The Collaborative Environment:
The Use of Wikis in Scholarly Communication

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Scientific and scholarly advancement are processes of **collaboration**

—

Research **builds upon**, **challenges**, or **reuses** previously published knowledge

(Panton Principles, n.d.)

Early Wikipedia Model:

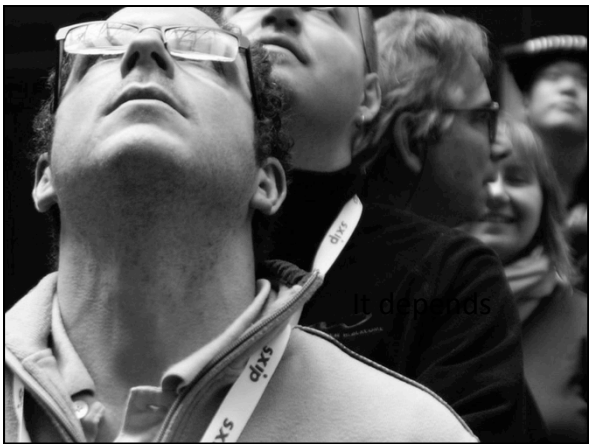
A serious encyclopedia in which the results were **not proprietary**, but were **freely distributable** in any desired medium

Ward Cunningham:

Groups of people who want to collaborate also tend to trust one another

- No distinction between reader and writer
- Version control

Can Wikis be Used to Improve Scholarly Communication And Collaboration?



Three Aspects of Scholarly Communication

(1) communicating informally with other scholars and scientists

(2) Preparing, shaping and communicating to a group of colleagues what will become formal research results

(3) The ultimate formal product that is distributed to libraries and others in print or electronically

(Thorin, 2006)

Larry Sanger (2008):

Derivative versus Original Communication

The purpose of a scholarly journal is not only to disseminate information to the community but, in its present configuration, it also provides **quality control**, a **trusted archive** and **author recognition.**

(Rowland, 1997)

Advantage of Wikis

- Central repository for information
- Central repository for communication
- Tracking and revision
- Intertextuality

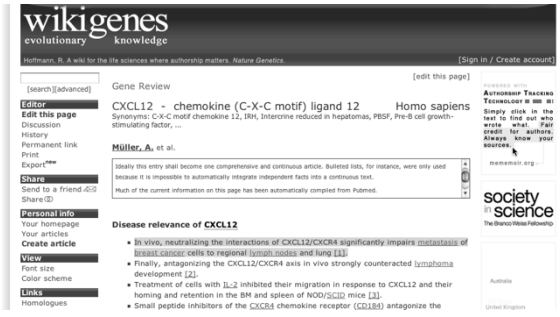
In the standard scholarly publishing environment, updating information requires the **generation of a new article.**

(Mietchen et al., 2011)

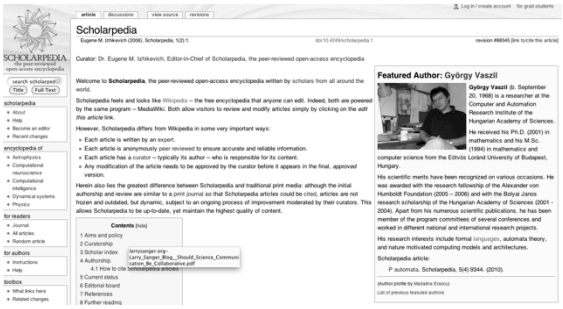
Barriers to Use

- Lack of credit or ownership
- Lack of control
- Perceptions about quality and scholarly merit
- Need for static, citable/archivable end-product

Wikigenes: A wiki for the life sciences where authorship matters.



Scholarpedia



Semantic Wikis

Information can be given meaning so that can it might function like a table in the relational database system

The Formal Product Is Changing

- Explosion in research
- Explosion in pricing
  - to merely licensing them
- Impact Factor Spiral
- Digital communication

Public & Transparent Peer Review:

Wikis are used for transparent peer review. Reviewers could even edit the submitted text by themselves rather than writing a report about what should be changed.

Larry Sanger (2008):

An article that is written with a large and diverse set of authors—**particularly if it is under the gentle guidance of experts**—can be expected to be lengthier, broader in its coverage, and fairer in its presentation of issues.

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