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acm Pressroom
The First Society in Computing

Software System Award

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IMMEDIATE

ACM CITES TOOL TO DETECT SOFTWARE "BUGS" FOR PRESTIGIOUS AWARD
Bell Labs Researcher Developed "SPIN" to Make Computers More Reliable

New York, March 6, 2002...The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) has recognized Dr. Gerard Holzmann for his contribution to a widely used software package called SPIN that quickly detects defects in networked computers, making them more reliable. Dr. Holzmann, director of research at Bell Labs, a division of Lucent Technologies developed SPIN to assure dependability in complex telephone switching systems, which have stringent reliability requirements. But as computers became more powerful, this verification tool has found applications in everything from Internet protocol software and railway signaling systems to distributed control software essential to nuclear power plants and spacecraft. Dr. Holzmann will receive the ACM Software System Award, which carries a $10,000 prize.

Assuring software quality has always been a challenge, but because of the intricate mutual dependencies common in today's networked computers, code debugging is more complex than ever before. John R. White, executive director and CEO of ACM, noted that finding and removing errors from computer programs can be time-consuming and costly. "Gerard Holzmann's SPIN system is particularly clever in finding techniques for checking rapidly with limited memory, and for assuring that the program being tested works the way it should," he said.

Dr. Holzmann earned his Ph.D. at Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands. A Fulbright Scholar, he has worked at Bell Labs since 1980, and is the author of numerous publications. ACM will present the award to Dr. Holzmann at its annual ACM Awards Banquet on April 27, 2002, at the University of Toronto. The Software System Award honors an institution or individual recognized for developing a software system that has had a lasting influence, reflected in contributions to concepts, in commercial acceptance, or both Financial support for the award is provided by IBM.

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ACM/Press Release
Last Update: January 24, 2002
by Patrick J. De Blasi

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