
Information technology — Linear Tape File System (LTFS) Format Specification

*Technologies de l'information — Spécification du format de système
de fichier à bande magnétique*

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Linear Tape File System (LTFS) Format Specification

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Version 2.2.0

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This document has been released and approved by the SNIA. The SNIA believes that the ideas, methodologies and technologies described in this document accurately represent the SNIA goals and are appropriate for widespread distribution. Suggestions for revision should be directed to <http://www.snia.org/feedback/>

SNIA Technical Position

December 21, 2013

Revision History

Revision	Date	Sections	Originator:	Comments
2.1.0	May 18, 2012	Entire Document	David Pease	LaTeX version contributed by IBM
2.2.0 rev a	January 15, 2013	Entire document	Arnold Jones	Converted to Microsoft Word
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2.2.0 SNIA Technical Position	December 21, 2013* March 14, 2013**	Entire Document	Carl Madison	*2.2.0 rev k formatted as a <i>SNIA Technical Position</i> after SNIA membership approval. **Additional editorial revisions

Suggestion for changes or modifications to this document should be sent to the SNIA Linear Tape File System Technical Work Group at <http://www.snia.org/feedback/>.

Changes between v1.0 and v2.0.0 (standards.iteh.ai)

- Incremented version number to 2.0.0 and updated date to March 11, 2011.
- Improvements in specification text to remove ambiguity and clarify intention of the specification. These changes were made at several locations throughout the document.
- Improvements to clarify description of MAM parameters in Section 9 Medium Auxiliary Memory.
- Removed reference to a specific version of the Unicode standard in Section 6.5 Name pattern format. This removes any requirement to use specific versions of Unicode support code in an implementation.
- Improved description of Name pattern format to remove ambiguity in Section 6.5 Name pattern format.
- Added description of LTFS Format specification version numbering in Section 2.1 Versions.
- Updated XML Schema for Label and Index to match version number format in Annex A and Annex B.
- Added specification of minimum and recommended blocksize value for LTFS Volumes to Section 7.1.2 LTFS Label.
- Added definition of allowed version numbers to Section 7.1.2 LTFS Label and Section 8.2 Index.
- Added definition of fileoffset tag in Section 8.2 Index.
- Extended description in Section 5 Data Extents to support addition of fileoffset tag and associated functionality.
- Added definition of highestfileuid tag in Section 8.2 Index.
- Added definition of fileuid tag in Section 8.2 Index.

LTFS Format Specification

- Added definition of backup time tag in Section [8.2 Index](#).
- Incremented version number in Application Client Specific Information (ACSI) structure shown in [9.3 Use of Volume Coherency Information for LTFS](#). This increment allows identification of LTFS Volumes written with a LTFS v1.0 compliant implementation. A widely used v1.0 implementation wrote ambiguous ACSI values due to an implementation bug.
- Added definition of extended attributes in the ltfs.* namespace in [Annex C](#).
- Added description for handling unknown XML tags in Index to Section [8.2.10 Managing LTFS Indexes](#).

Changes between v2.0.0 and v2.0.1

- Incremented specification version number to 2.0.1.
- Updated specification date to August 17, 2011.
- Expanded historical record of changes between revisions of LTFS Format Specification.
- Improved description of constraints for two Indexes having the same generation number in Section [4.4.1 Generation Number](#) to make it clear that differences in access time values is permitted between Indexes that are otherwise except for self pointer and index pointer values.
- Added note in Section [4.4.1 Generation Number](#) to explicitly state that Index generation numbers may increase by integer values other than 1.
- Expanded description of the ltfs.sync extended attribute in [Annex C](#). The expanded description explicitly states that this extended attribute triggers a sync of the in-memory data to the storage media. That is, the operation is analogous to a POSIX sync operation.

