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X3T9.2/91-85

June 14, 1991

Mr. John B. Lohmeyer
Chairman, ANSI X3T9.2
NCR
3718 N. Rock Road
Wichita, KS 67226

Dear Mr. Lohmeyer:

My company has developed a recent interest in the SCSI-2 Common Access Method proposed standard being developed by X3T9.2. I just recently learned (via a phone conversation with you Thursday, June 13) that your committee is seriously considering advancing the document to X3T9 at your June 17th meeting in Minneapolis.

We applaud the efforts of X3T9.2 in the development of this proposed standard. After an admittedly brief examination of the proposed standard, we believe the draft standard is incomplete in certain important technical areas. It is our position that additional specification is necessary before the document be forwarded for standards processing.

Our specific concern is with the specification of CAM in a Novell environment. In clause 5.3, "Principles of Operation", paragraph 7, the proposed standard reads,

"Under Novell, the XPT is supplied by Novell, and the SIM is implemented according to Novell documentation guidelines".

Our concern is that this is a proposed American National PUBLIC standard. It is inappropriate to name a particular vendor as the standardized implementor of any part of an ANSI standard. The specification of providing an XPT in the Novell environment needs to be spelled out in sufficient detail so that multiple vendors have the opportunity to provide competing versions of that service. Furthermore, the phrase "the SIM is implemented according to Novell documentation" is also troublesome. Hopefully the SIM will be implemented according the CAM standard!

I frankly do not know what Novell's relationship with X3T9.2, but it is my understanding the current versions of Netware do not provide XPT support. There is certainly no guarantee that Novell will implement the desired XPT in a conforming way or in a timely

manner. Indeed, adherence to any ANSI standard is strictly voluntary, so it is inappropriate for a standards committee, let alone a standards document, to speculate on what it hopes a particular vendor will do in the future.

If it is the case the Novell supports this standard, then specific detail needs to be made public so that the CAM document can be complete.

If it is not possible to include the specific details for implementing a standardized XPT in any operating environment, then that operating environment cannot realistically be included in the standard. In the case of Novell, this would certainly be unfortunate. Note, however, that omitting a particular operating environment from the standard does not preclude an implementor from implementing to that environment; it simply leaves the details of implementation up to each implementor.

In summary, we respectfully request that you delay forwarding the proposed standard until this important technical issue is addressed.

We plan on investigating this matter further and hope to be in a position to provide X3T9.2 with a specific change proposal by the August meeting.

I thank you in advance for your consideration of this comment.

Sincerely,

Bob Huntsman
Extended Systems