Digital Apollo: Human and Machine in Spaceflight (Hardback)

By David A. Mindell

MIT Press Ltd, United States, 2008. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. How human pilots and automated systems worked together to achieve the ultimate in flight - - the lunar landings of NASA s Apollo program. As Apollo 11 s Lunar Module descended toward the moon under automatic control, a program alarm in the guidance computer s software nearly caused a mission abort. Neil Armstrong responded by switching off the automatic mode and taking direct control. He stopped monitoring the computer and began flying the spacecraft, relying on skill to land it and earning praise for a triumph of human over machine. In Digital Apollo, engineer-historian David Mindell takes this famous moment as a starting point for an exploration of the relationship between humans and computers in the Apollo program. In each of the six Apollo landings, the astronaut in command seized control from the computer and landed with his hand on the stick. Mindell recounts the story of astronauts desire to control their spacecraft in parallel with the history of the Apollo Guidance Computer. From the early days of aviation through the birth of spaceflight, test pilots and astronauts sought to be more than spam in a...

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