

Subj: SFF- 8020
Date: 95- 05- 05 17: 46: 12 EDT
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From: dal_allan@mci mail. com (Dal Allan)
To: ata@dt. wdc. com, atapi@dt. wdc. com, mmc@dt. wdc. com, sff_reflector@Sun. COM

To: ATA Reflector ata@dt. wdc. com
To: ATAPI Reflector atapi@dt. wdc. com
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To: SFF Reflector sff_reflector@sun. com

The following proposal will be submitted next week to the relevant working groups, but in the interests of wide dissemination before then, I have decided to 'flood' the involved reflectors so that you all have time to consider the implications. Those who cannot attend next week will then have an opportunity to participate by airing their opinions.

May 5, 1995

To: X3T10 ATA/ATAPI/MMC Working Groups
SFF Committee
Subject: SFF- 8020
From: Dal Allan

The formal balloting on the March SFF mailing closes this afternoon at 1700 but it is now 1400 and I do not expect an overwhelming surge of ballots to change things before 1700. Although companies can register their ballots at Friday's SFF Committee meeting, the ballots received a week before guide the decisions made on projects that cross-correlate to X3T10 activities.

The balloting was structured to separate the political and technical issues and to reduce the confusion of wanting ATAPI to enter the formal standards process but not feeling comfortable with the technical content of Rev 2. x. I believe the ballot results indicate the desire to support the standards process and show there are reservations about technical content.

SFF- 8020 ATA Packet Interface for CD- ROMs
Approve the Forwarding of: YES
Approve the Technical Content of: NO

It may be an over-simplification, but here are the major differences I see between the long-stable Rev 1. 2 and Rev 2. x, and what those who have called me indicate are their ranking of importance. I have chosen to categorize by caller's affiliation to ATA or ATAPI.

CD- ROM Command Extensions	ATAPI IMPORTANT	ATA Don' t Care
Weak Overlap	ESSENTIAL	Acceptable
Strong Overlap	Helpful	NO BLOODY WAY

The capitalization indicates emotional and business ranking, and if we use this as a guide, there should be no problem on integrating the activities. My recommendation to the ATA, ATAPI, MMC and SFF projects is the following:

X3T10 ATAPI	Accept Weak Overlap as a Project Activity
X3T10 ATA-4	Purse Strong Overlap jointly with ATAPI
X3T10 MMC	Accept CD-ROM Extensions as a Project Activity
SFF	Create 8020i Rev 2. x which deletes Strong Overlap
SFF/ATA-4	Joint SSWG to develop mutually acceptable Strong Overlap

If the above recommendation is accepted then we isolate the hard core of the present crisis which is Strong Overlap. The following interpretation will probably offend both sides, but ATAPI is charging ahead without the ball and chain of an installed base to protect, and ATA is hollering to slow down.

We agreed a long time ago that the physical interface of ATA is the preserve of X3T10, and the ATAPI/ATA projects would have to co-operate on changes to it. Fueling the current 'hostilities' are objections to Proxy Interrupt per se, objections to not following the process of joint development, or both.

Let's isolate the problem and co-operate on getting a solution. We can hold a series of SSWGs to define Strong Overlap. There is no ATA-4 project yet but there wasn't an ATA-2 project when Fast-ATA began either, and the SFF activity fed into ATA-2. The formula worked before, we can do it again.

We have to recognize both the political aspects and the marketing issues. The market will tick on regardless of the standards activities and in some cases despite them. The above actions can benefit industry in general and smooth the standards process.