Mt 195 Swift Message Example

Understanding the MT 195 Swift Message: A Comprehensive Guide with Examples

In the intricate world of global financial communications, the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) network serves as the backbone for secure and standardized messaging. Among the many message types within the SWIFT MT (Message Type) series, the MT 195 message plays a critical, yet often underappreciated, role. This article provides an in-depth look at the **MT 195 Swift message example**, its purpose, structure, real-world applications, and best practices for usage. Whether you are a financial operations professional, a compliance officer, or a student of banking, understanding the MT 195 is essential for effective interbank communication.

What Is an MT 195 Swift Message?

The MT 195 is a SWIFT message type categorized under the "System" messages group, specifically within the "General Purpose" segment. Its formal title is "Queries" and it is used by financial institutions to send a query to another bank or financial entity regarding a previously sent message or transaction. The MT 195 is essentially a tool for clarification, follow-up, or correction. It does not carry payment instructions or confirm transactions; instead, it initiates a communication thread.

For example, if Bank A sends an MT 103 (Customer Credit Transfer) to Bank B, and Bank B notices a missing beneficiary name, Bank B can use an MT 195 to ask Bank A for the missing data. Similarly, a bank might query a missing confirmation for an MT 202 (General Financial Institution Transfer). The **MT 195 Swift message example** often demonstrates how to structure such requests in a clear, traceable manner.

Key Features of the MT 195

Purpose: The primary purpose of an MT 195 is to act as an inquiry. It is not a rejection, correction, or unauthorized reversal. It simply asks for additional information or confirmation. This distinction is vital for maintaining audit trails and regulatory compliance.

Direction: The MT 195 can be sent from one institution to another. It is typically used in a bidirectional manner—either the sender of the original transaction queries the receiver, or vice versa. However, the most common scenario is the receiver of the original message querying the sender.

Related Messages: The MT 196

(Answers) is the logical counterpart to the MT 195. When an institution receives a query via an MT 195, it should respond with an MT 196 that provides the requested information. This pair forms a complete query-response cycle.

No Financial Instruction: Unlike MT 103 or MT 202, an MT 195 does not instruct any transfer of funds. It is purely an administrative message. Therefore, it does not have fields for amounts, currencies, or value dates, but it does reference the original message being queried.

Structure of an MT 195 Message

To understand a **MT 195 Swift message example**, it helps to know its standard SWIFT message structure. An MT 195 consists of several blocks and fields defined by the SWIFT standards. Below is the typical layout:

Block 1: Basic Header

Contains the application identifier, service identifier, and logical terminal address of the sender.

Block 2: Application Header

Indicates the message type (195), direction (input/output), and the destination BIC (Bank Identifier Code).

Block 3: User Header (Optional)

Often used for optional parameters like priority (e.g., urgent) or delivery monitoring. In many **MT 195 Swift message examples**, this block is either omitted or left minimal.

Block 4: Text Block

This is the core of the message. For MT 195, the text block contains the following mandatory and optional fields:

- **Field 20: Transaction Reference Number** (Mandatory) – Unique identifier assigned by the sender of the query.
- **Field 21: Related Reference** (Mandatory) – Reference number of the message being queried (e.g., the original message's field 20).
- **Field 32A: Value Date / Currency / Amount** (Optional but highly recommended) – Provides the value date, currency code, and amount of the original transaction. This helps the receiver quickly identify the query.
- **Field 52A, 52B, or 52D: Ordering Institution** (Optional) – Identifies the institution that originated the query, especially when different from the sender.
- **Field 72: Sender to Receiver Information** (Mandatory in practice) – Free-format text where the actual query is written. This field is structured with specific tags to convey the type of query.
- **Field 77A: Narrative** (Optional) – Additional free text for clarification.

The most critical field for the actual query is **Field 72**. It uses a standardized set of qualifiers (tags) to indicate what is being requested. Common tags include:

- /ACC/ – Account number query
- /BNF/ – Beneficiary information query
- /CHRG/ – Charges query
- /DUP/ – Duplicate message query
- /INST/ – Payment instructions

query
- /REJ/ – Reason for rejection query
- /VAL/ – Value date query

MT 195 Swift Message Example: A Real-World Scenario

Let's examine a concrete **MT 195 Swift message example** to illustrate its usage. Suppose Bank Alpha (BIC: ALPHADEFF) sent an MT 103 on 2025-04-01 to Bank Beta (BIC: BETAFRPP) for a payment of USD 50,000 to a beneficiary named John Smith. Bank Beta received the message but found that the beneficiary account number was missing. Bank Beta decides to query Bank Alpha by sending an MT 195.