Changes between v2.0.1 and v2.1.0

- Incremented specification version number to 2.1.0.
- Updated specification date to October 18, 2012.
- Added definition of symlink tag in Section [8.2 Index](#).
- Added example of symlink tag use in [Annex E](#) (informative) Complete Example LTFS Index.
- Added symlink tag to [Annex B](#).
- Added description of "ltfs.vendor.X.Y" extended attribute namespace in [Annex C](#).
- Added description of software metadata section in [Annex C](#).
- Added description of drive metadata section in [Annex C](#).
- Added "ltfs.labelVersion" extended attribute in [Annex C](#).
- Added "ltfs.indexVersion" extended attribute in [Annex C](#).
- Added "ltfs.mediaEncrypted" extended attribute in [Annex C](#).
- Improved description of "ltfs.mediaStorageAlert" extended attribute in [Annex C](#).

Changes between v2.1.0 and v2.2.0

- Incremented specification version number to 2.2.0.
- Updated specification date to July 16, 2013.
- Changed "2010" to "2013" in XML examples.
- Editorial Cleanup.

- Changed “extentinfo” definition in Section 8.2 Index.
- Changed “symlink” definition in Section 8.2 Index.
- Added additional paragraph to “symlink” definition in Section 8.2 Index.
- Added general comments at start of Section 9 Medium Auxiliary Memory.
- Added Section 9.4 Use of Host-type Attributes for LTFS.
- Removed Section 9 Certification from document.
- Added “Itfs.mamBarcode” extended attribute in Annex C.4 Volume Metadata.
- Added “Itfs.mamApplicationVendor” extended attribute in Annex C.4 Volume Metadata.
- Added “Itfs.mamApplicationVersion” extended attribute in Annex C.4 Volume Metadata.
- Added “Itfs.mamApplicationFormatVersion” extended attribute in Annex C.4 Volume Metadata.
- Added new Annex F Interoperability Recommendation and added File Spanning and File Permissions subsections

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Contents

1	Introduction	10
2	Scope	11
2.1	Versions	11
2.2	Conformance	12
3	Definitions and Acronyms	13
3.1	Definitions	13
3.2	Acronyms	15
4	Volume Layout	16
4.1	LTFS Partitions	16
4.2	LTFS Constructs	16
4.3	Partition Layout	17
4.4	Index Layout	18
5	Data Extents	20
5.1	Extent Lists	20
5.2	Extents Illustrated	20
5.3	Files Illustrated	22
6	Data Formats	26
6.1	Boolean format	26
6.2	Creator format	26
6.3	Extended attribute value format	26
6.4	Name format	27
6.5	Name pattern format	27
6.6	String format	27
6.7	Time stamp format	28
6.8	UUID format	28
7	Label Format	29
7.1	Label Construct	29

LTFS Format Specification

8	Index Format	32
8.1	Index Construct	32
8.2	Index	32
9	Medium Auxiliary Memory	43
9.1	Volume Change Reference	43
9.2	Volume Coherency Information	44
9.3	Use of Volume Coherency Information for LTFS	44
9.4	Use of Host-type Attributes for LTFS	46
	Annex A (normative) LTFS Label XML Schema	48
	Annex B (normative) LTFS Index XML Schema	50
	Annex C (normative) Reserved Extended Attribute definitions	53
C.1	Software Metadata	53
C.2	Drive Metadata	53
C.3	Object Metadata	53
C.4	Volume Metadata	54
C.5	Media Metadata	55
	Annex D (informative) Example of Valid Simple Complete LTFS Volume	58
	Annex E (informative) Complete Example LTFS Index	59
	Annex F (normative) Interoperability Recommendations	63
F.1	Spanning Files across Multiple Tape Volumes in LTFS	63
F.2	File Permissions in LTFS	66

List of Figures

Figure 1 — LTFS Partition.....	16
Figure 2 — Label Construct	16
Figure 3 — Index Construct	17
Figure 4 — Partition Layout.....	17
Figure 5 — Complete partition containing data.....	18
Figure 6 — Back Pointer example	19
Figure 7 — Extent starting and ending with full block	21
Figure 8 — Extent starting with full block and ending with fractional block	21
Figure 9 — Extent starting and ending in mid-block	21
Figure 11 — File contained in two Data Extents.....	22
Figure 10 — File contained in a single Data Extent.....	22
Figure 12 — Shared Blocks example	23
Figure 13 — Sparse files example	24
Figure 14 — Shared data example.....	24
Figure 15 — Label construct.....	29
Figure 16 — Index Construct	32
Figure D. 1 — Content of a simple LTFS volume.....	58

