Real-Time Collaborative Editing

https://etherpad.wikimedia.org/p/Collab15

C. Scott Ananian <cscott@cscott.net>
Wikimedia Foundation

With thanks to Dario Taraborelli, Ori Livneh, and Erik Zachte.
Slides from Erik Moeller. Designs by Pau Giner.
What are we doing here?
What are we doing here?

- Lots of talk among developers about technical mechanisms for real-time collaboration.
- Very little talk about the social aspects or impact on community.
- Not much dialog between developers and editors and readers.
- Let's start to fix that!
First! Real Time Collaboration already happens on Wikimedia projects.
Real-time editing today

Example article: “2014 pro-Russian unrest in Ukraine” on English Wikipedia

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- (cur | prev) 20:56, 9 May 2014 RGlocester (talk | contribs | block) . . (153,736 bytes) (-874) . . (→Attacks on journalists: "VoR reported that Interfax mentioned that Lifenews reported" - Hearsay to the extreme, and absolutely ridiculous.) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) 20:53, 9 May 2014 RGlocester (talk | contribs | block) m . . (154,610 bytes) (-1) . . (General formatting, date formats per WP:MOSNUM by script) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) 20:34, 9 May 2014 EkoGraf (talk | contribs | block) . . (154,611 bytes) (+298) . . (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) 20:32, 9 May 2014 EkoGraf (talk | contribs | block) . . (154,313 bytes) (+656) . . (Please be carefull, you reverted my whole edit) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) 20:30, 9 May 2014 RGlocester (talk | contribs | block) . . (153,657 bytes) (+1) . . (→Reactions: grammar) (undo | thank)
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<th>Connection</th>
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<th>Description</th>
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<td>Alemannic, may be logged if necessary.</td>
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<td>#wikipedia-balkan</td>
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<tr>
<td>#wikipedia-be</td>
<td></td>
<td>This is primarily for Wikipedia, but other Bengali projects are also welcome.</td>
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<td>#wikipedia-cs</td>
<td>Česky</td>
<td>Czech, public logging prohibited.</td>
</tr>
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Real-time chat today

Excerpt from [https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/IRC/Channels](https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/IRC/Channels)

<table>
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</table>
| wikipedia-als   | Deutsche, may be logged if necessary.
| wikipedia-ar     | Arabic                               |
| wikipedia-as     | العربية                              |
| wikipedia-ay     | Arabic                               |
| wikipedia-balkan| Balkan, publicly logged, UTF-8/ASCII encoding. |
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| wikipedia-be-tarask | Беларуская (тарашкевіца). |
| wikipedia-bg     | Български                            |
| wikipedia-by     | Bulgarisch                           |
| wikipedia-bs     | Bosanski                             |
| wikipedia-ca     | Català                               |
| wikipedia-ca-vandalisme | Catalan.                         |
| wikipedia-ch     | Connect                              |
| wikipedia-ckb    | Connect                              |
| cs.wikipedia    | Connect                              |
| cs.wikipedia-rc | Connect                              |
| cs.wikipedia-social | Connect.                        |
| wikipedia-ce     | Норвежский                           |
| wikipedia-cs     | Česky, public logging prohibited.   |
Edit conflicts

English Wikipedia, July 2014

- >120,000 edit conflicts
- 23,000 registered users encountered a conflict
- Top conflicting articles:
  - Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 - 289 conflicts
  - Twitch (website) - 207 conflicts
  - Operation Protective Edge - 102 conflicts
  - Germany national football team - 72 conflicts
  - FIFA World Cup records - 71 conflicts
Edit conflict: Red Randall Series

Page view

Someone else has changed this page since you started editing, resulting in an edit conflict.

The upper text area contains your changes (the text you have cursor-selectively marked for changes).

The lower text area contains the text you are working on (the text immediately before you changed it).

Both text areas are completely independent of each other, and the text in the upper text area will be saved when you submit this page. All other changes in the lower text area will be lost.

Please do not delete any text from the lower text area if the upper text area contains it, unless you are sure that you want to undo all of your changes made while you were editing the page. Rather, please try to compare the two versions and continue working in one of the two text areas that preserves both your edits and any improvements made by others.

In order to resolve an edit conflict, the text you work on opens another tab in your browser, and all the text in that tab containing your changes from the section at the bottom of the page may be deleted.
What’s next.

- We’ll discuss what we do now, and what we’d like to do.
- We’ll present some designs and ideas.
- We’ll discuss some more!
- If we run over time, perhaps we'll go over to Don Diego 4 and continue the discussion with the WMF Collaboration team.
Let’s discuss (#1)

What we do now:

- How we find collaborators.
- How we find out about new stuff.
- How we coordinate.
- What works well, and...
- What we’d like to fix.
Some designs and ideas
Wikimania real-time collaboration session

Structure

Wikipedia is already a real-time collaboration tool
Possible data to get
  Edit conflict instrumentation would be useful to show hot spots
  Near-collaborative edits. Histogram? # articles/day getting >X edits?
  IRC usage
  How we currently collaborate: etherpads, talk pages, irc channels, etc
How can we reduce friction of this process?
  But: Maintaining focus
    (possible UX exploration) “Find collaborators”
    Directory
    Advertising via Flow boards
    Metadata about sessions
      “We’re collaborating on the military history topic of the day”
Issues to work on
  Mentorship (“Teahouse”)
Real-time notifications
Focus / collaboration mode
Edit conflict/merge UI

(possible UX exploration)
Chat: On-the-record vs. off-the-record
https://jsfiddle.net/cscottnet/z6otfreg/embedded/result/
What's Happening

[[Cricket]] became a featured article!
With the big 2015 cricket matches just getting underway, it's no surprise that Cricket is one of our top hits for the month. Subbu and Mark have been hard at work: this is their third jointly-edited feature article.

