

# Wikimedia is more: how sisters can help overcoming problems of the Wikipedias

How to attract new authors to Wikimedia projects?

Roland Unger

Wikimedian, German Wikivoyager, ...



- On the speaker
- Historical overview
- Social media: Wikipedia and sisters
- Problems of Wikipedias
- Software problems
- What can small content wikis offer?
- Problems of small content wikis
- What do smaller content wikis need?
- Conclusions
- Thanks

## On the speaker

- Roland Unger
- Born on July 16, 1959
- First wiki edit: Nov. 1, 2004 at Wikitravel
- One of seven founders of Wikivoyage, active until now

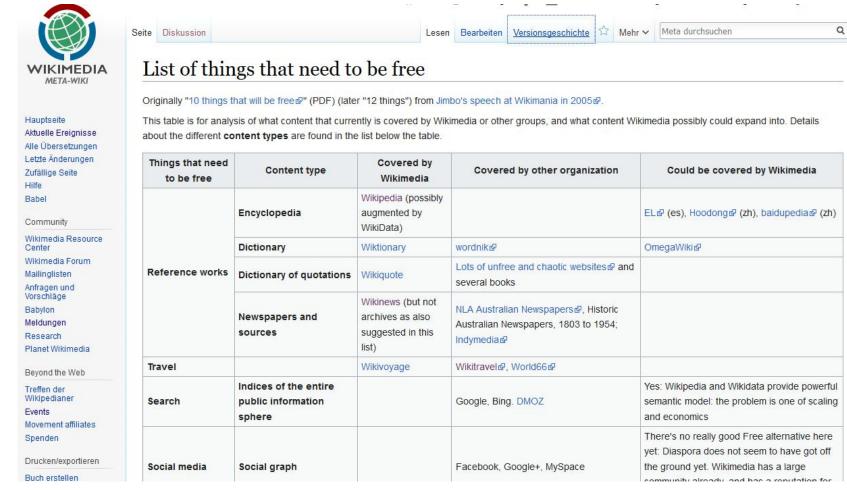


At the water mountain of Djedefra — في جبل مياه دجيدف رع

- Author mainly for Egypt, Germany, Ethiopia, ... Discover Egypt with Roland Unger on Wikivoyage
- Programmer (Lua, JavaScript, HTML, CSS)
- Admin and interface admin
- This lecture a very personal opinion, too.



#### More than Wikipedia: Knowledge that need to be free, too



https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/List\_of\_things\_that\_need\_to\_be\_free

Based on Jimmy Wales' lecture "10 things that will be free" (later "12 things") at Wikimania in 2005.

# Wikipedia as a collaborative project and a social media service

- Since beginning of 1990s First internet collaborative projects were established, for instance Internet Movie Database, IMDb
- Wikipedia since 15. Jan. 2001
  - The early establishment is part of its success
  - Wikipedia and its sisters are social media services, too.
- Later: Facebook since 4. Feb. 2004, flickr since 10. Feb. 2004, Youtube since 14. Feb. 2005, X/Twitter since 21. Mar. 2006, TikTok since Sep. 2016

#### What attracts someone to social media?

- Collaboration, sharing knowledge
   At the best: "Plunge forward!" "Now!"
- Web activity to pass the time
- Having fun
- Mean of self-expression
- Gain recognition

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- The number of authors and the increment of articles permanently decrease in Wikipedias.
- The missing authors should be replaced by newcomers.

## Wikipedia problems – 1: Scope

- Maybe the main problem: on the one hand: its huge extent, on the other hand: restriction to encyclopedic knowledge
  - Big count of articles, wide range of topics
  - Question: What else can you write about?
- Partly very specific knowledge, overwhelms the general public
  - Example: <u>String theory</u>
- Topics of general interest often do not exist or are not feasible
  - Cookbooks, guides, instructions



- Extensive set of rules
- Need to substantiate statements by references
- Flagging of article revisions: Publication of newcomer, anonymous authors is suspended until flagging

