



Date: 8 November 2000
 To: T10 Technical Committee
 From: Ralph O. Weber
 Subject: Suggestions for T10 Style Guide

The following suggestions for information in the T10 Style Guide come from the November, 2000 SPC-2 Letter Ballot review meeting (results in 00-407).

"Specify" versus "Indicate"

When describing data sent from an application client to a device server, the verb "specify" should be used. When describing data sent in the opposite direction (device server to application client), the verb "indicate" should be used. This suggestion derives from the definitions of the two verbs ("specify" connoting a requirement and "indicate" connoting a suggestion) and the T10 practice of avoiding unnecessary requirements on initiators.

Table Style Guidelines

Three issues have been identified with respect to table style guidelines:

- separation of the table body from heading and footers
- formatting of table notes
- keeping tables on a single page

It must be possible to distinguish table headings and footnotes from the table body and the same line separators cannot be used both in the table body and as heading/footnote separators. If a table contains lines separating the rows in the body, single lines shall be used to separate table body rows and double lines shall be used to separate heading and footing material from the table body. If a table has no lines separating the rows, single lines shall be used to separate heading and footing material from the table body.

Table notes are part of the normative text of a T10 standard, which makes them different from the notes in the main body that are informative. Therefore, table notes need to have a different appearance than body notes. The following guidelines endeavour to achieve that stylistic difference. Table notes:

- shall use same point size as other text in the table
- should be preceded by Note or Notes (underlined and not all caps) on a separate line at the left margin
- shall use a method of identifying notes that is stylistically distinct from non-normative body notes (e.g., bold numbers in square brackets)
- shall extend fully from left table margin to right margin as much as possible

The readability of a table is greatly improved if the whole table is placed on a single page. Document editors should make every reasonable effort to keep the whole of each table on a single page. However, there are several things a document editor shall not do in an attempt to keep tables on a single page:

- reduce the font size
- cause table rows to be closer together than they would be as two lines of body text
- allow tables to move off the page containing the text that describes them
- cause pages to have excessive white space (greater than one-half page)

Use of Equals Signs

The use of equals signs in discursive text should be avoided. The phrase "do xyz if BIT=1" should be written "do xyz if BIT is set to one" or "do xyz if BIT equals one". The exceptions to this guideline are clause titles, subclause titles, tables, and figures, places where excess verbiage can produce formatting problems.