

How do we make sure we
work on the right problems?

BOF / pre-WG review

Are we getting the right things into the
IETF, and/or is there pain to be reduced?

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Warning:

this is intentionally
provocative and occasionally
even controversial :-)

are we getting the right things into the ietf?

- we pretty much cover the interesting stuff (and a lot more)
- but others nibbling at us, e.g., itu
- threats of going to <blah>-forum are hollow. let them go!
- are there things we should be working on which we are not?

are we getting the wrong things into the ietf?

- yes, we get
 - jxta? (we just don't know yet)
 - jerry ash's 32 wavelength TE
 - policy framework
 - enum!
 - was cops a wrong thing? should we have thought more first?
 - is ieprep really ietf material and is it well constrained?
 - eugene terrell :-)

are we getting things in, but in a non-optimal fashion?

- jabber wants a rubber stamp
 - needs a lot of work, esp. security and scaling
 - has heavy duty strong political proponents
 - reluctance to push back, install strong chair(s), ...
- jxta is boiling the ocean
- gmpls/optical discussion belongs in the itu
- 3gpp's aaa needs came in when we did not have enough bandwidth in the wg
- network configuration wanders around in circles, the clueless leading the eager

what are the characteristics of non-optimal entry?

- lack of a compelling vision
- lack of clear vision (weeds or ocean boil)
- lack of resources (aka differently clued)
- deployability/scalability clue missing
- outsiders want a rubber stamp (jabber)
- outsiders can't settle their fights on their original turf (ccamp/optical)
- vendors on a mission, either to promote their technology or to block others'

what might we do to make entry better?

- don't do what we don't know how to do correctly and simply (running code)
- heavier bof screening and agendas
- ensure active draft(s) before the bof, and pre-review them heavily
- early selection of very strong ietf-clued chairs
- know when a bof is meant to be a one-time shot

requirements documents successes & failures

- if the wg is fishing in the weeds, forcing a requirements phase can force focus
- if they are doing something good and simple, forcing a requirements phase can be just a pita and can slow progress
- often written afterwards (zeroconf)
- if the group is really bent on hell, they produce smoke if anything at all
- requirements are just one tool used by good management

architectural insight - are we getting the right clues into the process at the right time?

- desperately not
- we're just figuring out if and how we can encourage or impose architecture
- the root problem is the size of the ietf, number of wgs
- it's just not 42 old smart dogs any more
- the same for security and deployability and scalability clue, aka ops

It's perfectly appropriate to be upset. I thought of it in a slightly different way--like a space that we were exploring and, in the early days, we figured out this consistent path through the space: IP, TCP, and so on. What's been happening over the last few years is that the IETF is filling the rest of the space with every alternative approach, not necessarily any better. Every possible alternative is now being written down. And it's not useful.

-- Jon Postel 1998

Don't just do something, stand there.

-- contemporary Bhuddist saying