

# Standards Today

A Journal of News, Ideas and Analysis

A publication of  
**CONSORTIUM  
INFO.ORG**  
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April-May 2009

Vol. VIII, No. 3

## EDITOR'S NOTE:

### With Renewed Energy

The first paragraph in my Editor's Note to the last issue read as follows:

*This issue marks the third and final (for now) entry in a cycle that addresses the role of technical standards in government, and vice versa, occasioned by the election of America's new, technologically savvy president, Barack Obama.*

But even as I wrote that paragraph, a nagging voice in the back of my mind was reminding me that I really wasn't done yet. No serious effort to provide an overview of the Obama Administration's standards-related challenges could be considered complete until I had addressed one more important topic.

That topic, of course, is the new administration's highly ambitious, extremely expensive, and vitally important plan to upgrade the nation's electrical system from its electro-mechanical past into the digital, intelligent future that beckons - and to extend that network intelligence into the homes and businesses of America as well. If successful in achieving this goal, President Obama will go a long way towards delivering on a trifecta of important and challenging administration promises: lowering our dependence on foreign oil and gas, creating new, sustaining and high paying manufacturing jobs in "green" industries, and significantly decreasing America's production of green house gasses. But none of this will be possible to accomplish unless government and industry work together to compile the hundreds of standards that will be necessary to make the Smart Grid work, selecting them where they exist, developing them where they do not, and then implementing them ubiquitously.

So with renewed energy to pursue the important topic of government's new willingness to drive ambitious standards-dependent challenges, I make amends with this issue, and provide an introduction to Smart Grid standards in a manner similar to the previous overviews of Electronic Health Record ([December - January](#)) and Open Government Standards ([February - March](#)).

My **Editorial** introduces the topic by highlighting one of the significant challenges realizing the benefits that the Smart Grid can deliver, one that we all share a responsibility to address. If home owners do not embrace Smart Grid technology, then the billions of dollars of public investment that rely on the installation and use

of home-based Smart Grid technology to achieve their intended results may be wasted.

As before, the **Feature Article** attempts to provide an understandable overview of what the goals of the government's initiative are all about, and the role that standards must play in achieving these goals. More particularly, I provide an overview of the history of government support for the creation of the Smart Grid and the legislation that has been passed to drive its development. I then review the types of standards that will be needed (and whether they currently exist), and the principal standard setting organizations that are actively engaged in the development and support of these standards.

I'm very pleased to follow with an **Interview** of Dr. George W. Arnold, recently appointed to act as the first National Coordinator for Smart Grid Interoperability at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), who provides his first-hand insights into where we are in meeting the Smart Grid challenge, where we need to go, and how we will get there. I have been pleased to know and work with George for some years at ANSI, where he has been very active in a variety of leadership positions, including serving as Chairman of the Board from 2003 – 2005.

The balance of the issue covers other topics that I hope you will find of current interest: my **Standards Blog** juxtaposes a meeting location that just about every American business travel has found him or herself in at some time with what lies not so far away, while my **Consider This** essay focuses on the current challenges of the print media to survive in an increasingly digital age. This issue closes with a **Monday Witness** essay that explores how those that write history can define that term to their own advantage.

As always, I hope you enjoy this issue. But whether you do or don't, it's always good to hear from you. You can reach me at [andrew.updegrove@gesmer.com](mailto:andrew.updegrove@gesmer.com).

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Award for Journalism

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