



Attorneys at Law

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EDITOR'S NOTE

CHINA, THE UNITED STATES, AND STANDARDS

The world is awash today with news of the Peoples Republic of China, just as it is awash with that vast nation's products. In this issue, we focus on the substantial stake that China is placing on standards to achieve its commercial ambitions.

In our Editorial, we place China's standards strategy in a historical perspective, noting the Nineteenth Century origins of its understandably prickly attitude today towards Western commercial power. We also note that the world has more to gain politically than it has to lose commercially from seeking greater integration of China into the global economy.

In our Feature Article, we examine China's standards strategy in the conflicting context of its long (and eventually successful) quest to accede to the World Trade Organization – which led to its becoming subject to the restrictions that the WTO's Technical Barriers to Trade Act places on the use of standards to erect barriers to trade.

In our Trends Article, we contrast the Chinese government's centrally controlled "top down" standards policies with the laissez-faire, "bottom up" approach followed by the United States, where government stands largely apart, and a constantly morphing tapestry of accredited standards development organizations and non-accredited consortia independently create thousands of standards.

In an Update, we report on a novel meeting hosted by ConsortiumInfo.org and Gesmer Updegrove that provided an unusual opportunity for a large number of consortia and ANSI to meet – for the first time ever – to address matters of mutual concern.

Finally, in our Blog entry for this month, we reflect on a decade of periodic acts of extreme violence in United States schools, and ask why it is that modern society has sought so actively to tear down some of the most useful societal standards that governed human behavior for millennia in the past.

As always, we hope you enjoy this issue.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Updegrove", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Andrew Updegrove
Editor and Publisher