



GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WSSN WEB SITES

2nd edition

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0 Background

Within the past few years, Internet has achieved major technological breakthroughs enabling very low-cost client access to distributed data and document servers (e.g. World Wide Web – WWW) for essentially all kinds of information exchange; business transactions are also now being made over such networks. These developments will inevitably lead to the creation of a global electronic information network where suppliers and customers will be able to search, retrieve, order, buy and sell information on standards and the standards themselves in an open "paperless" electronic market.

The standardization community has created a number of electronic information services available on WWW servers through Internet. ANSI has developed NSSN, a resource for US, international and regional standards information in the USA. The question of the development of an European standards information Web site is under study (INES project).

To facilitate user access and navigation on the Web sites, a need arose for harmonization of the above developments at international level. Therefore, the INFCO¹ Information Group created INFCO AHG 7i "WSSN" and entrusted it with identifying user requirements and needs, taking into account the experience already gained in this field, and with proposing possible solutions and guidelines for the development of a World Standards Services Network (WSSN). Both IEC and ITU have participated in this work as members of INFCO/AHG 7i.

¹ INFCO – ISO Committee on information systems and services.

1 Scope

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of WSSN and guidelines by which Web sites linked into WSSN may be arranged and presented in a harmonized way in order to facilitate their use.

2 Document references

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of these guidelines. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and bodies applying these guidelines are encouraged to investigate the possibility of using the most recent editions of the documents indicated below.

ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, *Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary*

ISO/IEC Guide 21:1999, *Adoption of International Standards as regional or national standards*

ISO 639:1988, *Code for the representation of names of languages*

ISO 2788:1986, *Documentation – Guidelines for the establishment and development of monolingual thesauri*

ISO 3166-1:1997, *Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions – Part 1: Country codes*

ISO 4217:1995, *Codes for the representation of currencies and funds*

ISO 5127-1:1983, *Documentation and information — Vocabulary — Part 1: Basic concepts*

ISO 5127-2:1983, *Documentation and information — Vocabulary — Part 2: Traditional documents*

ISO 5127-3A:1981, *Information and documentation — Vocabulary — Section 3a): Acquisition, identification, and analysis of documents and data*

ISO 5127-6:1983, *Documentation and information — Vocabulary — Section 6: Documentary language*

ISO 8601:1988, *Data elements and interchange formats — Information interchange — Representation of dates and times*

ITU-T E.123 *Notation for national and international telephone numbers*

ISO/GEN 5:1995, *Notification procedures related to the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards contained in Annex 3 of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade*

ISO/GEN 9:1997, *Guidelines and policies for the protection of ISO's intellectual property International Classification for Standards (ICS), 4th edition, 1999*

ISONET Manual, 2nd edition, 1998

Guide for the use of IT in the development and delivery of standards, 2nd edition

WTO TBT Standards Code Directory, 5th edition, 2000

3 Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2, ISO 5127-1, ISO 5127-2, ISO 5127-3A and ISO 5127-6 apply, with the following exceptions:

The term "**standards**" is used to denote all types of normative documents.

The term "**standardizing body**" is used to denote both standards and standardizing organizations and bodies.

"Thesaurus" – the vocabulary of a controlled indexing language formally organized so that the *a priori* relationships between concepts are made explicit. (Reference ISO 2788:1986)

"Indexing language" – a controlled set of terms (descriptors) selected from natural language and used to represent, in summary form, the subjects of documents. (Reference ISO 2788:1986)

4 Overview of WSSN

WSSN is a network of WWW servers publicly accessible through Internet, which provide information on international, regional and national standardization and related matters, as well as the ordering and delivery of standards.

WSSN is a decentralized system within which each standardizing body linked to the system is responsible for providing information and, when possible, ordering and delivery of information and/or documents within its scope of activity.

WSSN aims to provide a user-friendly environment through harmonization of presentation of the basic elements common to a majority of member sites.

