Forget the tutorials, be bold!

How one feature is bringing in thousands of new editors.
What we’re going to talk about

- The problem we’re tackling
- Our solution
- How we tested our hypothesis
- The results
- What’s next
- Q&A
The problem:
Most registered users are never able to contribute to Wikipedia.
The problem over time:

English Wikipedia live account rate*
circa 2011-13

* % of new accounts that click “edit”
Why English Wikipedia first?

- It is one of the projects with the worst decline in new editor retention.
- English Wikipedia is a good testbed...
  - 50% of our traffic
  - 3-4,000 accounts created a day
  - Used to new features being launched
  - We know the English community very well
Why don’t new people edit?

1. It’s hard to contribute
2. We don’t ask you to
3. We don’t show you how
Welcome to Wikipedia, HiWikimania!

Looking for an easy way to get involved? Just choose one of the three options below, and we'll give you a suggested article to edit.

- **Fix Spelling & Grammar**
  - The easiest way to get started!

- **Improve Clarity**
  - Simplify or reword sentences.

- **Add Links**
  - Connect Wikipedia articles together.

← No thanks, return to the page I was reading

**Suggest an easy first task, right after you join Wikipedia**
Show people how to successfully complete the task
How we tested this:

- five A/B tests so far
- three rounds of cohort analysis
- remote usability tests with real, live newbies
What we measure:

New editor productivity
* 1+ article edits within 24 hrs
* 5+ article edits

New editor quality
* Revert rates
* Block rates
What we get:
Lots more first-time contributors to articles!
A/B test results:

Lots more first-time article editors, not yet big increase in active editors (5+).
+2% sounds small but...
small, sustained increases over time lead to BIG changes
What about quality?
Let's look at the June/July cohorts.

Revert rate the same

Block rate low 7.6%

- 326 active editors
- 25 blocked for any reason
The impact so far?

In June-July 2013, we gave GettingStarted op 100% of newly-registered users on English Wikipedia.

June
2,656 new 1+ editors, who've made 16,000+ edits to articles so far.

July
3,098 new 1+ editors, 67% made with VisualEditor!
We’re close, but not done yet!

For context, we need 1,000-2,000 additional active editors to get English Wikipedia growing again.
What's next

* Additional A/B testing of workflows to encourage people to keep going!
* Launch outside English (we need your help!)
* Mobile web version
* Support alternative first-time tasks, e.g. article creation and more
Learn more

* Talk to us! [ee@lists.wikimedia.org](mailto:ee@lists.wikimedia.org)