



NEWSLETTER

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Message from the IQNet President

Dear IQNet Partners,

2015 was a memorable year for IQNet. The celebrations of IQNet's 25th anniversary took place from Estoril to Milan, from Switzerland to each one of our partners' countries.

During this year we had the opportunity to share the spirit of IQNet with all of the IQNet Partners and to progress on strengthening the Network, through involvement and cooperation.

Although it is relevant to adequately commemorate special dates or events, it is also important to make the best use of the celebration to honour what was accomplished so far and to discuss the challenges we face nowadays, so that strategic directions can be defined and a clear signal for the future can be sent to all interested parties.

We also had the opportunity to consolidate on-going projects and launch new initiatives. A lot is still to be done but the steps we've already accomplished demonstrate that we are in the right path and that, with everyone's assistance, we will be successful.

This newsletter clearly demonstrates the diversity, the competence and the commitment of IQNet Partners and I want to praise and thank every contribution.

I also make use of this opportunity to wish all IQNet Partners' staff and their families a happy and prosperous new year.

Michael Drechsel
IQNet President





The revision of ISO 14001: impact, risks and opportunities

When reading carefully the new revision of ISO 14001, recently published, one realizes that the standard has really “come to age”, and that environmental issues has become in the last years a strategic element for any organization.

First of all, the adoption of the new High Level Structure developed by ISO for Management Systems Standards will increase the compatibility of the standard with other MS standards like ISO 9001 or ISO 27001, making it simpler the adoption of several standards within the organization and fostering the interrelationship and synergies between the systems. Managements systems are now more integrated than ever into the Strategic Management of the companies and, having proved to be an effective and efficient tool to reach strategic objectives, need to have a common structure.

The inclusion of explicit requirements related to the context of the organization and leadership, while maintaining the PDCA model, represents a great opportunity for the companies to better understand and manage the needs and expectations of the interested parties with regard the organization. Moreover, understanding the changing context which influences our company and its activities will lead to easily manage the derived risks and opportunities.

Today, managing effectively risks and opportunities means obtaining a strong competitive advantage for over the competitors; however, to reach this goal it is essential that top management is aware and fully understand these context and risks, and shows its leadership within the whole organization. That’s why we cannot talk any more about commitment of the top management, as in the older versions of the standard, but about a real and proactive leadership which will take advantage of these opportunities and will ensure the integration of the environmental management system in all business processes to achieve the strategic objectives of the organization.

The new ISO 14001, which makes a special emphasis in ensuring the continuous improvement of the environmental performance of the company and its products and services, has adopted a Life Cycle perspective to help organizations to define its environmental aspects and significant aspects. This new approach, which doesn’t mean to make a full LCA, will make easier to understand the main impacts throughout the different stages of the life cycle and to identify the most critical ones in terms of environmental performance.

Probably the main risk for the organizations with regard the new ISO 14001 is not to be aware of its full potential, especially at the (top) management level. Ignoring the Environment means increasing the risk level of the company in many fields (financial, reputational, compliance...) and will head it to a less competitive performance.

To summarize, the new ISO 14001 is a powerful management tool and represents a great opportunity for the companies to better integrate the environmental factor in its global strategy. It allows taking advantage of its opportunities while controlling or reducing the associated risks, and to successfully achieve the strategic objectives of the company.

AENOR

AENOR – Asociación Española de Normalización y Certificación
is an IQNet Full Member since
1990

AENOR hosted the
2006 General Assembly and
2009 Year End meetings

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IQNet contribution to International Standardization initiatives



AFNOR – Certification – Association Française pour l'assurance de la Qualité

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One of IQNet's key roles on behalf of its partners and as a major contributor to the body of knowledge relating to Certification is to monitor and input to on-going development and revision of standards. In recent years, IQNet investment in this activity has been considerably reinforced, for several different reasons, including impulsion from the IQNet Board, inclusion of outreach in the IQNet Strategic Plan, feedback from the partners' CEOs and the international standardization context.

So in the last 5 years, IQNet has moved from informal participation and passive monitoring of changes in standards to active participation and influencing developments.

As IQNet membership is still heavily focused on Management System Certification, it is only logical to begin with the Rules for MS Certification bodies (ISO/IEC 17021-1). When ISO CASCO began the development of ISO/IEC 17021, way back in 2003/2004, a number of partners were personally participating as national Standards Bodies delegates. So, as a strategic initiative, IQNet Board of Directors took the decision to take a number of practical steps, including

- e) formally requesting liaison status with ISO CASCO;
- f) nominating liaison delegates formally on behalf of IQNet;
- g) setting up a corresponding task group within IQNet Standing Committees to monitor, collect input, define a common IQNet position where possible and promote and defend this position;
- h) informing and sharing feedback and providing training for all IQNet partners on on-going matters relating to relevant international standardization.

Given the success of this approach, the Board of Directors now have extended this approach to have formal liaisons with a wide number of standards bodies and certification related bodies. In addition to the successive versions of ISO/IEC 17021-1 (in 2011 and in 2015), the standards concerned cover the revisions of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001, the future ISO 45001 and ISO/IEC 17011. Equally, IQNet delegates participate in various committees within the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA), ISO's Conformity Assessment Committee (ISO CASCO) where standardization strategy makers and users gather. Other vectors of sharing information about areas of concern are the meeting of specialized IQNet Partner Panels, such as the Food PP which monitors standards and certification in the Food Sector.

It should be emphasized that, as all these initiatives are part of our IQNet Strategy, and as such they are financially supported by Board of Directors and technically supported by the IQNet Head Office staff under the direction of IQNet's Managing Director, Pedro Alves and the IQNet Technical Manager, Tatiana Chiroasca.

As can be seen from all the above initiatives, IQNet is in the process of becoming a clear and an authoritative voice in the World of Management System Standards. To continue and extend this constructive approach and to make our voice stronger, IQNet needs more volunteers from our Partners.



Author

Alister Dalrymple
AFNOR Delegate to IQNet
Vice-President of IQNet



The challenge of hosting IQNet 25th anniversary celebrations

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”
Henry Ford

And in a single sentence we can find the perfect sum-up of IQNet’s history. The beginning was approximately 25 years ago to face the challenges associated with globalization and the will to define and implement mutual recognition and cooperation criteria and procedures, namely related to management system certification. Keeping together and working together requires understanding, flexibility and hard work but I dare to say IQNet achieved it. Furthermore, the success of IQNet is in direct correlation with the success of its 36 Partners worldwide.

The only thing I want to add up to Henry Ford’s quote is that all successes (and also failures) must be adequately celebrated!

APCER is a founding member of IQNet so, it was with great pleasure, that APCER embraced the challenge of hosting the main events related with the celebration of the 25th anniversary of IQNet.

The June 2015 General Assembly week in Estoril | Portugal can be pointed out as the highlight, among several others 25th anniversary related initiatives. More than 75 delegates participated in a comprehensive meeting programme, including all IQNet’s organizational areas, from strategy to marketing and product development, harmonization to peer membership.

The organisation of relevant international events usually presents a number of challenges specially those which include the celebration of important milestones in the history of organisations or networks.

The first challenge was to find an appropriate scenario for the business event that combined history and access to modern facilities and technology. So, in an astonishing sea side scenario with great accessibilities, the meeting week went according to plan managing to align very different expectations from over 75 international participants with distinct cultural and social backgrounds.

One of the highlights of the week, included in the communication and promotion plan designed specifically for this celebration, was the APCER/IQNet Forum. This Forum involved distinguished local and international experts in the discussion of conformity assessment state-of-the-art issues and current market challenges and opportunities. In addition, it was all achieved by mixing technical issues and art, communicating and sharing the spirit of IQNet through a unique combination of words, music and painting. Also the media coverage of the event and follow up press releases produced great results and, for the first time, an IQNet institutional video was produced plus another add-on video specially designed for the 25th anniversary.

Success is also when inspiration meets preparation, so a team was put in place to implement this project which motivated us all. IQNet Headoffice and APCER’s Team were in permanent contact for over eight months to ensure that everything went according to plan, because “the devil is in the details” and nothing can be left to chance. Bottom-line, the feedback received from all participants was that expectations were exceeded which makes all the efforts worthwhile and we believe that the excellent atmosphere breathed contributed to enhance furthermore IQNet’s spirit.

The success of the General Assembly meeting week truly enhanced the influence, reputation and market awareness of IQNet as the pre-eminent certification and conformity assessment service network and it was a pleasure for the team involved to be part of the celebration of such an important milestone in IQNet’s history.



APCER – Associação Portuguesa de Certificação is an IQNet Full Member since 1990

AENOR hosted the 1999, 2007 and 2015 General Assemblies

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The market as the main driver for conformity assessment



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Industrial environment changes fast and drives businesses to new strategies in order to respond to new market requirements. In the last 50 years, organizations shifted from a standards based strategy in the post war period towards a risk based strategy in recent days. International standardization and in conformity assessment kept up with the trend.

