Identification

MSPM Publication Procedures
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The MSPM is intended to be an "encyclopedia" for the Multics
system. That is, it contains specification of the design
and implementation of the _entire_ system. Tutorial information
on user-generated sub-systems and commands does not fall
within the scope of the Manual, but when such sub-systems
and commands become "part of the system" it is expected
that design and implementation documentation for them
will be placed into the Manual. Furthermore, by definition,
all efforts of the system programming staffs (Project
MAC, Bell Telephone Laboratories, and General Electric's
Cambridge Information Systems Laboratory) do fall within
the scope of the Manual. There are two major reasons
for the heavy emphasis placed upon the MSPM: First, the
Multics system is of considerable interest to both scholars
and professional programmers. Second, the Multics system
will not be unique to Cambridge and Murray Hill, but is
intended to be used at various locations; therefore, in
order to make on-site maintenance of the system feasible,
it is necessary to furnish a thoroughgoing description
of the system.

In light of the foregoing, it may be observed that the
scope of the MSPM is, essentially, the Multics system.
The procedure for submitting a document for publication
is, in general, the following:

1. A programmer is assigned a task.

2. A design specification is written.

3. The document is circulated in draft form to
    interested parties.

4. The relevant Activity Leader, after approving
    the draft, submits it to the MSPM Editor.
    (Note that section numbers are assigned by the
    Editor, usually working in conjunction with the
    Activity Leader.)

5. The Editor submits the document for final
    publication approval to the Programming
    Manager or his designate.

6. The approved document is taken by the Editor to the Documentation Office, where a flexowriter tape is produced.

7. A copy of the flexowritten document is given to the author for proofreading.

8. After any typographical errors have been corrected, the author passes the final copy on to the relevant Activity Leader for final approval, indicated by initialling the Document Office routing form in the appropriate space.

9. The MSPM Editor then checks the final copy, indicating his final approval on the routing form.

10. The document is then reproduced, and copies are distributed to the MSPM mailing list.

Aside from the conventions discussed in BA.3.00, there are no rigid rules covering the writing of individual sections; newcomers to the project may, however, wish to consult with the Editor as to which already-published sections are considered to be reasonable models to follow.

Corrections to Already-Published MSPM Sections

There are two ways of making corrections to already-published MSPM sections. First, if the changes are extensive it is usually the case that the section in question should be reissued. In this case, the procedures are similar to those for the original submission of a document, as described above, except that circulation of a draft is not required other than for extensive re-designs and step 5 (and possibly step 8) is omitted. A corrected copy of the published version of the section is usually submitted, although in some instances a newly-typed version is necessary. A cover letter, briefly summarizing the changes, is required for re-issues.

The second way of making corrections to an already-published section is to produce an appendix to the section, specifying the desired changes. This is usually done when the changes are relatively minor, although an important but concise change may also be reflected in an appendix. Submission procedures are similar to those for re-issuing a section, but the Activity Leader's approval is not required for changes which are essentially corrections of typographical errors. An appendix is published separately, bearing the number of the section it applies to, followed by an "A"; e.g., an appendix to the current section would be

numbered "BA.5A". If further changes are required to
a section which already has an appendix, a new appendix
may be provided, consolidating the two sets of corrections,
or the section may be reissued. An "appendix to an appendix"
is not permitted, however.

Abstracts

In order to furnish crucial information such as function
and calling sequence for programs which cannot immediately
be documented in full, abstracts may be published in the
MSPM. They are published as "place holders", under the
section number assigned to the full version of the documentation,
and are labelled as abstracts.

The MSPM Editor has Abstract forms available. Those steps
involving Activity Leaders are generally omitted in the
submission procedures for abstracts.