

Comparing Editorial Styles: Names of Institutions, Companies, Associations, and Conferences

Sources

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. [CMS]
- Favilla, Emmy, and BuzzFeed News. “The BuzzFeed Style Guide”. New York: BuzzFeed News, 2002. [BFG]
- Pallep, et al. *Microsoft Writing Style Guide*. Washington: Microsoft, 2022. [MSG]
- *IEEE Editorial Style Manual*. N.p.: IEEE, n.d. [IEEE]

Intro

This document compares the proper naming prescriptions of four style guides: The Chicago Manual of Style, The BuzzFeed News Style Guide, and the IEEE Editorial Style Manual. While the Chicago manual is considered the standard source of prescription for many, the others are focused and narrow in their application. The IEEE and Microsoft guides are used in tech, with the IEEE guide more applicable to academia and the Microsoft guide more applicable to industry. The BuzzFeed guide focuses on style that applies to reporting and pop culture.

Specifically, this document discusses how IEEE, MSG, and BFG deviate from or supplement CMS. The rules in the Chicago manual are too extensive to discuss thoroughly. This document will also omit discussion of prescriptions for translated names because only CMS has rules for these cases.

Company and Institution Names

IEEE says nothing of company or institution names and their use.

MSG says nothing specifically about company or institution names. Its only applicable prescriptions are those for nouns and pronouns. These are all consistent with CMS.

Of the three guides aside from CSM, BFG makes the most prescriptions for company and institutions names.

BFG tells writers to use “it”, rather than “they”, as company and institution pronouns. MSG agrees with this through its pronoun rules. CSM has no direct rule for this pertaining directly to company and institution names.

- Best Buy announced Monday that it would lay off 1,000 employees.

BFG tells writers to use a lowercase “t” in “the” when it appears before a company or institution name, even when “the” is part of the name. A capital “T” should be used if it is the first letter in the sentence. CSM agrees.

- Where do you buy the New York Times?
- The New York Times is lame.

BFG tells writers to omit words and abbreviations such as “Co.”, “Ltd.”, etc., from company names. CMS tells writers to omit these words from bibliography entries but says nothing of their use in text.

- JPMorgan Chase is a financial firm.
 - In this example, “& Co.” was omitted from “JPMorgan Chase & Co.”

BFG tells writers to use an apostrophe without a following “s” when forming possessive company or institution names. CMS 7.17

- General Motors’ employees should unionize.

BFG tells writers to fully spell the name of universities when they first appear in the text and then gives permission to abbreviate subsequent appearances

- The University of California Berkeley is an expensive school, but lots of people want “UC Berkeley” on their resume.

BFG also gives writers a list of frequently used company and institution names to copy and paste, enabling writers to be totally consistent with these names.

Conference Titles

BFG and MSG say nothing of conference titles.

IEEE contains rules for citing conference papers and proceedings, but otherwise directs the reader to use CMS rules. CMS, though, doesn’t have any rules pertaining specifically to conference titles.

IEEE gives writers a list of words that should be abbreviated in citations of conferences and conference papers. It also tells writers to omit prepositions and articles.

IEEE tells writers to format bibliography entries as follows.

- Author, “Title of paper,” in *Unabbreviated Name of Conf.*, City of Conf, Abbrev. State, year, pp. xxx-xxx
 - G.R. Fau Ilhaber, “Design of service Systems with priority reservations,” in *Conf. Rec. 1995 IEEE Int. Conf. Communications*, pp.3-8.