**PATENT ROUNDTABLE**

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**The Open Standards System and the Patent System**

The IEEE Standards Association (IEEE-SA) recognizes the standards system to be one of the pillars of the global knowledge community. Through an open standards system knowledge is supplied to the global scientific and technical community—information that is representative of collaboration for technological advancement.

The IEEE-SA also recognizes the patent system to be one of the pillars of the global knowledge community. With the rise of a knowledge driven economy, the importance of patents has grown considerably, indicating scientific and technology progress and innovation. The patent system by nature has a robust repository of information and knowledge—information and knowledge that combined with the open standards system can make a substantial and unique contribution to the global economy and knowledge community.

Patents and standards encourage innovation and support diffusion of technology. Both the open standards system and the patent system generate, source and manage abundant information—information when combined can be powerful in helping to address today’s global challenges in an increasingly borderless, global market.

There are patents that are essential for the practice of a standard. Providing access to patent offices to early draft standards prior to publication represents an important source of non-patented literature prior art. Via collaboration, access can be provided to another key source of prior art— the non- confidential formal submissions and other contributions that are part of the standards development process which do not become part of the final, approved standard, but can still be considered prior art from the perspective of patentability. The wealth of information and knowledge realized through cooperative and collaborative relationships amongst standards bodies and patent offices can greatly improve the quality of patents issued and help reduce patent litigation.

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