Errors committed in manufacturing has been an impetus for creating technical standards. For example, in the beginning of the industrial revolution several pressure vessels failed and exploded, causing many casualties. Industry responded by creating technical standard defining specifications to what components, installations and facilities were to be built. In the post war period, complying with technical standards assured not only save design but introduced standardization of products who led to competitive advantage. Thousands of standards were made by technical committees defining all kinds of products in mechanical, electrical, nuclear domains...

From a simple screw to a mega power station, industry was committed to a standards based strategy whereas compliance assessment was performed by specialist bodies issuing technical reports proving compliance to the standard or not.

Compliance based strategy since the 60's

By the sixties, quality requirements detailing what industries had to do to achieve performance were adopted in the standards. Later on to avoid duplication of effort, suppliers' methods were assessed against a generic ISO standard. The purpose was to provide a common contractual document demonstrating that industrial production was controlled. The introduction of certification in conformity assessment was a marketing tool. Obviously, an independent third party was needed to ensure fairness.

During several decennia companies developed and worked compliant to their own production standards in order to meet customer requirements. Documented procedures and registrations of the company's management system provided (shelf-load) evidence of compliance.

Conformity assessment was addressed in external auditing. Compliance audits were performed by independent auditors asking: "tell me what you do, show me where it is written and prove me that it is done that way?"

Continuous improvement based strategy in 2000

In 2000 a radical change in thinking placed the concept of process management in the centre of business management and performance. The goal was to have effective business via system management and process performance metrics. Expectations of continual process improvement and tracking customer satisfaction were made explicit in business strategy.

Conformity assessment shifted from a compliance check towards a judgement on what is effective and efficient (do the right things and do the things in a right way) the question was more "will this process help you achieve your objectives? Is the process performing well, or is there a better way to do better?"

Risk based strategy in 2015

The financial crisis showed the vulnerability of our global world creating growing concern for risks. Companies are interconnected what makes them very competitive but also vulnerable. For some organizations the consequences of delivering nonconforming products or services can result in mayor inconvenience or can be fatal to customers, interested parties or business partners.

In conformity assessment the audit verifies the rigour and degree of formality (qualitative or quantitative) needed to the management system to act as a preventive tool for managing quality risks. The question is more "knowing the context of the organization what are the risks? What processes are vulnerable? How robust are the measures taken?"

What is next?

As seen in this short overview conformity assessment follows the industrial megatrends from standard based towards risk based strategy in order to help organizations to survive the changing context. It would be interesting to know what the next megatrend will be.

Author



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Why to apply for IQNet full membership

The Cyprus Certification Company (CCC) is a relatively new organization founded in 2003 and operating in a rather small market, in an evolving country that has nowadays attracted the attention of everyone with regards to the energy potentials of its natural reserves. Cyprus is also found in a very interesting geographical position between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. The potential for expanding certification and inspection services as well as relevant training is endless.

The market in Cyprus albeit small, is crowded with certification bodies. The need to expand knowledge, expertise and to compete with everyone else is huge. Being a member of IQNet definitely enhances the marketing power when submitting a proposal and when presenting our organization to interested parties. Being a member of IQNet also upgrades the image of CCC to government bodies and organizations and contributes to the perception of our integrity and independence.

More importantly, being a member of IQNet, is a passage to an unlimited supply of knowledge, expertise and exchange of ideas and best practices. You become a member of an elite group of like-minded people, a member of a group of the best certification bodies on an international level. This translates to being able to obtain information at a moment's notice from all around the world. You are immediately treated as one of the elite and the opinion of your certification body contributes towards the greater IQNet strategy that is transferred to and influences all international certification, accreditation and even standardization organizations.

IQNet members are always willing to support you through surveys that help you see what is happening all around you and that help you define your organization's policy and strategy. In many occasions, you will be able to respond to every certification/ inspection requests, since even if your organization does not provide a certain service, all around you have your IQNet partners that can respond, fill the gaps and service the customer. More importantly, training needs can be met by IQNet directly or through your IQNet partners, who are always approaching certification matters more or less along the same lines as you.

The list of benefits is endless and 5 years since joining IQNet, CCC can certainly claim and prove that being a full member has greatly contributed towards the Company's strengthening of image and operations and its continuous improvement.



CYPRUS CERTIFICATION COMPANY is an IQNet Full Member since 2015 (Franchising Body since 2010)

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**Local expertise
Global recognition**



CHINA QUALITY CERTIFICATION
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CQC hosted the 2002 General
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Dispositions of the transition to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO14001:2015

ISO9001: 2015 and ISO 14001: 2015 were issued on 23rd September and 15th September respectively. According to IAF, the transition period for the new standards is three years.

China Quality Certification Centre (CQC) has positively kept track of the revision of these two standards, especially ISO14001. CQC experts, working as SAC/SCI committee members, have played a role in revising the standards. For now, two experts of CQC have become a part of the drafting group of China's national standard GB/T19000, GB/T19001 and GB/T24001, which adopt ISO9001 and ISO14001 equivalently. These three national standards will be issued around February in 2016.

To meet customers' demand to transit to the new standards as early as possible, CQC has publicized and implemented the new standards to customers when they were still at DIS stage. After FDIS version was issued, CQC has held two technical seminars regarding ISO9001: 2015 and ISO 14001: 2015, and has edited technical documents for transition as well as forms used in audit. CQC is planning to train auditors to new standards from 28th October, 2015 to 31st October, 2015. During the customer meeting held from 2nd November, 2015 to 3rd November, 2015, CQC is planning to illustrate the differences between new and old standards and transition requirements to customers, in order to make good preparations for transition.

CQC will issue the transition scheme for ISO9001: 2015 and ISO14001: 2015 at the end of October, and will start transition of certification to new standards in November. So far, CQC has issued 38000 ISO9001: 2008 certificates and 9200 ISO14001:2004 certificates, which indicates that the transition work would be a great challenge and at the same time an opportunity for CQC.

Author



Wang Yu
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Social responsibility: Conformity assessment response to market driven efforts

With the rapidly development of globalization and informatization, domestic organizations are subject to greater scrutiny by their stakeholders at home and abroad. Labour intensive firms in China are becoming increasingly aware of the needs for and benefits of socially responsible behaviour.

According to media report, China organization social responsibility performance is poor. Exporters are facing pressures of foreign buyers. Some clients approach CQM for SA8000 certification because their buyers require they have to get a SA8000 certificate. Some CQM auditors complained that some firms are not ready for conformity assessment, and don't know how to improve labour and working conditions. Typical issues are top managers' indifference, lack of infrastructure, ignorance of legal requirements, overtime work and insufficient training. We all know that these clients' demand for SA8000 certificate is the results of market drives; however, being a third party service provider, CQM is responsible for fulfilling its social responsibilities.

At initial contact stage, CQM auditors can help potential clients to better understand the principles of social responsibility, to better recognize social responsibility and engaging stakeholders, the core subjects and issues pertaining to social responsibility. By communicating and conducting gap-analysis, social responsibility conformity assessment enable clients increase the social responsibility awareness and legal awareness. We can observe conformity assessment provides confidence to consumers and stakeholders, increasing the certified firms' competitive advantage and reducing risk of labour liabilities. Social responsibility conformity assessment will effectively promote the sustainable development of enterprises and harmonious relationship with stakeholders.

Experience has shown the third party conformity assessment is a very good way to enhance credibility of social responsibility based on the trust of stakeholders.

Nowadays China government promotes to establish a healthy and sustainable society. Firm's operation philosophy must switch to concern social responsibility; it's not only the external requirements, but also the organization internal needs! More and more Chinese enterprises realized the importance of social responsibility. The third party assessment activities show many years of growth in China. It's predicted there will be steady need for social responsibility assessment. CQM will do his best to provide trustworthy conformity assessment service.



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CQM hosted the 2004 and will host the 2016 General Assembly meetings

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Why it is important to have a dynamic approach to IQNet product portfolio



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CQM hosted the 2002 General Assembly and the 2010 Year End meetings

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Although the Czech Republic is one of the smaller countries of Europe and the world at large, it has a big potential in management system certifications. Organisations in the Czech Republic are interested in obtaining various management system certifications which are not as traditional as the ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO/TS 16949, OHSAS 18001 and ISO/IEC 27001 certifications and certifications according to a number of other well-known standards. In this case we can make use of common products developed for the global IQNet network, in which the CQS certification body is involved on behalf of the Czech Republic. Although majority of the members have a broad portfolio of their own services in the area of management system certifications, there are specialities here which not every member of the IQNet is able to offer to their clients, and hence it is important to have the opportunity to make use of the offerings and experiences of the IQNet as a whole, but also those of individual IQNet members.

Let us use as an example certification according to SA8000, which concerns social responsibility. Obtaining accreditation for certification according to this standard is very demanding on defining procedures and documentation, as well as on demonstrating the auditors' qualification. Therefore, the IQNet has obtained accreditation and those members who have satisfied the conditions and offered their qualified auditors for this specification, can make use of this accreditation and offer it within their region. CQS has made use of this opportunity and thus is able to take advantage of the IQNet international network.

In a similar way CQS has also used the opportunity of providing certification of the management system of social responsibility. IQNet had set up a team which created a certification schema for certifying the management system of social responsibility, and here too, IQNet members can make use this certification schema, and to offer it.

