so you want a wiki – now what?

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Northwestern University

NSLS Workshop
February 26, 2008

overview

- options for collaboration and communication
- where wikis fit in
  - how they work
  - benefits of wikis in libraries
  - contrasting blogs and wikis
    - What to use and when
- getting started

questions

- what is your primary role at your organization?
  - reference/Instructional Librarian
  - collections/Digital Project
- library ITS (web developer, systems librarian)
  - library manager
  - other
- do you contribute to a wiki?
- are you interested in using wikis for
  - business processes
  - personal web publishing
  - community building
  - intranet
  - don't know

committees and teams

- how many groups do you belong to?
  None 1 – 2 3 – 5 5 – 10 > 10
- where are the communications from those groups stored?
  - mailing list archives
  - email folders
  - everyone's desktop and file cabinet
  - shared file server
  - web board
  - IM (saved)
- what are some of the limitations?

technologies for online collaboration

- push-based
  - email
  - discussion forums
  - webcasts
  - blogs
  - text messaging
- pull-based
  - newsgroups
  - RSS
- interactive
  - web chat
  - web conferencing
  - instant messaging
  - team rooms

what if …

- reduce email overload
- have an archive of the work done to date
- build a knowledge base automatically
- have an easy way to write and publish
  - reports
  - documents
  - policies
  - procedures

what is a "Wiki"?

- original software developed in 1994
  - Ward Cunningham
- means "quick" in Hawaiian
  - As a bacronym - "What I Know Is"
- allows you to add, edit, or link content easily

what_is_a_wiki.avi

some more thoughts...

Wikis facilitate collaboration, information dissemination and communal knowledge management in a free-form, yet structured way

from the New Communications Forum wiki

the post-it note of the web

the description of OpenWiki

a wiki is a freely expandable collection of interlinked web pages, a hypertext system for storing and modifying information – a database, where each page is easily edited by any user with a forms-capable Web browser client

Bo Leuf and Ward Cunningham, *The Wiki Way*, p. 14

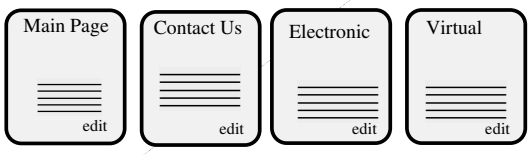
"What would you get if you had a Web site where anyone could edit or add anything?" Boredom, I guessed, or chaos. Boy, was I wrong. You get hundreds, thousands of pages full of information, ideas, conversations, learning, and teaching. You get linkages among ideas, conversations among people. You get a tool for business, a tool for people. You get copies and replicas all over the world. You get … the wiki"

Bo Leuf and Ward Cunningham, *The Wiki Way*, page xiii

using wikis

- intended to be simple so you can focus on the writing
  - not on HTML coding
  - mechanics and syntax of a web development system
- intended to be open to facilitate information sharing
  - can be restricted

collections of pages

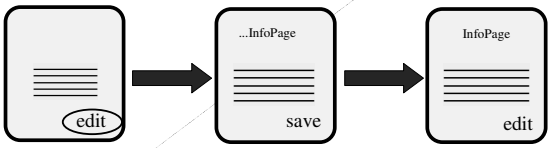


- Wiki pages look like web pages
- anyone with a web browser can read a wiki site

who is anyone?

- everyone
- just your staff
- just your workgroup
- just you

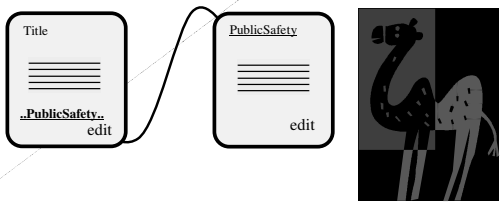
click, write and save



- anyone with a web browser can edit a wiki site
- anyone can undo any change at any time

