

*The Gregg Reference Manual* is intended for anyone who writes, edits, or prepares material for distribution or publication. For over fifty years this manual has been recognized as the best style manual for business professionals and for students who want to master the on-the-job standards of business professionals.

GRM will provide you with answers that can't be found in comparable manuals. That probably explains why GRM has been so warmly received over the years. The unsolicited five-star reviews on the Amazon Web site are only one indication of the reputation that *The Gregg Reference Manual* enjoys among people in professional organizations and educational institutions.

GRM serves as a *survival manual* for those professionals who no longer enjoy the help of trained assistants to ensure the quality of the documents they must produce. And it serves as an indispensable *training manual* for those who want to improve their language skills so that they can achieve that level of confidence they have always craved.

## Features of the New Edition

The eleventh edition of *The Gregg Reference Manual* has been revised and enhanced to satisfy the continually evolving demands of business and academic writers. In addition, this special four-color edition of GRM pays tribute to the author Bill Sabin with personal photographs and a new biographical essay, "About the Book and the Author" (pages viii–ix); "A Personal Tribute," remarks given by Bill's sister-in-law, Mary Lee Noonan, at his Memorial (pages x–xi); and a selection of tributes from Bill's colleagues in the world of business writing, "Professional Tributes" (page xii). Here are some of the other key features of this new edition of *The Gregg Reference Manual*.

**Essays on the Nature of Style.** This edition highlights Bill Sabin's six classic essays on style: "Mastering Number Style: One (or 1?) Approach"; "A Fresh Look at Capitalization"; "The Comma Trauma"; "The Plight of the Compound Adjective—Or, Where Have All the Hyphens Gone?"; "The Semicolon; and Other Myths"; and "Re.: Abbrevs." In these essays, which may be found on pages xxiv–xli, Bill Sabin spelled out the basic principles that governed his thinking on matters of style. As he observed once in a comment addressed to the reader, "Once you understand those principles, you can manipulate the rules [on style] with intelligence and taste."

**New Material on Style, Grammar, Usage, and Formatting.** The treatment of style, grammar, usage, and formatting has been expanded (1) to address the many questions and suggestions submitted by readers since the publication of the tenth edition, (2) to reflect new business practices that have emerged together with new computer technology, (3) to incorporate new terms and phrases in the examples so that GRM reflects the way that people speak and write today, and (4) to address various questions that some of the new vocabulary creates.

The eleventh edition flags the most *basic rules* of style, grammar, and usage—those rules that apply to the kinds of problems that typical readers encounter most often. The number for a basic rule appears in a rectangular, orange-colored panel, like this:

**408**

A rule number that does not appear in a rectangular panel but simply looks like this—**409**—concerns one of the *fine points*: those problems of style or grammar or usage that occur less often but tend to cause special trouble when they do. Extensive coverage of the fine points is one

of the many things that distinguishes GRM from similar types of reference books. Readers will find in GRM the answers to questions on style and grammar and usage that they cannot find anywhere else.

Like previous editions, the eleventh edition of GRM offers updated advice on dealing with style and usage problems related to computer technology: Should you italicize or underline the titles of computer software? (See ¶290h.) Should you hyphenate some or all of the new terms that use *e-* or *i-* or *Web-* as a prefix? (See ¶847.) What are the latest guidelines on netiquette? (See the extensive discussion of e-mail that appears on pages 494–510.) See ¶1390 for a brand-new discussion of text messages.

**Easy-to-Follow Models.** The rules on grammar, style, and usage are accompanied by numerous examples, so you can quickly find models on which to pattern a solution to the various problems you run into as you're writing or editing.

GRM offers an abundance of illustrations of documents—for example, e-mail messages, letters, reports, tables, plus scannable résumés and other employment documents. Using these illustrations as models, you can easily create and format all kinds of written communications. In discussing the special features of word processing software that make it easy to format various elements in business documents, GRM notes ways to overcome the problems that these time-saving features can create.

