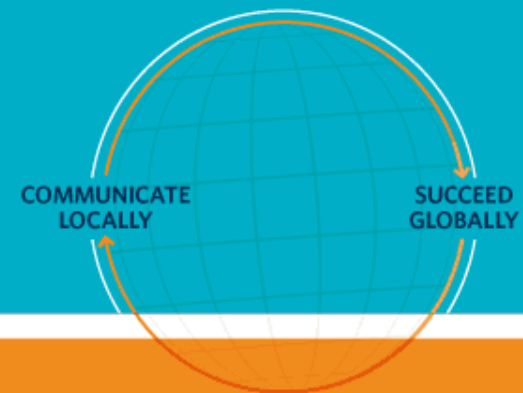


# Beyond Specifications: Looking at the Big Picture of Standards

Arle Lommel, Standards Coordinator  
*Globalization and Localization Association*





***The GALA standards initiative promotes the effective use of standards for international and multilingual content, builds awareness of best practices for their implementation, and helps the localization community make open standards work.***

Focus very similar to Multilingual Web, but broader focus (i.e., on items in addition to the Web)

# What Is Standards Work?



- **Traditionally: the development of standards**
- **In localization: development of technical specifications**
- **Committees are formed to:**
  - address a particular technical need (then usually disbanded)
  - created in response to a technical problem that creates a business issue (e.g., wasted money)
- **Output is a *technical* specification**

# Technical Specifications...



- **outline a format or (less frequently) a process to accomplish a technical goal**
- **are designed by technical people for technical people (written by geeks for geeks)**
- **but they end up used by people who may not understand the technology or solution**
- **ultimately must address a business need (or they will not be used)**

# Who Does Standards Work?



- **Funded technical staff**
- **Where does this leave companies without the resources or knowledge to participate?**
- **What about the business manager,**
- **or the technical staff who sees the need but has to convince his business manager,**
- **or the executive who has to sign off?**

# Obstacles to Use



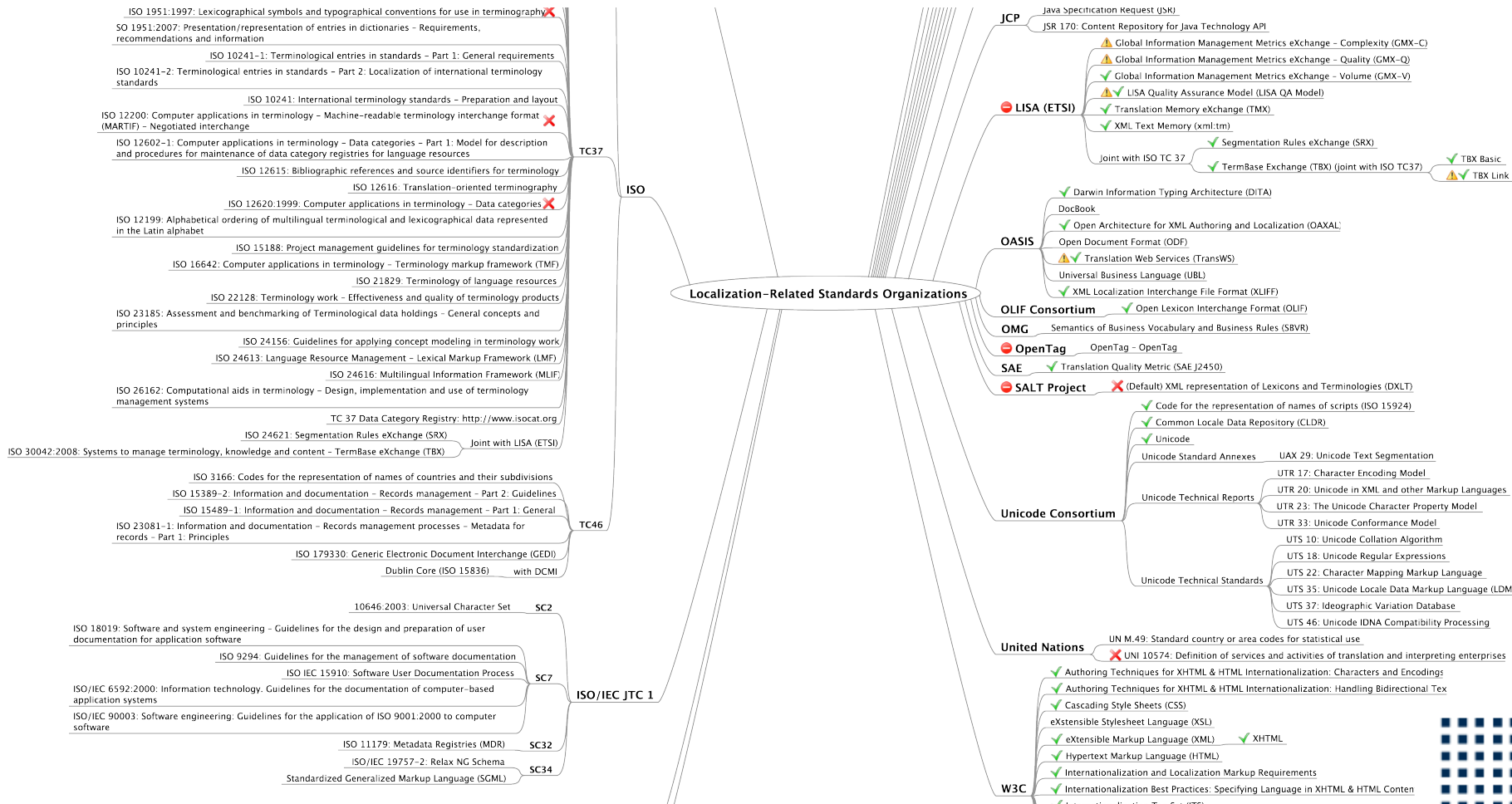
- **Yet another format...**
- **Unimplementable specifications**
- **Unclear specifications/scope**
- **Evolving use cases not anticipated**
- **Unclear applicability**
- **Unclear business case (does it actually save me money?)**
- **Feature creep (trying to be all things to all people)**