creating new pages

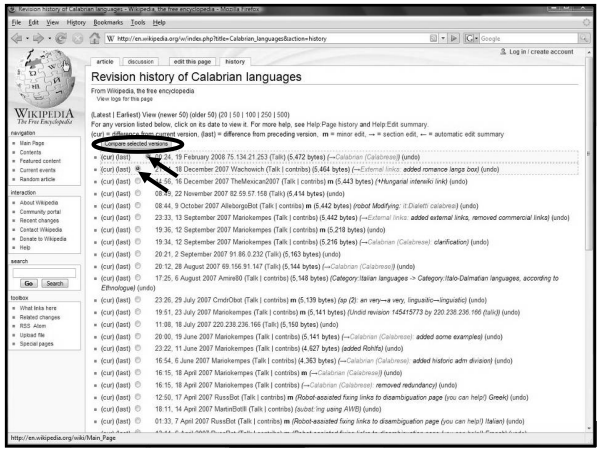
- make a new page by typing the name in CamelCase
  - This will become the WikiName of the page

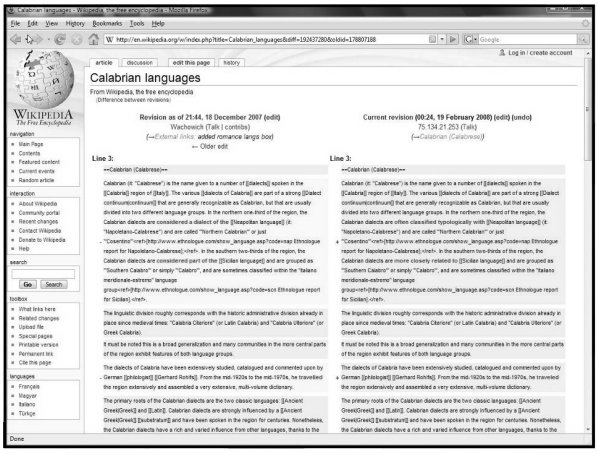


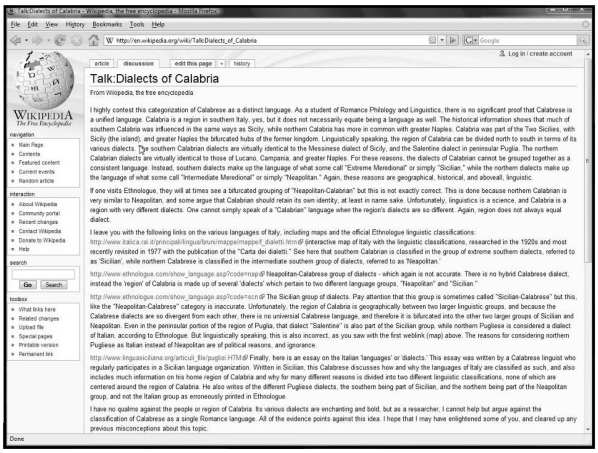
wiki design principles

- Openness and trust
  - if a page is incomplete or inaccurate anyone can edit it

Wiki Design Principles
http://www.c2.com/cgi/wiki?WikiDesignPrinciples

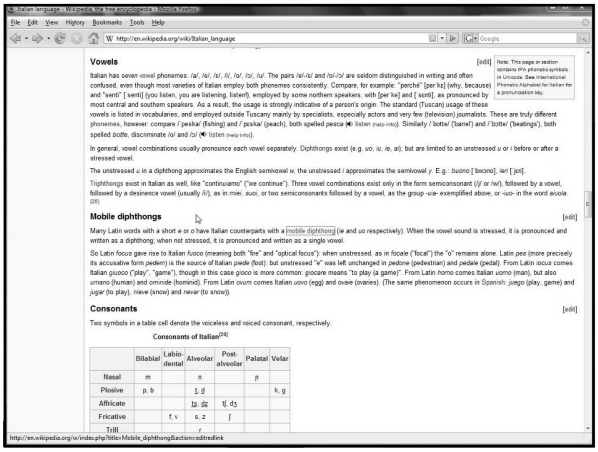






wiki design principles

- Openness and trust
  - if a page is incomplete or inaccurate anyone can edit it
- Incremental
  - pages can cite other pages, even those not yet written