Example Message (simplified):

```
{1:F01BETAFRPPAXXX0000000000}{2:O1951020040104ALPHADEFFX0XX0000000000}{4:
:20:QUERY20250401001
:21:ALPHA20250401001
:32A:250401USD50000,00
:72:/BNF/Please provide
beneficiary account number for
payment of John Smith.
}
```

Explanation of fields:

- **:20:** The query's own reference (QUERY20250401001) assigned by Bank Beta.
- **:21:** The related reference of the original MT 103 (ALPHA20250401001) as sent by Bank Alpha.
- **:32A:** Value date (25 April 2025), currency (USD), and amount (50000,00) to help pinpoint the transaction.
- **:72:** The query itself: "/BNF/Please provide beneficiary account number for payment of John Smith."

This **MT 195 Swift message example** demonstrates a clear and traceable inquiry. The receiving institution (Bank Alpha) can use the reference numbers to locate the original message and respond with an MT 196 containing the missing account number.

Why Use MT 195 Instead of Other Communication Channels?

Financial institutions could theoretically use email, phone, or dedicated portals to resolve queries. However, the MT 195 offers several advantages:

1. **Audit Trail:** Every SWIFT message is logged and timestamped, providing an indisputable record of the query and its response. This is crucial for compliance and dispute resolution.
2. **Standardization:** The use of tags in field 72 ensures that both parties understand the nature of the query. For example, /BNF/ universally means a beneficiary-related query.
3. **Integration:** MT 195 messages can be processed automatically by back-office systems, reducing manual intervention and errors.
4. **Speed:** SWIFT messages are delivered within minutes, ensuring timely resolution.
5. **Security:** SWIFT's secure network prevents unauthorized access and tampering, unlike email.

Best Practices for Crafting an MT 195

To maximize effectiveness, follow these guidelines when creating an **MT 195 Swift message example** for your own use:

1. Always Include the Related Reference

Field 21 must contain the original message's transaction reference (field 20). Without this, the receiving bank may have difficulty identifying the transaction, leading to delays.

2. Be Specific in Field 72

Use the appropriate tag and write a concise, clear question. Avoid ambiguous language. For instance, "/BNF/Please provide full name and address of beneficiary" is better than "Please clarify."

3. Include Value Date and Amount (When Possible)

Field 32A is optional but highly recommended. It helps disambiguate if multiple transactions share the same reference. Always provide the exact value date, currency, and amount from the original message.

4. Use a Unique Query Reference

Field 20 should be unique for each MT 195 you send. Many banks use a prefix like "QRY" or "QUERY" followed by a date and a sequence number to ensure uniqueness.

5. Avoid Combining Multiple Queries in One Message

If you have several unrelated questions, send separate MT 195 messages for each distinct transaction. Combining queries creates confusion and complicates the response.

6. Respond Promptly with MT 196

Once you receive an MT 195, respond with an MT 196 as soon as possible. Even if you need to investigate, send an interim acknowledgment if possible. SWIFT best practices recommend responding within 24 hours.

Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them

Pitfall 1: Using MT 195 to reject a payment. If you want to reject a transaction, use MT 199 (Free Format) or the appropriate specific rejection message (e.g., MT 103 with a reason code). An MT 195 is not a rejection.

Pitfall 2: Omitting the / tag in field 72. Without a tag, the receiving system may not recognize the nature of the query, leading to manual processing. Always start with a slash and a three-letter code.

Pitfall 3: Including sensitive customer data in free text. Protect personal data by not including full customer names or account numbers unless necessary. Use references instead.

Pitfall 4: Sending duplicate queries. If you send multiple MT 195s for the same transaction, you will confuse the receiver. Track your queries and only resend if there is no response within the expected timeframe (e.g., 48 hours).

Integration with Other SWIFT Messages

The MT 195 is part of a broader ecosystem. It often works in conjunction with:

- **MT 196:** As mentioned, the answer to the query.
- **MT 199:** Free format messages that can be used for non-standard queries, but MT 195 is preferred for structured queries.
- **MT 103, MT 202, MT 205, etc.:** The messages being queried. Understanding the structure of these payment messages is essential to creating accurate MT 195 examples.
- **MT 298:** Used for queries related to securities, whereas MT 195 is general purpose.

MT 195 in the Context of SWIFT GPI (Global Payments Innovation)

With the advent of SWIFT GPI, which provides end-to-end tracking and real-time payment statuses, the need for manual queries has reduced. However, MT 195 remains relevant for complex inquiry scenarios that GPI does not fully address, such as regulatory compliance checks or

