

Standards in the Enterprise

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Which standards do I mean?

Not just Web standards...

- Coding standards
- Naming conventions
- Design specifications
- Interaction patterns
- Usability guidelines
- Accessibility requirements

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Why do you need standards?

Consistency and uniformity

- Standardizes how people work and make decisions
- Results in faster production cycles and quicker time to market
- Allows the organization to keep pace with emerging trends
- Protects the user experience

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Common complaints...

- *The standards change to often or are out of date.*
- *The standards don't address a specific need, concern, or edge case.*
- *The standards prevent individuals from being creative problem-solvers.*
- *It's too difficult to read and remember all of the standards.*
- *Management told me not to follow the standards.*

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...point to common problems

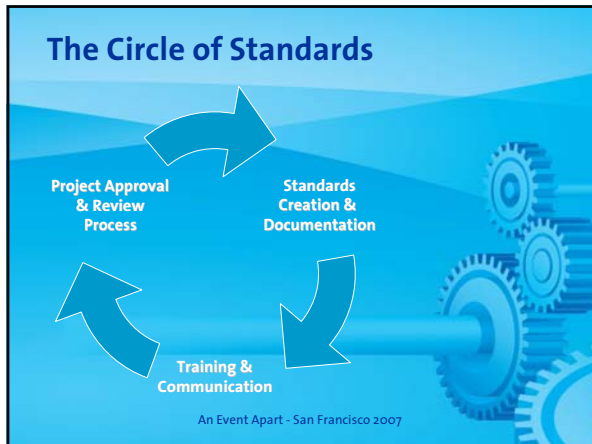
- The standards aren't thorough, well-documented, or well-maintained.
- Standards documentation efforts are lagging behind project work.
- Lack of training and communication is causing confusion or misunderstanding.
- Management isn't demonstrating commitment to standards.

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Keys to successful standards

- Timely updates
- Regular, well-crafted communications
- Constant reinforcement
- Assigning an owner!

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- ### Standards Creation & Document.
- Start with the fundamentals
 - Investigate the live site and work in progress
 - Think ahead to future needs
 - Review regularly
 - Monitor projects for efforts that require standardization
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- ### Training & Communication
- Make training mandatory for everyone
 - Offer training regularly
 - Communicate on a regular basis
 - Make information available in a convenient format
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Project Approval & Review Process

- Make adherence to standards part of the project requirements and acceptance or launch criteria
- Formal design and technical/code reviews look for standards-related issues
- New work gets fed back into the Standards Creation phase

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The Standards Manager

- Champion for standards
- May run a team dedicated to standards
- Must understand the related disciplines and work to be effective

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The Circle of Standards in action



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Bootstrapping standards

1. Organize:
Find like-minded folks and band together.
2. Execute:
Inventory, propose, document, evangelize.
3. Diplomacy:
Identify influencers and speak their language.
4. Help:
Be the support system for others.

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What makes a good standard?

- Detail on reason/need for standard
- Justification for standard solution
- Use cases, including edge cases
- Examples
- Supporting files
- Cross-discipline buy-in

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Get creative with communications

- Set up an intranet, enable comments and other sticky features
- Hide easter eggs in standards content and run contests to find them
- Be visible – go to staff meetings, hang signs to promote standards

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Don't complicate the process

- Work reviews into existing PDLC
- Be available regularly
- Set expectations
- Use the process as another opportunity to educate

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Celebrate successes

- Highlight projects that make use of standards
- Document savings from use of standards
- Recognize others that advocate standards

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