wiki design principles

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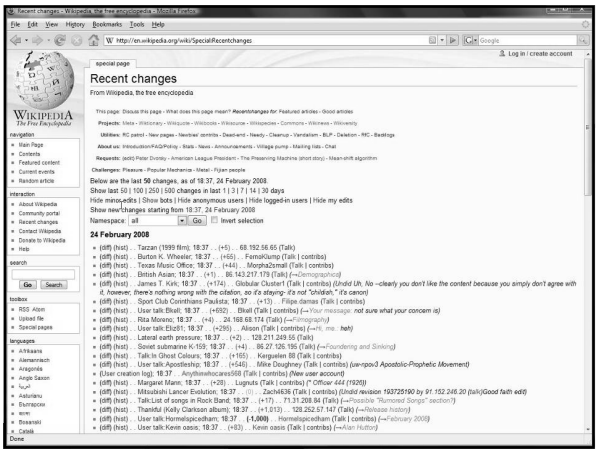
- Observable
  - you can see the changes being made



wiki design principles

- Openness and trust
  - if a page is incomplete or inaccurate anyone can edit it
- Incremental
  - pages can cite other pages, even those not yet written
- Observable
  - you can see the changes being made
- Organic
  - site structure is up to everyone, and it will evolve and change

wiki gardeners

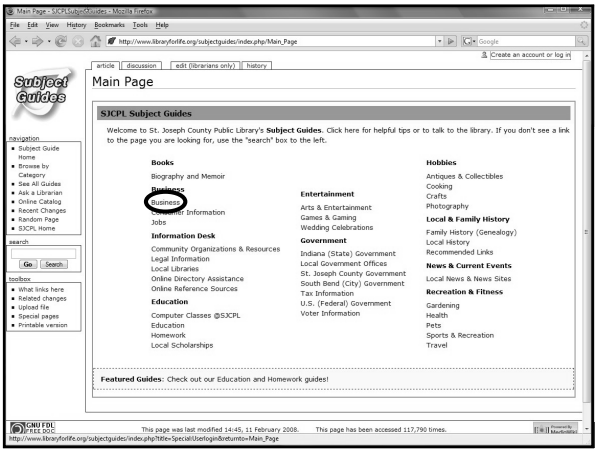
- People who tidy up the wiki
  - Pruning links
  - Editing text
- Organizing structures
  - Generally, cleaning things up
- Respected
- Authoritative

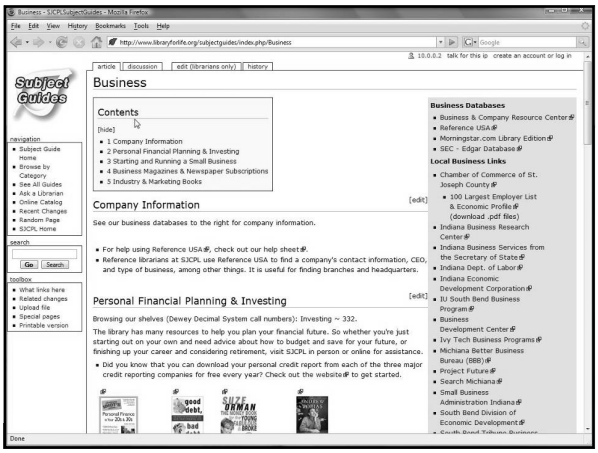
On a library wiki, you might want to assign this role

