

47!

A report on the Account Creation Improvement Project and the Fellowship

By Lennart Guldbrandsson

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1unction that chec . s for available usernames.....+4

Thanks.....37



This report in a nutshell: More people would start editing if we changed the account creation process.

[45image source6](#)

Introduction

- e made a bet after a meeting in a room on floor 6 in - i.imedia foundation's offices in (an Francisco. It was me and Ian. (chulenburg plus - inifred 9liff. The bet was for two bottles of good champagne. The question was how much we could manage to increase the number of people who started to edit after we had changed the account creation process. For the life of me I can't remember what - inifred said before we left our notes for safe-keeping with :ryony ;ones but I remember distinctly that Ian. surprised us by saying that we could go up to 4%<. (ince the current number was under +) < on most days that was a bold guess.

: ut in my hand I held a note with another number on it. It was 47<...

This is the story on how I won that bet. 9r if you will a report on the Account &reation Improvement Project and my i.e. Zennart >uldbbrandsson's - i.imedia foundation community hello! ship during the first half of 2015. After reading it you'll know what the recommendations for the future are about this. You'll also know how to implement the suggested changes on your i.i.

The Account &reation Improvement Project was started in the - i.imedia foundation community department by Ian. (chulenberg. Zennart's hello! ship first consisted of working on two simultaneous projects* the :oo.shelf project and the Account &reation Improvement Project. In the end of May though [the :oo.shelf part ended](#) allowing Zennart to focus on the Account &reation Improvement Project. During all this period Zennart has reported regularly to Ian. (chulenburg and AAC. BCley as well as to the - i. idpmMedia community.

During the six months of the hello! ship Zennart successfully conducted two surveys led a series of localization tests oversaw the design of a tracing system and then the development of two high-quality test versions after which we deployed them and finally worked on gathering and analyzing the data after the tests.

Overview of the project and the Fellowship

Before the Fellowship

(September 2014) Ian. starts Account &reation Improvement Project Zennart signed on as interested to participate on same day

The Fellowship

(December 2014) Zennart's hello! ship starts
January 2015 Ian. to (an Francisco
January 2015 February 2015 " (urvey rolled out on six languages
February 2015 March 2015) Ian. two localization tests live on English - i. ipedia
March 2015 April 2015) Ian. to (an Francisco again
April 2015) Ian. Trac. ing system up and running
June 2015) Ian. Gigh-quality tests live on English - i. ipedia
June 2015) Ian. Zennart's hello! ship ends

After the Fellowship

July 2015 Statistics on how many made 5 edits after the account creation tests

July 2015 Report being compiled

August 2015 Fellowship 2ennart presents Account & Creation Improvement Project at [Wikimania](#)

Participants and method

For the most part, 2ennart has been working with volunteers during the Account & Creation Improvement Project. The main workspace has been the Outreach Wiki at <http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Account&CreationImprovementProject> but some work has been conducted on different language versions of Wikipedia, the Test Wiki and the MediaWiki.

Besides the volunteers, the project has had some Wikimedia Foundation staff support, primarily in the form of ideas and technical support.

For brevity's sake, this report uses the pronoun "we" to signify the work of either of these three groups of people: 2ennart, volunteers, staff, instead of constantly naming who did what, the focus being on the results.

Note* most of the links in this report lead to English Wikipedia. This is to keep things brief. If you change the "en" in the URL to the [5 digit code for your language](#), all MediaWiki pages, for instance, go to their counterparts on the Wikipedia in that language.

The lay of the land

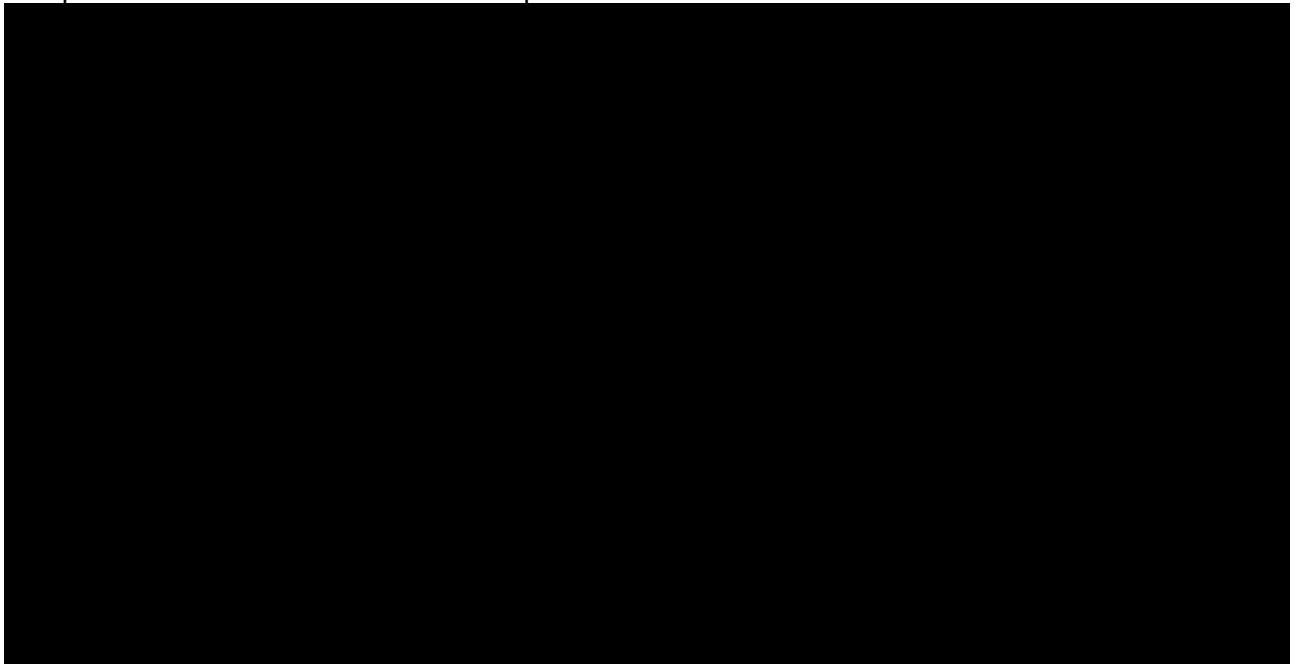
Before we started to change anything in the account creation process, we wanted to understand what we had. That meant that we had to do a bit of documentation and research. There wasn't much before, at least not collected anywhere.

The account creation process as it was before the Account Creation Improvement Project started has been created by the a6 tech staff of the Wikimedia Foundation and b6 Wikimedia volunteers.

The technical aspect

Since the project had very limited support in terms of full-time tech staff help, the existing account creation process would have to remain relatively unchanged. That was not a major problem. Compared to many other websites, Wikipedia has a rather simple and clear account creation process with only a few fields to fill in. In contrast to websites such as Facebook, Wikipedia will of course let you use the service both read and contribute without an account.

The process to create an account in Wikipedia looks like this*



[4\(ource6](#)

(steps for account creation*

-)* 'ser clicks on the Log in/ create account link in the navigation
- \$* 'ser is taken to the Log in page which asks the user to either log in or to create an account
- %* 'ser is taken to the Account Creation pages which asks the user to create an account by filling in a form
- +* 'ser is taken to a confirmation page

[4\(ource6](#)

[0 comparison between - i. ipedia and 1acebook.'s account creation processes](#) makes this instruction very clear. 1acebook.'s 54 words are compared with - i. ipedia's 68\$ words including a few warning signs and phrases marked in bolded red!

We considered that the eCisting account creation process was boring fine but needed to have some statistics to back that up. During (September %) we ran. (chulenburg wrote several queries to the Toolserver. The goal was to understand how many created accounts per day and how many of them started to edit. Here's the result for August %)*

Project	Number of new user accounts overall	New user accounts: average per day
English - i. ipedia	\$6 87)6	58474
(panish - i. ipedia	%78\$)%	874
>erman - i. ipedia	\$78 6+	57
1rench - i. ipedia	\$687\$%	5+
/ussian - i. ipedia	\$%865+	4)8
@utch - i. ipedia	5874+	\$85
Polish - i. ipedia	58+ +	\$74
(! edish - i. ipedia	+8 %	\$%
Bnglish - i. ine! s	%88)\$)
&Eech - i. ipedia	%8686	87
Gungarian - i. ipedia	%86)%	84
Gindi - i. ipedia	\$8% +	4%
Tamil - i. ipedia	8)7	%6
: engali - i. ipedia	677	%%
3alayalam - i. ipedia	6\$6	%)

, umber of new accounts per month.