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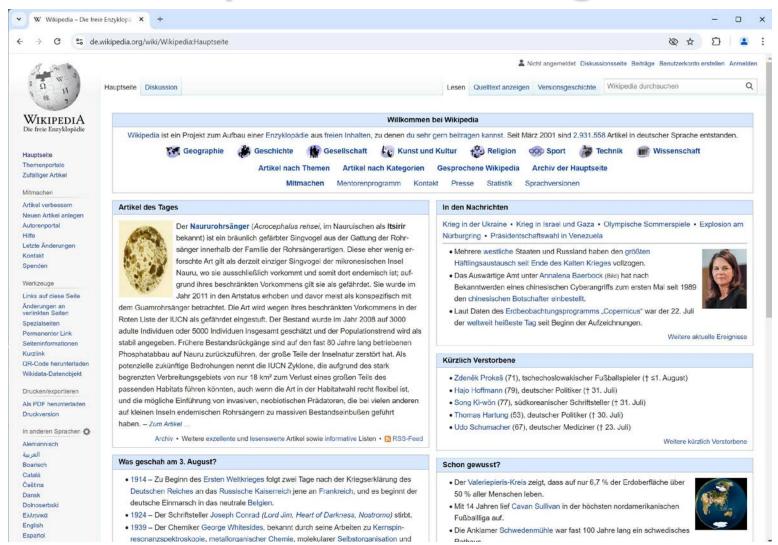
## Wikipedia problems – 3:Web design

- Old-fashioned layout
  - high expectations based on experiences with TikTok & co.
  - current world is dominated by visual platforms
  - fails modern standards of usability and struggles with numerous foundational issues
    - Think big open letter about Wikimedia Commons
- Use on mobile devices
- Fear of and fight of mainly long-term authors against changes of layout and methods of operation

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## Timelessly beautiful design

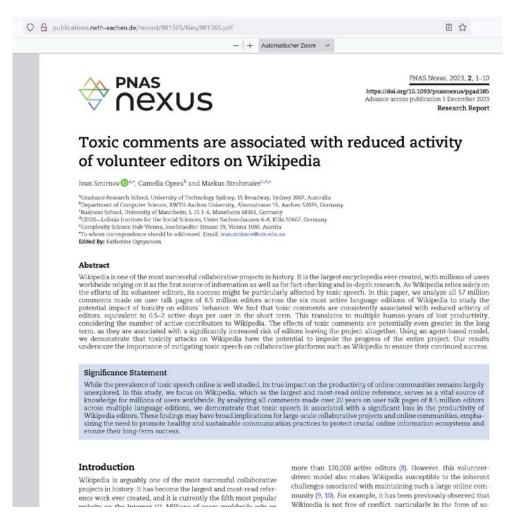


# Wikipedia problems – 4: toxic behavior in discussions

- Even experienced authors who have been working for a long term suddenly give up everything and remove their tools etc. In case of luck they escape to collections like Wikimedia Commons.
- Some causes
  - Anonymity, big number of authors
  - Hierarchy: misuse of power
  - Lack of respect
  - Deliberate violation/ignorance of rules
  - Lack of arbitration

# Wikipedia problems – 5:Toxic behavior as a topic in scientific research

- Example:
- Ivan Smirnov et al.: <u>Toxic</u> <u>comments are associated with</u> <u>reduced activity of volunteer</u> <u>editors on Wikipedia</u>, PNAS Nexus, 2023, 2, I–I0
- The authors emphasize "the need to promote healthy and sustainable communication practices to protect crucial online information ecosystems and ensure their long-term success."



## Mediawiki software problems

- There are a great many of requirements for the Mediawiki software due to the size and scope of the wikis
- Long processing times for bug fixes or the integration of new features
- Communities cannot compensate for small number of developers

"If you need a special high school diploma to understand that, then I won't use it. Rejected."

ChiemseeTraunstein on the use of Wikidata

- The use of the software is difficult and not always intuitive to use despite the visual editor. But keep it simple!
- Lack of interconnectivity of different types of wikis
  - Access to images and Wikidata data
  - Broken interwiki links between Wikipedias and sisters

By user Jantusla CC-by-sa-3.0

KIS

### Wikipedia and its sisters

#### Content wikis

- Wikibooks since 2003/07/10
- Wikinews since 2004/11/15
- Wikiversity since 2006/08/15
- Wikivoyage since 2006/12/10
  & 2013/01/15

#### Collections

- Wiktionary since 2002/12/12
- Wikisource since 2003/11/24
- Wikiquote since 2004/07/17
- Wikispecies since 2004/09/04
- Wikimedia Commons since 2004/09/07
- Wikidata since 2012/10/29

