



Community & Collaboration

## How to Motivate Older People to Become Active Wikipedians?

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## Content

- Why Seniors Outreach?
- Typology of Approaches
- A Few Exemplary Approaches
- Summing up and Documenting the Experiences
- Workshop

## Why Seniors Outreach?

- Seniors represent a large pool of potential contributors with a long-term perspective.
- Seniors are strongly under-represented among contributors.
  - Users over 50 represent only 5.8% of all Wikipedia contributors (above 60 years: only 1.9%)  
*Source: Wikipedia Survey (2007-2010): [www.wikipediastudy.org](http://www.wikipediastudy.org)*
  - In comparison: 26% of Europeans over 60 use the Internet frequently, with large differences between countries, ranging from over 50% (e.g. NL, NO) to less than 10% (e.g. RU, PL, BG)  
*Source: European Social Survey Round 5 (2010)*

# Typology of Approaches

Approach	Countries	Implementation Stage
<b>Courses/workshops to gain new contributors</b>	DE (Silver Knowledge) ES (Catalunya)	Broad implementation; transfer to other countries ?
<b>Using Wiki Loves Monuments to gain seniors as new contributors</b>	NL, DE, CH	Successful pilots; ready for transfer to other countries
<b>Associating seniors to the writing of WP articles without getting active on the platform</b>	SE	Broad implementation with mixed results; re-orientation
<b>Strategic partnership with an online community for seniors</b>	CH	Pilot phase
<b>Getting seniors to scan and upload photographs from personal archives</b>		Idea
<b>Mobilizing seniors in the context of GLAM activities</b>		Idea



## “Silberwissen” - “Silver Knowledge”

„I am a retired person and I gained several experiences in geography and the history of Norway and now I want to do my bit to Wikipedia.“

User:Kvikk, Mär. 2011

**Gaining knowledge of an experienced generation!**



## „Education and knowledge“ @ WMDE

- Knowledge: start in Wikipedia and the sister projects
- Education: Workshops, support, lectures, ...
- Who? everybody, who has knowledge to share or wants to share knowledge

**Motivating different people for the idea of free knowledge!**

## Internal collaboration



Wikipedia -  
University  
Programme

WIKIPEDIA  
MACHT  
SCHULE

School program:  
**Target group:**  
Teachers

**“Silberwissen:”**  
**Target group:** Elderly people

“University program”  
**Target Group:**  
Professors and Teachers

The correct and critical  
handling of Wikipedia in  
school education

Getting people with an extensive  
professional- and life experience to become  
Wikipedia authors.

Students edit Wikipedia  
articles. Subject-specific  
requirements of the  
studies.

Shared consultants’  
network

Shared organizational  
resources

- Experience exchange between consultants within and among programs
- Effective deployment of personal resources in the office
- Ensuring a long-term efficiency



## External collaboration

### Finding Partners:

- Senior- Universities
- Senior- Academies
- Senior-Clubs
- Senior-Computer-Clubs





## „Silver knowledge“ – giving time

### Workshop 1

#### Introduction in Wikipedia

**course:**

- Inform
- Awakening desire to edit
- How Quality works
- Free Knowledge
- First steps in editing

### Workshop 2

#### Edit in Wikipedia (I)

**course:**

- Wikipedia-Syntax and formatting texts
- My own account
- Texting
- Quotes and rules for an article
- citation

### Workshop 3

#### Edit in Wikipedia (II)+ Wikimedia Commons

**course:**

- Uploading 2-4 pictures and linking them to an article
- Basic information about licensing
- Introduction to Wikimedia Commons



## Conclusions:

**Support and build a network**

**Invitation**

**Personal contact**



## Everybody has a topic to give!



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cc-by-sa 3.0, Erdmann99



By Kds11, CC-BY-SA-3.0

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## Mobilizing seniors for Wiki Loves Monuments

- Mobilization of seniors for the WLM photo contest via partner newsletters and online forums
- Picture safaris for mixed publics
- Workshops for seniors
- Discussion and assistance in Seniorweb CH forum

## Mobilizing seniors via Wiki Loves Monuments – An approach with great potential

- In 2011: over 5'000 participants (80% new users)
- Easy way to participate and improve Wikipedia in one's neighbourhood
- WMDE, WMCH, WMNL made special efforts to include senior participants
- Some photographers' communities reluctant to «share» their photos
- Participation rate of 50plus – preliminary results from survey
  - All the countries: 23% (n = 146/642)
  - NL: 41% (n = 15/37)
  - DE: 32 % (n = 35/111) (*CH numbers too small for analysis*)
- In 2012 WMDE, WMNL will pursue their seniors outreach via WLM;  
situation in CH still unclear due to organizational issues related to WLM;  
further chapters are invited to join the effort!

