

BOOK REVIEW:

Standardization Essentials, Principles and Practice,

by Steven M. Spivak and F. Cecil Brenner,

published by Marcel Dekker, Inc. New York, NY, 2001

**Reviewed by Ken Krechmer
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Standardization Essentials is an introductory text on the development (standardization) and use of standards that define similarity. Since the beginning of the industrial revolution, repetitive manufacturing processes have been used to economically produce similar things. The standards associated with any repetitive process may be termed similarity standards. This book clearly develops and explains the economic advantages of creating and using similarity standards to increase the size of served markets and decrease the per unit cost of manufacture. Although the focus of this book is on North American standardization, there is considerable discussion of the value and importance of world wide standardized manufacturing and the international standardization organizations associated with similarity standards. The important issues of conformity assessment (testing to insure conformance with similarity standards), ISO 9000 (quality management system) and ISO 14000 (environmental management system) standards are addressed. There is a good introductory chapter on both ISO standards series, and an excellent contributed chapter on implementing ISO 9000 in a medium size chemical company.

More than half the book is devoted to 18 independent articles (some previously published), 15 from different people with broad experience in the standardization industry and three from the authors. These articles offer a wide view of current aspects of standardization and are quite interesting to read. These articles range over different manufacturing fields: air conditioning, tires, information technology, automotive and chemicals; they address standardization from multiple vantage points: consortia, US Department of Defense, consumer product safety, developing countries, laboratory accreditation, trade barriers and product procurement. Some of the articles are very descriptive and all are helpful to understand different views on similarity standards and their standardization.

Standardization Essentials concludes with a copy of a US Government document: Office of Management and Budget revised Circular A-119 (1998) on the federal use and development of voluntary standards. Considering that such documents are available over the Internet (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a119/a119.html>), it is not clear why the authors chose to include it. The book offers a listing of some of the more significant formal standardization and related organizations in North America and some regional and international standardization and related organizations. But only names are provided. no contact information. Considering how rapidly most standardization committees are moving onto the Internet, the lack of web addresses and pointers is quite surprising and reduces the value of the book as a starting point for further study.

In summary, *Standardization Essentials* only partially fulfills the promise of its title, offering a view (although a good one) of just similarity standardization. It does not address unit of measure standards and the related metrology (e.g., calibration) issues, and addresses only slightly compatibility standards and the related communications issues. At a price of \$150.00 this is a difficult purchase to justify.

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