



**I E T F<sup>®</sup>**

Open Standards

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# What's a standard?

- If two entities communicate, what's the language?
- If two things connect, why do they fit?



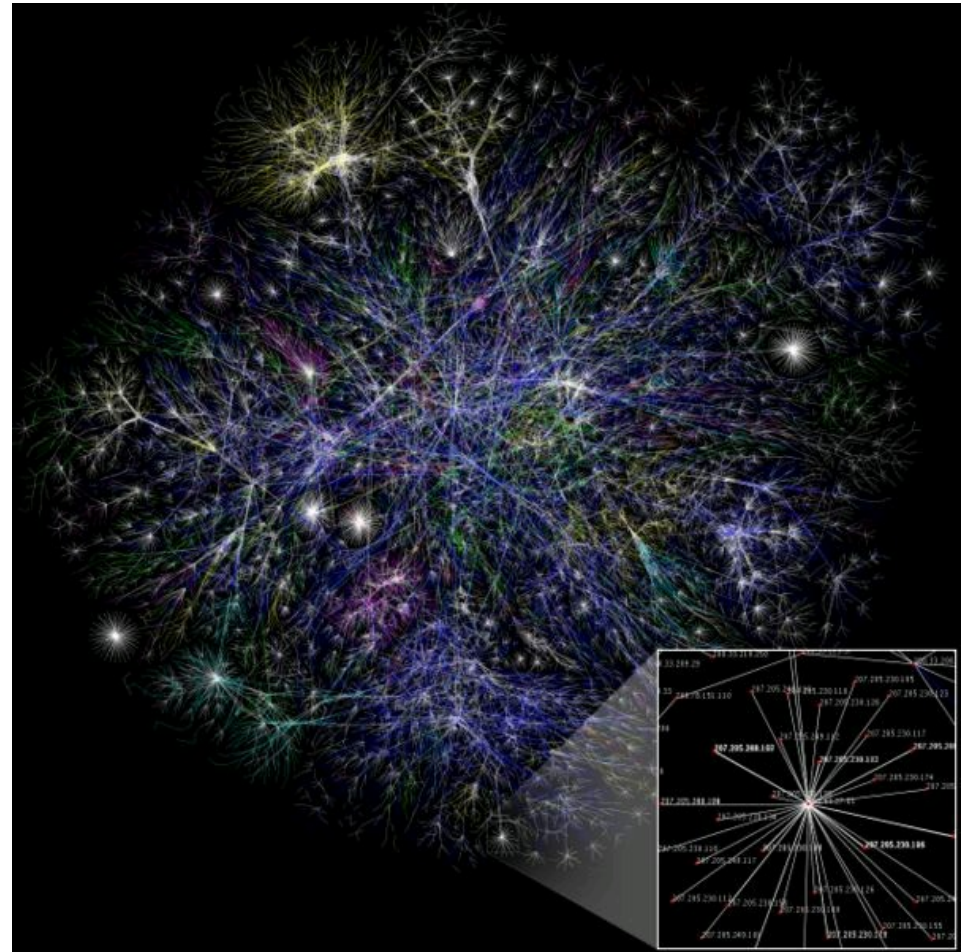
# What's an open standard?

- Do you know what it is?
  - Is there a specification?
  - Can you get the specification?
  - Do others implement to the specification?
- Are you able to use it?
  - Without paying a license?
  - Without getting sued?
- Who is able to change it?
  - Do you know how it happens?
  - Can you object?