## Mobilizing seniors via Wiki Loves Monuments – Best Practices, Main Insights

- Improve usability of photo upload (matching photos with official number from monument list)
- Organize picture safaris with heterogeneous target groups – address seniors communities, historians' associations, Wikipedians alike
- Organize follow-up workshops (e.g. Wikipedia/Wikimedia Commons introductory workshops at the Award Show or afterwards)
- Intensify cooperation with seniors communities and associations; appoint 1-2 «liaison persons»

## Old Heritage Associations and Wikipedia

**Findings from a two years initiative to get them  
involved as active Wikipedians**

By Anders Wennersten, Sweden (64 years old)

Wikipedian (very active) and active member in several old  
heritage associations

Presented by Jan Ainali, Chairman, Wikimedia Sverige

## Swedish Old Heritage Associations and Wikipedia - Background

- Around 2 500 parishes in Sweden 1950
- 2 000 old heritage associations for these areas
- Active persons often very old, 70+, 80+
- Interest areas: Old cottages, old farm/household appliances and also books of the local area
- Very uneven IT-knowledge, 1/3 do not have a home page, less than half can manage e-mail correctly
- Extremely negative to the idea of free licenses



## The Project

- Write articles for all local parishes (~3 000)
- For each, mail local old heritage association for feedback
- Only 15% responses, some valuable but very often not. No signs of will to improve or expand
- Seminars and presentations for Senior Nets
- **Conclusion after 2 years:** hopeless for 75+, they do not have necessary basic IT knowledge

## New Approach

- Get GLAM institutions actively involved in providing info to Wikipedia (good progress)
- Tell Old heritage associations they are part of GLAM sector and that they should follow suit (they have high esteem of museums etc, low esteem of IT "brats")
- Long time perspective: trust their grandchildren to tell them of WP and the articles, and wait a couple of years for a new generation, more IT competent (now in the early 70ies), to take over

## Strategic Partnership Wikimedia CH - Seniorweb CH

- Seniorweb is an online community for the generation 50+ (around 6000 members)
- Outreach in relation to the WLM photo contest
- Wikipedia/Wikimedia introductory workshops
- Shared stand presence at a seniors fair
- Plans for the participation of seniors in GLAM-related activities
- Plans for shared memberships and shared office space

## Introductory workshops for Seniorweb users

- Seniorweb's education program „Free Cruise on the Internet“ provided an opportunity for such workshops
- Located in a shopping mall in Bern
- Targeted at readers but also at new contributors
- The same approach has been used for a series of workshops at a University for the Third Age

## Summing Up (1)

- Seniors outreach is **worthwhile**, but not without **challenges!**
- Requires **committed volunteers** and a certain **organizational capacity** to be sustainable:
  - Use of synergies
  - Know-how management and transmission
  - Long-term commitment, trial-and-error
  - Partnerships, setting up of a network

## Summing Up (2)

- Invitation, personal contact, responsiveness are important to **build trust**
- **Activate**, **guide**, and **reward** the new users
- Catch the **low hanging fruits**:
  - Build upon existing initiatives (WLM, GLAM, etc.)
  - Identify easy ways to contribute (e.g. photo contest)
  - Target potential multipliers and «liaison» persons

## Documentation of the Experiences

- TAO Handbook: <http://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/TAO>
- Outreach-Wiki: <http://outreach.wikimedia.org> (upcoming)

### *Main Target Publics:*

Wikipedians and organizations who would like to implement one or several of these approaches. – If you are interested, please get in touch so we can tailor the documentation to your needs!

- [www.thirdageonline.eu](http://www.thirdageonline.eu) (research reports)

## Group Workshops

- **Group A:** I'm a Wikipedian/Wikimedian and I want to reach out to older adults. What approach would I choose? What inputs/support do I need from the project TAO, my chapter, other volunteers, etc.? How can I get the support?
- **Group B:** Bringing seniors outreach on a chapter's agenda: What are the challenges? / What are possible solutions?
- **Group C:** What are the major pitfalls in reaching out to «seniors»? How can we avoid them? / What would be great opportunities to reach out to «seniors»?



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