

Strengthening and unifying the visual identity of Wikimedia projects: a step towards maturity

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Wikimania 2007, Taipei

3 July 2007

Introduction

Six years of Wikimedia projects

2001 Wikipedia

2003 Wikimedia

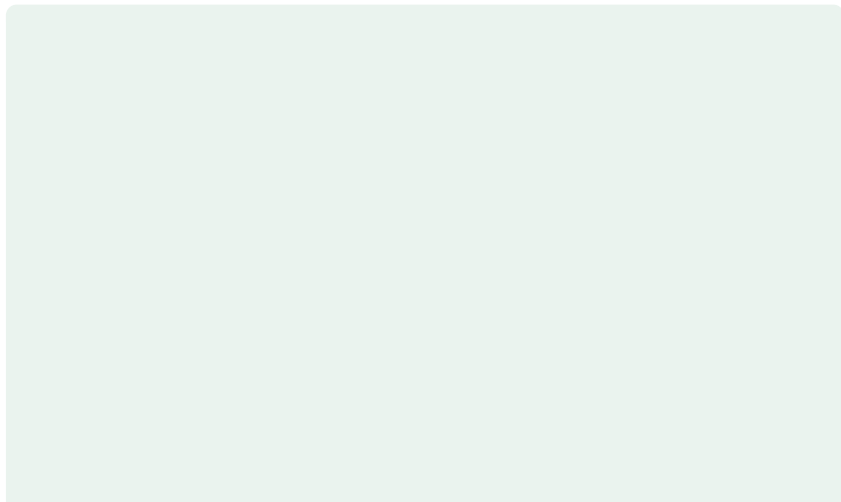
2001-2006 opening of different projects and language versions

2007 review on visual identity, logos, names, and global appearance

Table of contents

- 1 Context
 - Evolution of the interface
 - Within the projects
 - Promotional material
- 2 Wikimedia names and brands
- 3 Logos & skins
- 4 Towards a new design of Wikimedia projects appearance

Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page





Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page

HomePage

[HomePage](#) | [RecentChanges](#) | [Preferences](#)

You can [edit this page right now!](#) It's a free, community project



Welcome to [Wikipedia!](#) We're writing a complete encyclopedia from scratch, collaboratively. We started work in January 2001. We've got over 3,000 pages already. We want to make over 100,000. So, let's get to work! Write a little (or a lot) about what you know! Read our welcome message here: [Welcome, newcomers!](#)

Some questions you might have are answered below, but why not first explore a few links?

[Philosophy](#) -- [Mathematics](#) -- [Statistics](#) -- [Science](#) -- [Physics](#) -- [Chemistry](#) -- [Biology](#) -- [Astronomy and Astrophysics](#) -- [Earth Sciences](#)

[Countries of the world](#) -- [History](#) -- [Linguistics & Language](#) -- [Politics](#) -- [Economics](#) -- [Geography](#) -- [Anthropology](#) -- [Archaeology](#) -- [Psychology](#) -- [Sociology](#) -- [History of Science and Technology](#) -- [Anomalous Phenomena](#)

[Technology](#) -- [Architecture](#) -- [Engineering](#) -- [Computing](#) -- [Transport](#) -- [Business and Industry](#) -- [Law](#) -- [Agriculture](#) -- [Education](#) -- [Communication](#) -- [Library and Information Science](#) -- [Health Sciences](#) -- [Family and Consumer Science](#) -- [Public Affairs](#)

[Entertainment](#) -- [Music](#) -- [Dance](#) -- [Film](#) -- [Literary Art](#) -- [Religion](#) -- [Recreation](#) -- [Sports](#) -- [Classics](#) -- [Critical Theory](#) -- [Visual Arts and Design](#) -- [Painting](#) -- [Sculpture](#) -- [Performing Arts](#) -- [Theater and Drama](#) -- [Games](#) -- [Hobbies](#) -- [Tourism](#)

The above reflects only one of Wikipedia's [category schemes](#).


Want to learn about something? Add the topic to our list of [requested articles](#).

You're wondering:

- [What is a wiki?](#)
- [How does one edit a page?](#) *Quick hint: press the "Edit text of this page" link at the top and bottom of every page!* Practice editing pages in our [SandBox](#).
- [How is Wikipedia related to Nupedia?](#)
- [What are your new topics?](#) (The very latest can be found via the [RecentChanges](#) link at the top and bottom of every page.)



Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page



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[Main Page](#) | [Recent changes](#) | Protected page | [Older versions](#) | 209.237.238.158
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Main Page

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Protected page
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[What links here](#)
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Main Page

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Welcome to Wikipedia, a collaborative project to produce a free and complete [encyclopedia](#) in [every language](#). We started in January [2001](#) and are already working on [93656 articles](#) in the English version, with more being added and improved all the time. Anyone, *including you*, can edit any article right now, without even having to log in. See the [Wikipedia FAQ](#) for more background information about the project, and the [help page](#) for information on how to use and contribute to Wikipedia.

The content of Wikipedia is covered by the [GNU Free Documentation License](#), which means that it is free and will remain so forever. See [wikipedia:Copyrights](#) for the details and [open content](#) and [free content](#) for background.


This day in history: [November 30](#)
Ongoing events: [Israeli-Palestinian conflict](#) - [War on Terrorism](#) - [terrorist incidents](#) - [Oil spill off Spanish coast](#)
In the news: [Henry Kissinger](#) - [Severino Antinori](#) - [Dept. of Homeland Security](#) - [Volkert van der Graaf](#)
Recent deaths: [Verne Winchell](#) - [James Coburn](#) - [Abba Eban](#) - [Myra Hindley](#)

Philosophy, Mathematics, and Natural Science

November 2002



Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page



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Main Page

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Wikipedia is a [multilingual](#) project to create a complete and accurate [open content](#) encyclopedia. We started on January 15, 2001 and are already working on 104765 [articles](#) in the English version. Visit the [help page](#) and experiment in the [sandbox](#) to learn how you can edit any article right now.

Selected Articles

In the news: [NATO - Domestic Security Act](#) - [Phil Spector](#) - [Václav Havel](#) - [Shuttle disaster](#)
Recent deaths: [Lou Harrison](#) - [The crew of STS-107](#) - [Lord Younger](#) - [Lord Dacre](#) - [Gianni Agnelli](#)
Ongoing events: [Israeli-Palestinian conflict](#) - [Plan to invade Iraq](#) - [War on Terrorism](#) - [North Korea](#)
Historical anniversaries: [Gary Powers](#) - [Joseph McCarthy](#) - [The Beatles](#) - [Mary I](#) - [Confederacy](#)
[Jean Aristide](#) - [Maastricht treaty](#) - [Spanish-American War](#) - [Elizabeth II](#) - [Treaty of Waitangi](#)

Philosophy, Mathematics, Natural Science

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[Mathematics](#) - [Philosophy](#) - [Physics](#) - [Statistics](#)

Writing Articles

[Policy](#) - [Copyrights](#) - [How to edit](#) - [Guide to layout and style](#) - [Public domain](#) and [shared resources](#) - [Requested articles](#) and [images](#) - [Brilliant prose](#) - [Reference desk](#)

Applied Arts and Sciences

[Agriculture](#) - [Architecture](#) - [Business and industry](#) - [Communication](#) - [Computer science](#) - [Education](#) - [Engineering](#) -

February 2003



Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page



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[Log in](#) | [Help](#)

Main Page

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[Donations](#)

Welcome to **Wikipedia!** We are building an [open-content](#) encyclopedia in many languages. We started in January 2001 and are now working on 240012 [articles](#) in the English version. Join us! Visit the [Community Portal](#) or try out the [sandbox](#) to find out how you can edit any article right now.

[Browse by topic](#)
[Other languages](#)
[Table-free main page](#)
[Text-only main page](#)

Featured article



Joshua Abraham Norton was a famous, impoverished and highly [eccentric](#) citizen of [San Francisco, California](#) in the mid-to-late [19th century](#). Among his many celebrated and curious activities, he most famously anointed himself as "Emperor of the United States" in [1859](#), becoming Emperor Norton I. Other notable activities include his ordering the dissolution of the [United States Congress](#) and his numerous (and prophetic) decrees that a bridge be built across [San Francisco Bay](#). The King in [Mark Twain's](#) *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is reportedly modeled after him.

Recently featured: [Crawling by elephant](#), [Buzand](#)

Did you know...

