FAST™

Flexible Appropriate Structured & Transparent

Good spreadsheet design relies on adopting common principles and uniform practices.

Most people make the mistake of thinking design is what it looks like. That's not what we think design is. Design is how it works.
Steve Jobs

FAST STANDARD

FAST DESIGN FEATURES

Developed over many years, FAST is a
shared modelling language based
on a series of trademark characteristics
that ensure transparency, efficient implementation,
ease of navigation and maintenance.

FAST DESIGN FEATURE	IMPACT ON FINANCIAL MODEL
Complicated logic broken down into small simple pieces of logic	The complexity of the transaction is separated from the complexity of the model. The breaking down of complex logic keeps the model easy to read.
Each of the small pieces of logic is made up of ingredients, calculations and results	All the elements required to understand a calculation are presented together – this avoids "paging around" a model to find precedents to a calculation.
Labels and units are part of each ingredient, each calculation and each result i.e. each line item has the 3 properties—name, unit and value	Line items remain consistent, reusable elements within the model.
Calculations are kept short and have a proper syntax	This ensures that they are easy to read. A good analogy with business writing which requires short, declarative sentences.
Limited number of Excel functions used – and only where necessary	Overuse of Excel functions shows off the "cleverness" of the modeller, but often impairs transparency.
As in any logical process, models follow a coherent flow from top to bottom and left to right	This ensures that models remain logically intact and therefore easy to trace and adapt.

**FAST
STANDARD**

FAST DESIGN FEATURES
(Contd.)

FAST DESIGN FEATURE	IMPACT ON FINANCIAL MODEL
Simple visual colour-coding	Useful information about the model structure is encoded in the model, and is not kept in the head of the modeller.
Simple navigation	Making it easy for the reader to find what he or she is looking for.
Minimal use of range names and macros	As far as possible the model should avoid creating "black boxes".
Multiple input sets	Making it easy to run scenarios and options through the model.
Multiple tracked output sets	Ensures the modeller can keep a track of changes as they impact the model.
Organised error checks	Quickly alerting the modeller and reader to issues in the model that need to be addressed.
Business documentation within model	Ensuring that anybody opening the model has all the information to hand to allow them to understand it.
Best-practice standards observed, such as formula equivalency, separation of inputs, calculations and outputs, clear marking of inputs, timing flexibility, no circularities	These are "market norms" for good practice in modelling and help to ensure consistent structure.

FAST Standard Organisation

Raising spreadsheet standards

The FAST Standard Organisation is the independent standards body set up to:

- Promote, protect, and evolve the FAST Standard
- Provide members with a spreadsheet governance framework
- Assist third parties who are creating new products and services based on the standard
- Provide independent testing and certification.

The above functions are overseen by an Advisory Board and a Moderation Board constituted by organisations and individuals who advocate the FAST Standard.

The FSO is a not-for-profit entity, specifically a UK membership-based company limited by guarantee with a non-distribution clause. In other words, the FSO does not have shareholders and cannot distribute profits to its members. For more information please visit www.fast-standard.org/about-fso

**FAST
STANDARD
ORGANISATION**

SIMPLICITY IS THE ULTIMATE SOPHISTICATION

Leonardo Da Vinci

FAST