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2. MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ISA MEMBERSHIP: Free Web-Access to ISA Standards

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This article is part of a series of articles about taking advantage of the resources and opportunities that come with your ISA membership.

Do you remember when technical offices had vast bookshelves of reference material available? I certainly do. Ten years ago it was not uncommon for most large engineering firms and plant maintenance departments to have extensive technical libraries. These rooms of knowledge would be filled with bookshelves containing a vast array of reference materials. From engineering handbooks and industry publications to regulatory documents and standards, going to look something up was often just a case of walking down the hall to take a look on the shelves. Not so anymore!

Given the rapid pace of change in our industry, along with the ever growing pressure to reduce business overhead, maintaining a technical library has simply become too expensive for many firms. Reference materials seem to go out of date too quickly, standards change, some documents are only available in digital

format, and new editions are constantly coming out. It is becoming more difficult to justify the floor space that the bookshelves take up. Yet, we as professionals, still have the ongoing need to access reference materials to help us do our jobs better. What is the automation professional to do? Well, the ISA does not claim to have an answer for that one, but it does have a unique member benefit that comes in pretty handy when it comes to ISA standards.

Since its inception in 1945 the ISA, in addition to being a member-driven organization, has been a very active standards organization for the automation profession. The ISA publishes standards on a wide variety of automation topics ranging from instrument selection/installation and control system interoperability all the way up to topics such as process safety systems in explosive environments and how to interface with today's modern enterprise manufacturing systems and wireless technology. Currently the ISA publishes and maintains over 150 different standards documents on broad range of topics.

One major benefit of ISA membership is being able to view each and every one of the ISA's standards for free on the ISA website. Are you ever curious if an ISA standard can help in an automation project you are working on? Well, there is no guessing like you get with many other standards organizations that will not even let you look at a standard before you buy it. As an ISA member, you can simply log into the ISA website and take a look!

The ISA also goes one step further. Not only can you look up the list of standards and their descriptions on the ISA website, you can also login with your ISA membership and have immediate access to the full text of the standards as well. This can translate into a real timesaver. There is no more waiting for your purchasing department to approve a purchase request, there is no more waiting for a document to be mailed to you, and there is no need to navigate a complicated online

purchase system with uncertain results. Best of all is if the ISA standard you looked up turned out to be not quite what you needed; you have not wasted any time or money in the process.

As I mentioned, the ISA currently has over 150 different standards. Here is a short list of some the ones that have come in handy over the years:

- **ISA-TR20.00.01-2001** Specification Forms for Process Measurement and Control Instruments – *standardized forms for specifying instrumentation so you can minimize mistakes and omissions*
- **ISA-5.1-1984(R1992)** Instrumentation Symbols and Identification – *the standardized symbols and process codes that we use for Piping & Instrumentation Diagrams (P&ID's)*
- **ISA-5.5-1985** Graphic Symbols for Process Displays – *the standardized symbols that we use on HMI's and touch screens*
- **ANSI/ISA-88.01-1995 (ANSI/ISA-S88.01-1995)** Batch Control Part 1: Models and Terminology – *a uniform and standardized way of structuring control systems for batch and recipe drive systems*
- **ANSI-ISA-95** Enterprise Control System Integration – *standards and techniques for integrating process control systems into larger ERP/manufacturing management systems*
- **ANSI/ISA-18.2-2009** Management of Alarm Systems for the Process Industries – *a comprehensive framework for making alarms in your facility work as a helpful tool for your operators instead of constant headache/annoyance.*
- **ANSI/ISA-RP12.13.02-2003 (IEC 61779-6 Mod)** – Recommended Practice for the Installation, Operation and Maintenance of Combustible Gas Detection Instruments
- **ANSI/ISA-84.00.01-2004** Functional Safety: Safety Instrumented Systems for the Process Industry Sector – *the standards collection that SIS, SIF, and SIL safety systems come from*
- **ANSI/ISA-91.00.01-2001** Criticality Ranking for Instrumentation – *a systematic approach for identifying which instrumentation your plant is critical*
- **ISA-99.00.01** Manufacturing and Control Systems Security – *considerations when securing your control system*
- **ANSI/ISA-7.0.01-1996** Quality Standard for Instrument Air – *guidelines on standards to maintain in your compressed air system for better actuator performance/reliability*
- **ANSI/ISA-TR75.04.01-1998** Control Valve Position Stability – *standards for control valve actuator performance*
- **ANSI-ISA-61804-3 (104.00.01)-2007** Function Blocks (FB) for Process Control - Part 3: Electronic Device Description Language (EDDL) – *part of the standardization that allows bus-connected instrumentation and controllers to communicate/interoperate with each other*
- **ANSI/ISA-77.42.01-1999 (R2006)** Fossil Fuel Power Plant Feedwater Control System – *feedwater control system*

requirements and guidelines for thermal power plants such as natural gas fired generating stations

- **ISA-100.11a** Wireless Systems for Automation – *wireless networks for instrumentation, monitoring and process control*

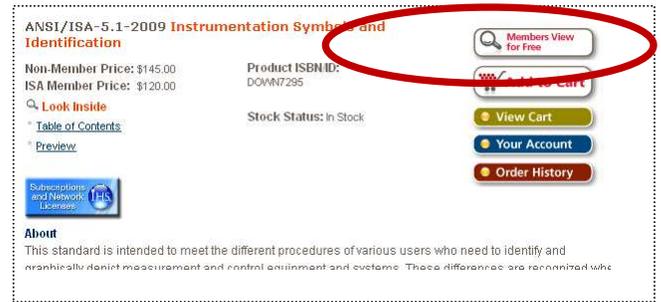
The process for viewing standards on the ISA website does take a few clicks, so I will walk you through what you need to do. First point your web browser at <http://www.isa.org> to load the ISA website. Click on the “Login” link near the top left corner and login with your ISA login/password. If you do not have an ISA login/password yet, click on the Login link and follow the “New to ISA” link. You can then set up an ISA web account using your membership card and some information like your mailing address.

Once you have logged in, click on the “My ISA” link on in the menu under “General Information”. The “home page” for your ISA membership will now come up; click on the “My Online Files” link. When the next page loads go to the “ISA Standards Subscription” section and click on the “Access ISA Standards”. A new page called “Find Standards” will now appear on your screen.

Once you are on the “Find Standards” page you can now search for ISA standards using several methods. The search options are by standards number, by standards subject, by title/ISBN/description/keyword, by type of standard, or by automation domain. One trick to using this page is that you need keep scrolling down. When you do a search, the top part of the page does not change – instead the search results are listed at the bottom of the page, hence the need to keep scrolling down each time you search.

When you have found the standard you are looking for do not get scared away by the “Member price” and “Unit Price”. (The prices

are listed there in case you want to order a printed or PDF copy of the standard.) Instead, click on the title of the standard and then click on the “more...” link. This will get to you the “product page” for the standard. Assuming that you have logged into the ISA website successfully with your ISA member login, you will now see a page like the following:



Click on the “Members View for Free” link on the top-left corner of the product page and a browser window will open with the ISA standard in it for your viewing pleasure. There you have it!

Being able to view ISA standards for free on the ISA website is just one of the many benefits that come with ISA membership. This article is part of a series in the ISA Hamilton Section newsletter about ISA membership benefits and how you can take advantage of them.

NEXT ISSUE: ISA Technical Reports