...that [Bodega Bay](#) in [California](#) was the setting for [Alfred Hitchcock's](#) film *The Birds*?
 ...that [rattlesnake venom](#) contains [hemotoxins](#)?
 ...that [Ernest Duchesne](#) discovered [penicillin's](#) [antibiotic](#) powers 32 years before [Alexander Fleming](#)?
 ...that the [Indriks chronicles](#) are the oldest written history of [Latvia](#) and [Estonia](#)?



[Archive](#) | [All new articles...](#)

In the news

March 2004



Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia main page as it appeared in January 2005. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'article', 'discussion', 'view source', and 'history'. The main heading is 'Main Page'. Below this, a welcome message states: 'Welcome to **Wikipedia**, a free-content encyclopedia that **anyone can edit**. In this English version, started in 2001, we are currently working on 439314 articles.' To the right, there is a 'Create an account or log in' link and a 'Other languages' section with a list of language icons and links to 'FAQs' and 'Table free'. A 'BROWSE' section lists various categories: CULTURE, GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, LIFE, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, SOCIETY, and TECHNOLOGY. A yellow box highlights a message: 'Find out **how you can help** those affected by the recent Indian Ocean earthquake.' The 'Today's featured article' section features Johnny Cash, with a brief biography and a link to the full article. The 'In the news' section lists recent events, including a magnitude 9.0 earthquake in 13 countries and Turkey introducing the New Turkish Lira. A search box is located on the left side, and a 'navigation' menu lists links like 'Main Page', 'Community portal', and 'Recent changes'. The date 'January 2005' is displayed at the bottom left of the page.



Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

article | discussion | view source | history

 Sign in / create account

Please take a moment to read this **personal appeal** from Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales.

You can give the gift of knowledge by donating to Wikipedia!

 \$198,966.82

Tax-deductibility of donations - Daily report

Main Page

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Welcome to **Wikipedia**, the free encyclopedia that **anyone can edit**.

In this English version, started in 2001, we are currently working on **894,028** articles.

[Wikipedia FAQs](#) - [Categories](#) - [A-Z](#) - [Portals](#) - [Ask a question](#) - [Site news](#) - [Donations](#)
[Culture](#) | [Geography](#) | [History](#) | [Mathematics](#) | [People](#) | [Science](#) | [Society](#) | [Technology](#)

Today's featured article



Dinosaurs are [vertebrates](#) that have ranged from reptile-like to bird-like. Dinosaurs dominated the [terrestrial ecosystem](#) for over 160 million years from around 230 million years ago until 65 million years ago, at the end of the [Cretaceous](#) period, when all non-avian dinosaurs became extinct. Knowledge about dinosaurs comes from both fossil and non-fossil records, including [fossilized bones](#), [feces](#), [trackways](#), [gastroliths](#), [feathers](#), impressions of [skin](#), [internal organs](#) and [soft tissues](#). Dinosaur remains have been found on every continent on Earth, including [Antarctica](#), showing that all land masses were at one

In the news

- Tropical Storm Zeta** continues activity in the [Atlantic Ocean](#), becoming only the **second tropical cyclone** to exist across two calendar years.
- Based on a July determination by the [IERS](#), a **leap second** has been added to clocks as of midnight [UTC](#).
- Police in the [Indian city of Bangalore](#) have launched a manhunt for the perpetrators of **Wednesday's**



search

Go Search


toolbox

- [What links here](#)
- [Related changes](#)
- [Upload file](#)
- [Special pages](#)
- [Printable version](#)
- [Permanent link](#)
- [Cite this article](#)

January 2006



Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page



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The Free Encyclopedia

navigation

- Main page
- Contents
- Featured content
- Current events
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interaction

- About Wikipedia
- Community portal
- Recent changes
- Contact us
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- Help

search

Go Search

toolbox

- What links here
- Related changes

[main page](#) | [discussion](#) | [view source](#) | [history](#)

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Welcome to **Wikipedia**,
the free encyclopedia that *anyone* can edit.
1,768,307 articles in English


Your *continued donations* keep Wikipedia running!

