GLOBAL STANDARD SETTING 2007
An Interactive Discussion

MEETING REPORT

On June 20, 2007, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) convened its third Open Forum for Standards Developers in Boston, Massachusetts. These highly interactive events are designed to foster an open exchange among various types of standards-setting organizations (SSOs) on issues of common concern.

This year's forum, *Global Standard Setting 2007: An Interactive Discussion,* saw a marked increase in the number of consortia representatives, some of whom participated on behalf of multiple consortia groups. The final count on the attendance roster included seventy-one participants from fifty-four organizations. Participants highlighted the value of the forum's dialogue and networking opportunities, and confirmed interest in continuing dialogue.

In his opening remarks, Andy Updegrove, partner, Gesmer Updegrove LLP and chair of the ANSI Consortium Outreach Group, dispelled common myths and misperceptions regarding SDOs and consortia, revealing that despite certain basic differences, the two types of organizations share more similarities than generally thought. Intellectual property rights (IPR) issues, achieving global recognition of their work products, and the challenges of serving a broad spectrum of industries are chief priorities common to both.

ANSI president and CEO Joe Bhatia explained that understanding the needs and issues of *all* standard-setting organizations is a top priority for the Institute, and emphasized the Institute's commitment to host an annual event where all types of standard setting bodies can gather to network and share information and best practices.

The first panel of the day gave focus to various IPR-related issues that can arise during the standards-setting process. Panel moderator Earl Nied—program director of standards at Intel Corporation and chair of the ANSI Patent Group—emphasized that the appropriate use of intellectual property rights can stimulate innovative technologies and market competition in ways that facilitate the adoption and implementation of standards. Presenters from WilmerHale and Bingham McCutchen, LLP led attendees through a discussion of current developments relating to ex ante disclosure of terms (i.e., before

1

technology is locked-in to a standard) and the pros and cons of early patent disclosure. There was recognition that ANSI, via its Patent Group, provides a forum where patent issues are debated, and that currently consortia groups are not widely represented.

Introducing the topic of patent issues at the international level, Amy Marasco, general manager of standards strategy at Microsoft, highlighted key aspects of the new harmonized patent policy adopted by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) last March.

The second panel, chaired by Ron Silletti, corporate program director of standards at IBM, examined the challenges that both traditional and non-traditional standards-setting organizations face as they seek to build worldwide recognition of their standards and specifications. Presenters from the Web Services Interoperability Organization (WS-1), the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS), and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) discussed their respective strategies for increasing international reach, global participation, and acceptance.

During a luncheon discussion, Robert W. Noth, chairman of the ANSI Board of Directors, explained that one of ANSI's primary reasons for convening open forums is to learn from all constituents how the Institute can better serve the needs of the broad standards community. Underscoring ANSI's commitment to continue these forums on a regular basis, he emphasized that the Institute continually examines new ways and technologies to support standards-setting organizations operating in the U.S. and abroad.

A panel chaired by Kavi Corporation's director of strategic consulting Karl Best gave voice to the various challenges that SSOs face as businesses operating in today's marketplace. To succeed, SSOs require profitable financial business models that support their standards missions. Panelists from ASTM International, the Open Geospatial Consortium, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), USB Implementers Forum, and Virtual, Inc., discussed their organizations' strategies for diversifying revenue streams, capitalizing on growth opportunities, delivering timely, market-driven standards, and engaging member participation.

During a final wrap-up session, participants highlighted the value of the forum's dialogue and networking opportunities, and identified three issues of common concern: intellectual property rights, achieving global recognition of work products, and the challenges of serving a broad spectrum of industries.

The group recommended that ANSI continue to convene open forum sessions on an annual or bi-annual basis. Looking forward, ANSI was also encouraged to consider the possibility of forming an ongoing activity in which consortia might engage. This would provide a venue through which consortia could feed input to ANSI, and also allow ANSI to reach out to consortia. The latter could be pursued through the development of electronic meeting room forums.

Written responses to several key questions raised at the conclusion of the event (*see Annex A*) will be used to help shape future ANSI programs.

All of the presentations are posted to meeting event page on ANSI Online:
http://www.ansi.org/meetings_events/events/OpenForum07.aspx?menuid=8