Project	Number of new user accounts	New accounts with at least one edit within the first 10 days after creation	Percentage
English - i.wikipedia	6876	58864	+\$ <
(panish - i.wikipedia	78\$)%	6876	%5 <
>erman - i.wikipedia	\$78 6+	68%%\$	+4 <
/ussian - i.wikipedia	\$%865+	+8++5	%6 <
@utch - i.wikipedia	5874+	\$84\$+	%4 <
Polish - i.wikipedia	58+ +	\$8%55	%+ <
(! edish - i.wikipedia	+8 %	\$8\$)	+) <
Bnglish - i.ine ! s	%88)\$	%87 8	\$)) <
Gindi - i.wikipedia	\$8% +	\$%\$	<
Tamil - i.wikipedia	8)7	8%	\$) <
:engali - i.wikipedia	677	74	\$ \$ <
3alayalam - i.wikipedia	6\$6	7)	\$ \$ <

, umber of ne ! accounts that are used in the first \$) days.

4The rest of the results of the "before" statistics are [here](#).6

5s this result amaEing or badI 0ccording to [a paper on 1aceboo.](#) 44%6 < of the ne ! users drop off in the first + months, but since 1aceboo.'s system is very different, and most other !ebsites don't publish data such as this, !e concluded that the only data !e !ould compare ourselves to !ere earlier data, i.e. if !e could increase the numbers in the table above.

0round ;anuary %5, !e as.ed administrators on 7 language versions of - i.wikipedia 4Bnglish, >erman, 1rench, (panish, (! edish, :engali and :ahasa 3elayu, to put a lin. to a very short survey [on the page that ne ! users JlandJ on](#) after they have created their ne ! accounts. That survey !as the neCt step to understanding !hat !e needed to change. The goal !as not to have a statistically perfect survey, but some in.ling on !hat ne ! editors !anted out of their account and !hat !e needed to eCplain to them. The survey as.ed them about !hat they eCpected !hen they created the account, or in essence,

This is the Bnglish version*

Why did you create your account?

0ns !er choices*

-
-
-
-

-
-
-
-

4([ource](#) and other language versions6

After a few days we started a new survey on English German and Spanish Wikipedia with the following question*

Congratulations! You just created your own Wikipedia user account. If you had to create a user account again, which of the following statements would convince you more?

Four choices*

-
-
-
-
-
-

4([ource](#)6

We got roughly 545 persons in all answering our surveys for the French and the Spanish delays as not started despite being translated. In order from the fewest to the most responses*

- English " 55%
- (Spanish " 55
- German version " 55
- Polish " 5
- (Spanish version " 88
- German version " 5
- (Spanish version " 5)
- English version " 45
- English version " 5) 4roughly6
- English version + " 8

4([ource](#)6

\$ This idea is humorously sketched out [as a graph here](#). This is probably the main reason why people with accounts don't start to edit Wikipedia.

% Due to a mistake the specific result is skimming around somewhere on the time survey but we have a screenshot of the results*

<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/65/0accountHcreationHsurveyH%Hen.png>

Results

The most common answer across all language versions was "I want to be part of Wikipedia". In fact, the stable results on that point was the reason why we did another survey to understand what "part of Wikipedia" meant.

Following favorite articles on Wikipedia" was the most common answer in the second survey, with the notable exceptions of German Wikipedia where anonymity is a bigger reason and Spanish Wikipedia where getting a user page and being able to send/receive messages are the most important features. When forced to choose one alternative, newcomers to English Wikipedia think that being able to follow articles is the most important reason to create an account. That is also important when they can choose.

Full results of the surveys can be found in the [Appendix](#).

Comments from people taking the survey

In the first and second surveys, we gave people a free text area. People used that option a lot. The most common responses were along the lines of*

- "I don't want to edit articles anonymously."
- "Class assignment"
- "I want to create a book. I can save and print" (or other function related answers)
- "I'm a 29-year-old - 50-year-old"

(Some gave responses that showed that we still have some outreach work to do*)

- "I thought I would be able to read a lot more articles"
- "chat with online friends"
- "To give my forum a page"

And some gave cryptic responses*

- "I wanted to vandalize!"
- "I'm an artist"
- "I'm a 29-year-old - 50-year-old"

Testing it live

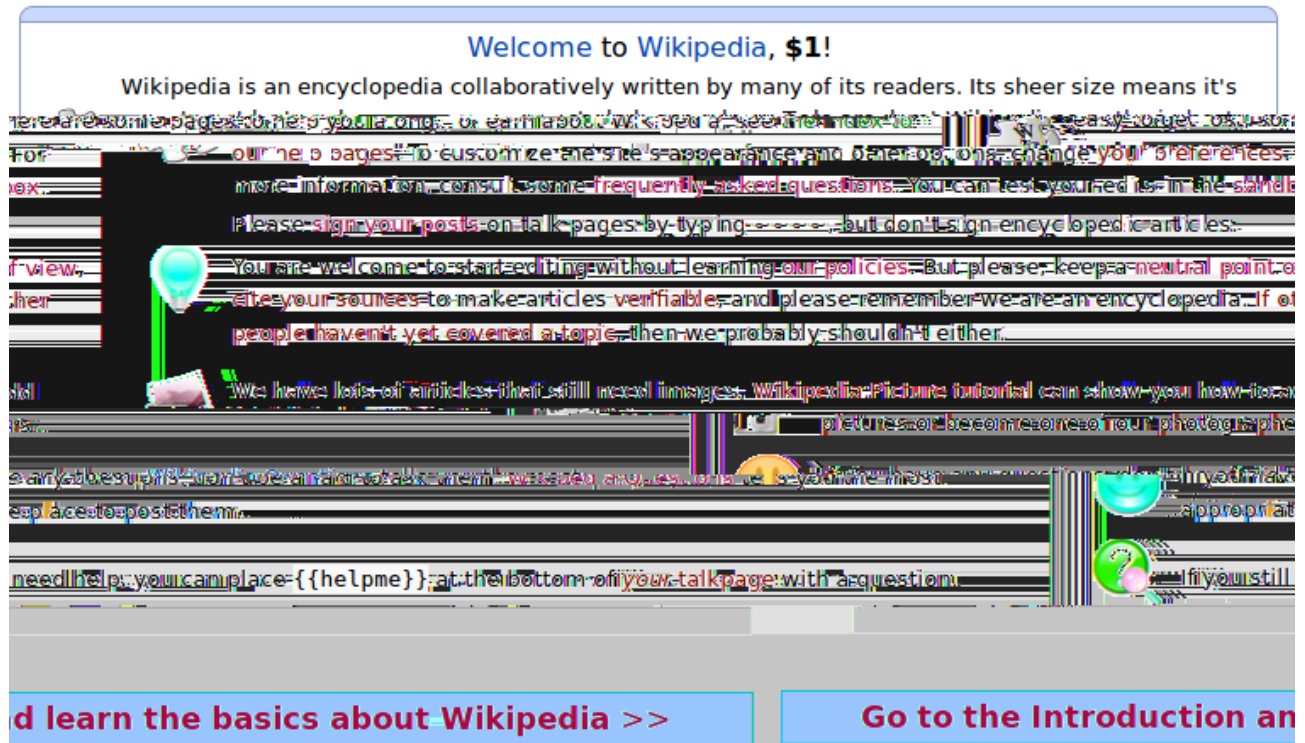
During Zennaro's trip to San Francisco in January, he decided that surveys and statistics are but the first step and that he needed to test out different things live on Wikipedia.

□ □ □ □

(step 1 in the testing process) as to gather as many different ideas as possible without too much thought into design, deploy them and measure how many new users who started editing. He called that the "Quality tests" in contrast to the more polished versions that he would later on once he knew more about what worked and what didn't. He was certainly aware that the versions in many cases were crude and simplistic but the tests could show which he should work more on.

(starting 1 February) the community was invited to contribute their designs of the three pages in the account creation process: the login page, the account creation page and the confirmation page. To help people out, he created a list of assumptions that they could use when designing their own versions. For example, he believed that showing the new comers images of people may inspire more confidence. Read [the full list here](#). Among the suggestions were one that was used on Polish Wikipedia where the new comer gets the "Krulebo" on their user page. Other designs had videos and links to reading materials.

On 1 February 2006 the first test was performed on English Wikipedia. In all, 50 quality designs were tested, the last test ending on March 4. Most of the tests were focused on the last page in the account creation process, [the confirmation page](#). The original version looked like this*



45image source⁶⁺

+ This version became known in the project as "Commons salad" because of all the images and extra ingredients.

