Preface

If you ever want to realize how much you don't know about something, write a book about the subject. This has been a humbling experience but a fun adventure as well. For me it all started when I was doing machine tool design in LaPorte in the late '70s. I needed a tube for a black and white TV so I went to the local Radio Shack store. While I was there I noticed this ugly gray monitor and keyboard just sitting in a corner playing Pong. I asked the manager what it was, and he explained it was a computer that was fully programmable. That Radio Shack became a regular hangout for me both before and after I bought that old TRS-80 (which I still have).

What happened next was nothing short of a miracle. LaPorte, Indiana, in those days was a small town of about 10,000 that sits on the Indiana-Michigan line. Rich in heritage but nestled in the corn fields away from the big city and big business. Not long after I bought the TRS-80, a blind ad ran for a programmer who had TRS-80 experience. I applied for the job and as it turned out the employer was none other than Howard W. Sams Publishing, a company moving into the software industry. Never would I have thought that a software opportunity would present itself in a small, sleepy town like LaPorte, Indiana. But it did and the rest is history. From 1979 to 1986 I developed operating systems, accounting software, programmer tools, and numerous other products. In 1986 I began developing embedded machine control systems and have either been on my own or owned companies since that time. Over the years I have written hundreds of articles, spoken at conferences, and even appeared on video for a variety of topics.

Over the years, the software industry and America has changed. In recent years I've decided to leave the software and hardware industry to move into something else. So I decided to

share my experience and insight with the software and hardware community before moving on. This is the first in a series of books that cover topics such as embedded systems, communications, host application development, Java, Internet communications, and wireless embedded systems. I hope you enjoy reading this book as much as I have writing it.