- Arts
- History
- Biography
- Mathematics
- Geography
- Science
- Society
- Technology
- All portals**

[Overview](#) · [Editing](#) · [Questions](#) · [Help](#)

[Contents](#) · [Categories](#) · [Featured content](#) · [A-Z index](#)


Today's featured article



Gilwell Park is a [campsite](#) and activity centre for [Scouting](#) groups, as well as a [training](#) and [conference centre](#) for [Scout Leaders](#). The **44 hectare** (109 acre) site is located in [Sewardstonebury](#), [Epping Forest](#) close to [Chingford](#), [London](#). In the late Middle Ages, it started as a farm, growing to a wealthy estate that fell into disrepair towards 1900. It was given in 1919 by [Scout Commissioner](#) William De Bois Maclaren to [The Scout Association of the United Kingdom](#) to provide camping facilities to London Scouts, and training facilities for Scouters. As Scout Leaders from all countries of the world have come to Gilwell Park for their [Wood Badge](#) training, it is one of the great landmarks of the world [Scouting](#) movement. The site contains campfields for a small patrol up to a 1200 people camp, indoor accommodations, historical sites, monuments of Scouting, and activities suitable for all sections of the Scouting Movement. It can accommodate events for up to 10,000 people. Accommodation of Gilwell Park can also be hired for non-Scout activities such as school group camping, [wedding receptions](#) and

In the news

- The **Ulster Volunteer Force**, a loyalist paramilitary group in Northern Ireland, renounces the use of force.
- Five men arrested in **Operation Crewce** in 2004 are convicted of plotting to deploy [fertilizer bombs](#) in [terrorist attacks](#) across the [United Kingdom](#).
- A **second mass rally** in support of [secularism](#) in [Turkey](#) is held in [Istanbul](#), protesting against the candidacy of [Abdullah Gül](#) (*pictured*) in the [presidential election](#).
- Ivica Račan**, the previous [Prime Minister](#) of [Croatia](#), dies of [kidney cancer](#) less than three weeks after resigning as leader of the opposition [Social Democratic Party](#).
- The **Bronze Soldier**, a [Soviet Red Army war memorial](#) in [Tallinn](#), is removed by [Estonian](#) authorities amid [political controversy](#) and [violent protests](#).



May 2007

Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page

Observations

- very basic interface in the early ages
- design improved in 2004
- still the same as of today

Evolution of the English-language Wikipedia main page

Observations

- very basic interface in the early ages
- design improved in 2004
- still the same as of today

Current possibilities

- Wikimedia wikis: editing one's own CSS
- all others: using one of the many skins created for MediaWiki (or creating one)



Evolution of design within the projects

Evolution of design within the projects

Separate ways

- very few attempts of homogeneity
- very different main pages
- not really a problem for us
- spreading of good ideas



Promotional material



Promotional material

Review

- some successes: leaflet, cheatsheet
- outdated, not maintained
- very specific
- lack of promotional material of good quality & on a broader range than Wikipedia
- difficulty to get local communities involved

Wikipedia Cheatsheet



Everyone can contribute to the free encyclopedia Wikipedia. This is possible because Wikipedia is a wiki. Simply click on the link "Edit this page" on top of an article and start writing. This cheatsheet shows the basic formatting tricks.

Wiki text	Result
<code>*itali*</code>	<i>italic</i>
<code>**bold**</code>	bold
<code>***bold and italic***</code>	<i>bold and italic</i>
<code>====>====</code>	Headings in different sizes
<code>====level_1====</code>	
<code>====level_2====</code>	
<code>====level_3====</code>	
<code>====level_4====</code>	
<code>[[Link to another page]]</code> <code>[[Link other title]]</code>	Internal Link to another page on the wiki
<code>http://www.test.org</code>	External link
<code>[[http://www.test.org test]]</code>	Link with description
<code>[[FR:Page de français]]</code>	Internal link to french Wikipedia (appears under "languages")
<code>[[Category:Example]]</code>	Add article to category "example"
<code>----</code>	Horizontal line
<code>* one</code>	Bullet list
<code>* two</code>	
<code>* three</code>	
<code># one</code>	Numbered list
<code># two</code>	
<code># three</code>	
<code>[[Image:File: pt text]]</code>	Image with alternative text
<code>[[Image:File: pt text text]]</code>	Image aligned right with caption
<code>[[Image:File: pt thumb text]]</code>	Thumbnail
<code>[[Media:File.ogg]]</code>	Download link
<code>[[Name]]</code>	Include template "Name"
<code>~~~~</code>	Signature (Link to userpage)
<code>~~~~~</code>	Signature with timestamp
<code>#REDIRECT [[other article]]</code>	Redirect to another article

<http://www.wikipedia.org>



Wikimedia Foundation
<http://www.wikimediafoundation.org>
info@wikimedia.org



About the Marketing committee

About the Marketing committee

Role

- creation of good-quality material
- quality and visual identity guidelines
- advisory committee to the board for logos, visual identity & design

About the Marketing committee

Role

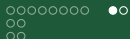
- creation of good-quality material
- quality and visual identity guidelines
- advisory committee to the board for logos, visual identity & design

Review

- not much known, nor solicited by chapters or communities
- projects started (guides)
- this review

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- 1 Context
- 2 **Wikimedia names and brands**
 - To translate, or not to translate?
- 3 Logos & skins
- 4 Towards a new design of Wikimedia projects appearance



To translate, or not to translate?