#### What can sister content wikis offer?

- A welcoming and supportive community. The communities are small but friendly and effective. Authors become more familiar.
- More extensive assistance and support
- Manageable inventory of articles
- Easier creation of new articles
- Almost uniform article structure by prepared skeleton helping arranging information
  - Examples: Wikivoyage, (hypothetical) cooking recipes
- More colorful language is encouraged
  - Wikivoyage: Stories, non-official trails, ..., can be added
- Greater scope for experimentation
- Same or similar templates and parser extension tags as used in Wikipedias
- References not required but allowed [citation needed]
  - In case of citations the copyright law has to be respected
- No flagged revisions (up to now no need): changes are immediately available after saving

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### Examples of skeletons with their sections

#### Hypothetical cooking recipe

- Ingredients
- Cookware and tools
- Preparation steps
- Garnishes
- Time needed
- Level of difficulty

#### Wikivoyage default article skeleton

- Background
- Get in
- Get around
- See
- Do
- Buy
- Eat
- Drink
- Sleep
- Stay safe
- Stay healthy
- Practicalities
- Go next

# Example of a story: Tonight in Baghdad

- The world can be so small: at least in the depression of el-Khārga.
- The village of <u>Bārīs</u> and the French capital have the same Arabic writing: باریس
- A lot of modern villages got their View on the old town of Bārīs/Paris names from Arab cities like Baghdad, Port Said, Algiers, Khartoum, Sana'a', Kuwait, and Palestine.
- After a lunch in Bārīs/Paris experienced hikers can arrange a meeting in the evening in Baghdad which is only 20 km away.



### Attracting new user groups

- Youth:
  - 06.–08.06.2017:Ten Hungarian pupils of the local Friedrich Schiller grammar school instructed by Denis Barthel created the article on Pilisvörösvár at the German Wikivoyage.
- Women can feel more comfortable.
- Promotion new ways of traveling and activities.

#### What can sister wikis benefit from Wikimedia?

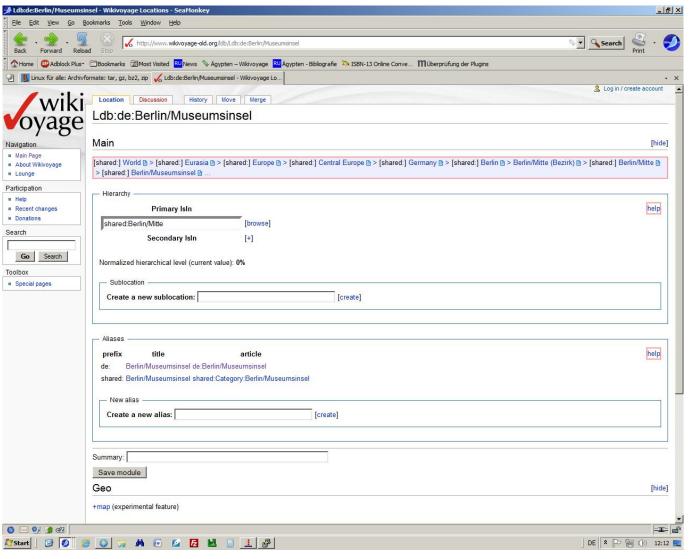
- Wikipedias can bolster the sisters up
- Via interwiki link, Wikipedias and other sisters can give additional information
- Survey: how Wikivoyage was found/reached: mainly from

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# Scope for experiments at Wikivoyage – I

- 2006 single sign-on login
- 2007 Bread-crumb trail
- 2008/10/17: Location database (not only 2012)
- 2012/12/04: Precursor of Kartographer: Poi und PoiMap templates for OSM maps (SlippyMap extension), projection of trails on maps
- 23.07.20 | 3/07/23: Wikidata migration
  - absolutely most:Wikimedia Commons
  - relatively most: Wikivoyage

# Location database at the "old" Wikivoyage



#### Serving

- Names and aliases
- Interwiki links
- Geographic hierarchy
- Geo coordinates
- Elevations
- • •

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## Using data from Wikidata

 Halle State Museum of Prehistory in German and Spanish Wikivoyages

FeIerrag 10:00−17:00. Preis: 0,00€ (Erwachsene), 4,00€ (ermaisigt), Kostenios (Kinder, Dis 18 Janre). (letzte Änderung: Okt. 2020 | i info | info | bearbeiten)

