

# SNIA Dictionary

## Guidelines for Creating Definitions

- **Brevity is a virtue**
  - Definitions are complete—to quote St. Exupery—not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.
  - The *definitional phrase* of a definition should be substitutable in a sentence for the term being defined.
    - E.g., if the term is “byte” and the definition is “a sequence of eight bits”, then the sentence “this field consists of two bytes” can be converted to “this field consists of two sequences of eight bits” using the definition.
  - If the definitional phrase is too terse to be meaningful on its own, extra paragraphs of discussion may be added.
    - How much to add is a judgement call; the editors strive for a balance between terseness and informativeness. The key to remember is that this is a dictionary, not an encyclopedia.
  - The current online version of the dictionary has been edited with these principles in mind; please see that for examples.
- **Definitions are declarative statements of fact**
  - Remove technical marketing material before submitting them.
- **The SNIA dictionary is vendor-neutral**
  - Vendor-specific and/or trademarked terms are inappropriate
    - Exceptions may be made for very widely used terms
  - Identify any trademarks used within definitions
    - A (tm) after the trademark is sufficient
- **Do not submit definitions from existing sources without attribution.**
  - Note that existing definitions (e.g., from another dictionary) are often protected by copyrights that prevent SNIA reuse.
- **Submission of definitions confers legal rights to SNIA**
  - Submitting a definition requires that the author or authors give SNIA permission to use the definition
  - The permission includes production of “derived works” to allow editing of the definition and translation into other languages