The Smarter Library: A Vision from the Front Page of Wikipedia

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Connecting communities of knowledge

- Work with Wikipedia helps us…
- Connect collections with people who want and need them
- Amplify voices of those in our communities
- Create opportunities to join with others
Work with Wikipedia helps us to...

**Reconfirm** and **extend** our **professional values** by connecting with an **allied community**
Wikipedia + Libraries: Better Together

Strengthening ties between public libraries and Wikipedia
Learning, the WebJunction way
Focus on the needs of adult learners
Put the “why” before the “how”
Meet people where they are
Show, don’t tell
Inspire and guide

Not instruct

Image: Eilean Donan at Dusk By Syxaxis Photography [CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons]
Wikipedia + Libraries overview

1. Research public library connections
   Build awareness/recruit US public library staff; design curriculum; recruit Wikipedia guides

2. Deliver 9-week online training program; Sept. 13 - Nov. 15, 2017
   Enrolled ~300 U.S. public library staff

3. Collect / publish case studies and resources
   Evaluate and share learnings
Wikipedia guides – the human to human element

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What do public library staff want?

- **Increase** information literacy
- **Improve** access to **authoritative information** online
- **Support research** and **critical thinking skills**
- **Raise visibility** of their libraries, communities
- **Enrich** community programs

70% of participants have never edited Wikipedia
Librarians Who Wikipedia
Chihuahuita, Texas

Chihuahuita (or Little Chihuahua) is a neighborhood in El Paso, Texas. It has also been known as the "First Ward." It is considered the oldest neighborhood in the city. It has also suffered through extreme poverty in its history. It is currently on the Most Endangered Historic Places list as compiled by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It is located on the border of the Rio Grande at the United States-Mexico border. For most of the twentieth century, the name Chihuahuita was used to refer to all of southern El Paso, often including El Segundo Barrio. In 1991, Chihuahuita was designated as a historic district by the city of El Paso.
The reference librarian

“...writing the Wikipedia article makes this information available to everyone; it has longevity and visibility.
I was coming across all of these musicals with no reference information. It would have helped me greatly to have some reference material to contextualize the music. I started to make my own lists, then it hit me: why not do this in Wikipedia so that it will help other people, too?
Librarians rocked the course!

By the numbers*

- The **236** active participant editors
- made over **5900** edits
- and **369** Commons (photo) uploads
- to improve **799** articles
- and create **6** new articles!

Since the start of the course, there have been **36.1m** views of improved articles

*as of 13 February 2018
Connecting to other institutions

“This is a tremendous opportunity here to make [Wikipedia] a very robust resource for everybody.... I dare you not to get excited.
Information literacy

“...I, too, used to poo-poo Wikipedia. Now I consider myself a convert. I am pushing its value to help students be critical consumers of information.
The campus connector

“...Think beyond the edit-a-thon. What we are developing [is] an ongoing Wikipedia project here—with the library as the center of it all.”
The individual contributor

“...I like that I can add sources that are credible and I am able to find information using my databases that others don’t have immediate access to."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>Pre-course</th>
<th>Post-course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand how Wikipedia works and can explain to others</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not know how to edit Wikipedia</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not know how to organize an engagement program involving Wikipedia</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have helped patrons evaluate information on Wikipedia</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have helped a colleague with Wikipedia</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As I have been talking with my colleagues about this class, almost EVERY person has said, 'but we tell people not to use Wikipedia!' I ... thought the same thing...my mind has been completely changed...I can all but guarantee we are steering people away from a good place to start their research.
"I really liked the foundational information at the beginning, talking about the structure and layers of work going on with Wikipedia. I really had no idea that there were so many checks and balances on the articles."
"I was one of 99% of users who think of Wikipedia as a less reliable source. I must say that this course was an eye opener …

I am a changed librarian now. A librarian who feels the worth of Wikipedia, crowdsourcing and contributing to the larger community."
Librarians have the power to make Wikipedia better and more reliable.
Thank you

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A Vision from the Front Page of Wikipedia
I'm not a librarian.
But I really try to act like one.
I founded and run The Wikipedia Library.
Baseball cards were my library.
Book bonding.
Coffee is relevant.
Coffee helps you recover.
Meet them with coffee.
Digital coffee.
Free coffee.
The Front Page of Every Library
Wikipedia was bad.
You know so much.
We wanted to be like you.
“Wikipedia is increasingly becoming the **go-to reference resource for the newest generation of students**... Librarians and faculty should help remove the stigma associated with Wikipedia by embracing this Website and its imperfections as a way to make information literacy instruction valuable for the twenty-first-century student.”

-College and Undergraduate Libraries
“If we want to develop a more local, shared sense of responsibility, continuing efforts to incorporate public information production in classrooms should include opportunities for students to support and challenge one another in justifying and critiquing claims, as is done by co-authors on Wikipedia.”

- *International Journal of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning*
“We need to see Wikipedia as a makerspace in its own right... Instead of creating a physical item, we have an intellectual makerspace.

-Programming Librarian
So maybe not so bad?
A virtuous circle of research and knowledge dissemination.
No longer plead but rather assert your value.
Unapologetic and Bold.
Being smarter is recognizing the power you have that you aren't yet using.
The smarter library is not just about its collections but the value it adds to them.
The stars of the library are librarians.
Every human is your patron.
#1Lib1Ref
1 Librarian, 1 Reference
Wikipedia is a starting point for deeper research.
#1Lib1Ref is a fact party and you're invited!
Small gesture. Big significance.
“I say that our revolution is like Wikipedia. Everyone is contributing content. You don't know the names of the people contributing the content...Everyone was contributing small pieces, bits and pieces. We drew this whole picture of a revolution. And no one is the hero in that picture.”

-Wael Ghonim
Most-read summary anywhere online.
Ref one, Teach one.
#1Lib1Ref reached 6 million people 15 million times online.
Wikipedia and libraries are natural allies.

Really.
Together we can achieve so much.
Finally!
Same audience. Same mission.
National Wikimedian!
Do you have one?
Better Together indeed.
Adults need story circle too.
“Incorporating ideas into a Wikipedia article leads to those ideas being used more in the scientific literature...fully a third of the correlational relationship is causal, implying that **Wikipedia has a strong effect in shaping science.**”

- **MIT SLOAN**
A universal bond of sharing that connects all of humanity.
"A person with ubuntu has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole. Ubuntu speaks of the very essence of being human. It is to say, 'My humanity is inextricably bound up in yours. We belong in a bundle of life. We say, 'A person is a person through other persons.'"

-Desmond Tutu
The smarter library is one of sharing.
A freer, bolder future.
I invite you to share that future with us.
THANK YOU!

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