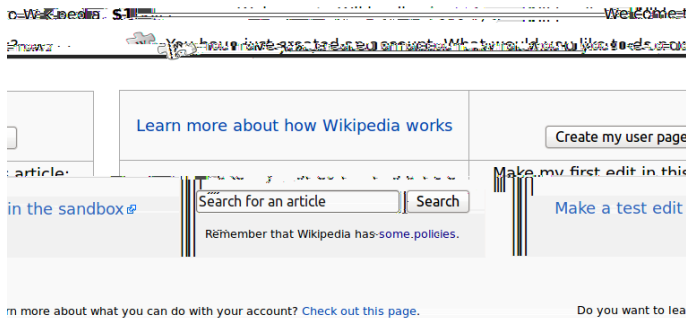
Samples of versions that were tested:

Welcome to Wikipedia, \$ 1
Your account has been created.

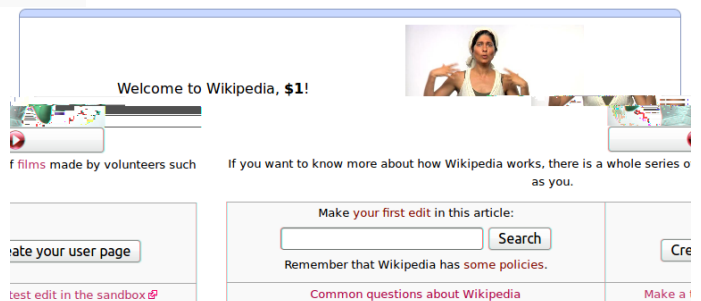
[Click here now to create your user page.](#)

You can also start from the [introduction](#) or [your preferences](#).

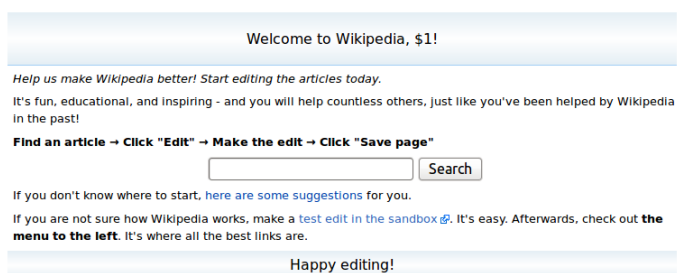
4version %6



4version +6



4version 6



Do you have a question about Wikipedia?
Do you want to learn more about what you can do with your account? Check out this page.

Results of the first tests

Test version	Number of new accounts (best day)	New accounts with at least one edit on the day of account creation (best day)	Best percentage
Original	7858)	88\$77	+) < ⁴
\$	78+4\$	88\$5\$	++ <
%	68574	88+8	35%
±	78%66	88+64	+% <
4	78%67	884++	++ <
5	68 +5	88447	35%
6	68)8)	\$8 \$7	+% <
7	78\$5\$	88\$8+	+\$ <
8	68)66	\$887	+\$ <
-	686 7	88\$4	+% <
\$)	6448	\$ 78	+\$ <

⁴ [Source](#) and all results

Version % and 5 had a few percentages more people who started to edit than the others, but the remarkable thing is that all versions were better than the original one. Version % and 5 gave 5 percent units more newcomers than the standard one, which on a day with 6))) new accounts means +)) more potential Wikipedia contributors per day! These versions were certainly worth exploring more thoroughly.

The backlash with version 2

We announced the changes before we implemented them on the Village pump of English Wikipedia as well as the Administrators', noticeboard. Most who responded were interested in the tests but the activity was not very high.

Go! ever! When we rolled out version % (see picture above) there was outcries in several places and the page was reverted. To understand the reason why let's look at how version % works since this will become important later on. Remember that the design lacks a certain style. The [proposed by editors from Polish - Wikipedia](#) based on the system that [they had there](#). Once you have created an account you're given one clear choice* to create a user page. When you click on the button a template [preloads](#) information on your user page and all you have to do is click the "save" button. The Polish version had a list of around +) links to guides, policies and other pages on Wikipedia. The English version [looked like this](#).

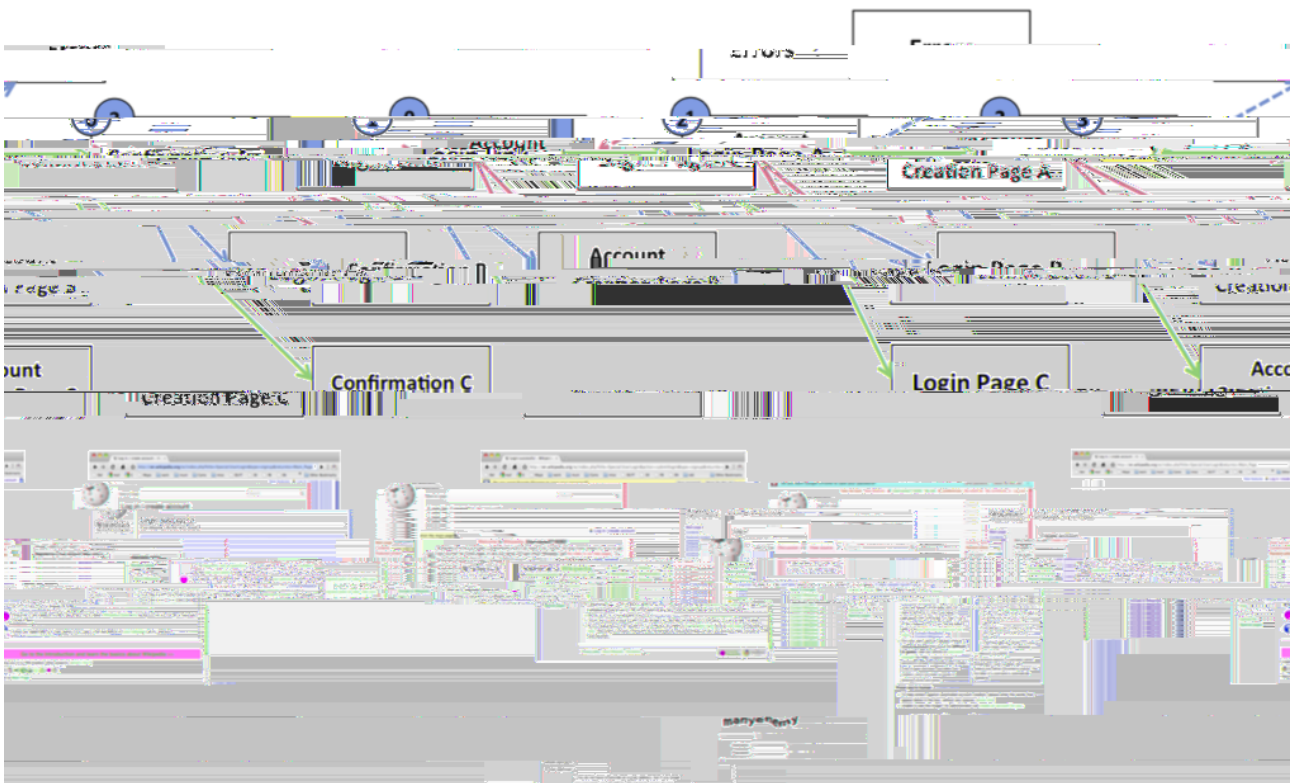
What the community reacted to was that so many new users created user pages that looked exactly the same. This function made the newcomers' user pages blue links instead of red links and for instance [recent changes](#) also made it more difficult to distinguish between newcomers who according to Wikipedia wisdom are more prone to vandalism and Wikipedians who are less prone to vandalism.

⁴ This percentage here deviates a little bit from the percentage in [the original statistics](#).

Go!ever! !e reasoned that it be a good thing if - i. ipedians !ho patrolled / ecent changes didn't automatically scrutiniEe ne! users harder. [0 test on English - i. ipedia](#) using Kunder cover” - i. ipedians posing as ne! comers noticed that edits they made !ere more often reverted than if they made the same type of edits !ith their usual accounts. This made us thin. harder about ho! !e could have the best of both !orlds* tools for the vandalism patrol on the one hand! and an easier time getting accepted as a - i. ipedian on the other.

To get a better measuring rod than statistics from the Toolserver accounts F !ich needed to be updated manually for each update F the tech department !ere given the tas. of creating a trac.ing system !ith [00: testing](#) capabilities [as described here](#).

5n essence! !hat !e !anted !as a method to randomly send those !ho !anted to create an account one of several alternate routes! li.e this*



4([ource](#)6

0Iso! !e !anted trac. ho! many !ent through the different routes F and most importantly! ho! many of them began to edit after creating their account. This basically meant! !ich route !as the most effective !ay of getting people to edit!

