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Information technology — Guidelines for the documentation of computer-based application systems

*Technologies de l'information — Principes généraux relatifs à la
documentation des systèmes d'application informatisés*

Withhold

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3.

In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint technical committee are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this International Standard may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

International Standard ISO/IEC 6592 was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 7, *Software engineering*.

This first edition cancels and replaces ISO 6592:1985, which has been technically revised.

Annex A of this International Standard is for information only.

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Introduction

Documentation is essential to the success of any software development project. Management should determine the quantity and content of documents to ensure there is neither too little nor too much. However, the most important factor is to include all relevant information for the users. This International Standard provides a method to define an adequate set of documents to use throughout the life cycle of a software development project, including its definition and use.

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Information technology — Guidelines for the documentation of computer-based application systems

1 Scope

This International Standard gives guidelines for the documentation of information systems (ISs) and is intended for use in that area. This International Standard is applicable to the software of IS. However, some aspects of hardware, e.g. configuration of the system, are included.

This International Standard is not intended to be a guide to the way documents are organized or structured. Instead, it provides a checklist for two parties to use in agreeing on document content.

The guidelines given in this International Standard have been developed with the objectives of:

- obtaining the necessary commitment of the parties involved with the life cycle of the IS to participate in the development process;
- contributing to the production of well-planned, standardized software system documents;
- enabling the production of software system documents in parallel with the software life cycle.

Well-defined rules for documents during the software life cycle facilitates:

- the provision of relevant information;
- the preparation of the documentation itself;
- estimation of the time and resources required for the achievement of a project;
- exchange of information between parties concerned, resulting in:
 - selection of attainable objectives for a system;
 - a more complete and well-considered functional design;
 - fewer misunderstandings and mistakes;
- making decisions and briefing of personnel during the software life cycle.

This International Standard is designed to be applicable to the whole range of ISs and recognizes the software component of a system may vary from a minor part to a major complex component.

This International Standard applies to documents in any natural language or representation and is independent of the medium used for its implementation, i.e., the principles are generally applicable, but in some cases there may be differences in structure and format.

Although this International Standard is intended mainly for use in the software engineering (SE) area, there will be other groups involved less directly with SE including those involved in SE strategy, people with SE requirements, SE customers and SE users. This International Standard is relevant to those groups. The groups will produce some of the documents (e.g., strategy, customer requirements and user documents).

Associated with SE activities are methods, techniques and tools. Many of these products have their own documentation facilities. Software engineers may use documents of this type, but should ensure the principles and practices given in this International Standard are observed.

2 Normative references

This International Standard has no normative references. Informative references are listed in the bibliography.

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