In the area of management system certifications are thus being quickly created new and new narrowly oriented certification schemas, as a result of which it is better in these cases to make use of shared experiences and capabilities. Within the IQNet certification network it is a good idea to create for this specialised schema joint projects, the outcome of which will be a common product and subsequently also the opportunity to offer this product to clients the world over. This will enable us to make use of the offered potentials and, mainly, of the experiences in the area of certification of people from around the whole world.

Another possibility how to make use of the partnership among the IQNet members is to contact directly a particular IQNet member and ask them for cooperation in the certification according to a concrete standard or specification which even IQNet is unable to offer. Thus every IQNet member can use the help of another member with an offer of certification which is very specific.

It is apparent that the IQNet certification network is able to offer a broad portfolio of its services throughout the entire world, and that the members have been making use of this opportunity to satisfy their clients and to provide them with certification which the clients have been asking for.

We see this as a big advantage offered by an international certification network, and therefore we at CQS are trying to make a maximum use of the offered opportunities within the IQNet international network.

Author



Jana Olsanska
CQS Executive Manager



IQNet Strategy and organizational Drivers

Over the years, IQNet strategic thinking reflected the specificities of each particular period of time under analysis, supported by the identification of external threats and opportunities and by the internal characteristics of our Network.

Additionally, the capacity to “look beyond” allowed IQNet to systematically build up an organizational development path, limiting overlapping or conflicting initiatives, extracting the best out of strategic projects and investments.

To support and deploy the strategic imperatives into practice and operational routine, different success drivers were established over the years, reflecting IQNet organizational focus points at each moment in time:

1997 – starting-up - Definition of network rules and structure, encouragement of partners’ co-operation and mutual recognition, informing the market on IQNet and procedures and criteria harmonization;

2001 – building-up - Definition of membership levels and network expansion policies, assistance, training and coaching services improvement to ensure adequate and harmonized behaviour on a high level, centralize marketing and sales for global accounts, development of global products, financial management and control reinforcement;

2007 – Improvement - Improve partner involvement and cooperation, promotion of BPE benefits to identify method as well as performance related opportunities and threats, opportunities identification and develop new IQNet certification schemes, development of appropriate marketing, communication and networking tools;

2013 – Consolidation - Intensify representation, liaisons and lobbying activities and further develop relations with relevant stakeholders, expand the network to new CB’s and consolidate the membership processes, enhance knowledge transfer and technical cooperation to partners, strive for the sustainability of IQNet product portfolio, promote efficient services to partners.

As stated, the outcome of each strategy definition exercise was never limited to time boundaries, since it was always aimed at assuring the sustainability of the Association and its Partners. And this may well be the “signature” of the next strategic reasoning: sustainability!

In fact, starting next year, IQNet Partners will be again asked to contribute to yet another strategic thinking exercise, applicable from 2017 to 2020.

And the 2020 vision directives were already established for IQNet Network (2013-2016 Strategic Plan):

- To be known as the most competent, efficient and innovative global CB’s alliance
- To be of recognized importance for Partners business success and sustainability
- To be considered of value for different stakeholders and able to accommodate a wide scope of interests and expectations
- To be perceived as the most influential and dynamic driver of independent and credible third party conformity assessment

The dynamics of the conformity assessment business due to the permanent evolution of our surrounding environment demand a significant and continuous adaptation effort from IQNet and its partners but, on the other hand, results from previous projects and initiatives need to be clear. These are the challenges we are facing but there is no doubt that, with the contribution of all Partners, we are going to succeed in our common endeavour.



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CQM hosted the 2011 General Assembly meeting

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Michael Drechsel
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Author



The management system certification in Brazil



Fundação Vanzolini

Fundação Carlos Alberto Vanzolini is an IQNet Full Member since 1997

CQM hosted the 1999 General Assembly meeting

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The certification of quality management systems began in Brazil in the same way as in the rest of the world, with big companies using their own quality management models and requiring their suppliers to fit to those models.

That was the second party certification activity that lasted until 1990.

With the publication of the ISO9000 series in 1987 the third party certification took place in the market. In Brazil, this movement started in 1990 when Inmetro, the state owned accreditation body, stopped doing the certification by itself.

Fundação Carlos Alberto Vanzolini, FCAV, a foundation linked to the University of São Paulo, was the first entity to be accredited to do third party quality management systems certification in 1990. This started the growth of this market in strong competition with many foreign companies that came to this country attracted by the existing big business potential.

According to the last ISO Survey the ISO 9001 management systems certification in Brazil in 2014 reached the total of 18,201 certificates with a fall of 17.7% concerning the numbers of 2013. In part this is due to the partial information given by the certification bodies in Brazil to ISO Survey and part due to the loss of attractiveness of the certification to the companies. The extensive action of a class of certification bodies nicknamed “cowboys” was one of the main reasons to that loss of interest.

With the recent economic crisis in Brazil we can expect that the number of certificates have another fall in 2015.

The presence of IQNet in Brazil, with the admission of our country member FCAV in 1998, has contributed to improve credibility to the management system certifications. The share of experiences and knowledge in between the members leads to a culture of high quality certification services in Brazil. Pioneers in that cooperation with FCAV were DQS from Germany and DS from Denmark. FCAV shared this knowledge with many others countries in Latin America, in particular with Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia and Mexico. From these countries Argentina soon got its full membership followed after some years by Mexico. Nowadays we have a strong cooperation both bilateral and multilateral also with Colombia and Venezuela.

Presently, many IQNet member bodies operate in Brazil, all of them in accordance with our association code of ethics and offering a menu of products including training courses and specific scheme certification as SA 8000.

The local market perspectives are indicating that special products will be the future with better profit margins and low competition. For the traditional management systems certification, we have 50 certification bodies with local accreditation in the country that implies in a very strong competition and low prices and low service levels.

FCAV is looking forward to offering to its clients and partners at IQNet innovative products such as the AQUA certification process for green buildings, which is a leading product in the civil construction area.

We understand that IQNet membership was a strategy that made possible the position of FCAV as a major player in the Brazilian market alongside with the big foreign certification bodies that are operating here.

We believe that the 2015 economic crisis is temporary and the huge Brazilian market is still worthwhile.

Author



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IQNet importance when striving to maintain international engagement

Marketing and trading is a priority in meeting the enormous needs of the nations, where the economic activity, is the most important consequence of the generation of resources. The economic revenue, closely linked to this phenomenon, derives in the rise of the of living conditions, the increase in jobs and employment levels and cultural development of our society as well as smaller entities such as companies, multinationals, NGOs, clubs among others, etc. This has been observed for many years and history is a faithful witness of this event.

Countries need to maintain and develop the best trade relations with their peers, in order to contribute to the development of their societies. The exponential rise in communications, the opening of markets, the release of previously closed borders, the growing of economic and financial transactions in real time among the grouping of entities in blocks and networks has shaped the dynamic interrelations of our society in what is called "globalization ". Since decades, it has become clear that globalization has helped the rapid development of society, but has also allowed the marketing and trade balance tilts less vulnerable nations.

This block and network formation has developed a variety of agreements between members, allowing them to act jointly and respecting a common goal. The answer and actions made by groups and in one sole voice is more robust, effective and efficient than individually held. Associations of all kinds have been formed throughout our regions, which has promoted the harmonization of criteria in order to act with the same scheme and achieve beneficial results to all participants. Success in establishing these organizations has been reported since the beginning of the modern era, they have been multiplied in all areas of society, as has happened with the UN, NATO, FIFA, EEC, OPEC, WHO, OAS among many more.

Large and small associations have been created, with links to all areas of events. The world of Management Systems has not escaped this trend and this is why our association, IQNet, eager to remain at the forefront on the issues of Certification of Management Systems, has implemented various mechanisms to comply with market demands, while increasing its presence in many countries, harmonizing common answers to customers and suppliers and finally, responding in unison to stakeholders, with evident benefits at the time being and many others imponderables at present, but certainly helpful in next future. But it must be clear to remember that to be part of elite organizations such as the IQNet network, an unblemished record of performance in the area must be demonstrated, as well as the ability to stay as a partner, meeting all the guidelines of a demanding list of requirements.

The globalization of our activities has affected us both positive and negative, as referred in advance. IQNet, bringing together common desires of its 36 members in 200 branches, has endeavoured to update on what is happening worldwide in its different areas of competence, offering products that promote the development of Management Systems, encouraging the continuous interaction markets, gaining and transferring experiences to those who are not traveling at same speed and generating welfare to all participants. If not for their continuous monitoring of daily operations development of its members, its long permanence in the different markets, the analysis of trends in all these activities and the lobbying in global entities related to the world of Management Systems, it shall been very difficult to remain as a leader in bringing together certification bodies worldwide.

It is for this reason that the marketing and edges, such as the feedback of information between members, the dynamic established in Bern by our headquarters staff and co-certification of Management Systems schemes to third parties by members of IQNet, has been the spark plug that has crystallized its supremacy in international markets. Last but not least, its presence in regional and global entities, harmonization of standards of different origins, the trust generated by belonging to this prestigious partnership and the cooperation and feverish work of its members, has allowed IQNet and its partners in these 25 years to enjoy the benefits generated by the marketing and consolidation of their products beyond their borders.