That tas. !as done by [an eCtension to the 3edia - i. i soft! are!](#) !ich placed a trac.ing coo. ie in the !eb bro! sers of the ne! users. The tech team !rote*

What data we are storing

- We are storing a new cookie upon visiting the "Create account" page with a lifetime of three months. This cookie will be used to track the following information*

- - Which account creation messaging group the user was placed in (identified as 0&P\$ 0&P% or 0&P+ for no)
- - What version of the account creation campaign they received
- - Whether the particular user made it to the end of the account creation process or whether they dropped off after reaching the login screen or the account creation screen
- **If (and only if) the user creates a new account**, the number of edits or previews during the course of the trial

The information is associated with browser sessions (each of which has an individual unique identifier).

⁴(source)

The extension was deployed on April 7, which is when the more advanced statistics begin.

The tech team theorized that more outreach activities could use the custom 'signup' extension to gauge how successful the activity was in getting more people to sign up as editors.⁵

Figure 1

After the second trip to (San Francisco), Jennart and I ran, set out to create two high-quality account creation processes. They were different from the low-quality tests in two fundamental ways*

- \$6 they were created with more style in mind, over a longer period of time than the low-quality designs, which among other things meant that we designed fewer than individual pages
- %6 they were deployed with the custom 'signup' extension in play, so that we could measure what happened to the people who went through the account creation process

The two new high-quality designs were based on the two most successful versions in the low-quality tests. Internally we called those versions "the user page creator" and "the (par.ed.com model)" (more details below). Concurrent with them, we could run a third process. The third one was the existing process, which we wanted to use as a baseline in case we suddenly saw a spike or dip in the statistics of the new version.

The effort to design and code the two high-quality versions proved to be harder than anticipated. There were technical challenges as well as content issues that needed to be addressed before they could be rolled out on English Wikipedia. Fortunately, even though Jennart was responsible for the user page creator and I ran, too, the charge of the (par.ed.com model), we had plenty of help from the communities of the Outreach Wiki and other Wikimedia projects.

The user page creator

The user page creator was based on version 6 of the low-quality tests. For [the controversial one](#). However, we felt that once we could provide the vandalism patrollers some tools to deal with the

⁵ This can be made easier by using such services as [P /pedia](#), a website which turns wikitext into codes that can be read by mobile cameras.

⁶ For instance, we placed a [progress bar](#) at the top of both account creation processes.

problems that the model created, this model would have a good chance to get many newcomers to start editing, which was the goal. It would also present the newcomers to the rest of the community, which the hypothesis would make the Wikipedia community more inclined to welcome them into the fold. The various tools and features will be explained as we go through the steps in the process.

This process was designated campaign=ACP1 in the custom 'signup extension', which meant that you can go directly to this account creation process instead of getting randomly assigned to one of the three account creation processes by clicking this link.*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/index.php?title=Special:User2login&submitloginRtype=signup&campaign=0&P\\$](http://en.wikipedia.org/index.php?title=Special:User2login&submitloginRtype=signup&campaign=0&P$)

This is how it looks.*

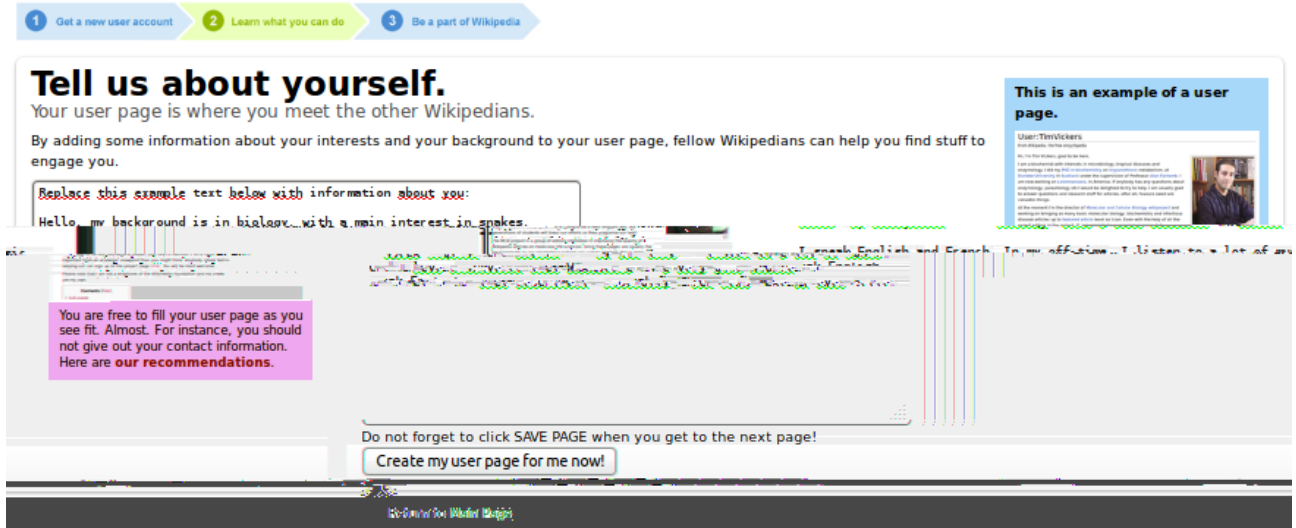
(step 1) and \$ in the [account creation process](#) are the same as the normal one. This is also true for the (par.ed.com model.

4(ource6

You'll note the difference to the original one: shorter text, the softened frame with shadows and the colorful progress bar at the top.

We should also mention that much of the page consists of a form that we could not change for technical reasons. It would take too much time for a six-month project and with very unsure results. The [original design](#) called for an inspirational "You can also become a part of Wikipedia" sidebar, but we were unable to get this to work with the form part without changing the software.

A confirmation code was sent to your e-mail address. This code is not required to log in, but you will need to provide it before enabling any e-mail-based features in the wiki.



4 (source6

There are two main new features beside the progress bar*

- the blue boC to the right⁸ ! hich sho ! cases an eCample of a user page⁷ 4including a photo of a - i . ipedian⁶
- the Ktell us about yourself” form⁸

The "Tell us about yourself" form is a [JavaScript created function](#) that is [prefilled](#) with the following text:

Replace this eSample text below with information about you*

Gello my bac. ground is in biology ! ith a main interest in sna.es.

I speak English and French. In my off-time I listen to a lot of music and I have discovered that Wikipedia is a very good source for information in that department. Hopefully I can help make it even better.






This teCt is of the tools ! e gave the vandalism patrollers* they can no ! chec. for user pages that include this eCact ! ording.

ormally step + is ! here ! e let the ne ! comer find his or her o ! n ! ay. 5n this version ! e added a fourth step. 9nce you clic. K&reate my user page for me no ! ”% you ! ill be ta.en to your ne ! user page% ! ith the teCt you added pasted into the edit area% so that all you have to do is to scroll do ! n and clic. K(ave”. This loo.s li.e this*

7 The user page belongs to [Tim Nic.ers](#) after a thorough search among user pages for a simple informational user page that a neophyte could imitate. It is a happy coincidence that the user turned out to be a scientist.

8 3y (! edish ! eb bro ! ser underlines the ! ords it doesn't understand, even after 5 s ! itched it to English. 5n other ! ords, it shouldn't loo. li.e that.

This text is generated by one part of the code on this page* http://en.!.i.!.ipedia.org/!.i.!.ID3edia-.i.!.i.*ommon.:=8 ! which you also have to change if you are to import this version of the account creation process to other ! i. is.

B I     

<!-- BELOW IS THE TEXT ABOUT YOU. YOU CAN CHANGE IT COMPLETELY OR IN PARTS AND THEN COME BACK TO IT. AFTER YOU ARE DONE, SCROLL DOWN A BIT FURTHER AND CLICK "SAVE PAGE". -->{{New user bar}}
 Replace this example text below with information about you:
 Hello, my background is in biology, with a main interest in snakes.
 I speak English and French. In my off-time, I listen to a lot of music, and I have discovered that Wikipedia is a very good source for information in that department. Hopefully I can help make it even better.
 <!-- NOW, CLICK THE "SAVE PAGE" BUTTON. CONGRATULATIONS, YOU'VE JUST MADE YOUR FIRST EDIT TO WIKIPEDIA. -->

Content that violates any copyrights will be deleted. Encyclopedic content must be **verifiable**.
 By clicking the "Save Page" button, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#), and you irrevocably agree to release your contribution under the [CC-BY-SA 3.0 license](#) and the [GFDL](#). You agree that a hyperlink or URL is sufficient for attributing your contributions to the project.

Edit summary (Briefly describe the changes you have made)
 New user page through [[:outreach:Account Creation Improvement Project|Outreach:ACIP]]

Preview of edit summary: (New user page through Outreach:ACIP)
☐ This is a minor edit (what's this?) ☐ Watch this page
 Save page Show preview Show changes Cancel | [Editing help](#) (opens in new window)

With Wikipedia's [Terms of Use](#) before you submit. If you do not want your writing to be edited, used, and redistributed at will, then do not submit it here. All text that you did not write yourself, except brief excerpts, must be available under terms consistent with it.

