On The Importance Of Being Heard

As a non-attendee to the BRM on DIS 29500, I have been trying to sort out fact from fiction in the highly imaginative accounts of the meeting. I have been able to isolate only one common point of agreement in all the published and unpublished reports that I have seen.

That point of agreement is that everyone at the table was heard. That may not seem like a lot to an Oracle or IBM, but name the last time Microsoft was listening to everyone in a public and international forum? At a table where a standard for a future product was being debated by non-Microsoft groups?

So, now that Microsoft is listening (something we should encourage), in an international and public forum, what are our options?

Reject DIS 29500? The cost of rejection is that ordinary users, governments, smaller interests, all lose a seat at the table where the next version of the Office standard is being written.

Approve an admittedly rough DIS 29500? That gives all of us a seat at the table for the next Office standard. Granting that I wince at parts of DIS 29500, it is hard for me to argue with that rationale.

Because approval of DIS 29500 insures an effective international and public forum whose members will be heard by Microsoft I recommend approval of DIS 29500 as an ISO standard.*

5 March 2008

Patrick Durusau

*This is a change in my prior position on DIS 29500. Different behavior has led to a different DIS 29500 and hence a different position on my part.