FONDONORMA – Fondo para la Normalización y Certificación de la Calidad is an IQNet Full Member since 2001

CQM hosted the 2004 General Assembly meeting

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Jesus Taborda
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Author



One-stop-shop: combining certification, standardization and testing



ICONTEC – Instituto Colombiano de Normas Técnicas y Certificación is an IQNet Full Member since 1998

CQM hosted the 2001 General Assembly meeting

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The changes that have occurred in various areas of human activity and society, heavily influenced by globalization, understood the latter as the increased communication and interdependence among countries of the world, tend to unify the economy and diverse cultures. As a result of this phenomenon, in recent decades an unprecedented expansion of world trade has occurred, living standards have risen worldwide, and it has boosted demand for safe and high quality products and services for consumers. It is for this reason that consumers are interested in knowing whether the product or service that they are purchasing meets their expectations. Given the wide range that consumers find in the global market, it is usual to ask whether the product fulfils what is expected or if the product is safe and does not generate negative impacts to the environment, taking in account their needs and expectation in performance, including safety.

Thus, a definition of the characteristics that the product must have to satisfy market expectations is required, and it is achieved through the development of standards and regulations and other specifications which not only establish the requirements to be met, but also the way in which compliance with these requirements can be assessed by tests. Every day, companies have to adapt to new market rules and manufacture its products with the best quality, safety and environmental care.

The process addressed to prove that these characteristics of the product or service, meet specific requirements, called certification, has gained relevance and importance in recent years due to the demand from buyers and the need to compete in global markets.

So, it is possible to state the great importance of standardization, certification and testing in the context of the new global economy. Without these three elements, a manufacturer or supplier could not access new markets demonstrating that its products satisfy the buyer's expectations.

Standardization as a key tool for globalization offers significant benefits as a result of adapting products, processes and services to the purposes intended, by protecting health and the environment, preventing trade barriers and facilitating technological cooperation. By the other hand the standardization is a powerful tool for adapting o adopting new technologies by developing economies countries.

As a complement to the processes of standardization, the certification can bring to market the assurance required for the product or service, based on the implementation of testing or services to prove compliance with the requirements and providing assurance to the market about product conformity, allowing to generate appropriate levels of trust in relation to the product being purchased.

Standardization, certification and testing, a combination that constitutes the one-stop shop for access to markets



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CONTEC Delegate to IQNet

Author



The importance of always listening to your customers – 5 things to listen closely

“Listen to the customer” is one of the most used phrases when talking about successful businesses. When I hear this bumper sticker wisdom I tend to question does the orator really understand the meaning of understanding customers? Successful businesses can only be based on happy customers that you cannot create without the art of listening. But what are the most important things you should be listening? Here is my short list of things I consider most valuable for driving my business.

1. Listen were to focus - “If you don’t listen, you cannot understand. If you don’t understand, you cannot make progress.”

Focusing your evaluation correctly requires understanding the customer’s situation and on your ability to consider the right emphasis on right things. This understanding is crucial when discussing customer satisfaction. Your success as a certifier depends on how well you can bring this knowhow to the evaluation process. You must be able to produce findings that support the customer’s business goals. If you don’t listen, you cannot understand. If you don’t understand, you cannot make progress.

2. Listen to expectations - “The goal should be to first identify these expectations and then perform according to them.”

Your service experience level depends on the customers’ expectations. If you exceed expectations, your service is considered excellent. This creates a situation where expectations rise and you need to perform even better next time. This is expensive and sometimes unnecessary. On the other hand, if you perform lesser than expected, your customer is unhappy. The goal should be to first identify these expectations and then perform according to them. We as certifiers set the minimum standard requirement level but not the maximum. All customers are not alike, and they don’t expect the same service level. When you understand this, you see that it is an opportunity.

3. Listen to service experience feedback - Without listening you cannot take proper care of your customers.”

You should listen to customers satisfaction levels and how happy they are with your service experience. Without listening you cannot take proper care of your customers. When you aim to respond to customer expectations, you have to know how good you are at every service step. Sometimes this requires you to identify those steps and think how you could perform better in customer touchpoints. For this you need to model the service process and discuss with the customer how you could improve it.

4. Listen to customers hidden needs - “If you don’t listen, get ready for price and profitability drop.”

As certifiers we take a trip to the customer’s core business. By listening carefully you can identify new possibilities to offer additional services. It is important to ask the customer what challenges he faces daily. If you identify these challenges, you can offer solutions. Some say this is selling, I say it is caring for customers by solving their problems. There is also a link from profitability to listening. With the right service offering and level you can justify your price level. This enables profitable business. If you don’t listen, get ready for price and profitability drop.

5. Listen why the customer needs a certificate - “Only by listening you can identify what drives your customers business.”

The credibility of certification is based on listening to the customer and his current situation. Only by listening you can identify what drives your customers business. You should know where your service fits in the value creation process. What value does it bring to the customer and to his customer? If you don’t listen, you cannot understand how the certificate helps drive the customers’ business goals.

The success of our certification activities demands that we take listening the customer seriously. We should listen genuinely, continuously. We cannot just not our heads and pretend – we have to listen, thus we know that it is the lifeline of our future success.

I hope that we systematically try to understand our customers and not settle for empty phrases. Our credibility depends on it. After all, we need to show that we offer more than a festive certificate on the wall.

Inspecta

Inspecta Sertifiointi Oy - is an
IQNet Full Member since 1990

INSPECTA hosted the
1999 General Assembly
Meetings

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Tomi Kasurinen
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Inspecta Certification

Author



As IQNet newest members, what were the main drivers for applying for IQNet membership



INTECO - Instituto de Normas
Técnicas de Costa Rica
is an IQNet Associated Member
since 2014

Apartado Postal: 10004-1000
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www.inteco.or.cr

As the National Standards Body of Costa Rica, and as a key player in terms of certification bodies in Central America and the Caribbean, INTECO's goal has always been to learn from the best and to work side by side with the best. Due to this, INTECO has always been looking for new opportunities that can help our country, our clients and our certification body to be more efficient and competitive.

One of the main reasons we decided to join IQNET is because it includes many of the ingredients I just mentioned above, and that I will proceed to explain.

As today, IQNet has 36 of the most prestigious certification bodies, as members. This gives us the opportunity to learn from them by analyzing their procedures, to become more efficient. It also gives us the chance to network and make strategic alliances with other partners that have more experience, products and services than we do.

Being a member of IQNET allows us to move to a higher level where our clients see new opportunities like global certification. It gives us the possibility to expand our product portfolio by having access to a growing number of unique and specialist products and services.

Being a member of IQNet gives us the chance to let our stakeholders know that we are allying with a solid and mature Association who recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, and whose partners have collectively issued approximately one quarter of all management system certificates worldwide.

Finally, being a member of IQNet is an honor, and a way to demonstrate ourselves that we can be able to be at the same level of the best certification bodies, and to represent with dignity, this Association.



Mauricio Céspedes Mirabelli
Executive Director
INTECO Delegate to IQNet

Author



The imaginable future of certification services

There was an news taking my attention recently, which is that a woman in Sydney, Australia landed upon the genius idea of sending a “telepresence robot” to wait in line for her as a digital representative. The robot, which shows the face of shopper Lucy Kelly, features an iPad screen attached to a long pole on wheels that can be controlled remotely. From the news, I realized using high-end technology is not only used by industrial site but also used for individual life. The era that the technology is everywhere already came.

We CBs are certifying the organizations which are using cutting-edge technologies.

As the body who certify others, we have to be the one of those who should be armed with IT technology and use it. Nevertheless, many of CBs still stick to traditional activities such as phone response, lots of paper work, handing over printed audit report. I believe CB can provide better value to our customers by grafting IT technology onto our services.

Let me share my ideas. It might be already implemented or possible IT-grafted certification services.

- **Improved and faster customer service:** you can make proposal service faster by establishing e-quoting system. Customers access your website and as long as they input their information, they can see man days and certification fee automatically. In addition, they can even find from the website whether the date they want to be audited is available or not. It is not a chimerical story. As long as you have a good programmer, you can actualize it right a way!
- **Environment-friendly service:** How many papers are you spending for your work? Do you still print the paper and write some notes on it during auditing? If you developed mobile program, you could have brought just a tablet. You can download all the data related to the auditee organization, and write all the findings on the audit report app and upload it. If you don't like typing keyboard, you can also use handwrite on the screen of tablet using surface pro. If you need to take photos as objective evidence, then you can just take photos by camera on tablet and upload the photo on the app. That's it. Through IT solution, you don't need to print a piece of paper.
- **Creating additional value:** When your customer access your website, what will they expect to get? New certification scheme? Maybe. But what If they are existing customers for a long time? aren't they expecting the statistics of results of previous audits? By establishing computer database, you can create additional value for them. you can allocate IDs to customers, and if the customer log in by using the ID, they can see all the previous audit data and be provided statistics of audit results via your website. In addition, they can also find which part of their system is weak
- **Cost and Time-efficient audit service:** If you send a robot like the above-mentioned woman in Australia, instead of an auditor, what will happen? It may sound weird, but in the future a robot will work for you. Have you ever calculated how many days you are losing for travel and how much money your customer are paying for your travel and accommodation? By using robot with camera, microphone, and speaker, you can remote-control the robot at your office and see the customer's site through the camera and communicate with your auditee at the site through microphone and speaker. You can also show your findings and reports to your customer via monitor equipped in the robot. To do this, what tasks do you have to do? It's very simple. You can just send and receive the robot by DHL, and your customers can also just pay the delivery fee. I think It will be much cheaper than your flight ticket. In your side, on the other hand, you can save travel time so you can spend your time creating other valuable works or you can audit other customer by using time saved.