4(ource^s)6

There are a couple of things to note here^{\$\$*}

- there are t!o [Khidden" comments](#)[§] reminding the user to clic. K(ave" and !elcoming the user to - i. ipedia
- the [edit summary](#) automatically adds the teCt K, e! user page through [9utreach*0&5P](#)" to this edit in / ecent changes[§] ! hich ma.es it very easy to spot for vandalism controllers
- this is not the first thing the user sees after coming to this page. Obove this is something #uite interesting[§] see the neCt section.

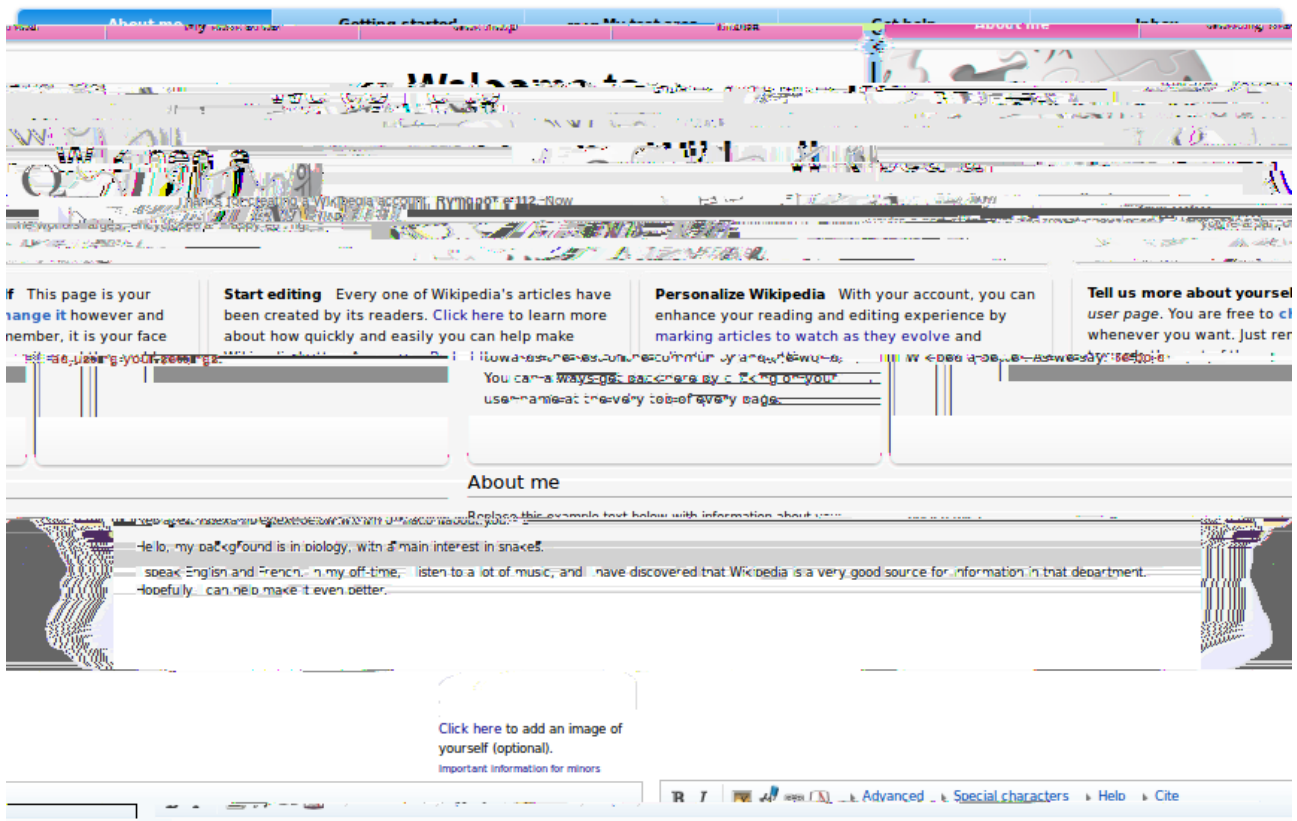
9ne thing that !e .ne! that the ne! users needed[§] and !e ! anted to give them[§] ! as information about ho! - i. ipedia ! or.s. : ut !e needed to do it ! ithout giving them a list of +) guidelines and manuals on their user page[§] as in the Polish version. 9ur idea !as to use [tabs](#)[§] i.e. place the information they needed close at hand. The method !e chose !as to use a [template](#) that could be pasted onto every ne! user page during the account creation process.

That template is eCpanded on the user page to give the ne! user information and guidance[§] ! ithout ta.ing up too much space on the page. ?ou can actually see the code that produces the tabs template in the image above[§] right after the first line of hidden teCt* `{{New user bar}}`. 5f you didn't notice it the first time you sa! the picture F good. That's the point.

2et's ta.e a loo. at the template that sits on every ne! user page created through this account creation process*

[§]) This page cannot be easily sourced[§] since it's session"based. (o you'll have to try it yourself.
^{\$\$} : esides the red"lin. problem 5 told you about before.

Remember that this is only a preview; your changes have not yet been saved!



4 (ource\$%6

One feature we have in the user bar template is the prominent tab "Getting started" which links to a page we created called [Starting editing](#). This page is a very short introduction to editing Wikipedia. It's much shorter, less technical and more focused on inspiration than almost any other manual on Wikipedia.



4 (ource6

The links in the tab are: [About me](#), [Getting started](#), [My test area](#), [Get help](#) and [Inbox](#).

: ut bac. to the , e! user bar template* , ote also the placeholder image to the right8 ! ith a lin. to a special page about [uploading images of yourself](#). - e reasoned that it ! ould be easier for ne! users to enter the community if their user pages had pictures F and perhaps increase their chance of avoiding frivolous reverting by vandalism patrollers.

These lists have been manually created and would have to be manually updated as the tasks are being dealt with but with crowdsourcing this should be manageable.

This process was designated campaign=ACP2 in the user registration extension which meant that you can go directly to this account creation process instead of getting randomly assigned to one of the three account creation processes by clicking this link.*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/index.php?title=Special%3AUserLogin&submitloginRtype=signup&campaign=0&P%3DACP2>

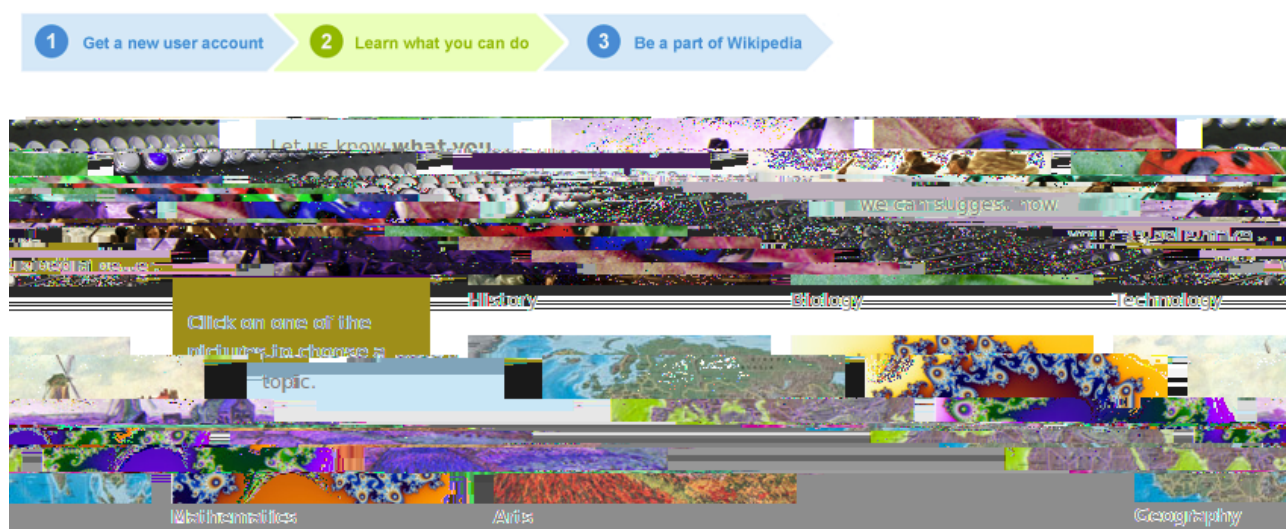
This is how the process looks*

Figure 1: Account creation process

(step 1) and 2 in the [account creation process](#) are the same as the normal one.

