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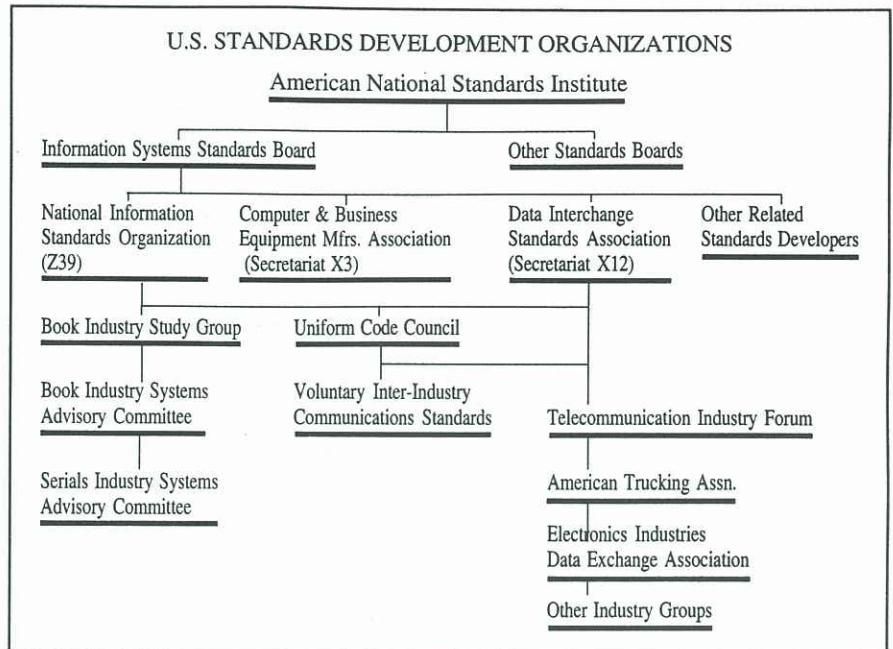
Standards - An Editorial

by **Sandy Paul** (NISO Fellow / Member, ANSI Executive Standards Council & ISSB / BISG Voting Member, ASC X12 / SISAC Treasurer / BISAC Machine-Readable Coding Subcommittee Chair)

This editorial, and the organization chart that accompanies it, are intended to explain all of the acronyms in the by-line list of volunteer organizations in which I participate, when I'm not trying to earn a living as the President of SKP Associates (an acronym that will NOT be explained in this Editorial at all)!

When Katina asked **Albert Simmonds** and me to edit this Features Section of *ATG* on the topic of **Standards**, we agreed to do so because we both find this area of extreme importance and reward. Albert works for the Maintenance Agency for the ANSI/ISO ISBN standard and the ANSI Standard Address Number, so he is rewarded intellectually and financially for his activities. I hold the volunteer positions above partially in an effort to insure that all of the technology-related standards developed in this country have the input of library and publishing folks, as well as those who are paid by IBM and Digital Equipment Corporation to do nothing but keep track of standards development in that area.


ANSI is a most interesting forum in which to be involved. On the one hand it is an office of clerical and managerial staff located on two floors of a building across from NYPL in New York City — AND no standards are developed there. The office coordinates national and international standardization activities, as well as offers training in national and international participation in standardization



activities, and the fulfills orders for standards developed by others in the U.S. and abroad. It is a non-governmental organization that sets no standards, but establishes ground rules to be certain that the standards which are developed in the United States are true consensus standards, developed in a fair and open pro-

cess, allowing all materially affected individuals and organizations to participate.

ANSI does this through several mechanisms. Its **Executive Standards Council (ExSC)** establishes ANSI's own procedures and the criteria by which it accredits organizations seeking to develop standards. ExSC also is charged with coordinating the work of the accredited standards developers and their international counterparts and does so through the Standards Board shown on the organization chart. The ANSI Board of Standards Review looks at the documentation supporting each new and revised standard that is to carry the ANSI imprimatur. They are seeking proof that the standard was developed according to the procedures under which the standards developer was accredited and that no significant number of negative ballots by affected parties exist.

Do you care about ANSI? Probably not. Be assured that your interests are WELL SERVED by the volunteers from the library, publishing, and vendor community who do spend their time working for the organizations whose acronyms are on the organization chart. You'll find their names as bylines to the articles in this issue and other *ATGs*. Hopefully, their excitement and the obvious rewards they are receiving from this work will stimulate you to participate as well. We can use as many heads, hands and hearts from the *ATG* readership as you can give. If you're interested, visit any of the Web sites or contact me at: SKP Associates, 160 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10010, Internet 4164812@MCI-MAIL.COM, phone 212/675-7804, fax 212/989-7542. 

U.S. STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

This is an explanation of the acronyms shown in the organization chart (above).

ANSI: ANSI coordinates all standards development within the United States. ANSI accredits standards development organizations and committees. ANSI represents the United States in international standardization through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

ISSB: ANSI assigns coordination for specific types of standards to its Standards Boards. ISSB has been assigned responsibility for standards in the area of Electronic Data Interchange (X12), Libraries, Information Science and Publishing (Z39), Computer Systems (X3) and related areas.

NISO, CBEMA, DISA: ANSI accredited the organization NISO to develop standards for Libraries, Information Science and Publishing. Accredited Standards Committee (ASC) X3 develops standards for Computer Systems using CBEMA as their Secretariat. ASC X12 develops standards for Electronic Data Interchange using DISA as their Secretariat.

BISG: BISG is the parent organization of BISAC and SISAC and is responsible for research of interest to the publishing community as a whole.

UCC: The UCC works with VICS. It is also responsible for the maintenance of the specifications for many bar code symbologies.

BISAC and SISAC: BISAC and SISAC develop book and serial industry-specific applications of the standards created by NISO and ASC X12. They also coordinate the application of bar codes for books and serials, all of which are maintained by the UCC.

VICS: VICS develops general retail applications of the standards created by ASC X12, as do the other organizations shown on the chart.