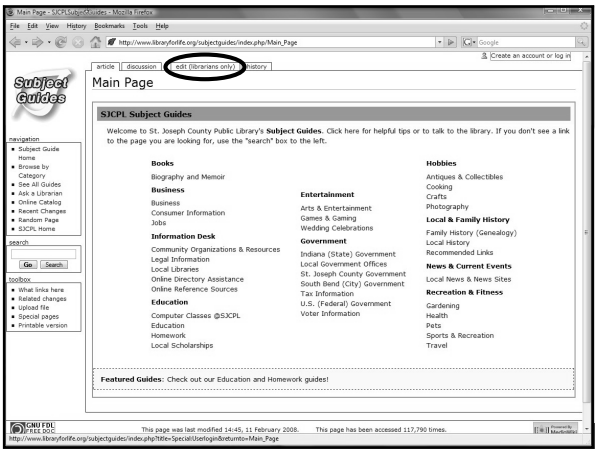
Photo by Ross Mayfield

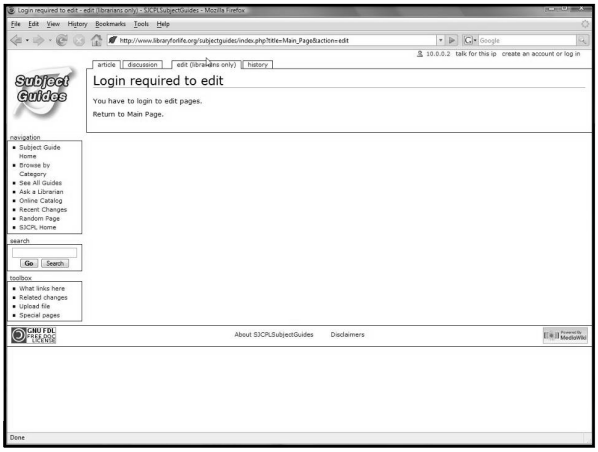
externally facing library wikis

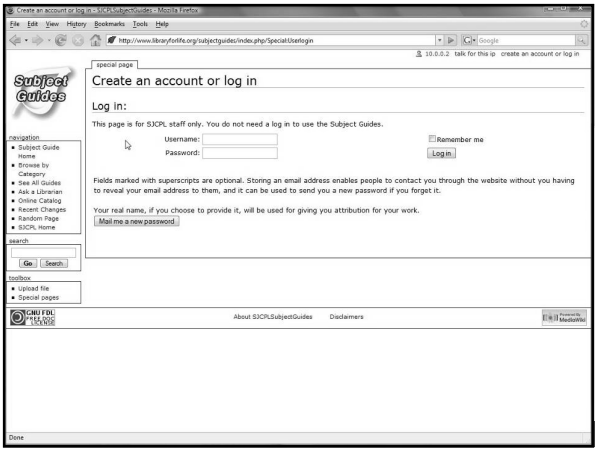
- subject guides
- events
- community content
  - encyclopedia
  - book reviews
  - courses



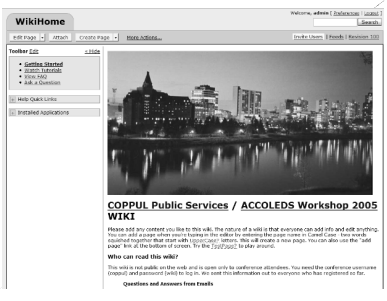






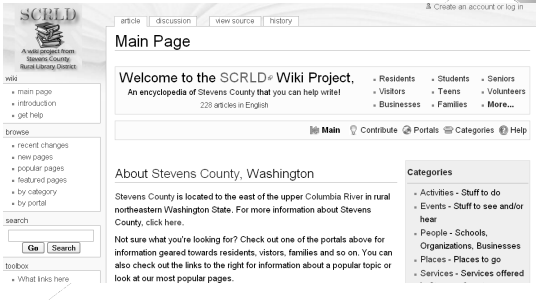


event planning and support



http://coppul.jotspot.com (Password protected)