Figure 2: Account creation process

Tell us what you are interested in



4 (source 6)

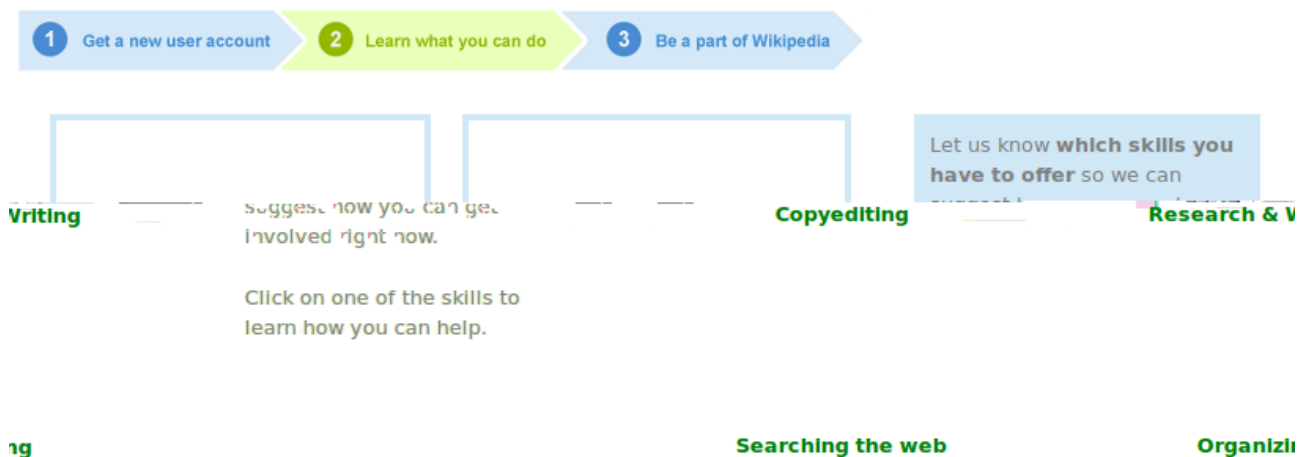
The header was consciously chosen to protect the feeling that we want to know more about the new user's interests.

By making the new comer choose a topic during the account creation process we hoped to focus them on contributing to Wikipedia instead of reading only. We also deliberately used pictures as links on this page to give the image of Wikipedia as "more than just text".^{\$7}

Finally, note the blue box with instructions on the right.

^{\$7} One comment we have received about these versions is that they are not fully compatible with the GNU Free Documentation License since we haven't provided information about the sources for the images. We chose not to since it could detract from the "straight" flow from account creation to starting to edit. The annual fundraiser have had the same discussions.

Which skills do you have to offer? (History)



4(ource6

Here we have tried to focus the new user into one of four tasks that we need volunteers to help out with. The blue box is present again with instructions.

Be a part of Wikipedia (History, Copyediting)

Get a new user account

Learn what you can do

Be a part of Wikipedia

Here is how you can help:

Click on one of the links in the list on the left hand side ("List of history articles that need copyediting"). This will bring you directly to the article that needs attention.

Then, click on "Edit" at the top of the screen (next to the search field):

Read Edit View history

List of history articles that need copyediting:

- Aftermath of World War II
- Alexander's Conflict with the Kambojas
- Ancient history of Cyprus
- Aun ibn Abdillah and Muhammad ibn Abdillah
- BBC History of World War II
- Colonialism
- Contents of the United States diplomatic cables leak (India)
- Contents of the United States diplomatic cables leak (Pakistan)
- Genmatics

Copyedit the article.

Finally, enter a description of what you have done in the "Edit summary" field and click on the "Save" button.

Wasn't that easy? Thanks for helping to improve Wikipedia!

- Kaifeng
- Lund Krigar
- Maiden Abduction from the Mountains
- Marinid dynasty
- Michael Joe Costello
- Migration Period
- Mikhail Miloradovich
- Mongol invasion of Europe
- Muslim conquest of Egypt
- Nguyen Khanh
- Paolo Soleri Amphitheatre
- Pedro Fernández de Castro
- Prehistory of Transylvania
- Quantitative revolution
- Rua Kenana Hepetipa
- Running in Ancient Greece
- Sarmatism
- Timeline of Cherokee
- Union of Brittany and Normandy

4(ource6

This is one of the +) pages !ith similar lists based on s.ill and interest. 0ll of them have been manually created! !hich is one of the dra!bac.s in this method. -e have been in preliminary contact !ith -i.iPro-ects that could help out !ith updating these lists.

-e deployed the three account creation processes 40&P\$ F the user page creator! 0&P% F the (par.ed.com model! and 0&P+ F the standard one! [on ;une 8 %\)](#)\$. The first results came the neCt day! and they !ere very encouraging in some respects.

What we measure and why

The data !e sought !as ho! many start to edit after going through a particular account creation process. 5f for instance! 0&P% F the (par.ed.com model " manages to attract more editors in the long run than any of the other processes! and the numbers are conclusive! !e should implement that model on English -i.ikipedia.^{\$8} On important angle !e loo.ed at !as ho! many ma.e \$ edit versus ho! many ma.e 5 edits. This distinction is crucial! because !e !ant the ne!comers to stay as editors! and not =ust ma.e a random edit to test out -i.ikipedia.

[0s !e stated above](#)! the data is built upon a bro!ser"based coo.ie. That means that if a person creates an account on her o!n computer and then starts editing !ith her ne! account ! she !ould not be counted here. ¤tly! !e have no method of getting data for those persons! but on the other hand! they !ill be present in approCimately the same numbers in the three different account creation processes! so in the end it !ill still be fair.

The raw data

The tech department made an automatic script on the [Toolserver](#) !hich updated daily on the statistics of the three account creation processes. 5t deposits the ra! data numbers in [this teCt file](#). The data there is a little hard to understand! so here is a short legend*

^{\$8} -e haven't run these tests on any other -i.ikipedia. 9ut intention at the beginning !as to have these .inds of statistics for several language versions of -i.ikipedia! but time constraints became a big factor. That's !hy !e hope that volunteers ma.e these eCperiments on their o!n !i. is in the future.

What is says in the text file – what it means

home\catrope\acp\perday\lennart"log"%)\$\$)4%7"0&P\$"final F date and 0&P 4in this case it's 0&P\$ the user page creator⁶

- 5TG B@5T(* 45 F of everyone ! ho ! ent through this 0&P ho ! many made \$ editI

- 5TG 5 B@5T(* F ho ! many made 5 editsI

T9T02*\$) F ho ! many can ! e match to a specific user nameI 4ignore this6

T9T02 - 5TG ' , 3 0T&GB@*\$ F ho ! many created an account through this processI

Percentage ! ith \$ edit* +7.8\$5\$ F ho ! big share of everyone ! ho ! ent through this 0&P made \$ editI⁶)

Percentage ! ith 5 edits* 7.56+)+ F ho ! big share of everyone ! ho ! ent through this 0&P made 5 editsI

Crunching the numbers

(orting through the ra ! data\$! e can find these numbers*

	- ith \$ edit	- ith 5 edits	0 ccounts created	Percentage ! ith \$ edit	Percentage ! ith 5 edits
Overage day	++7.87	6+. 6	67.+8	+4.8+	6.)
: est day	5++	\$)+	\$66	48. +	\$).6\$
- orst day	6%	8%	7++	5.58%	+58

	- ith \$ edit	- ith 5 edits	0 ccounts created	Percentage ! ith \$ edit	Percentage ! ith 5 edits
Overage day	4+7.66	6 .))7.4	44.58	7.)%
: est day	5++	\$)+	\$)5	48. +	\$).6\$
- orst day	++6	+6	7++	4). 7	4.++

	- ith \$ edit	- ith 5 edits	0 ccounts created	Percentage ! ith \$ edit	Percentage ! ith 5 edits
Overage day	87.6\$%	6+.)7	88\$.%7	+) . 6	6.66
: est day	+8%	6	\$)6%	+4. 8	.)6
- orst day	6%	8%	7)+	5.58%	+58

\$ 5n the teCt file\$ the first day is 0pril %7\$! hich is ! hen the eCtension ! as deployed. : ut ! e didn't roll out the three different account creation process until ;une . The data before that is based on three eCactly ali.e account creation processes. - e have therefore eCcluded any data from before ;une \$) F the first full day of testing. The last day included is ;uly %).

%) / emember\$ [the original statistics](#) said that +) < 4on the best days6 create accounts and then ma.e one edit. This method of measuring is a little bit different still\$ so any numbers ! ill deviate from the original statistics. The data in the legend is much higher but it seems that it ! as a pea. day. The normal level is much closer to the original statistics.

	- ith \$ edit	- ith 5 edits	0 ccunts created	Percentage ! ith \$ edit	Percentage ! ith 5 edits
Overage day	%88.+4	5 .))8.5\$	% .54	6.\$%
: est day	+54	86	\$)75	++ .4	7.84
- orst day	%\$7	+6	6	%6.7	+. \$

4(ource* see separate file6

5n total there ! ere **118988 accounts created** during the test period. 9f these **41558 made at least 1 edit** and **7867 made at least 5 edits**.

