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OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Andrew Updegrove

2005 was a busy year at ConsortiumInfo.org as well as in the standards world at large. Here are a few highlights:

February 16: I was pleased to announce the launch of the Standards MetaLibrary in our February issue, which was appropriately dedicated to the Study of Standards. What is the Standards MetaLibrary? Most succinctly, it is an expanding database of categorized abstracts of serious articles (currently 1,038 in number) about standards, in each case with links to the full text, which in most cases is available free of charge. The Standards MetaLibrary was created with the assistance of a generous grant from Sun Microsystems. I described the content of the Standards MetaLibrary in the formal announcement as follows:

> The Standards MetaLibrary is not limited to material about standards in a narrow sense. Rather, it focuses on the importance of standards to the modern world and their impact on society, and how they are created, and by whom. The materials included therefore address topics such as how the standard setting process operates, how governments support this process and utilize standards, the economic benefits of standards uptake, legal aspects of the use (and abuse) of standards, and many other subjects that illustrate the role of standards in the world today.

By year's end, use of the MetaLibrary was exceeding 18,000 visitors a month. For more about what the Standards MetaLibrary is and how to make use of it, see the FAQ page.

March 29: At the end of March, the host of this site, Gesmer Updegrove LLP, hosted what the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) called a "landmark event". As described in greater detail in the ANSI press release that followed the meeting:

> A landmark event occurred in Boston, Massachusetts, today as representatives from 21 consortia convened with members of the voluntary consensus standards community for the largest known meeting of the two constituencies.

> Hosted by Gesmer Updegrove LLP and organized by the U.S. Standards Strategy (USSS) Committee, the session was held specifically for the purpose of information sharing and soliciting input from consortia on the draft revision of the Strategy that is currently underway. The USSS (formerly known as the National Standards Strategy) serves as a strategic framework to help guide standards-related activities impacting trade, market-access, emerging national priorities and more.

ConsortiumInfo.org publicized the event, and I, (a member of the United States Standards Strategy Committee), gathered most of the representatives of the consortium community.

June 28: The Standards Blog was launched. By January 3, 2006 the 103rd blog entry had been posted, and monthly visits to the Standards Blog were approaching 90,000. Rather than a compendium of links

to the news of the day, the Standards Blog attempts to provide in-depth analysis of important events, and to follow important stories relevant to the world of standards as they develop. The Standards Blog has most thoroughly covered the evolving story in Massachusetts relating to the adoption of open document formats, and in particular the OASIS OpenDocument format. Many of the most important developments in the story were first reported in the Standards Blog, which has now been cited as a source in more than a hundred main-stream news articles.

August 15: I, was presented with the **ANSI 2005 President's Award for Journalism**. As stated in the ANSI press release:

> **Andrew Updegrove** has been awarded the President's Award for Journalism, which recognizes outstanding journalistic work that helps to illuminate the role that standardization and conformity assessment activities play in improving the health and safety of Americans, while strengthening the competitiveness of U.S. business in a global marketplace. Mr. Updegrove acts as editor and publisher of the *Consortium Standards Bulletin*, which offers a wealth of information on standards and standards-setting, both online and in print. *The Bulletin* and website, ConsortiumInfo.org, have helped to raise the profile of standards and highlight their importance to commerce and daily life, as well as encourage greater support for their use and development.

December: I was elected to the **Boards of Directors** of both **ANSI** and the **Free Standards Group**, offering the opportunity to gain greater insight into issues of interest to the ConsortiumInfo.org audience. ANSI is the administrator and coordinator of the U.S. voluntary standards system, includes more than 200 standards bodies as its members, and represents the interests of the U.S. internationally, including as the U.S. representative in global standards bodies ISO and the IEC. The Free Standards Group, a nonprofit organization formed by the open source development community and leading IT industry vendors to create the standards needed to prevent Linux and other key open source software from fragmenting in the way that destroyed UNIX interoperability. Its current standards include the Linux Standards Base, which was recently adopted as a global ISO standard.

By the Numbers: At year's end, all ConsortiumInfo.org resources were still free and available to the public, and more extensive -- and utilized -- than ever. Here are a few examples:

- Number of archived news items at the Standards News Portal: **1761**
- Number of news items entered in 2005: **751**
- Number of articles in the Standards MetaLibrary: **1,038**
- Number of standard setting organizations and open source projects in the Consortium and Standards List: **455**
- Increase in monthly visitors (January to December 2005): **19,905** to **183,745 (923%)**
- Monthly page views (January to December 2005): **83,091** to **743,885 (895%)**

I look forward to increasing the resources and services available at ConsortiumInfo.org in 2006, including a re-launch of the Standards Blog on a new open source technology platform that will permit it to become a fully-featured community site, and, I hope, an expansion of the MetaLibrary, among other plans currently on the drawing board.
As always, your comments and suggestions are welcome, as are inquiries relating to how I can work with other organizations towards achieving goals of mutual interest.

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