stevens county encyclopedia

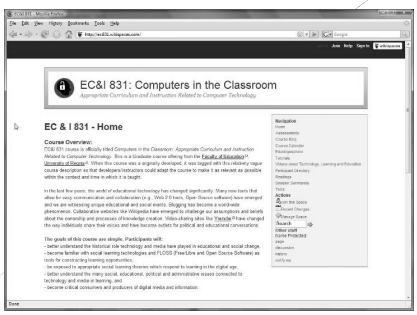


http://www.scrldwiki.org/index.php/Main_Page

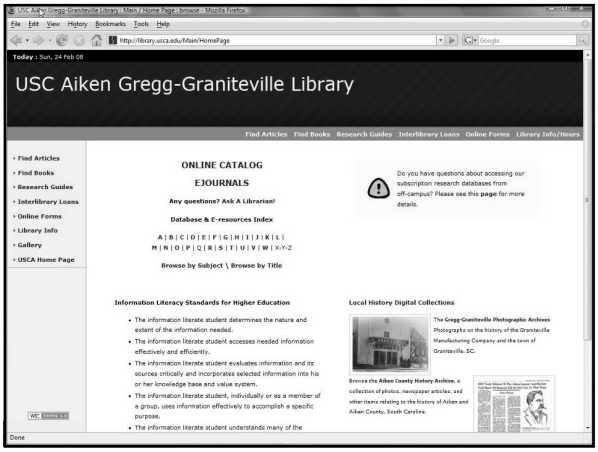
princeton public library

http://booklovers.pbwiki.com/Princeton%20Public%20Library

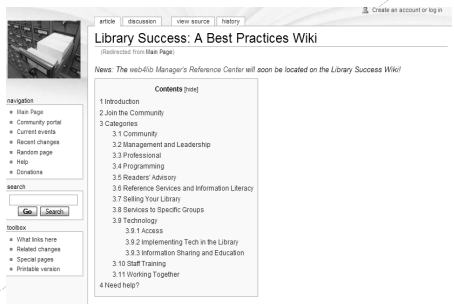
course wiki



http://eci831.wikispaces.com/

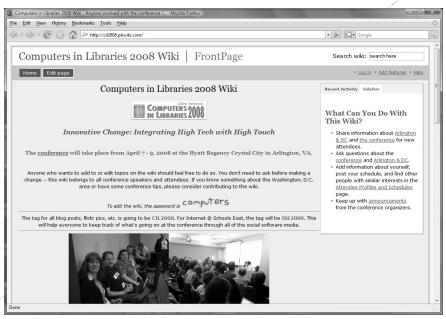


professional knowledge repositories



http://www.libsuccess.org/

conference

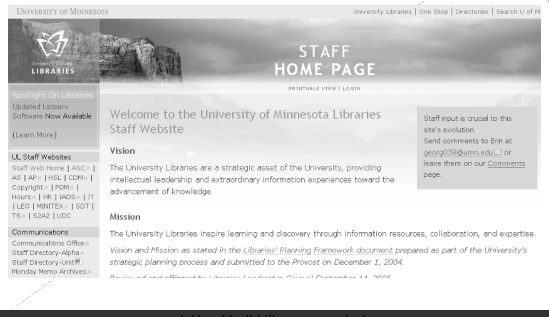


http://cil2008.pbwiki.com/

internally facing library wikis

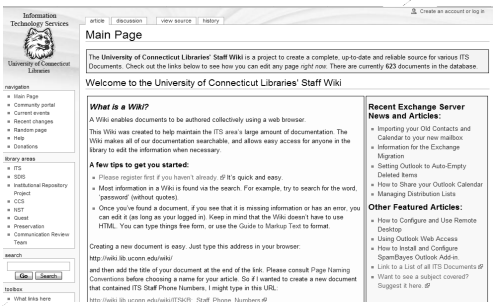
- staff intranet
- IT Documentation
- special projects/committees/events
- helpdesk and knowledgebase

