

Rarely Asked Questions

Strange but true stories from the call logs of Analog Devices

Political Correctness and Datasheets

Q. Datasheet Specifications: Provoking or Confusing?

A. That's a matter of opinion. We receive many comments about our datasheets, mostly "good," "well done" or "reliable data." On some occasions, however, customers complain about missing information (usually specific to their application), or the occasional typo that finds its way into a datasheet. We're used to receiving a breadth of comments about our datasheets, but rarely do we get calls that are completely unexpected.

A recent call started well, with the caller, Ms. April Day, commenting that our products performed admirably, but she found our datasheets to be a little difficult to read. I chuckled to myself and told her, "Yes, some of our engineers can get carried away when writing datasheets." The conversation took a turn into uncharted territory when she said the datasheets weren't technically difficult to read, but that they were not "PC" friendly. I assured her that our datasheets could be viewed or printed from any computer. "No, no," she said, "I mean politically correct." She then proceeded to rattle off the offending aspects of the datasheet. When she had finished her list, my chin was severely bruised from having hit my desk top so often during her call.

She was quite enthusiastic and passionate about her cause, and I told her we would take her comments under advisement. After mulling over her comments with some of my colleagues, we came up with some creative "PC" alternatives that could be implemented into our datasheets. Following is her list of offensive parameters; with our "politically correct" alternatives in italics.

Input bias current... *Input non-discriminatory current*, Voltage Noise... *Silence*, Challenged Voltage, Thermal resis-



tance... *Non-receptive thermal conduction*, Common Mode Rejection Ratio... *Bourgeois Mode No-Dice Ratio*, Disable pin... *Differently abled pin*, Negative feedback... *Non-Positive feedback*, Absolute Maximum ratings... *Genuine Zenith ratings*, Power Supply Rejection Ratio... *Power Supply Refusal Ratio*, Negative power supply... *Unaffirmative power supply*, and Harmonic Distortion... *Spectral Purity Assessment*.

Ms. Day was quite pleased with our new phraseology and appreciated our quick response in resolving this issue. I told her that if one of our parts met with an early demise in her application, she could return it to our Analysis Laboratory for a complete *Deferred Success Analysis Report*.

By the way, I forgot to mention our caller's middle name... Fools, that's right April Fools Day. In case you haven't realized it yet, this RAQ has been an April Fools' Day¹ joke, rest assured we will not be incorporating any of these changes into our datasheets. See you next month!

¹ April Fools' Day or All Fools' Day, is not an official holiday, but is celebrated in many countries on April 1st. The day is marked by playing practical jokes on family, friends, enemies and co-workers.



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