

ENDL T E X A S

Date: 11 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). Revision 1 of this proposal removes discussion of formatting for table notes because the ISO/IEC Style Guide contains all needed information on that subject (and more).

"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 suggest 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
- 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.

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.