staff web site

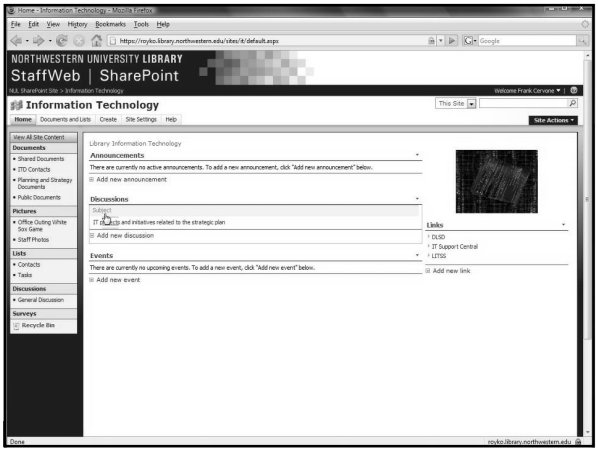


http://wiki.lib.umn.edu/

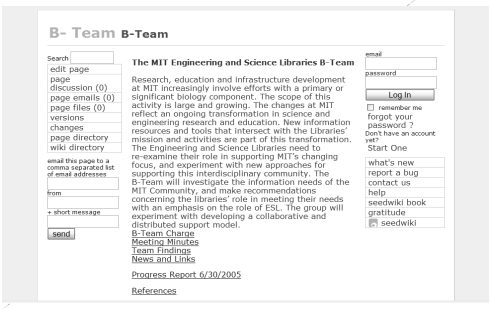
library intranet



http://wiki.lib.uconn.edu/wiki/Main_Page

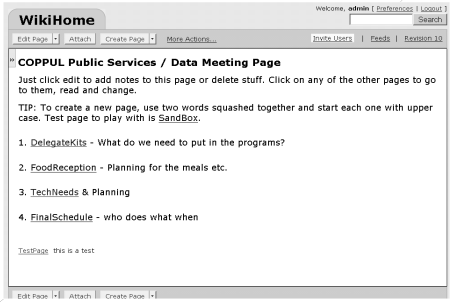


project and committee work



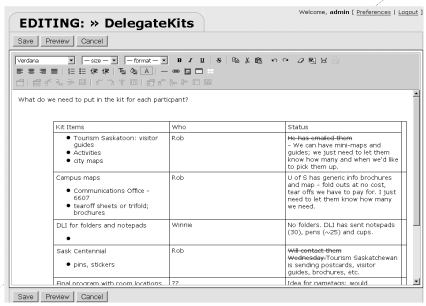
http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/b-team/

case study: event planning

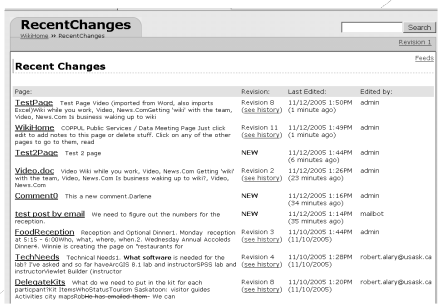


www.jotspot.com

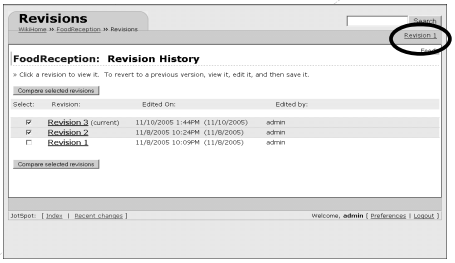
WYSIWYG Editor



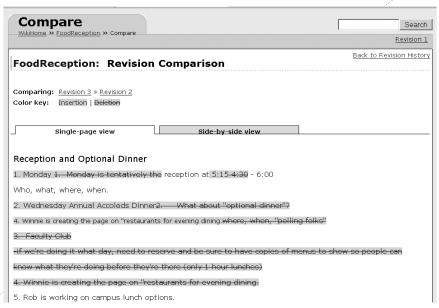
what pages have changed?