Localized names

Pages sur ce thème sur les projets Wikimedia :



Ressources multimédia

sur Commons.



Inventaire de l'espèce

sur Wikispecies.



Définition sur Wiktionnaire.

Connaissances



universitaires sur

Wikiversité.



Livre pédagogique sur

Wikilivre.



Texte sur Wikisource.



Citations sur Wikiquote.



Article d'actualité sur

Wikinews.



Coordination des projets

sur Meta-Wiki.

Should projects names be localized?

- Wikilivres, Wikinotizie, Wikcionario...
- too anglocentric?
- external facing vs. internal colloquial use
- separating our wikis from the others



To translate, or not to translate?

Localized names



Wikipedia - ウィキペディア
フリー百科事典

Conclusions & proposals

- one color per project
- cross-project navigation bar: type of content rather than names
- official name, localized motto and transcription

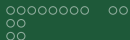


Table of contents

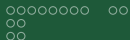
- 1 Context
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- 3 Logos & skins**
 - Choosing good logos
 - Wikimedia and non-Wikimedia MediaWikis
- 4 Towards a new design of Wikimedia projects appearance



Process & criteria

Choosing good logos

- a community process
- criteria
 - good message
 - good graphic quality (good looking, scalable)
 - fitting in the visual identity of the global structure
- colors: unique in a family



Process & criteria

Choosing good logos

- a community process
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- colors: unique in a family



Examples

Wikibooks proposed logos

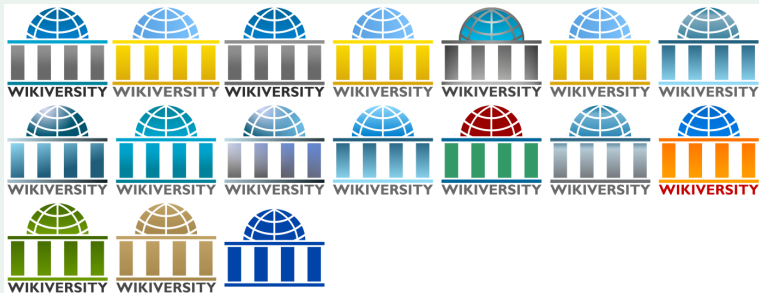




Choosing good logos

Examples

Wikiversity proposed logos





Proposals

Proposals for improvement

- a community process



Proposals

Proposals for improvement

- a community process
- involving the marketing committee to follow visual guidelines
- daring to ask for external help

Proposals

Proposals for improvement

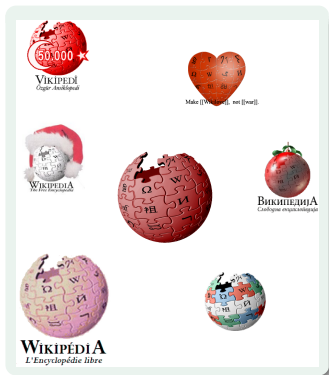
- a community process
- involving the marketing committee to follow visual guidelines
- daring to ask for external help
- being bold and imaginative to create aesthetic proposals

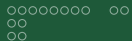


Proposals

Proposals for improvement

- a community process
- involving the marketing committee to follow visual guidelines
- daring to ask for external help
- being bold and imaginative to create aesthetic proposals





Wikis and MediaWiki



Wikimedia and non-Wikimedia MediaWikis

Wikis and MediaWiki

Quick stats

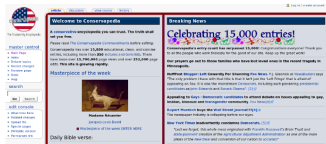
Table: Statistics about the layout of non-Wikimedia MediaWiki websites* (based on the 100 largest non-Wikimedia wikis listed on http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/List_of_largest_wikis.)

