

# Standards Development Organizations Promoting Standards

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# Position

- The standards development organization exists to be a good place to have the standards development discussion -- it's purpose is the process and NOT the resulting standards
- A standards development organization should promote its ability to develop standards well -- not to promote good standards
- Implementing companies will promote their products that “conform to the standard” and so promote the standards

# Standards

- A standard is a specification that has been put through a consensus process by a collection of interested parties
- Interested parties might be a formal de jure process of by governments, an industry or trade organization with broad interests, or a consortium of narrow focus
- Standards exist to encourage and enable multiple implementations, regardless of the developing forum, and they benefit the customer
- A successful standard (economically) has many implementations; if there is only one implementation it is a failure (or worse a vendor specification)
- Patents and standards are opposite ends of the economic spectrum (Patents protect a single implementation of an idea.)
- Open Source Software does NOT replace the need for standards -- It fosters their creation

# Standards Occur in a Marketplace

- When an incumbent over-delivers in a market space, (the technology space is mature), then customers want “standards” to create competition
- Market signal: customers complain the about price
- Competitors co-operate around an existing similar collaborative development project to form a standard to crack open the incumbent market position
- They choose a standards development organization that best fits their need
- Essentially, the competitors attack the core revenue stream of the incumbent with a standard based on (but not identical to) collaborative technology they can share
- Implementing companies will promote their products that “conform to the standard” and so promote the standard

# Company Messaging and Strategy

- An older example of this was ISO POSIX/C and then UNIX versus DEC VAX/VMS
  - DEC executed brilliantly in its standards strategy
- An example of this today is OASIS ODF (the standard based on OpenOffice.org) versus Microsoft Office (a product)
  - Microsoft has executed poorly in its standards strategy