, room MI 00.02.001, Technische Universität München, Boltzmannstraße 3, 85748 Garching
Friday, March 30 2012 9:00 a.m.

About Prof. Dr. Horst Zuse



Horst Zuse was born at November 17, 1945 in Hindelang (Bavaria in Germany). He received the Ph.D. degree in computer science from the Technische Universität (TUB) of Berlin in 1985. Since 1975 he is a senior research scientist with the Technische Universität Berlin. His research interests are information retrieval systems, software engineering, software metrics, computer history and computer architectures.

In 1991 he published the book: Horst Zuse: Software Complexity - Measures and Methods (De Gruyter Publisher). In 1998 the book Horst Zuse: A Framework for Software Measurement (De Gruyter Publisher) followed. In 1998 he received the habilitation (Privatdozent) in the area of Praktische Informatik (Practical Computer Science) and since 2006 he is a Professor with the University of Applied Sciences in Senftenberg.

The Origins of the Computer

Many outstanding scientists and managers were necessary to get the computer to the point of development that we know today. Konrad Zuse (1910-1995) is almost unanimously accepted as the inventor of the first working, freely programmable machine using Boolean logic and with binary floating point numbers. This Machine - called Z3 - he did finish in May 1941 in his small workshop in Berlin-Kreuzberg.

In this presentation the achievements of Charles Babbage (1823), the development of the secret COLOSSUS-Project (UK, 1943), Howard Aiken's Mark I (USA), and the ENIAC (USA). Konrad Zuses contributions to computer development are presented as well, with many surprising pictures and videos. It is not well known, that Konrad Zuse founded, in 1949, a computer company that produced 251 computers of a value of 51 Million Euros. It was the first company which did produce computers in a commercial way.