- \*\*Steinberg\*\* Windstrauseum Moritzburg Halle (Saale) №, Friedemann-Bach-Platz 5, 06108 Halle (Saale). Tel.: +49 (0)345 21 25 90 (Information, Kasse), +49 (0)345 212 59 40 (Service), Fax: +49 (0)345 202 99 90, E-Mail: kunstmuseum-moritzburg@kulturstiftung-st.de W \*\* III \*\* © X \*\* Dec. Geöffnet: Mo-Di, Do-So, Feiertag 10:00–13:00, 14:00–17:00; geschlossen: 24. Dez., 31. Dez. Preis: 12,00 € (Erwachsene), 9,00 € (ermäßigt), kostenlos (Kinder, bis 18 Jahre). (letzte Änderung: Okt. 2020 | i info | \*\* bearbeiten)
- Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte ∠, Richard-Wagner-Straße 9, 06114 Halle (Saale). Tel.:

  +49 (0)345 52 47 30, Fax: +49 (0)345 524 73 51, E-Mail: info@landesmuseum-vorgeschichte.de W ★ IIII ←

  © X. Deutschlandweit bedeutendes vorgeschichtliches Museum, dessen Sammlung sich aus Funden im

  Land Sachsen-Anhalt zusammensetzt. Zu den wichtigsten Funden gehören die Himmelsscheibe von Nebra, der Reiterstein von Hornhausen, die

  Familiengräber von Eulau und ein Mammutskelett. Geöffnet: Di-Fr 9:00-17:00; Sa-So, Feiertag 10:00-18:00; geschlossen: 24. Dez., 31. Dez. Preis:

  7,00 € (Erwachsene), 5,00 € (ermäßigt), kostenlos (Kinder, 0-18 Jahre), 3,00 € (Audioguide). (letzte Änderung: Nov. 2022 | i info | i bearbeiten)
- Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte Halle ∠, Richard-Wagner-Straße 9, 06114 Halle (Saale). 2 +49 (0)345 52 47 30, fax: +49 (0)345 524 73 51, ☑: info@landesmuseum-vorgeschichte.de ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ El Museo Estatal de la Prehistoria es el museo arqueológico de Sajonia-Anhalt con el disco celeste de Nebra y tumbas de la familia de Eulau como aspectos más destacados. ① Mar–Vie 9:00 am–5:00 pm; Sab–Dom, Feriado legal 10:00 am–6:00 pm; Cerrado: 24. Dic., 31. Dic. Precio: 7,00 € (adultos), 5,00 € (reducido), libre (niños, 0–18 años), 3,00 € (guía de audio). (última edición: nov 2022 | info | editar)

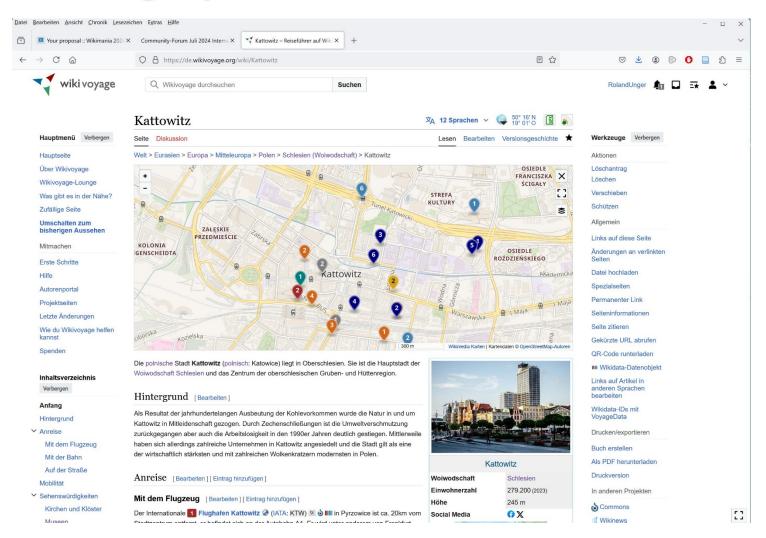
# Scope for experiments at Wikivoyage – 2

- 2016/07/08: Kartographer started. The development was initiated by the Wikivoyage community.
- 2016/10/24: First release of listing template modules programmed in Lua.
- 2019/10/03: Achim55: experimental bot to detect broken or redirect links to Wikipedia articles because of article moves.
- Infoboxes filled from Wikidata.
- Getting sister site links from Wikidata instead of direct calls.
- VoyageData: Checking article locations against Wikidata