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List of Tables

Table 1 — Version elements	11
Table 2 — Version comparisons	12
Table 3 — Extent list entry starting and ending with full block	21
Table 4 — Extent list entry starting with full block and ending with fractional block	21
Table 5 — Extent list entry starting and ending in mid-block	22
Table 6 — Extent list entry for file contained in a single Data Extent	22
Table 7 — Extent list entry for a file contained in two Data Extents	22
Table 8 — Extent lists for Shared Blocks example	23
Table 9 — Extent list for sparse files example	24
Table 10 — Extent lists for shared data example	25
Table 11 — Creator format definitions	26
Table 12 — Prohibited characters for name format	27
Table 13 — Characters which should be avoided for name format	27
Table 14 — Time stamp format	28
Table 15 — VOL1 Label Construct	29
Table 16 — Volume Coherency Information	44
Table 17 — ACSI format for LTFS	45
Table 18 — Relevant Host-type Attributes for LTFS	46
Table 19 — Example of Host-type Attributes	47
Table C. 1 — Reserved extended attribute definitions: Software metadata	53
Table C. 2 — Reserved extended attribute definitions: Drive metadata	53
Table C. 3 — Reserved extended attribute definitions: Object metadata	54
Table C. 4 — Reserved extended attribute definitions: Volume metadata	54
Table C. 5 — Reserved extended attribute definitions: Media metadata	55

1 Introduction

This document defines a Linear Tape File System (LTFS) Format separate from any implementation on data storage media. Using this format, data is stored in LTFS Volumes. An LTFS Volume holds data files and corresponding metadata to completely describe the directory and file structures stored on the volume.

The LTFS Format has these features:

- An LTFS Volume can be mounted and volume content accessed with full use of the data without the need to access other information sources.
- Data can be passed between sites and applications using only the information written to an LTFS Volume.
- Files can be written to, and read from, an LTFS Volume using standard POSIX file operations.

The LTFS Format is particularly suited to these usages:

- Data export and import.
- Data interchange and exchange.
- Direct file and partial file recall from sequential access media.
- Archival storage of files using a simplified, self-contained or “self-describing” format on sequential access media.

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2 Scope

This document defines the LTFS Format requirements for interchanged media that claims LTFS compliance. Those requirements are specified as the size and sequence of data blocks and file marks on the media, the content and form of special data constructs (the LTFS Label and LTFS Index), and the content of the partition labels and use of MAM parameters.

The data content (not the physical media) of the LTFS format shall be interchangeable among all data storage systems claiming conformance to this format. Physical media interchange is dependent on compatibility of physical media and the media access devices in use.

NOTE: This document does not contain instructions or tape command sequences to build the LTFS structure.

2.1 Versions

This document describes version 2.2.0 of the Linear Tape File System (LTFS) Format Specification.

The version number for the LTFS Format Specification consists of three integer elements separated by period characters of the form *M.N.R*, where *M*, *N*, and *R* are positive integers or zero. Differences in the version number between different revisions of this specification indicate the nature of the changes made between the two revisions. Each of the integers in the format specification are incremented according to Table 1.

Table 1 — Version elements

Element	Description
<i>M</i>	Incremented when a major update has been made to the LTFS Format Specification. Major updates are defined as any change to the on-media format or specification semantics that are expected to break compatibility with older versions of the specification.
<i>N</i>	Incremented when a minor update has been made to the LTFS Format Specification. Minor updates are defined as any change to the on-media format or specification semantics that is not expected to break compatibility with older versions of the specification that have the same value for <i>M</i> in the version number.
<i>R</i>	Incremented when textual revisions are made to the LTFS Format Specification. Textual revisions are defined as revisions that improve the clarity of the specification document <i>without</i> changing the intent of the document. By definition, minor changes do not alter the on-media format or specification semantics.

NOTE 1: When any element of the specification version number is incremented, all sub-ordinate elements to the right are reset to zero. For example, if the version is 1.0.12 and *N* is incremented to 1, then *R* is set to zero resulting in version 1.1.0.

NOTE 2: The first public version of this document used version number 1.0. This value should be interpreted as equivalent to 1.0.0 in the version numbering defined in this document.