Standardization and Innovation

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Standardization and Innovation

- Are these terms mutually exclusive?
- How can you have products standardized and yet allow companies to innovate?
- And, how can you then differentiate in the marketplace?
Consider the “standard” refrigerator.

What do you picture in your mind when someone says “refrigerator?”
Or?
Or?
Or?
If all of these are refrigerators, and if all are different, how do you measure performance or energy efficiency of each?

- Different types
- Different usages
- Different climates
- Different cultures
- Different shopping/storage patterns
We each come with our ideas of what a product will look like

- Features
- Technologies
- Performance
- Lifetime
- Consumer interface
Standardization or Innovation

- Can we have both standardization and innovation?
  - ensure innovation
  - assist innovation
  - protect innovation

Yes, if we do our jobs right.
Consider another case.

- Dishwashers
  - US performance testing based on washing relatively easy to remove soils
    - Concern from consumers is redeposit
    - Filtration
  - European performance testing based mostly on baked-on, dried-on soils
    - Concern from consumers is aggressive cleaning
    - Consumers don’t mind emptying filters
With two different approaches, how can you have one standard to measure performance?
- Working toward resolution
- Consumer habits changing
- New innovations in design
- Changes to energy testing now referencing performance

Threats to innovation can come from consumer testing agencies.
- Reflect one viewpoint
- Reflect past history
Standards Writing Organizations have responsibilities

- Develop current test methods
- Keep them current
- Allow for maximum innovation
Standards and Innovation

- Some countries have used standards to limit innovation
  - Not directly or intentionally (maybe)
  - Can be used to protect national industries
  - Can be limiting
    - Testing in country only
    - “Quality Inspection” trips
    - Mandatory conformity assessment without evaluation of risks
  - Not all countries have regulatory schemes, with consistency of enforcement.
Standardization and Innovation

- Responsibility to make sure standards are not used as Trade Barriers
  - US Trade Representative
  - Department of Commerce
    - Industry Trade Advisory Committees
- Review and comment on WTO actions
- Review new WTO accession requests
- Review US Trade Agreements
- Resolve Issues
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