Which account creation process is better?

To determine ! hich account creation process is better, let's loo . at the important aspects*

- it has the highest percentage of people that ma . e at least \$ edit on the best day
- it has the highest percentage of people that ma . e at least 5 edits on the best day
- it performs ! ell even on the K ! orst day” on ho ! many percent ma . e at least \$ edit
- it performs ! ell even on the K ! orst day” on ho ! many percent ma . e at least 5 edits
- it has a high percent average of people that ma . e at least \$ edit
- it has a high percent average of people that ma . e at least 5 edits

The one that's best in the most of these is clearly better at the =ob. Gere are the scores for the three account creation process compared on these five aspects. The ! inner of each category is bolded.

	0&P\$	0&P%	0&P+
Gighest \$ edit	48.93	+4. 8	++ .4
Gighest 5 edits	10.61	.)6	7.84
- orst day \$ edit	40.97	%5.58	%6.7
- orst day 5 edits	4.33	+.58	+. \$
Overage \$ edit	44.58	+) . 6	% .54
Overage 5 edits	7.02	6.66	6.\$%

These figures may seem very abstract, but by increasing the inflo ! of ne ! - i . ipedians ! ho ma . e 5 edits from 6.\$%< to 7.)% on an average day, ! e gain persons per day! 41rom 5 .) ! ith the present model6 to 68.) persons 4 ! ith 0&P\$6.

To sum it up. There is no other account creation process of the ones that we have tested that can measure up – in any category – to that of the user page creator. This is the account creation process that we recommend.

0nd, should be added F that version also scored above [47](#)<. (o unless - inifred's note said 48<8 4 < or 5)<, those t ! o champagne bottles are mine.

Other results and aspects

Go!ever! While the statistics are an important part of choosing a new account creation process, there are other concerns and aspects to keep in mind. To those six categories above, we should add that the account creation process we choose should be effective in terms of community effort. The O&P%the (par.ed.com model has an important drawback. in that the community would have to keep the lists of tasks constantly updated.

The O&P\$ and O&P% has both been complimented on looking nice! which makes it easier to convince the community to accept them as the default account creation process.

That does not mean that O&P\$ is without its challenges. Here are some of the things we need to take note of! should we decide to go with O&P\$*

- we should ask the community to keep an eye on the category for new - i. ipedians! and use it as a place to recruit new members of the - i. iPro-jects based on their descriptions of themselves
- some - i. ipedians have expressed concern that the O&P\$ increases the number of pictures of people on - i. imedia &ommons F and since &ommons is not a photo album! but the pictures should have educational value! they are likely to be deleted unless something is done on how to approach this
- we would need to discuss with the community about the issue of users with formulaic user pages! many of whom are inactive.
- there have been some talk about browser"compatibility issues! especially when it comes to the ;ava(cript"based Ktell us about yourself"form. Those would have to be resolved
- * when we ask the new comers to add information about themselves! we need to be very careful on what types of information we ask them for. (several - i. ipedians have [extremely hard objections](#) to including data such as name! where you live! what age you are and other identifying information. [- i. i"stal.ing](#) is one reason. Another is that if a new user adds a university degree or another expertise to their profile! this may lead that person to [expect special treatment](#)
- the deployment should be announced on both the [Nillage pump 4proposal6](#) and the [Odmistrators' noticeboard](#)! plus the - i. imedia oundation blog! with enough numbers to convince people
- other language versions of - i. ipedia may discover that their numbers differ from these. before they deploy O&P\$ uncritically! they should test this for a month and measure the difference. Of note is that some - i. ipedias already have other account creation processes! that could be fine"tuned as well

Of some - i. imedia oundation staffers have noted! the O&P\$ is an amalgamation of several pieces F the user page creator! the new user bar! the new - i. ipedians category! etc. If there is time! it would probably be a good idea to test the various parts further. we may yet increase the numbers to above 5) <!

Final thoughts

Although I didn't intend for it, the new user bar have already started to make its way around - i. ipedia. In Chinese - i. ipedia, some have begun to use it on their user pages, see for example http://deh.1i.1pedia.org/1i.1d'ser*Tommyang.

The extension 'ser' (signup) has already been used for a special outreach project* <http://hciaresearch%.hcie.cs.cmu.edu/SrfarEan/1i.1pedia/1tool/1signup.php>. - e should use it more.

- hile I ended up with too designs, different designs were collected. (ome of those who contributed were very skillful and their talents should be harnessed.

- i. ipedia's account creation process is really only technically lacking in one aspect only* it does not use [0;0I](#) for when you choose a username, which means that if that name is taken, the new user may have to redo the entire form, instead of getting a warning. This function exists on (I edish - i. ipedia, see [0ppendiC](#).

If you are thinking about implementing any of these account creation processes, there is a guide for it here* http://outreach.1i.1media.org/1i.1d'ser*Gannibal/guideHforHtheHneCtHperson. That guide will probably be moved somewhere else, and be continuously updated, as more challenges are discovered and new hacks are being implemented.

Of course, there is plenty left to do. (ome of the more important things are these*

- "how do I increase the number of people who create accounts?"
- "how do I increase the number of people who start to edit?"
- "how do I make sure they continue to edit?"

- e should also develop [the email that is sent to anyone who creates an account](#), and include parts that use the same types of algorithms as [\(uggest:ot](#) and [OmaEon.com](#). - e should also think about some sort of "I miss you" email to accounts that have been inactive for a period of time.

There have been some talk about adding a flag for new users, so that newcomers are easily spotted in recent changes. That is a complicated topic that should be brought up on - i. imania and other meetups between - i. ipedians.

More about creating formulaic user pages* [\(ructured profile](#)

@uring the (ummer of 2005) [0.shay 0gar!al!or.ed on the 0ccount &reation code](#).

* In my experience, some - i. ipedians aren't sure they want a big influx of new - i. ipedians, since it takes a lot of effort to train them to become - i. ipedians. If they did want them, they could treat them better. This is an important factor in this change in direction to attract more - i. ipedia editors.

Appendices

Language version	Alternative 1 I wanted to be part of Wikipedia	Alternative 2 I was just curious about what would happen if I created an account	Alternative 3 I thought an account is required to edit articles	Alternative 4 I thought I would get some extra features	Alternative 5 I usually register for websites I like	Alternative 6 I tried to start an article, but I couldn't do that without a user account ²²	Alternative 7 I wanted to upload images	Alternative 8: Other	People responding
: engali	7\$.8 < 47 6	%4.5 < 4%76	4).) < 4446	%5.5 < 4%86	+). < 4+46	%4.5 < 4%76	\$.\$. 4%\$6	\$5.5 < 4\$76	\$\$%
(! edish	6).4 < 4 +6	\$7.5 < 4%76	%.4 < 4++6	.\$ < 4\$46	%4.7 < 4+86	%%.7 < 4+56	.\$ < 4\$46	\$\$7 < 4\$86	\$55
>erman	66.7 < 4\$686	6.7 < 4\$76	%8.6 < 47%6	6.7 < 4\$76	\$7.5 < 44\$6	\$5. < 44)6	+.6 < 4 6	\$5. < 44)6	%55
Polish	45.5 < 4\$6\$6	\$+.8 < 44 6	\$7.8 < 46+6	%)\$. < 4586	\$6.4 < 4586	+)%. < 4\$)76	7. < 4%86	\$+..) < 4466	+5
(panish	7\$.6 < 46\$86	\$%.% < 4\$)56	%8.+ < 4%446	%\$.8 < 4\$886	+5.5 < 4+)66	\$5.8 < 4\$+66	.) < 4786	\$\$.) < 4 56	88\$
Bnglish	68.\$ < 4 5%6	\$8.) < 4%5%6	%7.\$ < 4+7 6	%%.8 < 4+\$ 6	%+. < 4++46	\$8. < 4%646	\$5.6 < 4%\$86	\$6.\$ < 4%\$56	\$4\$%
Mean (rounded off to two decimals)	64,02%	15,45%	27,77%	17,67%	24,82%	21,33%	10,72%	13,87%	Total: 3174

%% 5n many language versions you can create articles ! ithout accounts! so any ans ! ers here are significant of ! hat the ne ! users they need.