For the examples I shared, you may think it is ridiculous for some part or reasonable for some part. just hope my ideas would be a chance to make you have an idea on how to utilize IT technology. The certain thing is the essence never change but the methodology should change depending on the environment.



KFQ - Korean Foundation for Quality is an IQNet Full Member since 1997

KFQ hosted the 2003 General Assembly Meetings

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KyungHoon Cha

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The importance of keeping quality focus during difficult times



MIRTEC S.A. is an IQNet Full
Member since 2012
(Elot since 1992)

MIRTEC (Elot) hosted the
2001 General Assembly
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In recent years, Greece and most of Europe is experiencing an intense economic crisis. The impact on the market is direct and reflects in growing number of small and medium size enterprises across all sectors of the economy that are forced to go out of business.

During these difficult times the competition grows, only the best survive and there is need for giving added value to products and services.

Nowadays, companies more than ever need to differentiate from the competition by developing new strategies and creating competitive advantages. The target should be not only to offer lower prices, which is not always easy in view of the growing international competition, but also to provide products and services of higher quality in order to obtain customer's satisfaction and ensure a long term cooperation which is extremely important, especially during economic crisis.

The new strategies that have to be developed from small and medium size enterprises, based on principles of management are indicatively:

- focus and fast adaptation on customer satisfaction
- exploitation of the potential / abilities of human resources in developing niche products
- flexibility to meet specific requirements and take advantage of market opportunities
- original / innovative products & services.

All these strategies are strongly related to quality objectives thus showing the importance of focusing on quality.

Providing high quality products and services makes the difference in a competitive environment. An organization which invests in targeting high quality products and services makes a commitment to continual improvement (better resource management, work-action standardization and controlled monitoring, time saving, reduced operating costs, increased productivity, internal auditing and reviewing etc.). Operating in accordance to the requirements of quality management systems, results in a continuous process and product control thus reducing non-conforming products and services and leading to lower costs for corrective actions. Working under terms of quality improves the image of the company and its products thus leading to sales increase. High quality products and services lead to lower costs and also to an increase of income. Moreover, quality means exploitation of the potential and abilities of human resources by continuous training which guarantees best product characteristics and increase of customer confidence.

At difficult times focusing on quality is a pure profit and competitive advantage of high importance when added value of product and services is critical. High level quality products improve the company's reputation, increase profits, reduce production costs and create conditions for the company to acquire the largest possible share of the market.



Pigka Athina
MS auditor

MIRTEC Delegate to IQNet

Author



Is quality an exclusive right of big companies?

The answer for the question raised is definitely no, quality is not just the exclusive right of big companies. Nothing proves this better than the composition of the customer portfolio of the Hungarian Standards Institution (MSZT) regarding the companies certified according to ISO 9001 standard. The ratio of certified companies under 125 employees is 80%, in further breakdown the ratio of companies with 1-10 employees is 35%, in case of organizations from 11 to 45 persons it is 30%, while this ratio comes to 15% at organizations between 46-125 persons. As regards sector distribution, small organizations mainly operate in the IT sector, engineering services or in other services.

For small organizations a certified management system means one of the pillars of market access and the success in it. When establishing and operating a management system – in addition to their own motivation - the company leaders are inspired by the intention of becoming suppliers to large organizations or taking part in tenders (if it is a precondition), as well as by the expectation of a parent company. In addition, it is also required by the market, because nowadays their all competitors have such certification.

A few leaders of smaller organizations apply ISO 9001 (QMS) not only to meet customer requirements or to deliver faultless products and perfect services, but also one of the method for organization development. These smaller companies are particularly appreciating their gained international IQNet certificate to facilitate the extension of their cross-border partner relations.

Golden Certificates

MSZT has established a Golden Certificate Award as recognition of the efforts achieved in operation of management systems.

Since 2008, MSZT has recognized its certified partners' commitments to management systems by issuing this award. This certificate can be provided to those companies whose management system is operated as well as developed effectively and excellently moreover their certificate is continuously maintained by MSZT for more than 12 years.

Since 2008, 42 organizations have received this recognition concerning their quality management system and among them the ratio of small organization is 76 %.

We believe that the new ISO 9001:2015 standard will even better assist these enterprises in the effort that the requirements of the quality management system:

- be integrated into the organization's business processes, facilitate better alignment with the strategic directions and the focus be on performance measurement and evaluation, and
- thereby, they get closer to the standard-users.

The change is also an opportunity!

The MSZT with this slogan draws attention to the fact from what perspective should be reviewed the processes and the requirements of stakeholders, the context of the organization and applied risk-based thinking.

MSZT with its competent professionals and with its nation-wide and regional experience is ready to support their customers to comply with new requirements.



MSZT - Magyar Szabványügyi Testület is an IQNet Full Member since 1998

MSZT hosted the 2003 General Assembly Meetings

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Livia Szalai
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Certification client's expectations on the content of audit reports

A certification report may be looked at in various ways, but it is primarily the visible product from an audit.

During the years the report format and form has changed in most certification bodies. So also for Nemko.

When we started up as NCS in 1991 the report was extensive and every chapter in the standards at that time (ISO 9000 series) was commented on in the report.

Based on input from our clients we at one point introduced a summary and over the years we experienced that, the clients focus on the summary, the non-conformities, and other observations. This led us to drop the extensive reports and today we deliver reports on mainly one page with additional pages for non-conformities, observations, overview of documentation checked and participants.

In addition, there is an annex with the three years audit plan.

There are various practices among certification bodies on how they deliver audit reports. For our part, we always have a central check of each report, irrespectively of the type of audit. This secures that the reporting quality is relatively stable and consistent. We have also defined that a certification report shall be in the hands of the audited organization not more than 7 working days after the last audit day.

For Nemko being a small certification body, this is achievable, but for larger certification bodies this may be more difficult.

We feel that the way we do this is sufficient and is covering the formal requirements.

One issue however, is that we receive relatively few comments on the reports. It might be of interest to hear views on this especially from clients.

NEMKO is an IQNet Full Member
since 1991

NEMKO will host the
2016 Year End Meetings

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Paal Eddie
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Author



Quality requires a balance between hard factors (processes) and soft organizational aspects (people)

The most successful management systems such as ISO 9001, Denning Prize, EFQM, Malcolm Baldrige and Shingo Model recognise the importance of the staff individually and collectively in teams, but focus primarily on processes and systems rather than people for success.

It is widely accepted that success as a business owner or manager depends heavily on the ability to improve business performance through realising the full potential of employees. Human Resource management has become a sophisticated and important function in most modern organisations. However, the methodologies used are only now being captured in focused, organisation-wide management related systems.

The focus of progressive organisations, large and small, to develop their people as a key source of competitive advantage must be realised. The Kirkpatrick Model of learning sets out an example of applied research when implemented at its highest level based on four principles from: reaction, learning, behaviour to results. While Maslow sets out the well-known five hierarchies of human needs from basic survival to self-actualisation.

A recent Harvard review stated that trust at all levels of an organisation is vital to employee engagement. Leadership style is contagious and staff will mimic a CEO / Managers leadership style. This of course can vary from dogmatic to dictatorial resulting in staff become introverted and disengaged with low morale and less interest in the workplace and the success of the organisation, to the open/ democratic leadership style which allows for open debate, where all views are heard, understood and taken on board. Where staff feel valued, they have a voice, they have input to change and improvement in both their work and workplace.

Leadership style is infectious, staff are great people watchers, often knowing the leader's mood better than the leaders themselves.

It is now well understood that the culture of an organisation will override its strategy every time. The key for success is aligning culture with strategy, but this may be easier said than done. Where there is conflict, the leadership must engage and align organisational goals and objectives at all levels: organisation, division/department, individual so that it is clear to all staff how they individually and collectively work to enhance the success of the organisation.

Some important tools to allow you check if your organisation is operating at best practice in setting out on a journey include: Business Planning and Continuous Improvement, Effective Communication and People Engagement, Leadership and People Management, Planning of Learning and Development, Evaluation of Learning and Development, Human Resource Systems and Employee Wellbeing.

In addition, new thinking on personal value include engagement of staff in the community where the organisation resides or sells its products or services to, including volunteering, charity services, community schemes to support social responsibility. Where across divisional teams from all levels of the organisation work together in their own time to help others in need.

References;

- 1/. Kirkpatrick four level training evaluation model 1994
- 2/. Maslow's hierarchy of needs, 1943.
- 3/. Harvard Business Review.