Arlo just got a barnstar!
Arlo has been an active member of the community for over a decade. He's being recognized for his exemplary work shepherding newcomers at the 2015 Mexico Hackathon.

C. Scott started a new article on [[Llamas]]
I've got a heap of great ideas for this one.

WikiProject:Astronomy gained a new member: Fran
Let's all say hi to Fran and make them feel welcome!

WikiProject:Astronomy editathon!
To welcome Fran to the group, we're going to have a group collaborative editathon all day today! Click the link to join in the fun!

C. Scott had a kid!
A beautiful baby girl, born Aug 30, weighs 7lb 7oz. Mom's doing well and we're all very happy. Name suggestions welcome!
TogetherJS

https://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/Extension:TogetherJS

...but at the moment requires a patched copy of Visual Editor.
...and it’s not actually deployed on Wikipedia.

Alternatively, add:

```
importScript( 'User:cscott/TogetherJS-demo.js' );
```

to [[Special:MyPage/common.js]] on your favorite wiki (and have your friends do the same).
N. Agas starts a new article and asks other members of the Astronomy WikiProject to join editing together.
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Jane joins the session to edit “274301 Wikipedia” (asteroid) in real-time mode.
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Other users add content to the article at the same time. Jane wants to find out who they are..

274301 Wikipedia

274301 Wikipedia (provisional designations: 2008 QH₉, 2007 FK₃₉, 1997 ROₐ) is a main belt asteroid. It was discovered by the Andrushivka Astronomical Observatory in August 2008. The asteroid was named after the online encyclopedia Wikipedia in January 2013.

Discovery

The asteroid was discovered by astronomers from the Andrushivka Astronomical Observatory (A50) in Ukraine.

It was also observed on the next night and it [received provisional designation 2008 QH2₄].
274301 Wikipedia

274301 Wikipedia (provisional designations: 2008 QH₁₄₂, 2007 FK₁₁₀, 1997 RO₁) is a main belt asteroid. It was discovered by the Andrushivka Astronomical Observatory in August 2008. The asteroid was named after the online encyclopedia Wikipedia in January 2013.

Discovery

The asteroid was discovered by astronomers from the Andrushivka Astronomical Observatory (A50) in Ukraine. It was also observed on the next night and it received provisional designation 2008 QH24.
...and what are they working on.

274301 Wikipedia

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With the live history view, Jane can see changes as they happen, and navigate a timeline of changes.

**Curiosity (rover)**

*Curiosity* is a car-sized robotic rover exploring Gale Crater on Mars as part of NASA's Mars Science Laboratory mission (MSL).[^3]

Curiosity was launched from Cape Canaveral on November 26, 2011, at 10:02 EST aboard the MSL spacecraft and successfully landed on Aeolis Palus in Gale Crater on Mars on August 6, 2012, 05:17 UTC.[^1][^11] The Bradbury Landing site[^5] was less than 2.4 km (1.5 mi) from the center of the rover's touchdown target after a 563,000,000 km (350,000,000 mi) journey.[^7]

On June 24, 2014, Curiosity completed a Martian year—687 Earth days—after finding that Mars once had environmental conditions favorable for microbial life.[^6]

**Goals and objectives**

As established by the Mars Exploration Program, the main scientific goals of the MSL mission are to find martians help determine whether Mars could ever have supported life, as well as determining the role of water, and to study the climate and geology of Mars.[^8][^14] The mission will also help prepare for human exploration.[^9]
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Let’s discuss: Challenges

- One version - multiple authors
- One “version”?
- Real-time vandalism
- Co-existence of real-time and non-real-time
  - Focused writing
  - Unsupported browsers
  - Social reasons
- Chat misuse
- Wikitext itself
Let’s discuss: Applications

- Current events
- Conflict resolution
- Mentoring
- Targeted collaborations
- Teahouse / new user walkthroughs
- Others?
Let’s discuss: Questions

- How do we find other editors?
- Do we need “user groups”?
- How to record/display who wrote what in a collaborative session?
- When is a collaborative edit “done”? 
Let’s discuss: Social impact

- Will this encourage new editors? Readers?
- Will this encourage abuse?
- Do we become the next Facebook?
  - Should we?
- What happens when we make visible the community behind the wiki?
  - Should we?
  - Does that make us less “academic”?
  - Does that make us more biased?
Discuss!

C. Scott Ananian
cananian@wikipedia.org
[[User:cscott]]
The Graveyard of Unused Slides
OK, just make it work!

https://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/Extension:TogetherJS

...but at the moment requires a patched copy of Visual Editor.
OK, just make it work!

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