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## Kartographer and breadcrumbs at Wikivoyage





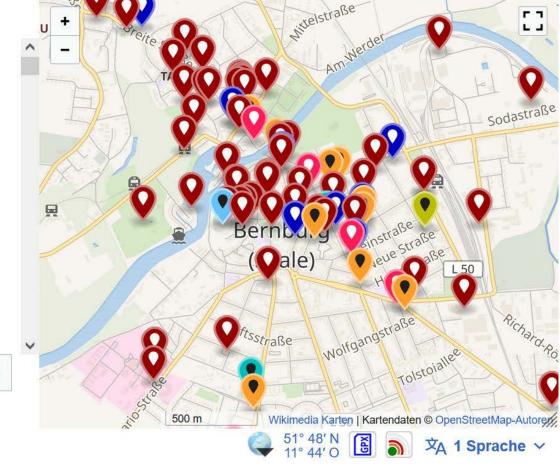
Search for forgotten or duplicate locations

#### VoyageData

- Bernburg-Roschwitz /- [⊕][♣][●]
- Museum Schloss Bernburg /- [⊕][♣][●]
- Gedenkstätte Bernburg /- [ 🏶 ][ 💿 ]
- Kaufland /- [●][♣][●]
- REWE /- [●][♣][●]
- REWE /- [●][♣][●]
- Amadeus Nr. 1 /- [ ] [ ] [ ]
- Bohemia /- [●][♣][●]
- Brutzelhaus /- [●][♣][●]
- Chinarestaurant "Goldener Palast" /- [ ] [ ]
- Griechisches Restaurant Dionysos /- [ ] [ ] [ ]



Bernburg (Saale)



#### Problems of all sister content wikis:

- Wikipedia is omnipresent. It is difficult to learn anything about the sisters.
- Sisters have a "popularity problem": they are less or hardly known.
- Sometimes sister projects are ignored or even refused by Wikipedians.
- Sister project links should be more prominently placed: now at the bottom of the right sidebar. Why not like the languages list?
- Most press releases deal with Wikipedia: sister projects are mentioned only at the end of these articles in only one sentence.
- Press releases for sister wikis to news and online medias are only made by the communities themselves.

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## "Destination of the month" in the press



Swiss town of Diessenhofen was chosen as a Destination of the month in January of 2010.

This was a surprise for the local newspaper and the mayor. They already started some tourism promotion for this town.

But Wikivoyage was faster.

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## Reports on specific anniversaries and events



#### Eine unblutige Revolte und eine Familienzusammenführung

Wie aus dem mutigen Inhalte-Fork ein Wikipedia-Schwesterprojekt wurde.

Von Stefan Mey 10. August 2023, 9:00 Uhr

in Pocket speichern



Gleich zwei Jubiläen kann das freie Reiseportal Wikivoyage in diesem Jahr feiern. Vor 20 Jahren ging das Vorgängerprojekt Wikitravel online. Vor 10 Jahren wurde Wikivoyage offiziell in den Kreis der Wikimedia-Familie aufgenommen. Über eine unblutige

Revolte und eine Familienzusammenführung, in die ein Internetkonzern, ein kleiner Verein in Halle und die große Wikimedia Foundation involviert war. FORGE OF IMPLES

Wikivoyage: A bloodless revolt and a family reunion

How the courageous content fork became a Wikipedia sister project.

By Stefan Mey

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#### Interwiki collaboration

- We should think about any types of an interwiki collaboration to improve them all.
- This requires genuine interest in such a collaboration and respect for the sister projects.

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# At last, what can you do for Wikivoyage?

- Write about your homeland and hometown.
- Write about your recent travel destinations.
- Add technical information to restaurants or add new ones.
- Improve the phrasebooks.
- Contribute photographs.

• . . .

#### Conclusions

- The number of authors and the increment of articles permanently decrease in Wikipedias.
- Newcomers find it very difficult to understand the projects (Wikipedias) and how to work on them. They are frustrated.
- It seems easier to newcomers to start in a sister project, at best in a collaboration with Wikipedias.
- For this purpose, the popularity of sister projects should be increased.

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#### **Thanks**

Thank you for your interest in this topic.

• I wish you a healthy stay at Katowice, always a save trip, and lots of new acquaintanceships and ideas.

 By the way: I know that my lecture would be an ad campaign for Wikibooks, Wikinews, Wikiversity, and Wikivoyage. Maybe you can forgive me.

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