FROM THE EDITOR

Most ISQ readers are aware, at least in an abstract way, of the benefits of standards—among them, systems interoperability, faster time to market, improved productivity, and cost savings. But who among us couldn’t use some help in explaining these benefits in more concrete ways to customers or suppliers or management or colleagues? In this issue of Information Standards Quarterly, we focus on several specific examples of the benefits of implementing standards, ranging from savings in staff time to improved customer service and a way to attract new customers.

Mary Jackson (Auto-Graphics, Inc.) quantifies the productivity benefits of implementing the NISO Circulation Interchange Protocol (NCIP) standard and illustrates the savings with case studies and before and after workflow comparisons. She also shows how to use the online NCIP Savings Calculator to determine what your potential savings could be.

Gary Van Overborg, John Milligan, and Michael Lee (Scholarly iQ) illustrate how their company, in its role as an intermediary between publishers and libraries in providing usage statistics, was able to improve services to both through their implementation of the Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative (SUSHI) protocol. They also show the additional benefits that implementers can provide to each other in sharing experiences and tools as part of the implementation effort.

Mary E. Marshall (ADC) describes her experience with the American arm of an international publisher as an early implementer of SERU (Shared Electronic Resource Understanding) to streamline the journal licensing process, saving time and costs for both the publisher and its library customers. She is now looking forward to the upcoming revision of SERU that will extend its use to other types of e-resources, such as e-books.

John Sack (HighWire) provides an opinion piece to dispel the myth that standards prevent innovation, and explains how the two concepts can work together for the benefit of each.

Perhaps their stories will encourage you to consider further implementation of standards and help you to justify those implementations. If you’d like to share your examples of the benefits of standards, please contact me at editor@niso.org. doi: 10.3789/isqv23n4.2011.01

Cynthia A. Hodgson | NISO Managing Editor