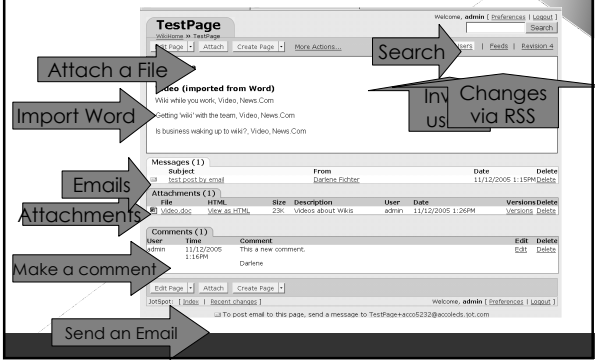
see what changed



single page or side by side



features



conference and wiki support

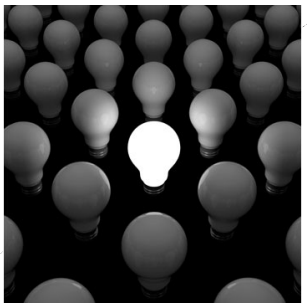
- Participants signed up for wifi, dine-arounds, connected with each other before the event
- Shared notes during the presentation and uploaded slides
- Evaluated the workshop

wiki reactions

Well, I wasn't sure about that wiki (sounded like something from Star Wars), but I decided to try it out. It is fabulous! Every conference should have one.

Gail Curry, UNBC

best practices



champion

Photo by azamrashdi'

culture shock

Photo by Childish David

structure

Photo by mirando

wiki roadmap

- install wiki software on web server
- plan rollout and content
- build the initial structure
- populate initial content with early adopters
- initial rollout with smaller group
- train and coach users
- do not underestimate inertia and time

Peter Theomy, Wiki Based Collaboration
http://twiki.org/cgi-bin/view/Codev/TWikiPresentation17Feb2003

implementation tips

- define an initial purpose upfront
- choose the right features for your environment
- start slow (snowball)
- provide training and coaching

practical considerations

- Have a champion
  - New way of "thinking", paradigm shift from intranet, webmaster or CMS (content management system)
- Choose the right features
  - Attach files
  - Access control
  - Version control
  - Ease of use: make sure "add a page" is self evident
  - Match look and feel
  - Alert and post via email to wiki
- Wiki Matrix
  - http://www.wikimatrix.org/

wiki exercise

Identify 2 or 3 areas where a wiki web would help with collaboration and communication.

Identify some "barriers" and brainstorm how you might overcome them in your work environment.

blogs and wikis face off

Photo Credit: **Pascal Vuylsteker**
http://www.flickr.com/photos/pvk/
CC Attribution 2.5

wikis

- group voice
- unstructured, organic
- anyone edits
- fluid medium: change any time
- better management: versions, rollback and change log, syndicate changes
- less familiar

blogs

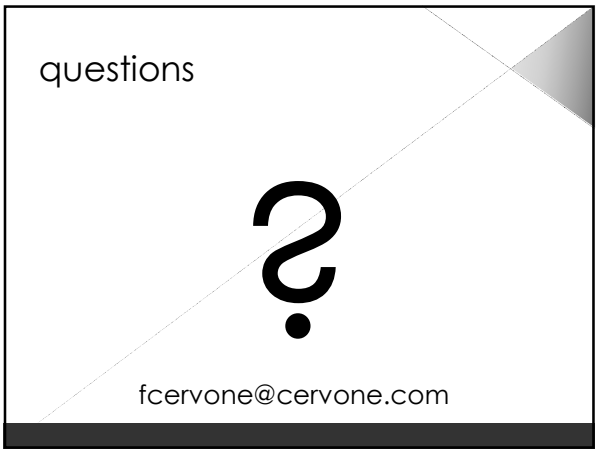
- individual voice
- default is by date, reverse chronological
- anyone comments
- post medium like email (comment, reply, comment, …)
- edits aren't tracked usually, new items are syndicated
- more familiar

summary

- wikis help support collaboration
- tools are simple, quick and inexpensive
- they belong in our collaboration toolbox
- help support the diverse needs of our workplaces
  - diverse users
  - diverse services
  - diverse software choices

more resources

- wiki resources
  - http://library.usask.ca/~fichter/wiki/


questions
?
fcervone@cervone.com