Language version	Alternative 1 Everybody will know that I helped improve Wikipedia	Alternative 2 It will enable me to customize the appearance and behavior of Wikipedia to my own preferences	Alternative 3 I will get my own user page on Wikipedia. Other users will be able to send me messages.	Alternative 4 I can follow all my favorite topics on Wikipedia.	Alternative 5 My contributions to Wikipedia are not connected to an IP-address, but to a nickname that can't be tracked back to my physical address.	Other/Comments	People responding
German	45. < 44)66	+).+ < 4%686	%4.7 < 4%\$ 6	+%.) < 4%8+6	5+.) < 446 6	4\$) \$6L+M	+%
(panish	+4.+ < 4+476	+\$.8 < 4+%%6	6).8 < 46\$56	+6.5 < 4+6 6	%7.7 < 4%8)6	4\$% 6L4M	\$)5)
English variant \$L5M	%\$ < 4%446	\$+ < 4\$5\$6	\$+ < 4\$5\$6	+6 < 44)86	\$5 < 4\$756	\$ < 4\$+6	\$%))
English variant %L6M	45.\$6 < 4\$45 6	4%.%5 < 4\$+656	4\$. \$ < 4\$+546	6).)4 < 4\$ 4)6	+8.\$+ < 4\$%+%6	8.)8 < 4%6\$6	+\$8
Total	36,59%	29,34%	35,10%	41,13%	33,46%		6371

Interpreting the results

- hat conclusions can ! e dra ! from these survey resultsI 5 thin . there are a number of conclusions that are interesting.
 - The number of participants over a short period 4volunteered by clic .ing on an eCtra lin . after creating an account6 ma .es the numbers relatively significant. 9f course a longer survey ! ould mean more certainty8 but the stable results across the survey period suggest that ! e ! ould get a

- A fair share of people thought they needed accounts to create articles which is true for some but not all - i. ipedia. In German and (panish - i. ipedia only about 5% thought that.
- About a sixth of the new users thought they could get some more features. Whether they know about the features or not is not certain. That's why we added the alternative in the second survey about the watchlists/follow articles. In (edish and German - i. ipedia this is not a big deal.
- Following favorite articles on - i. ipedia is the most common answer in the second survey with the notable exceptions of German - i. ipedia where anonymity is a bigger reason and (panish - i. ipedia where getting a user page and being able to send/receive messages are the most important features.
- Not many Germans were curious about what would happen when they created their accounts. Maybe they had enough information already.
- When forced to choose one alternative new comers to English - i. ipedia think that being able to follow articles is the most important reason to create an account. That is also important when they can choose.
- When not forced to choose one alternative new comers to English - i. ipedia more than the others that we surveyed like to tinkering with the look and feel of - i. ipedia.

Log In / Create Account page

- [@default Nalue* K2ogin error](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org!.i.id.3edia-.i.i*2oginerror) ! hen you fail to log in correctly⁶
- [@default value* empty](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org!.i.id.3edia-.i.i*2oginstart). 4in the loginstart div⁸ located bet ! een the page heading and the user login form⁶
- [@default Nalue* K2og in](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org!.i.id.3edia-.i.i*2ogin)”
- [@default Nalue* empty](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org!.i.id.3edia-.i.i*2oginprompt). 45n the userloginprompt div⁸ =ust belo ! the K@on’t have an accountI &reate one.” line⁶
- [@default Nalue* K ' sername*](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org!.i.id.3edia-.i.i*?ourname)”
- [@default Nalue* KPass ! ord*](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org!.i.id.3edia-.i.i*?ourpass!ord)”
- [@default Nalue* 0](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org!.i.id.3edia-.i.i*2oginend)ppears to contain all the K(ecure your login” teCt. 4in the loginend div⁸ =ust belo ! the login and email ne ! pass ! ord buttons⁶

The page that are assembled by these messages can be seen here* [http://den.!.i.ipedia.org! !indeC.phpItitleQ\(pecial*'ser2ogin](http://den.!.i.ipedia.org! !indeC.phpItitleQ(pecial*'ser2ogin)

User Create Page

-

- [@efaultNalue* \(ee section on \[lo! "#uality versions\]\(#\) in the signupend div6](http://den.!.i.imedia.org/!.i.i/3edia-i.i*(ignupend)

The page that are assembled by these messages can be seen here* [@efaultNalue* \(ee section on \[lo! "#uality versions\]\(#\) in the signupend div6](http://den.!.i.imedia.org/!.i.i/3edia-i.i*(ignupend)

, ote* if you go to that ' / 2 ! hile you are logged in, that page ! ill also contain a field as . ing for a reason 4for ! hy you are creating another account6.

Confirmation page

This page consists of* [@efaultNalue* \(ee section on \[lo! "#uality versions\]\(#\) in the signupend div6](http://den.!.i.imedia.org/!.i.i/3edia-i.i*(ignupend)

Function that checks for available usernames

This ;ava(crypt chec.s for available usernames and gives an error message if you try to create a new account with a username that is already taken. It is written by [ser*1luff](#) on (! edish - i . ipedia.

The code

```

DU 3 a.ing 0 ; 0 T calls ! hen a user ! ants to register a ne ! username UUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU
U
U @escription* @isplays a teCt noticing the user if the target username is available or not.
U 3 aintainers* LL ' ser*1luffMM
U 2in. for stats* LL ' ser*1luffDcfau.=sMM
UD
var cfauTimer Q falseV

function &10 ' loader 46 W
    if4!document.getBlement : y5d47 ! p , ame%766 W
        returnV
    X

if44 ! gPage , ame QQ J (pecial*5nloggingJ YY ! gPage , ame QQ J (pecial* ' ser2oginJ6 RR
4document.getBlement : y5d47 ! p , ame%76.class , ame QQ JloginTeCtJ66 W

    addGandler4document.getBlement : y5d47 ! p , ame%768 J.eyupJ8 &10 ' timerstart6V
var td , ode Q document.getBlement : y5d47 ! p , ame%76.parent , odeV

var &10 ' span Q document.createBlement47span76V
&10 ' span.set0ttribute47id78 7&10 ' result76V
    td , ode.append&hild4&10 ' span6V
X
X

```

```

function &10 ' timerstart 46 W
    if4cfauTimer6 W
        ! indo !.clearTimeout4cfauTimer6V
    X
    if4document.getBlement : y5d47 ! p , ame%76.value.length Z )6 W
        cfauTimer Q ! indo !.setTimeout47&hec.1or0vaible ' sername4678 5))6V
    X
X

```

```

function &hec.1or0vaible ' sername 46 W
    document.getBlement : y5d47&10 ' result76.innerGT 3 2 Q 77V
    in=ect(pinner4document.getBlement : y5d47&10 ' result768 7cfau76V
    var cfau ' sername Q document.getBlement : y5d47 ! p , ame%76.valueV
    cfau ' sername Q cfau ' sername.char0t4)6.to ' pper&ase46 [ cfau ' sername.substr4$6V

```

```

    if4!cfau ' sername6 W
        alert47Bnter the username you ! ant8 to see if it's available.76V
        returnV
    X
    var aob=ect Q sa=aCHinitHob=ect46V
    try W
        aob=ect.open47>BT78 !g(erver [ !g(cryptPath [ 7dapi.phpIformatQCmlRactionQ#ueryRlistQallusersRaulimitQ$RaufromQ7 [
    cfau ' sername8 true6V
    X catch 4e6 W
    thro ! eV
    X
    aob=ect.onreadystatechange Q function46 W
    if 4aob=ect.ready( tate !Q 46 W
        returnV
    X
    if 4aob=ect.status QQ %) )6 W

```

```

var res Q aob=ect.responseT 3 2.getBlements : yTag , ame47u76L)M.attributesL)M.valueV
remove(pinner47cfau76V
if4res QQ cfau ' sername6 W
    document.getBlement : y5d47&10 ' result76.style.color Q 7red7V
document.getBlement : y5d47&10 ' result76.innerGT 3 2 Q 7 The username 7 [ cfau ' sername [ 7 is busy.7V

X
else W
    document.getBlement : y5d47&10 ' result76.style.color Q 7V
document.getBlement : y5d47&10 ' result76.innerGT 3 2 Q 7 The username 7 [ cfau ' sername [ 7 is available.7V
X
X
else W
    DD if ! e get an http"error8 ! e ! on't bother sho ! ing an error message.
    remove(pinner47cfau76V
X
XV
aob=ect.send4null6V
X
add9nloadGoo.4&10 ' loader6V

```

Implementation

To implement this function on other language versions of - i. ipedia8 copy the code above8 paste it into the ;ava(cript page of the ! i. i8 e.g. http://en. ! i. ipedia.orgD ! i. iD 3 edia - i. i*&ommon.=s and translate the phrases mar . ed in red above.

Thanks

In many respects, I am not the ideal person to handle the Account & Relation Improvement Project. However, I had many people to help me. Some of them were volunteers, such as Jetchcomms, /oc. drum, Zono, Ertion, Onali, and everybody who made suggestions. Special thanks to those who helped out with the surveys.

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