NSAI Certification is an IQNet
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Author



Why is IQNet an asset in fast developing conformity assessment markets

In the modern world confirmation of conformity and certification is the most important tool for ensuring the international trade, reduction of foreign trade and sector barriers. For businesses which represent developing economies and economies being only in the course of integration into the global trade, confirmation of product/service conformity, including certification, can be a rather serious challenge.

When facing such requirements and assessing possible risks and costs, companies often make a decision not to introduce their products into international markets and settle with traditional markets, volumes of which normally do not allow attracting sufficient resources, knowledge, investments and experience for further development and improvement within the framework of global trends. Ultimately if such attitude of business community to its ability to meet the necessary requirements in the scope of certification and conformity assessment prevails in economics, generally the economics itself loses its world compatibility and slows down progress. In the current situation when development of technologies, business processes, in particular on the level of global supply chains, happens very quickly, even the slightest underrun on the market can grow into a permanent underrun harmful for an entire national economy.

The most important role in provision of business with convenient, accessible and economically viable tools for confirmation of conformity must be performed by a government through integration of a national conformity confirmation system into the international one, conclusion of multilateral agreements on recognition of certification/conformity confirmation results, investing into programs on development of a transparent certification service market and other mechanisms.

At the same time the market of certification and conformity confirmation itself is able to significantly facilitate business in overcoming the above mentioned barriers. First of all it is related to certification bodies. Their success directly depends on the extent to which companies with which CBs work are involved into international processes of conformity confirmation. In addition, big certification bodies, whose business are significantly integrated and dependent on national economies, cannot but feel their social responsibility in respect of providing their clients with such certification services which will facilitate extension of their market outlets, enlargement of a market share, increase of plough-back etc. It should be noted that, according to the author's experience, sometimes "international" certification bodies actively operating on various markets and in various countries far not always recognize this "social" factor, without feeling, if you like, the "roots" and running their business worldwide with the only regard to financial objectives and goals.

In such conditions establishment of IQNet – the international association uniting the certification bodies leading markets of their countries and regions – provides companies at these markets with various opportunities in the scope of internationally recognized confirmation of conformity, yet preserving the possibility to cooperate on the national level. Considering the reasons stated above, for markets with developing systems of conformity confirmation this approach may be found optimal. A national certification body well informed about a system of conformity confirmation operated on its market, this system's capabilities and problems, and at the same time, through IQNet membership, having access to the almost unlimited resource in the scope of conformity confirmation, can always offer companies the most suitable variant to confirm conformity. This allows the following:

- Promptly receive competent credible information about conformity confirmation requirements on a certain level,
- Cooperate on the issues of certification through your own certification body,
- Undergo certification in your certification body and obtain Certificates of conformity from all IQNet member certification bodies without additional audits.
- Undergo the conformity confirmation procedure and pay an adequate price (thus reducing risks to receive overpriced quotations caused by the desire to take advantage of "inexperience" of a company from a developing market, concerns of a foreign certification body to operate on such market etc.),
- Where necessary, be audited by a foreign certification body with participation of auditors, technical experts, translators representing "their" certification body.

It is safe to say that there is no other organization on the international certification market which would offer such amount of services and opportunities in the scope of certification. In addition to the above described advantages, IQNet membership of a certification body provides companies operating on the market with access to the services which currently could not be offered by separate certification bodies due to expenses on their development and insufficient market capacity.

It should be noted here that despite a great number of challenges and contradictions interest for certification is growing. The latest ISO Survey on management system certification market in 2014 shows that the amount of certified organizations keeps increasing worldwide – both "traditional" management standards and relatively new ones – ISO 50001, ISO 22301 etc. are gaining their ground. This shows that the role of certification and confirmation of conformity as an international tool for improvement of sustainable development and compatibility is still high, and work of IQNet will bring benefit to the business society in all countries in which it is presented.



RR - Russian Register
is an IQNet Full Member since
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RR hosted the
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Author



IQNet relevance in a sector based conformity assessment market



Sociedad Internacional de
Gestión y Evaluación SIGE, S.C.

SIGE - Sociedad Internacional de
Gestión y Evaluación, S.C.
is an IQNet Full Member since
2006

SIGE (ANCE) hosted the 208
General Assembly meeting

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As well as modern enterprises require certification to demonstrate that their products and/or services comply with standards of quality, health, safety and environment, in the same way the certification body should also have such guarantees to support the operation of his Management.

One of the most important benefits of backing up the quality of products and services, through the conformity assessment, according to some standard, lies in the satisfaction of users, which enhances the confidence of society in enterprises, authorities and institutions that support this type of event.

Therefore, IQNet, takes a great commitment, in a sector based conformity assessment market, allowing to have a detailed overview of each conformity assessment that we carry on, as Certification Bodies holding the seal IQNet. The primary goal, and to highlight in this certification scheme, is to provide an effective, competent and professional service through certification experts around the world.

Advantages of the IQNet seal

- Coordinate international projects of certification
 - Establish a Multilateral recognition of IQNet certificates and audit reports issued by IQNet members, in this way the company that has been assessed by one of the members of IQNet and has been granted a certificate, the rest of the members, recognize this certificate. This allows each IQNet certificate to have, practically, a worldwide recognition.
- ective, competent and professional service through certification experts around the world.

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Pedro CANO CALDERON
General Director
SIGE Delegate to IQNet

Upcoming Buzz? Anti-Bribery MS / ISO 37001

Bribery! Corruption! You hear about it every day, you read about it in the papers or internet; Some of you may have seen concrete evidence of it around you. Bribery, and public perception of bribery, erodes trust in governments and businesses. It is a "Global Disease", which slowly infects millions of citizens around the world. Globalization has entered a new phase, posing greater challenges for Anti Bribery compliance than before.

Two trends are driving these changes.

First, a growing number of governments around the world are tightening Anti Bribery regulations or introducing new laws. Enforcement agencies are working together to stem corruption. International companies must therefore create a strategy of compliance that is not only global but also takes account of national differences in regulations.

Second, as companies globalize their operations, supply chains become stretched. Corporations rely more heavily on third parties than before to do business in far-flung parts of the world, often in areas where there is a high risk of corruption. Anti-Bribery considerations are accorded too low a priority by companies preparing to acquire, or merge with other corporations across borders. A top-down risk assessment would help companies set priorities, but executives admit that an Anti-Bribery risk assessment is one of their companies' top challenges.

Due to the situation detailed above, the importance of it, and my own concerns, I was glad when BSI initiated ISO process for a new Standard, ISO 37001, based on a British Standard.

I was privileged to be amongst the "founders" of the PC278 Technical Committee, and part of the "Movers & Shakers", under the direct supervision of Mr. Niell Stansbury, which reached a "political" agreement between the USA and the UK, as to which path the Standard will stride.

Since then, we made progress, indeed. The Technical Committee (PC278) has almost reached the last stage for ISO 37001. We are now close to the DIS. The Committee held 4 meetings, in London, Madrid, Paris and Kuala Lumpur. In parallel, we acted successfully on behalf of IQNet, to increase its involvement in this great important task.

Today, (I represent SII as a P member, and IQNet as a Liaison), IQNet has become an integral part in creating a new Global reality.

And now, a little about the ISO 37001 Standard:

- The Standard enables an organized "war" against Corruption and Bribery.
- The Standard requires the organizations to stimulate various methods of Risk Assessment to evaluate the giving and accepting of bribes.
- The Standard requires the organizations to initiate various managerial methods to reduce risks.
- The Standard requires the organizations to exploit control programs to discover the giving or accepting of bribes.

The potential application of the Standard:

- Large companies
- Large associations (such as football, philanthropic organizations, etc.)
- Local authorities
- Government offices

We hope that this Standard will be formalized soon, and IQNet will be the leader for its implementation worldwide.



THE STANDARDS INSTITUTION OF ISRAEL

SII - The Standards Institution of Israel Quality & Certification Division is an IQNet Full Member since 1995

SII hosted the 1995 BoD and 2012 General Assembly Meetings

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Eli Cohen-Kagan
Director, Quality &
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Author



SIQ - Slovenian Institute of Quality and Metrology is an IQNet Full Member since 1996

SIQ hosted the 2008 Year End and 2014 BoD Meetings

Trzaska cesta 2
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The IQNet certificate: more than a co-certificate

When a customer receives an IQNet certificate as a co-certificate to the one issued by local certification body, it means that they have become a member of a large international group of companies that have something in common – IQNet and its benefits. The IQNet “community” includes 37 certification bodies, more than 300.000 issued certificates representing 25% of world’s share of all issued certificates for management systems, more than 40 accreditations and more than 17.000 auditors. Being certified by IQNet partner and receiving an IQNet certificate means customer is certified once, but its certificate is accepted everywhere. All IQNet certificate holders can find themselves in the IQNet Database of Registered Organisations.

So far IQNet certificates were issued only for Management Systems. In the future also participants of various trainings offered by IQNet partners, will receive an IQNet training certificate. This will enable even wider recognition of IQNet brand.

