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Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature straniere

# *From standards to quality. W3C, the academy, and the Ifitt*

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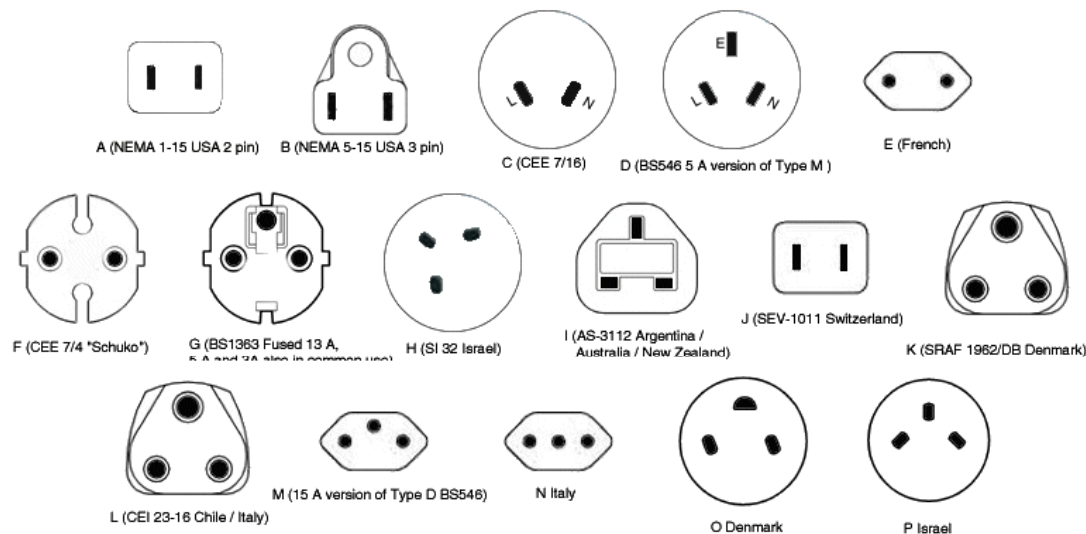
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# Standards and quality

*What are we talking about?*

1. Standards
2. HTML, and the W3C (companies + academy)
3. The academy about digital and tourism, the I fitt
4. ISO, or International Organization for Standardization
5. Can we define quality?



```
<html>
<head>
<title>The webpages's title,
on the top in the
browser</title>
</head>
<body>The webpage's content:
what we're telling the world,
and the browser
shows.</body>
</html>
```



## Standards and quality

### *Standards*

What's a **standard**?

Think of electricity voltage or octanes in gasoline, or of different electric plugs in different countries...  
or of the http, the html.

- ✓ International standards are standards developed by international standards organizations. International standards are **available** for consideration and use, worldwide. The most prominent organisation is the International Organization for Standardization, or **ISO**.
- ✓ International standards is one way of **overcoming technical barriers** in international commerce caused by differences among technical regulations and standards developed independently and separately by each nation, national standards organisation, or company.



## Standards and quality

### *De iure and de facto standards*

Some technology standards that are particularly relevant for our lectures – like the **HTML**, **WAP**, or **Bluetooth** – are official standards, internationally recognized.

(WAP was even the result of a joint, previously planned effort among several companies, like Ericsson, Nokia, Motorola, Microsoft, Oracle, Vodafone, and Telefónica).

We can consider those standards as **de iure standards**.

Sometimes, however, standards exist **de facto**, although no official agreement has been reached about them.

This is, for instance, the case of the portable document format, or **pdf**, developed by Adobe Systems Inc.

Another de facto standard, for multimedia distribution on the Web, is the **Flash** platform, now owned by Adobe, but originally developed by Macromedia.



## Standards and quality

*HTML, and W3C (companies + academy)*

The most important standard in our field is the HTML, the **HyperText Markup Language**, the language of the Web. It was devised by **Tim Berners-Lee** in 1989, while at CERN, the European Particle Physics Laboratory. From the year 2000, the HTML is an application of the International Standard **ISO 8879W3C**.

The **World Wide Web Consortium** (W3C) is an international community that develops open standards to ensure the long-term growth of the Web.

The W3C is made up of member organizations, both from private companies and the academy.

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## Standards and quality

### *The academy about digital and tourism*

Several academics (scholars and researchers), who deal with our specific field of the digital communication in tourism, have long belonged to the **Ifitt**, the International Federation for Information Technologies in Travel and Tourism, established in 1997.

The Ifitt holds conferences, seminars, workshops, and courses related to tourism and technology, and has set up national Chapters in some countries – Norway, Finland, Switzerland, and Italy among them.





## Standards and quality

### *Academical topics*

Topics at the last **ifitt** congress in Innsbruck, 2011, were

- ✓ Recommender systems
- ✓ Website quality and analysis
- ✓ User Generated Content and eWOM
- ✓ Mobile Technology and Services
- ✓ Hospitality Applications
- ✓ Technology Acceptance and Impact
- ✓ Web 2.0 and Online Magazines
- ✓ DMO and Destination Counseling
- ✓ Knowledge-based Systems and Technology Solutions
- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Marketing Distribution and Consumer Trust
- ✓ Personality, Tourist Behavior and Sensory Experience





## Standards and quality

### *ISO, or International Organization for Standardization*

Members of the Ifitt have contributed to the definition of a **tourism website evaluation model**, currently used to assess

- ✓ whether a tourism website “meets the standard”,
  - ✓ if it should be improved,
  - ✓ which are its weak points,
  - ✓ how these weak points can be overcome,
- taking into consideration **all the involved actors** (owners, managers, technicians, contributors, tourist operators and – most of all – users).

Not by chance, this evaluation model is based on a standard proposed by **ISO** (International Organization for Standardization).



## Standards and quality

*Can we define quality?*

**“Quality is the totality of characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs”**

(ISO 8402)

We will soon use this definition, in our attempt to **introduce** and put into practice a reliable – though simplified – **evaluation model** for tourism websites, and specifically official **DMO websites**.