To facilitate understanding of the various standards activities, and access to standards information and services, WSSN provides general information on standardization and related matters, including standards development, implementation, conformity assessment, etc., as well as structured links to members' sites.

Access to WSSN is provided through a WWW server, either directly (URL: www.wssn.net) or via the WSSN link provided on WSSN member sites. Access is free (not protected by a password).

The acronym WSSN shall remain constant and unchanged in any language.

5 Recommendations for members' Web sites

5.1 General

It is suggested that when developing or making major modifications to their Web site, members view the sites of other members for ideas on site structure, while taking care not to implement any practices which are in contradiction with these guidelines.

The following general principles of good practice are relevant:

- Where they exist, International Standards should be applied for the representation of, for example, dates (ISO 8601), language codes (ISO 639), country codes (ISO 3166) and currency codes (ISO 4217), etc.
- Web sites should take into account what browsers users have. The *Guide for the use of IT in the development and delivery of standards*, developed by ITSIG² includes guidelines on establishing World Wide Web sites and services.

² ISO/IEC/ITU Information Technology Strategies Implementation Group.

- All sites should be kept up to date; pages should indicate their date of last update.
- Copyright-related information and notices should be incorporated where appropriate. It is also recommended that each page display a copyright link which, when clicked upon, leads the user to the organization's copyright notices and contact for further information. Within the ISO framework, *Guidelines and policies for the protection of ISO's intellectual property* (document ISO/GEN 9:1997) have been developed and their application recommended to the ISO Central Secretariat and ISO members by ISO Council. These guidelines may be used by other standardizing bodies.
- A user feedback form should be provided.
- For information retrieval purposes, certain sections of WSSN members' home pages need to be capable of being accessed through a common language. English has been agreed as the primary or second language most commonly used. Therefore, it is recommended that, as a minimum, the main menu and the sections related to description of the organization (item 5.2) and catalogue (item 5.4) should have an English language version.

It is recommended that each Web site contain at least the following sections, accessible through the first (home) page:

- *Introduction of the standardizing body*
- *Information on national (or other relevant) standards activities, including development of standards* (should include subsection with a meeting calendar)
- *Catalogue*
- *Work programme*
- *Conformity assessment*
- *Products and services*
- *News*
- *WSSN*

5.2 Introduction of the standardizing body and its Web site

This section should provide general information on the particular standardizing body and contact information, including postal address, e-mail address, telephone, fax numbers, etc. Other information recommended for inclusion in this section would cover funding sources, staff size, key facts and figures, annual report, the organization's mission, structure, management, etc.

The section should also provide information about the Web site that may be needed by its users, including:

- key to the abbreviations/acronyms used on the Web site;
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs);
- links to other Web sites. For optimum reliability and use of resources, it is recommended that links to other WSSN members be directed via the maintained links of WSSN.

5.3 Information on national (or other relevant) standards activities, including development of standards

It is recommended that this section introduce the subject of standardization and provide a link to the general information on standardization given on the WSSN site. The section could include any complementary national or regional general information which members feel is

relevant. An explanation should be provided of the standards development process used by the particular body, with, if applicable, some description of how information technology is used in the process. Each standardizing body should consider providing links to the relevant official procedural documents used by the body and to electronic copies of any forms used in its standards development process.

A meeting calendar should be included in a subsection. The technical work programme of the standardizing body may also be included (see item 5.5 below).

5.4 Catalogue

The catalogue should provide bibliographic information on all publications and documents available for sale from the standardizing body. Its content should also include information to the user on how to identify and order the publications he/she requires.

5.4.1 Structure of the catalogue

The catalogue should contain at least the following sections:

- How to use the catalogue
- How to place your order
- Standards and other normative documents
- Publications other than standards

Other chapters may be added to the above list in accordance with the specific needs of the standardizing body.

It is recommended that member sites provide electronic access to the bibliographic information of catalogues, terms of access being for each member to decide.

The following description gives recommendations and check lists which are suggested as a basis for harmonized presentation of catalogues.

