The effects of IP address range blocking on contribution to the free knowledge

WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE

Tochi Precious, Antoni Mtavangu, Bobby Shabangu

AGENDA

Introduction - Tochi (5 minutes)

- ○ **What is IP address range blocking?**
- ○ **Why is it used?**
- ○ **What are the potential effects on contribution to the free knowledge?**

IP BLOCK EFFECTS

- ○ **Positive effects - Antoni (5 minutes)**
- ○ **Negative effects - Bobby (5 minutes)**
- ○ **How to solve IP block issues - Stewards**

- ● **Conclusion**

- ● **Discussion**

WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE

What is IP address range blocking?

For the purpose of Wikimedia blocks, a **proxy** is generally anything that allows a user to connect to Wikimedia projects through an IP address other than that assigned to them by their Internet Service Provider. - "What's happening with Proxy blocks"
2 December 2022 by Rae Adimer

Range blocks are technical restrictions applied through to **a group of IP addresses** that prevent them from editing, creating new accounts, sending email through the wiki interface, etc - Coined from Mediawiki.

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE

Why is it used?

❖ **To prevent cross-wiki vandalism.**

❖ **To prevent cross-wiki spam.**

❖ **Protect against sockpuppetry:**
  -Sock puppets are fake accounts that are created by the same person.

❖ **To prevent disruption on multiple projects.**

What are the potential effects on contributions?

The potential effects of IP range blocks on contributions to Wikipedia can be both **positive** and **negative**.

Positive effects

1. Widespread cross-wiki vandalism

2. Cross-wiki spamming

3. Prevents blatantly disruption of multiple projects

WIKIMANIA SINGAPORE | Antoni

Negative Effects

- Blocks legitimate users

- Reduces the enthusiasm of new editors

- Restricts access to editing

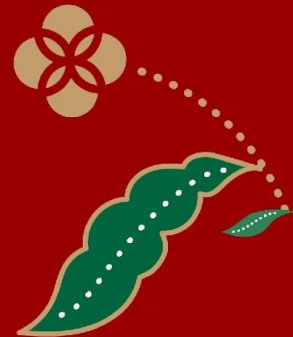- Limits participation in communities

How to solve IP block issues

- Global IP block exemption
- Wizard
- What stewards can do
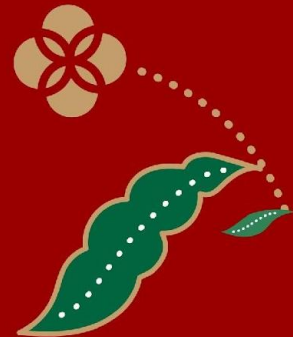- How stewards can help
- Who else could help?

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE

Discussion

Recommendations for mitigating the negative effects of IP address range blocking

Thank you!

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE