

QM&T June 2003 Newsletter

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E-Voters

According to recent research, over a third of people in UK would be more likely to vote if they could do so electronically. Last month we saw the introduction of an on-line voting pilot scheme intended to increase the number of voters in last month's local elections. Over one million people had the option to vote on-line. However, it has been reported that due to inadequate home technology, many people could not vote electronically. Voters without 128bit encryption, which is widely available in browsers since January 2000, could not vote on-line. This has highlighted the difficulties the government faces with its plans for a connected UK. For more information please visit www.eweek.com

New QM&T Product

Information Technology & Quality Management Book

This book has been developed to support the Institute of Quality Assurance Diploma in Quality course - D6.2. It consists of six chapters. The first chapter covers the network management issues. The second, third and fourth chapters cover issues such as the general application of IT to quality management, systems integration issues and software requirements etc. Chapter 5 covers legal issues such as the data protection, health and safety and security. And finally the last chapter demonstrates the relevance of advances in IT and their impact on quality management and management information. For more information regarding this book and other QM&T products please visit www.qmt.co.uk

Spam

According to a recent report the EU Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive is to become UK law later this year. This new directive is designed to reduce the amount of spam that can clog up the networks. It requires companies to obtain the consent of users in order to send marketing e-mails (opting-in). This has been preceded by a new voluntary code of practice from the UK Advertising Authority (ASA) which also requires companies to gain consent to use personal data for marketing purposes. The only exception is when an organisation has an existing sales relationship with the consumer and the goods which are being promoted are similar to the ones purchased previously. Companies who use direct marketing will have to update their records, to comply with the new regulations. This would be a welcome change for companies as it reduces the amount of spam travelling on their networks. These new regulations are significantly different to previous arrangements. Under the existing Data Protection Act, consumers only need to be told for what purpose their personal data is being used. Companies can subscribe consumers automatically, and it is up to each consumer to opt-out. The new arrangements are likely to reduce spam but might not be welcomed by firms that rely on direct marketing. This law may cut the amount of spam in



circulation, but a lot of spam comes from outside the EU, where these regulations do not apply. For more information please see www.itweek.co.uk

New Video Codec

According to a recent report a new royalty free video codec will soon be able to deliver reliable broadcast quality video communications to relatively low grade PC and mobile phones. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) are currently creating a new video codec (H.264) for use of video telephony by businesses and consumers. This would mean that video conferencing systems will be able to operate on low bandwidth channels and dial up modems, and up to four times as many video channels could be transmitted on digital TV systems using the current bandwidth. For more information please visit www.itweek.co.uk

Raising the Standards Game

A new initiative has recently been published to 'raise the game' for standards in UK. Led jointly by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), British Standards Institution (BSI) and CBI (Confederation of British Industry), the National Standardisation Strategic Framework (NSSF) document intends to help UK businesses by detailing the advantages that standards and standardisation can bring to the UK economy. It highlights six key areas: Business, Government, Infrastructure, Innovation, International, and Awareness and Education. For more information please visit www.nssf.info.

ISO 9001:2000 for Cars

It has been reported that by the end of 2006, 8 cars or trucks out of 10 which are produced around the world will contain parts or components that have been designed, manufactured and sold under an ISO 9001:2000 based quality management system. This has been achieved as a result of agreement reached by the highly competitive automotive industry for the first time in its history on a common set of supplier quality requirements, developed with and published by ISO (International Organization for Standardization).

Quality of Life Indicators

Local Authorities were given powers by the Local Government Act 2000 to promote the "economic, social and environmental well-being" of their communities. Many authorities have now developed "quality of life" indicators and are now looking at the best way to communicate this. An Audit Commission paper has been written that uses ten case studies to demonstrate good practice. This paper suggests that organisations must be clear about what they want to do and encourage local press interest. One of the most important things is to make any indicators believable and explain why they were chosen and what things are being done to improve them. You can read the report at www.audit-commission.gov.uk

ISO Standard to Improve Interoperability of Manufacturing Software

ISO 16100-1 *Industrial automation systems and integration – Manufacturing software capability profiling for interoperability Part 1* has been released and is intended to enable companies to effectively exchange, reuse and share engineering product data throughout a manufacturing enterprise and its supply chain. Other parts of the standard that are currently under development are:

Part 2 – this defines detailed reference models to ascertain the conditions of the interoperability

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Part 3 – this defines detailed aspects of the interface and the exchanges happening at the interface

Part 4 – this will provide the definitions of how to gauge if a capability profile is properly constructed

The standard will be useful to all sectors of the manufacturing industry including automotive and aerospace. For more information on this standard please visit www.iso.ch

Medicines Control Agency

From 1st April 2003, the Medicines Control Agency (MCA) merged with the Medical Devices Agency (MDA) to form the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Under the Title V of Directive 2001/83/EC, approved labelling and a patient information leaflet will accompany all medicines supplied to the public. For more information please visit the new Agency's website which will be found at <http://www.mhra.gov.uk>.

ISO Café

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) has recently introduced a new section on their website called *ISO Café*. It is a virtual place to find out more information about the standards and how ISO standards are developed, benefits of standards, why standards matter, and features examples of ISO standards which can make everyday life safer and simpler, healthier and more convenient, as well as ensuring quality and economic benefits. As an ongoing project, the *ISO Café* will be updated and expanded over time with more examples of ISO standards and additional information on international standardization. For more information please visit www.iso.org.

Protecting Credit Card Transactions

It has been reported that a new scheme is being introduced, initially in Northampton, which claims that it would almost wipe out card counterfeiters overnight. Shoppers who pay for their goods by card rather than cash will no longer be asked to sign the credit slip. Instead they would have to tap in a unique pin number to authenticate their card. The change is part of a new drive to stamp out credit card fraud. It is known as the Chip and Pin as it relies on the combination of a microchip embedded in the card and a Pin number. The French introduced their own Chip and Pin system 10 years ago, and saw card fraud drop by 80%. America, Australia and New Zealand also use a similar scheme. While Chip and Pin tackles counterfeiting, a big growth area for fraudsters is where the credit card is not present, such as goods which are ordered and paid for on the Internet or over the phone. Fraud in this sector has been shown to have grown by 15% last year, accounting for losses of £110m. For more information please see BBC news.

EN ISO 13485

“Quality Management Systems – Medical Devices – System Requirements for Regulatory Purposes”

The old European Standard EN 46000 has changed its name to EN ISO 13485. This is also being revised and will become EN ISO 13485:200X. The old standard was used together with the ISO9001 standard whereas the revised standard has the same structure as ISO9001: 2000 and can be used on its own if a firm works within the medical industry. It has additional requirements to ISO9001: 2000 and is more rigorous than the 9001 standard.

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ISO/TS 16949

The quality standard ISO/TS 16949 is specially designed for the automotive industry and supported by the major motor manufacturers such as Ford, General Motors and Renault. This standard can replace QS9000, VD6 and AVSQ and should make it easy for suppliers to meet the requirements of the Vehicle Manufacturers. Many of these manufacturers are now asking their suppliers to implement TS 16949 and become accredited by December 2004. The updated standard includes many aspects of the new ISO9001: 2000 standard such as customer focus and continuous improvement. If you would like training or assistance on any aspects of meeting TS16949 please contact help@qmt.co.uk, and for further information please visit our website www.qmt.co.uk