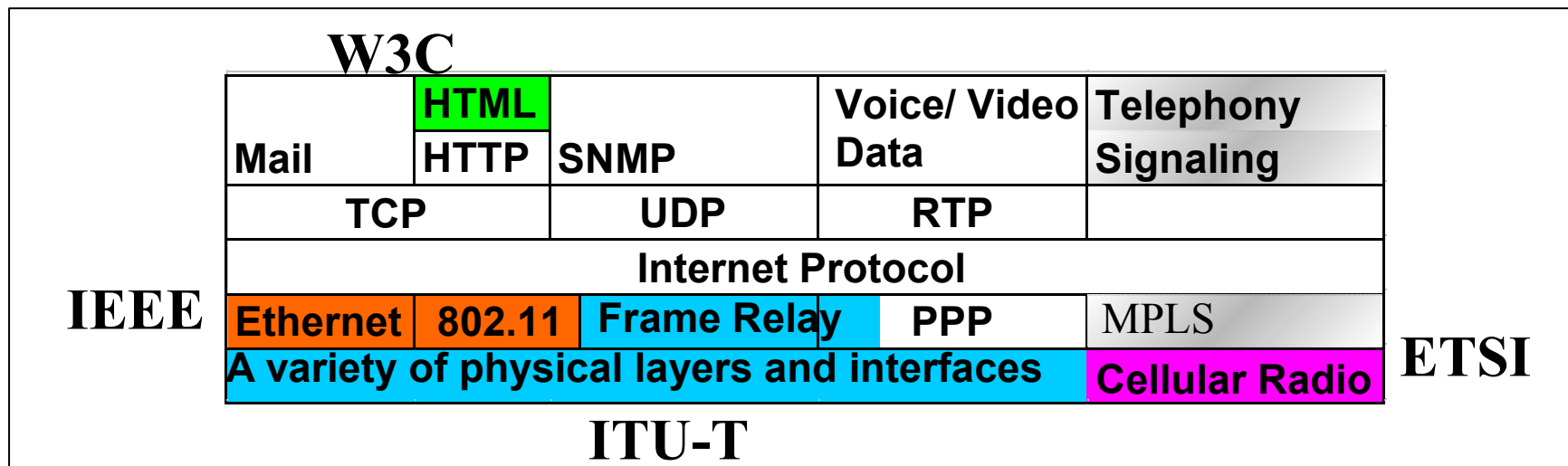
# What's the IETF?

- Traditional caretaker of the core standards for the Internet
- Organized as a meeting place for people - “no company hats”
- Works over the Internet
- Participants meet 3 times a year



# IETF scope

- TCP/IP, DNS, routing
- LDAP, SIP, SMTP, RTP
- MPLS, IP-over-foo, tunnelling
- “What needs doing for the Internet”



# Participating in the IETF

- Don't ask permission – of anyone!
  - You need an email address
  - You may enjoy showing up
- Observe some basic rules
  - Know what you're talking about.
  - Be honest.
  - Be polite.
- Enjoy the show!

# IETF leadership

- Selected from and by the community
  - Nomcom process: Randomly selected volunteers
- IESG: Charters working groups, approves their standards
  - 15 people meeting every 2 weeks
  - Sends email ALL the time
- IAB: Architectural oversight, appeals body
  - Also oversees IRTF and RFC Editor

# Why did we do it this way?

- Started out as a “community of experts”
  - Nobody else knew what an Internet was
  - Nobody else cared either
- Mechanism went on working
  - Scaled from 13 to 3000 people
  - No need to limit participation
- The world needed only one



# Comparision to other ways

- National Body  
Representation
- Sponsoring Company  
Representation
- “Industry Standard”

# National Body (ITU, ISO)

- Disagreements within a country suppressed
- Experts' influence dependent on location
- Expertise of national body varies
- Manipulation Sensitive



# Sponsoring Company

- Big companies can afford it
- Usually, majority voting rules
- Good thing: Clear sign-off rules



# Ways to Get Your Way

- Loudness of argument
- Buying power
- Rule manipulation
- Being in charge

# IETF: Rough Consensus

- In meetings and on mailing lists
  - Based on arguments presented
- Studiously avoids setting a percentage
  - Makes meeting-crowding an iffy proposition
- Personal judgment by WG chair(s)
  - Depends on chair's integrity and competence

# Typical life of an IETF effort

- Year 0: Idea
  - May or may not be based on existing practice or products
  - If lucky, embedded in drafts
- Year 0.5: BOF
  - Informal meeting to ascertain interest
- Year 0.8: WG formation
  - Now the discussions really start!
- Year 1.5: Almost finished
  - Just a few nits to fix
  - Everyone's tired
- Year 2.0: IETF Last Call
  - More nits found
  - Everyone's REALLY tired
- Year 2.5: Standard published

# Why should I care?

- Innovation tells us what's possible.
- Economics tells us what's salable.
- Standards create markets.
- If you don't participate, who will?

# Shameless Plug

- ISO SC34 adopted OOXML as a standard last week.
- ISO SC34 has a plenary meeting next door.
- At 12:00 on Wednesday, there's a demonstration outside.
- If you have an opinion, state it!



Questions? Comments?