# What Is (Usually) Missing?



- **Coordination:**
  - Oversight into the big picture
- **Education:**
  - Useful guidance for all classes of users
  - Business cases: It is not technical brilliance but business need that drives implementation
  - Best-practice statements
- **Promotion**
  - Of standards efforts and usage

# Coordination





# Coordination



- **Keep solutions compatible**
- **Provide insight from group to group**
- **Liaisons only go so far (too many relations):  
need centralization of relations – e.g., 10 groups,  
45 vs 10 liaison relations.**
- **Requirements from constituencies:**
  - **LSPs**
  - **Tools vendors**
  - **Clients (large and small)**



- **Guides to using standards**
  - Which standards applies to which tasks?
  - How to use standards:
    - business case
    - technical implementation notes
  - Geared to different user classes
- **Training**
  - Implementation guidance

# Promotion



- **Let industry know about relevant activities, bodies, and committees**
- **Promote standards-based workflows, solutions**
- **Promote industry best practice (particularly in business areas) in standards bodies**
  - **Linport**
  - **Model Service Elements**
  - **MFAQ**

# Web approaches vs. broader industry



- **W3C work not as well known to industry as it should be (e.g., Christian's question re: ITS)**
- **Different assumptions (much of the industry sees web content as the *end* point)**
- **Web solutions vs. non-web solutions: is the gap bridgeable?**
  - **E.g., HTML5 has trouble with date/time/calendar, but CLDR addresses this issue... Can these be brought together?**
  - **Bridging XML and non-XML**

# Need Participation/Support



- **My plug for the GALA Standards Initiative**
- **All GALA Standards Initiative activities are free of charge**
- **Open to suggestions for new activities**
- **Visit *<http://www.gala-global.org/standards>*.**

# GALA Standards Initiative Funders



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TAUS

# Thank You!



- **Thank you for your attention**
- **Questions and comments can be sent to *[standards@gala-global.org](mailto:standards@gala-global.org)***