

Guidelines for CAN Newsletter authors

The editors of the CAN Newsletter prefer technical features or application reports that are *not product-specific*.

We welcome articles on

- New technologies,
- Research results,
- Application examples,
- And *unique* products (first on the market).

Format

- Unformatted text (doc, rtf, txt),
- Pictures with 300-dpi resolution separately,
- Picture captions listed at the end of the article, referring to the picture name.

Please follow these guidelines for writing an article for the CAN Newsletter; they will help you to make your article more attractive to readers:

- 1) *Explain in simple words*: Use *common* words to explain *uncommon* thoughts. Use jargon *only* when *no* other word exists. Readers comprehend better, if you present them with simple sentences and words. Do not try to impress them – they may not let you finish your sentence.
- 2) *Make a point*: Readers read for *information*, not for fun. Stay away from lengthy *commonplace* introductions and summaries.
- 3) *Keep it short*: If you elaborate on the seventh "important" argument, readers may have dozed off. Stick to the *vital* information; present one good, rather than four mediocre arguments. Do not repeat yourself.
- 4) *Avoid words*: Flowery phrases are very well in lyrics; please avoid them in a technical magazine. Most adjectives are superfluous; do not add "fill-in words" to make your text sound nicer: this makes it hard for your reader to understand your point.
- 5) *Structure your article*: If you say "on the other hand", you must have said "on the one hand" before. If you have more than two points to consider, number them ("the following *four* arguments help you understand, why...: Firstly...Secondly..."etc). Write for the *reader's benefit*, not for your own ease.

Please turn over

- 6) *Avoid passive sentences*: They make an article hard to read.
Why say this: "Since CANopen supports program downloading by SDO protocols and specific object dictionary entries (for downloading and program control), downloading new or updated firmware is also possible via the modem.",
when you can say: "With the modem you may download firmware via the SDO protocols and object dictionary entries."
- 7) *Avoid nouns*: Which is easier to understand: 1. "The integration of CAN interfaces in devices increases the acceptability." or: 2. "Users prefer devices with an integrated CAN interface."?
Whenever you have the choice between a noun and a verb, *use the verb*.
- 8) *Move the verb to the front*: Do not make readers hunt down the meaning of your sentence three lines down, as the following sentence does:
"Furthermore, powerful tools for debugging, automated testing, fault injection, and dynamic modeling of the target machine, available for PC's, can be used to guarantee the functional behavior of the software."
Instead say: "The software works well with powerful tools for ..."
- 9) *Do not advertise*: Readers want to benefit from reading; give them information, not promises. Editorial texts are not a marketing playground. A marketing text repeats company or brand names and uses "beautifiers", such as: new, simple, easy, fast. The benefit for the reader: Nil.
- 10) *Re-read your text*: Check your text – have followed the above directions?
Which sentences can you shorten? Which can you make more to the point?
Where can you simplify meaning without falsifying it? Do you need to list every possible instance of your argument, or would *one powerful* reason do?

Thank you,

The CAN Newsletter editors