5.4.2 How to use the catalogue

This section should state:

- the extent and limitations of the content; for example, the types of documents included (such as standards, recommendations, codes of practice, regulations and their drafts) and outline the field of application (e.g. all sectors of economic activity except electrotechnology);
- information on the frequency of updating of the content;
- the arrangement and structure of the catalogue;
- related catalogues (if applicable); for ISO and IEC International Standards, reference with hyperlinks to the ISO and/or IEC Catalogues is recommended.

Instructions for using the catalogue, preferably illustrated by examples of how to find and interpret specific entries should be given.

An explanation of the numbering and identification system used for the publications listed should be given.

5.4.3 How to place your order

This section of the catalogue should provide information on how to obtain the publications listed in the catalogue, including information on suppliers (publishers) of these publications.

Information on obtaining the publications listed in the catalogue should include:

- information on pricing, discounts (if any), postal charges, taxes;
- description of standing order/subscription systems (if applicable);
- description of automated ordering and delivery systems (if applicable);
- information on payment of publications;
- terms and conditions of sale, including copyright.

Information on publishers of the publications listed in the catalogue should include the following, where relevant:

- acronym, 80.102
- name of organization, 80.110
- postal address, 80.130
- visiting address, 80.140
- sales office (if different from office address)
- telephone number, 80.150
- fax number, 80.160
- e-mail address, 80.170, 80.180 and/or 80.190
- URL for organization's WWW homepage, 80.200

5.4.4 Standards and other normative documents

This should be the main section of the catalogue. It is recommended that its first page contain, at least:

- link with search page
- list of the ICS fields
- link to a list of withdrawn standards

The **search page** should provide for retrieval of standards by a choice of criteria, e.g.:

- product/document reference (including wild card character)
- keyword(s) (including truncation, wild card characters, string search) within the title and/or abstract and/or descriptors (if applied)
- range of ICS notations
- development committee
- range of dates of publication
- range of current stage codes (if applicable)
- type of document (e.g. standard, technical regulation, code of practice, etc., as relevant)

or by combinations of these criteria with the exception of mutually exclusive combinations.

There should be the possibility to look up the ICS fields which should have links to the relevant ICS groups and subgroups. There should be the possibility to look up the stage code from a list of the appropriate Harmonized Stage Codes. There should be the possibility to look up the committee references which should have links to information about the relevant development committee.

ICS fields should have links to the relevant ICS groups and subgroups which, in turn, should have links to the relevant lists of valid normative documents including addenda, amendments, corrigenda. The lists should contain at least the document references and titles. Each document reference should have a further link to a display of bibliographical data elements for the document. It is recommended that the following elements be included (see *ISONET Manual* for descriptions of the bibliographic data elements):

- Product (document) reference, 20.104
- Title (in the language of a given Web site), 20.200
- Amended by, 20.110
- Amendment type (only for addenda, amendments, corrigenda), 20.108
- Amends (only for addenda, amendments, corrigenda), 20.112
- Technical committee, 20.204
- Abstract, 20.206
- Document type (product) (if not incorporated in the product reference), 20.216
- Edition, 20.220
- Date of publication, 20.310
- Languages (if information on languages is not explicitly presented in the section *How to use the Catalogue*), 20.208
- Number of pages, 20.212
- Price and currency, 20.226 and/or Price group, 20.228
- Medium (if other than paper), 20.232
- Electronic format (if medium is electronic), 20.238
- Issuing body (if information on the issuing body is not explicitly presented in the section *How to use the Catalogue*), 20.700
- Supplier(s) (if information on suppliers is not explicitly presented in the section *How to place your order*), 20.702
- ICS, 20.502
- TIT descriptors (if applicable), 20.504
- ROOT descriptors (if applicable), 20.506
- Replaces (if applicable), 20.610
- Corresponding documents (product), 20.612

The **list of withdrawn standards** should contain at least the following bibliographic data elements:

- Product (document) reference, 20.104

- Title (in the language of a given Web site), 20.200
- Technical committee, 20.204
- Withdrawal date, 20.330
- Replaced by (document references should be given), 20.606

5.4.5 Publications other than standards

This section should include information on publications other than standards and other normative documents, for example, catalogues, standards handbooks and compendia, mementos, directories, books on standardization and related matters, journals, booklets, etc.

