

Axiom 4

Recommended Citation

"Axiom 4", Global Problem Solving, December 10, 1999, <https://nautilus.org/global-problem-solving/axiom-4/>

[axiom 1 - metcalf's law](#)

[axiom 2 - early entrants win the field](#)

[axiom 3 - significance precedes momentum](#)

[axiom 4 - standards as power](#)

[axiom 5 - producer and consumer utility](#)

[axiom 6 - gatekeepers, intermediaries, and the attention deficit](#)

[axiom 7 - positive feedback loops](#)

[axiom 8 - differentiation of products and pricing](#)

[axiom 9 - switching costs and lock-in](#)

[axiom 10 - free information: cooperation in a competitive environment](#)

[bibliography](#)

Axiom 4 - Standards as Power

In the network economy, ever-less energy is needed to complete a single transaction, but ever-more energy is needed to agree on what pattern the transaction should follow (Kelly, 69).

Eventually technical standards will become as important as laws (Kelly, 71)

Since networks are multiple, the interoperating codes and switches between networks become the fundamental sources in shaping, guiding, and misleading societies (Castells 1996, 471).

We care about standards because of the fantastically complicated economic question of who captures the often considerable value that is created through the establishment of a standard ...[s]tandards are path-dependent, and that because of network effects, they tend to have a winner-take all quality, with one standard becoming dominant and devotees of other standards becoming stranded (Agre 1998(b), 6)

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/global-problem-solving/axiom-4/>

Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:
nautilus@nautilus.org