**Index.** Readers have raved about the index to *The Gregg Reference Manual* because it makes the manual so easy to navigate. Now, as in the past, the index lists not only major topics, like *capitalization* or *forms of address*; it also contains many entries for individual words and expressions. So, for example, you will find entries for terms and phrases like *digerati*, *Latinos-Latinas*, and *thank you in advance*. You will also find entries for many abbreviations, including *MP3*, *PDF*, and *GPS*, to name just a few. The index for the eleventh edition has, of course, been expanded to reflect the new additions on style, grammar, usage, and formatting.

But the index is not the only way to look things up in GRM. In the eleventh edition, as in the tenth, you will find (1) a topical index on the inside front cover, (2) detailed outlines at the opening of each section of the manual, and (3) marginal tabs that identify all the pages in a specific section. In addition you will also find an extensive number of cross-references throughout the manual. Not sure how to spell a term that you are looking for? Consult ¶719, which provides a 13-page guide to words that are frequently confused because they sound alike or look alike; for example, *cite-sight-site* or *stationary-stationery*. You may also want to scan the table of contents for Section 11, which provides guidelines for the proper use of terms like *already-all ready* or *Capital-capitol-Capitol*. Given all the options for looking things up, you will quickly and easily find out what you want to know. See “How to Look Things Up,” on pages xxi–xxiii.

**GRM Web Site.** The Web site for the eleventh edition provides a number of additional features, including the “Ask the Publisher” service, “Rules for Alphabetic Filing,” and a “Glossary of Computer Terms.” See the Web site, too, for an overview of all of the components of the GRM program and unsolicited comments from GRM readers.

**Ask the Publisher.** There will always be unusual situations and once-in-a-lifetime questions that no reference manual could possibly anticipate. The GRM Web site, at <www.gregg.com>, provides a unique feature—“Ask the Publisher”—that will enable you to quickly get some guidance on how to deal with situations like these. Through “Ask the Publisher” you may also make suggestions for future editions of *The Gregg Reference Manual*.

**Rules for Alphabetic Filing.** This section, Appendix C, has appeared in the printed version of GRM in the past. The basic guidelines offered here are consistent with the standards established by the leading professional organization for records managers, ARMA International.

**Glossary of Computer Terms.** This glossary, Appendix D, has been updated for the eleventh edition and now includes a whole host of new terms, like *bacn*, *blook*, *gamma testing*, and so on.

**Overview of the Components.** The GRM Web site makes it possible for you to get a perspective on all the components of the GRM program, order them if you wish, and easily contact editors and marketing personnel when you have questions. As previously noted, you can always make use of the “Ask the Publisher” service.

**Readers’ Comments.** This online feature presents the unsolicited opinions of more than thirty people who describe the role that GRM has played in their success. Their comments will give you a real sense of how GRM can help you achieve your goals.

**E-Book.** For the first time, *The Gregg Reference Manual* is also available as an e-book. This version of the eleventh edition includes the two online appendixes—the “Rules for Alphabetic Filing” and the “Glossary of Computer Terms.”

## An Overview of the Organization of the Eleventh Edition

This edition of *The Gregg Reference Manual* consists of 18 sections and 4 appendixes, organized in three parts:

**Part 1** (Sections 1–11) deals with grammar, usage, and the chief aspects of style—punctuation, capitalization, numbers, abbreviations, plurals and possessives, spelling, compound words, and word division.

**Part 2** (Sections 12–18) deals with editing and proofreading techniques and the procedures for creating and formatting all kinds of written communications—letters, memos, e-mail messages, text messages, reports, manuscripts, notes and bibliographies, tables, agendas, minutes, itineraries, fax cover sheets, news releases, outlines, and résumés and other employment communications. Readers will find here examples of documents produced using templates from Microsoft Word 2007, as well as examples of documents that conform with the standard formats most commonly used in business. Part 2 also provides detailed guidelines on forms of address.

**Part 3** (Appendixes A–D) provides a glossary of grammatical terms, a discussion of troublesome pronunciation problems, the rules for alphabetic filing, and a glossary of computer terms. The essays on the nature of style that formed Appendix A in the tenth edition have been moved up to the front of the book.