

Have you ever wondered why ...

...10 mm are always exactly 10 mm which again is equivalent to 0,39 Inches? Or why a red traffic light means "Stop" everywhere? Or why you are able to browse the Internet all over the world?

It's because they are based on standards. Here are another

10 GOOD REASONS FOR STANDARDIZATION

- 1. STANDARDS FACILITATE TRADE:** From container sizes to coffee beans, the selection of a specific fastener to attach a wheel to a car or the simple fact that a contract is printed in the same paper size as the rest of the file: standards are applied everywhere and assist businesses to base the development of their products and services on specifications that have a wide acceptance within their sectors. This enables them to compete on a "level playing field" on the markets of the world.
- 2. STANDARDS HELP DEVELOPMENT BY ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES:** Standards are important sources of technological know-how for developing countries and make it easy and affordable for them to participate in world trade by defining the characteristics that will be expected of products and services in order to meet export markets. Standards also help to break barriers for older and disabled persons to participate in society on equal terms.
- 3. STANDARDS MAKE THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE:** No matter if it concerns a soft toy, a sharp tool, explosion-proof window glass, a helmet or the transport of dangerous goods – being based on standards ensures that they serve their purpose and reduce hazards. That is also the reason why credit and many other cards work internationally – standards help to authenticate users. They also help to avoid piracy and fraud.
- 4. STANDARDS GUIDE AND CERTIFY BUSINESS QUALITY:** Standards and certification make flashy titles such as "Corporate Social Responsibility", business ethics and corporate governance measurable, to ensure there is some substance behind them.
- 5. STANDARDS CREATE A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND AN ENVIRONMENT FOR HEALTH:** Standards regulate everything from food safety, the provision of safe drinking water, the quality of medical devices to the application of hygienic principles for everyone. They also provide universal rules to tackle climate change as well as air, water and soil quality, energy supply, emissions and radiations. They provide a scientific and technological foundation to government legislations.
- 6. STANDARDS CARE FOR THE CUSTOMER:** Ranging from the harmonization of quality testing methods or the labeling of products from microwave ovens to sleeping bags, or assistance with personal financial planning in an ever-increasing complex world, standards give the customer something to rely upon when it comes to quality, safety and comfort.
- 7. STANDARDS FOSTER THE SHARING OF TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION:** Standardization helps innovative technology and know-how to be universally and internationally implemented, and opens the markets for new products and world-wide cooperation, be it the use of natural gas as vehicle fuel, space and aircraft technology or medical devices – standards bring the world closer together/help the world get closer.
- 8. STANDARDS ASSIST IN MANAGING CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY:** The world speaks more than one tongue and what works well in one culture might be taboo in another. Standards help to avoid confusion by harmonizing the display of date and time, language and country codes and graphical symbols and icons, including for those with special needs.
- 9. STANDARDS HELP SPREADING KNOWLEDGE VIA INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY:** Standards play a big part in enabling interoperability on all levels of ICT - from user interface to file formats and mark-up languages to semantics and content – in most languages and alphabets. Digital TV standards allow multimedia content producers to reach a wider audience and protect users from obsolescence. Standards for wireless mobile application ensure cross-frontier communication.
- 10. STANDARDS MAKE INFORMATION RETRIEVABLE:** There are standards to assign every book (ISBN), magazine (ISSN), even every piece of music ever published (ISWC) with a unique and permanent identifier to make it retrievable and identifiable across language and national boundaries. Also they make copyright and intellectual property rights issues easier and faster to resolve and remove ambiguity whenever information about it is stored or exchanged.

In brief: Standardization helps creating sustainability and benefits for everyone in a global society.

And what has this all got to do with terminology?

Terminology plays a vital part in all standardization efforts – no matter if it is a company-internal standard or an international standard. It can only work if everybody understands what is talked about: Especially in critical communication terminology must be standardized to assure security in emergency situations Besides, there are standardized principles and methods for terminology work, too.