



FEATURED MEETING

OPEN INVITATION: AN ANSI-SPONSORED FORUM FOR ACCREDITED AND NON-ACCREDITED STANDARDS DEVELOPERS

Early last year, an [unusual meeting](#) took place in Boston, called by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and hosted by Gesmer Updegrove LLP. That meeting was a private briefing for the consortium community on the redrafting of the United States Standards Strategy (USSS). What made the meeting unusual was the fact that the worlds of formal, accredited standards development organizations (SDOs) and unaccredited consortia have coexisted now for more than 25 years, but almost never engage in dialogue with each other – even though they share the same companies, government agencies and other constituencies as members.

At last year's meeting, representatives of 21 consortia, including some of the largest and most influential organizations in the information technology industry, met with members of the USSS revision committee (of which I was a member) and ANSI. Those that attended engaged in a wide-ranging and mutually beneficial exchange of views. The consensus that evolved was that accredited and non-accredited organizations had a great deal in common, and that much could be gained from continuing the dialogue.

ANSI is now organizing a follow-on meeting to continue this discussion, and all interested parties are invited to attend. The following describes what the meeting is about, and how you can become involved.

OPEN FORUM FOR STANDARDS DEVELOPERS June 21-22, New York City

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) is hosting an *Open Forum for Standards Developers* in New York City on June 20-21, 2006. The event will bring together standards developers of all kinds — including consortia and other forums and ANSI-accredited and non-accredited standards developers — for the purpose of identifying opportunities for cooperation, collaboration and harmonization.

While the primary purpose of the event is information sharing and dialogue, meeting organizers predict that the discussions may lead to the development of specific action plans for advancing certain topics. The event will span two days so as to facilitate networking opportunities.

A [call for input](#) has been issued for agenda items. Topics already submitted for consideration include: mechanisms for minimizing redundancy; reducing time to market; intellectual property rights (IPR) issues; legislative and regulatory activities; information sharing and access; best practices for standards development; and third-party recognition or credentialing programs.

The *Open Forum* will continue a dialogue initiated on March 29, 2005, when consortia representatives met with members of the voluntary consensus standards community

to discuss development of the United States Standards Strategy (USSS). Considered by many as the largest known meeting of the two constituencies, participants determined that more similarities than differences exist between the various organizations and that an ongoing dialogue would be helpful.

Based upon input received during the March 2005 meeting, discussion topics for an Open Forum may include:

- ways to ensure that “industry’s base assumptions” can/will work together (i.e., do the technical work once, minimize redundancy, reduce time to market, etc.)
- options for sharing information (need to find out what others are doing) and articles on standardization
- development of a “federated registry” (i.e., a comprehensive database of standards metadata so that those developing standards can determine if the need has already been met)
- establishment of service to monitor legislative and/or regulatory initiatives that will impact the standardization community
- enhancing legislative connectivity, development and use of use common key messages in political “scripts” including presentations by standards developers to the House Science Committee or similar committees whose jurisdiction impacts standardization
- identifying mechanisms to reduce cycle time while ensuring a fair and open playing field
- identifying best practices for ‘how to put a standard together’
- discussing the desirability of a credentialing system(s) for standards bodies
- soliciting enhanced U.S. federal and state government support of standards-setting activities
- ways to increase funding to support standards-setting – recognizing that not all organizations rely upon publication sales
- pursuing inter-sectoral (horizontal) coordination following an initial sectoral (vertical or sector-based) approach
- developing a Return on Investment (ROI) model to demonstrate adherence to the globally accepted principles for standards development
- promoting the concept of “using the best standard for the job at hand”
- allowing for and supporting innovation during standardization
- increasing awareness, outreach and education
- discussing intellectual property rights (various issues)

Registration information will appear soon on this page at the ANSI Website: http://www.ansi.org/meetings_events/upcoming_overview.aspx?menuid=8 For further information, contact: Stacy Leistner, ANSI director of communications and education (sleistne@ansi.org).