The information should include the following bibliographic data elements:

- ISBN (International Standard Book Number), 20.114 or ISSN (International Standard Serial Number), 20.116
- Title (in the language of a given Web site), 20.200
- Abstract, 20.206
- Number of pages, 20.212
- Price and currency, 20.226 and/or Price group, 20.228

5.5 Work programme information (Project list)

It is recommended that if a standardizing body wishes to include information about its work programme on its Web site, it should follow the guidelines prepared by ISO and the World Trade Organization: *Notification procedures related to the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards* contained in *Annex 3 of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade* (document ISO/GEN 5:1995). If the body has accepted the WTO TBT Code of Good Practice, then it is required to follow the guidelines. Standardizing bodies that have accepted the Code of Good Practice are listed in the WTO TBT Standards Code Directory.

The work programme of a standardizing body normally contains information on, at least, all projects or work items for development of standards and other normative documents by this body.

The guidelines contained in document ISO/GEN 5 indicate that all items of the work programme should be classified in accordance with the International Classification for Standards (ICS), that the stage system used should be the International Harmonized Stage Code system (HSC), and that references to any international standards taken as a basis should be referenced in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 21:1999.

Standardizing bodies may have different views on what constitutes a work programme. For the purpose of these guidelines, the catalogue (see item 5.4) is defined as containing bibliographic information on all publications and documents available for sale from the standardizing body.

5.5.1 Structure of the work programme information

The work programme information should contain at least the following sections:

- How to use the work programme section
- List of projects/work items

- How to obtain further information on the work programme elements

Other sections may be added in accordance with the specific needs of the standardizing body.

It is recommended that members' sites provide electronic links to their standards work programmes, terms of access being for each member to decide.

The following description gives recommendations and check lists which are suggested as a basis for harmonized presentation of work programme information.

5.5.2 How to use the work programme section

This section should state:

- the extent and limitations of the content, for example, the types of work items included (such as projects of standards, recommendations, codes of practice, regulations) and outline the field of application (e.g. all sectors of economic activity except electrotechnology);
- information on the frequency of updating of the content;
- the arrangement and structure of the work programme;
- instructions for using the listing, preferably illustrated by examples of how to find and interpret specific entries;
- an explanation of the numbering and identification system used for the projects/work items listed.

It is likely that projects that have reached the public enquiry stage will have documents associated with them that are available for purchase. If appropriate, information should be supplied on how these items may be obtained. It may be that a link to the Catalogue system may be required if that system includes public enquiry draft standards.

5.5.3 List of projects/work items

This should be the main section of the work programme information. This section should display all normative documents that are under development unless there are specific reasons why the organization considers some documents to be exceptions (e.g. not for public display). It is recommended that its first page contain, at least:

- link with the search function
- link to the standards catalogue
- list of the ICS fields, and/or list of technical committees, according to the structure of the work programme

5.5.4 How to obtain further information on the work programme elements

This section of the work programme should provide information on how to obtain further information on the draft normative documents listed in the work programme. Normally, this should be a contact address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address of an Information Centre to which the user may submit an enquiry.

The search page should allow users to enter search criteria which relate to the work programme elements. The following search criteria are recommended:

- document reference (including wild card character)

- project number
- keyword(s) (including truncation, wild card characters, string search) within the title and/or abstract and/or descriptors (if applied)
- range of ICS notations
- development committee
- range of current stage codes
- status of document (e.g. committee or working draft)
- type of document (e.g. standard, code of practice)
- or by combinations of these criteria with the exception of mutually exclusive combinations.