IQNet certificate helps companies in their business cooperation as it offers trust through credibility of SIQ and international recognition of IQNet partners. This is even more important if the certification body and certified company are coming from small economy and companies have to fight hard to show their quality. IQNet certificate gives additional value to the recognition of our client’s management system certificate. The reason for international recognition is that members of IQNet have signed the IQNet Multi-Lateral Agreement, which means that they mutually recognize various certificates for Management Systems Assessments of other IQNet partners as being equivalent to their own.

For SIQ issuing an IQNet certificate in addition to their own, means we can demonstrate inclusion in international Network of certification bodies, where knowledge and wide experience are shared among the partners. By issuing IQNet certificate SIQ competes equally with other multinational competitors.

Confidence in IQNet certificates is based on regular and rigorous peer evaluations of IQNet partners. The findings and outcomes of peer evaluations are discussed every year on General Assembly of IQNet.



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SIQ Delegate to IQNet

Author



Certification: a value for both private and public organizations

Widespread implementation of quality management systems (QMS) in Malaysia and certification to the ISO 9000 series of standards began very soon after the standards were first published in 1987.

Of the more than 1000 organizations which SIRIM QAS International had certified in the first ten years, almost all of them were from the private sector. Of these, almost 95% of them were from the manufacturing sector. The reason for the initial manufacturing bias was clear. Ours was an export-led economy with significant exports of manufactured products to both the European Union and the USA. ISO 9001 certification was almost a de facto requirement for most manufacturing organizations exporting products to Europe at that time. Hence, the boom in applications for certification from manufacturing organizations and others in their supply chain. With so much publicity given to ISO 9001 certification in the manufacturing sector and the benefits derived from it, service sector organizations began to realise that there must be something good about it. Colleges and universities, private hospitals, financial institutions and trading companies began to adopt and implement the standard and to seek certification from accredited certification bodies such as SIRIM.

The move to implement ISO 9001 in the public sector in Malaysia began in 1996. It was initiated by the then head of the Malaysian Civil Service who was concurrently the Chairman of the governing board of SIRIM. Through his association with SIRIM, he saw how private sector organizations were attracted to the standard and were benefiting greatly from implementing it. He was firmly of the view that the standard would greatly help in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in the public sector.

A directive was issued to the whole civil service comprising of nearly 800 agencies requiring them to implement ISO 9001 within their organizations with the scope covering at least one of their core processes. Initially, the agencies were audited and granted a form of “second-party certification” by the Malaysian Administration Modernisation and Manpower Planning Unit (MAMPU), an agency under the Prime Minister’s Department responsible for improving processes within the civil service. MAMPU gave up its role as a “certifier” in 2002 and public sector agencies were advised to seek certification from third-party certification bodies if they felt there was a need to continue implementing the ISO 9001 standard beyond 2003. The obvious benefit that many saw from implementing the standard and being audited and certified by third parties is evident by the number of such agencies which went on to obtain certification from accredited certification bodies.

Although there was no directive as to which certification body they should use, SIRIM is proud to have been the first choice certification body of the majority of these public sector agencies. Currently, we certify close to 700 public sector agencies to the ISO 9001 standard. This number represents a significant majority of all public sector agencies which have been certified and just over 20% of all our QMS certifications. Public sector organizations certified by SIRIM include those involved in general public administration, education and healthcare as well as local authorities.

The continuing demand for certification from both the private and public sectors is a clear indication of the value that they see in implementing standards and more importantly to have independent parties to verify the effective implementation in their organizations.



SIRIM QAS International Sdn. Bhd.
is an IQNet Full Member since
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SQS experience in hosting IQNet HO for more than 10 years

SQS - Swiss Association for Quality and Management Systems is an IQNet Full Member since 1990

SQS hosted the 2005 General Assembly Meetings

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Management system certification - a young business on its path for global recognition

Assessing and certifying of management systems by independent and neutral conformity assessment bodies exists only for about 30 years. It is a relatively young service branch.

Already at the foundation of SQS in the year 1983 (together with BSI, SQS is the worldwide oldest organization in this field of conformity assessment), it was clear right from the beginning that for all of its certification customers an indispensable precondition would mean consistent and globally recognized practices for the purpose of high confidence in certificates and audits. This counts especially for those client segments who would be increasingly subject to the global competition,

Therefore, SQS together with the other 7 founding partner was right the beginning initiator to establish a future oriented international certification network in fulfilling its mission effectively. This network has been founded in 1990 in Switzerland (Berne). At first, it was established as European EQNet and later in 1997, as the global IQNet.

The mission of the network throughout its start-up and growth phases was to enforce high quality standards and internationally recognized certifications. In order to implement this mission in a period of dynamic growth of certification and within an expanding network with new certification partners, the establishment of professional head office structures and the appropriate provision of resources within IQNet was an indispensable success factor. Thereby appropriate support should be provided to the each IQNet partner organizations and their commitment mobilized to generate respective value.

The previously mentioned mission has been efficiently and directly practiced by the managing directors of the 8 founder members. With the change from EQNet to IQNet, - so the actual globalization step - SQS was initiating a significant moment allowing better qualitative and quantitative growth of the network. To be mentioned are the following 3 measures:

1. Application to establish an independent IQNet Association secretariat with full time general secretary including assistant.
2. At the same time to provide by SQS to IQNet the first general secretary including assistant as well as premises and operating infrastructure.
3. The entire financing for the first 3 years which has been completely taken over by SQS. The condition was that IQNet should succeed in establishing its organization as a financially self-supported global organization within this 3 years period and to be recognizes as such accordingly. So it was a job, for better or for worse. SQS was interested to either be committed to a strong network or otherwise to let it remain.

The president at the time, Prof. Dr. H.D. Seghezzi, was a crucial factor for this advance to future within IQNet and he also was a generous investor. The first secretary general, Mr. Armin Girschweiler, with his distinctive competence and his unforgettable winning ways was as well a guarantor of healthy climate and growth within IQNet.

During the first years, IQNet was located in the same building as SQS. This facilitated the support and the exchange and of course also the performance review. In the year 2004, that means shortly after the conversion into an association under Swiss law, SQS was again launching the separation of the office facilities. The time had come that IQNet could completely and also symbolically be detached from the proximity to SQS.

Henceforth, the address and location of IQNet was now amid the Swiss federal capital Berne, almost within sight of the government and parliament buildings of the Swiss Confederation

Also today, transparency, competence, neutrality and independence are the indispensable values which are composing credibility and confidence for auditing and certification activities. The international network is providing many benefits for customers such as recognition of certificates, the specialized collaboration in audits or in general, the innovative product range. This caused that more and more partners joined IQNet and its stringent entry criteria and that they are cooperating for its customers very effectively, with high motivation and providing additional value on a worldwide level.

The SQS commitment to IQNet has ever been continued in a distinctive way and in this sense, it went noticeably beyond the establishment of the IQNet secretariat. Since the foundation of the association in the year 2000 and the appointment of the Board of Directors, SQS always delegated a board member, either as a member, as a director, as a vice president (SCPM 2002-2006) or as president (2006-2010).

SQS is proud of the successful development of IQNet and all achievements of the past 25 years and is ready to further support this path.



René Wasmer,
Deputy CEO
SQS Delegate to IQNet
Director of the IQNet BoD

Author



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INTECO
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF CERTIFICATION BODIES

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FEDERAZIONE
CISQ

[Handwritten signature]

IRAM
Instituto Argentino de Normalización y Certificación

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SIQ
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JQA *[Handwritten signature]*

SIRIM QAS
INTERNATIONAL

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kfq *[Handwritten signature]*

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Future challenges for IQNet membership

IQNet as the leading network of certification bodies in the world requires the maintenance of a high standard from all its partners. This standard is enforced through a rigorous peer evaluation process and a very selective new membership acceptance policy. While accreditation is a core requirement from all the partners, we go further through the maintenance of a periodical peer review process coupled with best practice evaluations performed by IQNet recognized auditors.

Between all our partners IQNet has a vast global coverage, but we always are looking to find new potential members that share the same values and high standards as the rest of the network. The challenge for us is to keep scouting the new emerging markets and try to identify those organizations that can meet our strict requirements. Finding the right partner is a key element in strengthening the network and expanding our global partner coverage.

Some of the key issues we take in consideration when looking for a new candidate member are credibility, reputation and integrity, position in the market, competences and technical expertise. Only when the organization meets all these requirements can become an IQNet candidate and start the evaluation process for membership.

This process is necessary to ensure the quality of the new members and to assure IQNet will maintain its reputation and credibility in the market.

Given the evermore increasing regulatory complexity and requirements in the conformity assessment field, IQNet is in a unique position to provide its new partners with an environment for knowledge exchange and technical expertise. This is one of the many benefits that IQNet can offer to all incoming members through the cooperation mechanisms that are set in place. Providing continuously support and growth opportunities for partners is the main proposition and challenge that IQNet will have to address in the future.



SRAC is an IQNet Full Member since 2006

SRAC hosted the 2007 General Assembly and 2013 Year End Meetings

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TEST-St. Petersburg Co. Ltd. is
an IQNet Full Member since
2008

TEST hosted the
2009 Year End Meetings

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International recognition argument in highly competitive environments

Russia is acknowledged as a market economy and due to the need on integrating into global processes it has joined the World Trade Organization in 2014.

