

# Beyond Web Standards: *Crafting Design and Development Standards*

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## **Which standards do I mean?**

*Not just Web standards...*

- Interaction patterns
- Usability guidelines
- Design guidelines
- Coding syntax/formatting rules
- Content style guide
- Accessibility requirements

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## What is a standard?

- Rule
- Guideline
- Best practice
- Design pattern
- Principle
- Requirement
- Process, checklist, etc.

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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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## What makes a good standard?

- Precise language
- Problem statement and context
- Use cases, including edge cases
- Examples
- Supporting files
- Cross-discipline buy-in

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## Common complaints...

- *The standards change too often or are out of date.*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 who has authority to enforce standards

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## The Circle of Standards

Project Approval  
& Review  
Process

Standards  
Creation &  
Documentation

Training &  
Communication

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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

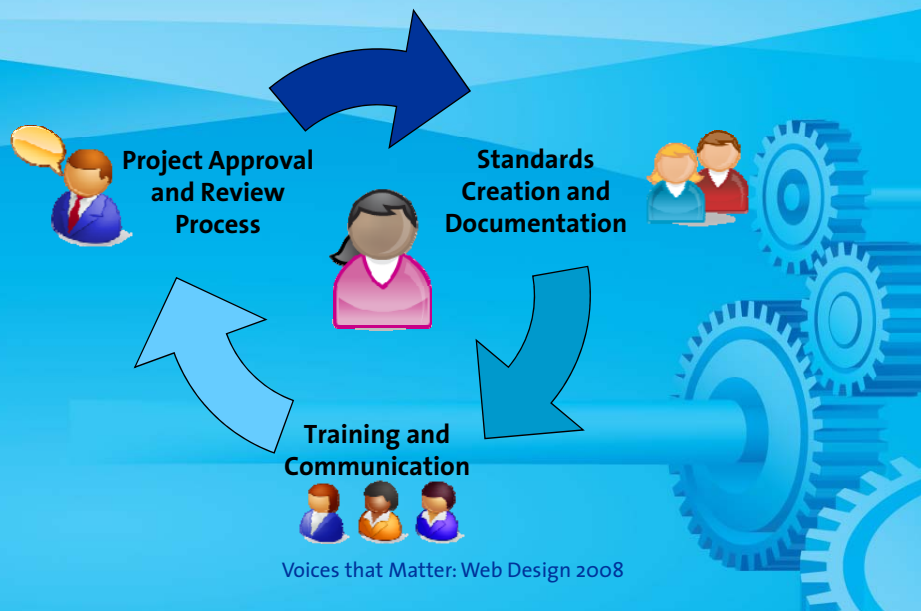
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## The Standards Manager

- 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 motion*



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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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The slide has a blue background with a graphic of interlocking gears on the right side. The text is white and blue. The title 'Bootstrapping standards' is in a large, bold, blue font. The list items are numbered 1 through 4, with the first part of each item in bold blue and the rest in white. The footer text 'Voices that Matter: Web Design 2008' is in a small, white font.

## 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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**HIGHEST ...**

**"QUALITY STANDARDS"**

**AVAILABLE!!**

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# Beyond Web Standards:

*[www.thecircleofstandards.com](http://www.thecircleofstandards.com)*

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