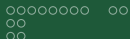
only the logo is different	74
----------------------------	----

similar to very similar design	12
--------------------------------	----

different to very different design	14
------------------------------------	----

* Statistics generated before the change of skin on Wikia.





Wikis and MediaWiki

Why a change is necessary

- MediaWiki default layout is used by many wikis.
- advertising, non-free content, bias
- wiki-X, Z-pedia...
- Wikimedia wikis must be clearly distinguishable and identified as Wikimedia projects.

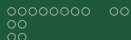


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 - A more professional design
 - Strengthening the bonds within families



Maturity for the Foundation and the content

Maturity for the Foundation

- changes in its administrative structure
- positions created and staff hired
- reforms about decision-making processes



Maturity for the Foundation and the content

Maturity for the Foundation

- changes in its administrative structure
- positions created and staff hired
- reforms about decision-making processes

Maturity for the content

- maturation plate on most developed projects
- stable versions
- Wikipedia 0.5, 1.0



The time of maturity

Showing we evolve



Showing we evolve

Reliability & credibility

	reliability	credibility
content	of the facts	of the projects
Foundation	sustainability	towards external partners



Showing we evolve

Reliability & credibility

	reliability	credibility
content	of the facts	of the projects
Foundation	sustainability	towards external partners

Changing our default layout is

- necessary for marketing reasons
- a chance to improve accessibility
- ⇒ proposed specifications for a new design



A more professional design

Designing a new skin: a challenge



A more professional design

Designing a new skin: a challenge

An overloaded interface

- new features constantly integrated
- disclaimers, policy links, interwiki links
- different expectations from editors (~ 4.6%) and readers

The screenshot shows a personalized interface for an editor. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'Artikel', 'Diskussion', 'Quelltext betrachten', 'Versionen', 'Purge', and 'Beobachten'. The main content area is titled 'Hauptseite' and includes a list of recent changes and a section for 'Gewählte Versionen vergleichen'. The interface is cluttered with various links and options, reflecting the 'overloaded' nature of the design.

Example of a personalized interface for an editor



A more professional design

Preparatory work



Preparatory work

Relations with the community

- necessity of getting input from the community
- setting up a process with timelines



Preparatory work

Relations with the community

- necessity of getting input from the community
- setting up a process with timelines

Global review in terms of accessibility

- identifying accessibility issues
- developing collaborations



Specifications / One color per project

One color per project

- improving projects identification and own identity
- a common frame coming in a variety of colours: one per project



A more professional design

Specifications / One color per project

One color per project

- improving projects identification and own identity
- a common frame coming in a variety of colours: one per project

Examples





A more professional design

Screenshots

The screenshot shows the German Wikipedia page for 'Enzyklopädie'. The browser address bar shows 'http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enzyklop%C3%A4die'. The page features a dark header with the Wikipedia logo and search bar. The main content area is titled 'Enzyklopädie' and includes a definition, a list of 'Inhaltsverzeichnis' (Table of Contents), and an image of a 'Brockhaus Konversations-Lexikon von 1902'. The left sidebar contains navigation links like 'Navigation', 'Mitmachen', and 'Über Wikipedia'. The bottom of the page shows the 'Fertig' status.



Wikipedia and “the others”

Attracting visitors to all projects

- the shadow of Wikipedia
- “small sister projects”
- cross-projects templates



Wikipedia and “the others”

Attracting visitors to all projects

- the shadow of Wikipedia
- “small sister projects”
- cross-projects templates

Pages sur ce thème sur les projets Wikimedia :



Ressources multimédia

sur Commons.



Inventaire de l'espèce sur

Wikispecies.



Définition sur Wiktionnaire.

Connaissances



universitaires sur

Wikiversité.



Livre pédagogique sur

Wikilivre.



Texte sur Wikisource.



Citations sur Wikiquote.



Article d'actualité sur

Wikinews.



Coordination des projets

sur Meta-Wiki.



Strengthening the bonds within families

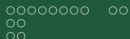
Cross-project navigation bar



Cross-project navigation bar

Navigation bar

- more visible links
- thematic consistency
- working like interwiki links
- also addresses the localization issue



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Conclusion

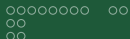
In a nutshell

- Issues in terms of visual identity, marketing and graphics have been identified.
- Solutions have been drafted.
- Feedback is necessary before going any further.



Thank you for your attention

Questions session



Credits & authors

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