Development of the market mechanisms in Russia since the end of the XX century has led to the increased competition. In this new environment weak uncompetitive Russian companies have lost their market and means of further survival, while strong competitive companies gained the additional leverages to protect their interests and even managed to become export-oriented. This was achieved by improving efficiency and competitiveness through providing the required high quality of products and services, as well as stability of their supplies.

Many Russian companies has shown the increased interest to the management systems certification against the internationally recognized standards such as ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and others, which would have allowed demonstrating compliance with the highest international standards to their foreign customers and partners.

However, due to the fact that Russia's accreditation system was lacking a formal international recognition, Russian companies were forced to address different certification bodies at the same time for multiple confirmation of compliance. At the end of the 90s of the last century and the early 2000s many of the large companies certified by "Test-St.Petersburg" Co. Ltd. had to simultaneously apply for certification in 2, 3 or even 5 different certification bodies in Russia and abroad.

In order to solve this problem "Test-St.Petersburg" Co. Ltd. has conducted a comprehensive analysis of the existing certification systems, as well as associations and organizations, which assistance would allow a radical change in the situation on the Russian market. And the search has resulted in finding the IQNet Association - authoritative, professional and internationally recognized organization.

After a thorough assessment of "Test-St.Petersburg" Co. Ltd. performed by the IQNet experts in 2002 our CB became the first Russian Partner of the Association. This status has allowed providing an opportunity for our clients to receive IQNet certificates of a unified international standard in addition to our own certificate, as well as the right to use the IQNet conformity mark – an exclusive logo, known worldwide as a symbol of the high quality level of management and competence. Thus, many of our clients were able to reallocate and optimize their costs on maintaining multiple certification, which led to the increased loyalty to "Test-St.Petersburg" Co. Ltd. and to the IQNet Association.

Active participation of "Test-St.Petersburg" Co. Ltd. in various activities of IQNet allows us and our customers using the most up-to-date tools and products for development and enhancement.

Obviously, the entry of "Test-St.Petersburg" Co. Ltd. to the IQNet Association was not the final point of our work, but one of its important stages. Partnership within IQNet gives us a great opportunity to carry out mutual activities together with the leading foreign certification bodies - IQNet Partners - on a unique common platform, based on the harmonized standards and requirements, which allows achieving the recognition and credibility of the results of our work in Russia and worldwide.



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Health and Safety management systems: Will ISO 45001 become a new <<best seller>>

Human resources is an essential component for the operability of organizations. However, in the sophisticated and complex working environment of many organizations today, coping with the risks regarding occupational health and safety has become a challenging issue in the sustainability of safe working conditions. According to International Labour Organization (ILO), approximately 2.34 million workers die each year due to work-related accidents and diseases, and such statistical data indicate the need for a better management and minimization system for all occupational hazard risks.

In order to guide all stakeholders in the implementation of Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) policy and in the proactive management of all related risks, ISO plans to launch an international standard "ISO 45001 Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements". This standard is hoped to increase awareness in public and establish a more systematic approach in the surveillance of risks in relation with legal requirements. With this purpose in mind, ISO/PC 283 Project Committee Work Group 01 has started working on the ISO based OH&S management system standard in October 2013. CD1 has been rejected to be revised in October 2014 and 2nd Committee Draft (CD2) has just ended enquiry stage in June 2015. Draft International Standard (DIS) is planned to be reviewed by the beginning of 2016 for a 3-month period.

Assuming that the DIS is approved, the publication date could either be as early as July/August 2016, or as late as March 2017. If the DIS fails to be approved, the publication date could be even later, depending on the course of action the PC then decides to take. Inspired by the Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSAS) 18001 standard in the beginning, the draft standard is being developed by a vast number of participating countries and experts. Yet, it is worth mentioning that ISO 45001 has a multidimensional approach for the organizations, which takes their health and safety issues including the contractors, suppliers, neighbours into consideration. Moreover, in the new standard, OH&S aspects are well integrated into the overall management system that is further supported by the participation and consultation of workers. Through this improvements, OH&S management system gains a convenient implementation system focusing on both internal conditions within the organization and also external potential risks, which let organizations take appropriate actions promptly by evaluating OH&S performance.

Following the high-level structure approach, ISO 45001 was designed in accordance with the Management System standards family such as Quality Management System ISO 9001 and Environment Management System ISO 14001. While reducing the overall costs by its proactive approach, new international standard ISO 45001 is a promising candidate to become a new <<bestseller>> via its worldwide applicability and integrity with the new structured management system standards.



TSE - Turkish Standards Institution is an IQNet Full Member since 2011 (FB since 2008)

TSE hosted the 2011 Year End Meetings

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The new ISO9001 and its alignment with the Japanese quality culture



JQA – Japans Quality Assurance Organization is an IQNet Full Member since 1994

JQA hosted the 1996 and 2014 General Assembly Meetings

1-25, Kandasudacho,
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100-8555 Tokyo
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JQA would like to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of IQNet.

JQA joined IQNet in 1994, and since then, IQNet has played a very important role for both JQA and our customers. This includes the commissioning of audits to IQNet partners of those customers of JQA who expand overseas, the input towards the adoption and development of new products such as IQNet 9004 and SR10, and the gathering of information and promotion of certification bodies such as IAF and ISO CASCO.

On the other hand, JQA has continued to contribute to the growth of IQNet. We hosted the IQNet general assembly in Yokohama in 2014, and in the past provided personnel to be SCPM chairperson, SCMD chairperson, and currently a member of IQNet board of directors. We are also working proactively in the Asian region to hold the biannual IQNet Asia conference for partners in the region. We would like to continue to contribute towards further development of IQNet from now on.

We would like the 2015 edition of the standard to be utilized by our customers as a tool for improving business operations. Japanese style of quality control, “Monozdukuri”, has had a reputation for being the best in the world. On the other hand, values and lifestyles among young people in Japan have changed recently, and the number of foreign workers has increased in factories, making it difficult for skilled workers at organizations, especially in the manufacturing industry, to pass on their experience and know-how to young workers. In the situation, the development and maintenance of QMS based on the 2015 edition, to which new requirements such as “7.1.6 Organizational Knowledge” have been added, is expected to play an important role in fixing this problem.

We at JQA will continue to contribute to the business activity of our clients by applying new editions of the standard effectively.



Yasuhiro Fukui
Board Director, JQA



Final note from the Managing Director

What a year! From the beginning we all knew that this would be a challenging and intense year.

We focused on the commemoration of IQNet 25th anniversary, relevant to communicate to external parties on the longevity and success of our association but also to consolidate and share the spirit of IQNet within the Network. A comprehensive celebration plan was defined and implemented. Feedback from the Partners reveal that, although with room for improvement, main goals were fully attained.

The election process was planned, performed and closed in conformity with applicable regulations, supported by professionally managed, transparent and participated activities and a new organizational structure is now fully operational.

We consolidated the ISLA (Improve, Share, Learn and Accomplish) project stage 1 (Internal cooperation platform), launched the design of stage 2 specifications (product hub) and initiated the development of phase 3 (website and social media) earlier than initially planned. It is taking more time than initially expected to execute the project, but main milestones and results (as approved in Yokohama GA) are still in reach and will be further pursued during 2016.

New and fundamental external liaisons were promoted and attained, both at the standardization and at the accreditation level. A clear impact was noticed not only on the external influence and visibility of IQNet (with IQNet representatives participating in most of the fundamental discussions involving certification business and assuming relevant organization positions in IAF and ISO/CASCO, as mere examples) but also on the development of effective knowledge transfer and internal harmonization (ISO 17021-1, ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 2015 revision processes as examples).

The Franchising Body concept evolved and the transition to Associated Member was accomplished in time, including the changing and registration of new Statutes and Bylaws (CRO Cert and INTECO already signed their Associated Member contracts). A new community based concept was also defined and approved: Affiliated Body. It is expected that its implementation will facilitate the external awareness and better understanding of IQNet among the CB community, thus allowing the increase of new Partner applications effectiveness and an extended involvement of remote, small or young CBs in our organization.

SA8000, SEDEX and BSCI scheme accreditation/recognition was maintained without major constraints and applicable requirement changes were discussed and adopted. IQNet was the trigger for a CB community movement aiming the revision of scheme owner criteria (SA8000 transition plan), with very positive results! The development contract was kept at acceptable level, IQNet Ltd schemes gained confidence of more signatory Partners and a new IQNet product was developed and launched: IQNet Academy. GAPP (Global Approach to Product Portfolio) Framework was designed and will be further consolidated in 2016 with the development of the Global Conformance scheme matrix.

Finally, IQNet Headoffice management system was further improved, full document control was defined, new co-workers were welcomed and completely integrated, meeting organization and management was reviewed and effectively implemented, the performance appraisal procedures were further improved and the employees care programme comprehensively implemented. All this thanks to a devoted, competent and enthusiastic team.

All things considered, we, at the Headoffice, are happy with this outcome and expected 2016 to be at least as interesting as 2015. We are sure that our abilities will again be tested and that our resilience will again be required. We are also absolutely convinced that the contribution, support and assistance of all IQNet Partners will again be decisive.

Thank you for being there!

Pedro Castro Alves
Managing Director