There should be the possibility to look up the ICS fields which should have links to the relevant ICS groups and subgroups. There should be the possibility to look up the stage code from a list of the appropriate Harmonized Stage Codes. There should be the possibility to look up the committee references which should have links to information about the relevant development committee.

Once a search has been carried out the results of that search should be able to be displayed. It is recommended that first a list of all valid items be displayed, with the ability to select items for further information. The initial list display should contain at least the project reference and/or the document reference and the title. A valid document is one that has not been superseded by a later document.

Each record reference should have a further link to a display of bibliographical data elements for the work item. It is recommended that elements from the following list be included (see *ISONET Manual* for descriptions of all the bibliographic data elements that are available for use):

- Item number, 10.100
- Project reference, 10.104
- Title (in the language of a given Web site), 10.200
- Technical committee, 10.204
- Abstract, 10.206
- Current stage code, 10.300
- Date of current stage, 10.302
- Target date for official publication, 10.322
- Type of project, 10.408
- Type of publication, 10.410
- ICS, 10.502
- TIT descriptors (if applicable), 10.504
- ROOT descriptors (if applicable), 10.506
- Corresponding documents (project), 10.612

5.5.5 Other sections related to the work programme

Web sites that present work programmes in accordance with these recommendations should also provide a complete listing of the ICS (see *ISONET Manual* data elements 50.001, 50.110, 50.120, 50.122), a complete listing of the technical committees (see *ISONET Manual* data elements 40.104, 40.130, 40.140, 40.170, 40.192), and a list or chart of the appropriate harmonized stage codes (see *ISONET Manual* data elements 30.100, 30.110).

Data relating to the standards development organization(s) should be easily accessible and should include the following, where relevant:

- acronym, 80.102
- name of organization, 80.110
- postal address, 80.130
- visiting address, 80.140
- telephone number, 80.150
- fax number, 80.160
- e-mail address, 80.170, 80.180 and/or 80.190
- URL for organization's WWW homepage, 80.200

5.6 Conformity assessment

It is recommended that this section introduce the subject of conformity assessment and provide a link to the general information on conformity assessment given on the WSSN site. In addition, an explanation of the conformity assessment activities undertaken by the particular body should be provided. Each standardizing body should consider providing links to the relevant official procedural documents used by the body and to electronic copies of any forms used in its conformity assessment activities. The section might also include certification schemes operating in the member's area, as well as lists of accreditation bodies, certification bodies, certified companies, etc.

5.7 Products and services

This section should provide information on the standardization-related products and services offered by the body, including information services, training courses and seminars, import/export or other consultancy services, promotional services, etc. Where possible, the body should consider allowing online ordering or registration, as appropriate.

5.8 News

This section should include news items of interest to the standardizing body's members or customers. It might include, for example, information on significant new national, regional or international standardization activities, governmental actions impacting standardization, new standards, new marks of conformity, press releases, coming events, etc.

5.9 WSSN

This item should provide the WSSN logo, with link to the WSSN home page (<http://www.wssn.net>). It is recommended that the full title (and/or translation of the full title) of WSSN is also given.

6. Procedure for the establishment of links to WSSN

Requests from organizations wishing to participate in WSSN should be directed to the ISO/IEC Information Centre.

Currently, the following categories of membership of WSSN have been identified:

- ISO, IEC, ITU
- International standardizing bodies
- Regional standardizing bodies recognized by ISO, IEC and/or ITU
- Members of ISO and/or IEC
- Other international organizations with related activities

National bodies other than the member organizations of ISO and IEC will be directed to the appropriate ISO and/or IEC members. Requests from international or regional organizations other than those identified above, will be put forward for consideration within the appropriate INFECO group.

7. Conclusion

It is anticipated that by following these guidelines members of WSSN will achieve harmonization of core elements common to their Web sites, while retaining the individual character of each site. By this means, users navigating through WSSN will find themselves in a coherent worldwide standards services environment, thus facilitating their search for standards information or related services.