

New developments: Parallel panel sessions
*B) New user habits and social
attitudes*

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Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The free content encyclopedia that anyone can edit

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Projects at a glance

The **Wikimedia Foundation** Inc. is a non-profit corporation aiming to develop and maintain open content, wiki-based projects and provide their full contents to the public free of charge.



Wikipedia: an encyclopedia containing more than 3 million articles in over 100 languages



Commons: a repository of images, sounds and videos containing more than 400,000 multimedia files



Wikinews: a news source containing original reporting by citizen journalists from many countries



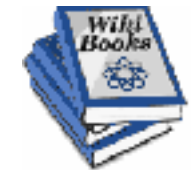
Wikisource: a collection of published works in the public domain or released under free licenses

Wikiquote: a collection of quotations from notable people and creative works

Wikibooks: a collection of free educational textbooks and learning materials

Wiktionary: a dictionary cataloging meanings, synonyms, etymologies and translations

Wikispecies: a directory of species data on all other forms of life (animalia, plantae, fungi, bacteria, archaea, protista)



Think free. Learn free.

— a multilingual free encyclopedia

Wiktionary
[wikʃənri] n.,
a wik-based Open
Content dictionary
William Powell (lead)



Key features



- Every project is developed using a wiki engine, a software that allows anyone to easily add and edit content and is especially suited for collaborative writing
- This real-time collaborative model allows rapid updating of existing topics and introduction of new topics
- Our projects are built on the expectation that collaboration among users will improve the quality of articles over time, in much the same way that open-source software develops
- The participation of contributors without specific expertise or formal qualifications enriches the projects
- Decision-making on the content and editorial policies is done by consensus and occasionally by vote
- Wikipedia follows two key rules: NPOV (Neutral Point Of View) and free licensed content



Wikipedia – pros and cons

Pros:

- Very fast growth: Wikipedia was born in 2001 and now it contains more than 3 million articles (Encyclopædia Britannica was first published in 1768 and has 120,000 articles)
- The number of contributors can be potentially infinite
- It's free of charge
- Anyone can fix errors or update an article very quickly

Cons:

- Absence of a top-down planning and systematic review process
- The quality of articles varies widely and over time
- Modifications go directly online: vandalism and inaccurate content can stay online for a while before it gets detected
- Coverage of topics and level of detail is not always proportionate to their importance



Wikipedia - content dissemination

- According to Alexa.com, Wikipedia is the **31st** most visited site in the whole Internet
- **WikiReaders** are published collections of Wikipedia articles on a certain topic
- German Wikipedia is published also on **CD/DVD** (other languages edition will be available soon)
- Because of the digital divide we're working for a **paper Wikipedia** to be distributed in Third world countries



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