

Background

The new Recent Changes filters have been out as a beta feature on various wikis. Our goal is to learn from users directly how the experience of using the new filters over a period of time has been for them.

Since the initial rounds of generative and usability testing, the team has made some tweaks from past usability testing and feature requests that have been applied to a new prototype, termed 'integrated' filters, along with a set of filters made specifically for the functionality on watchlist. In this round of testing, we evaluate the usability of the latest iteration, the applicability of its watchlist mirror, and the live updates feature in conjunction with the beta satisfaction testing.

Research Questions

Rating users' satisfaction with the Recent Changes beta:

- What do users think of the filters? Have their opinions changed over time?
 - Have they put the filters to use? If so, how? What are some of these uses?
 - Are the filters supporting their existing activities and workflows?
 - Are they creating new 'existing activities/workflows' as a result of having the additional capabilities?
-
- How do they feel about the beta Recent Changes vs current Recent Changes?
 - More specifically, how do the new set of filters compare with the current set?
 - What does the page need to contain for it to reach peak effectiveness for the users?

Research Questions

Integrated filters/live updates usability:

- How are discoverability of the filters and general navigation for users? Overall, has there been improvement?
- What reactions do users have to the live updates button and pagination options?
- Do users know about / recall / use the resources listed in the related links section?

Research Questions

Watchlist actions usability:

- What actions do users typically take on their watchlists?
- What filters would be useful? How do they feel about the watchlist filter set on the prototype? What filters are still missing?
- Is the purpose of the watchlist-related filters provided in the Watchlist page understood, discoverable, and useful for watchlist users.
- Do users create the same filter sets in the Watchlist they would for Recent Changes?
- Are users able to identify which pages require their attention (are not visited) at a glance and why the distinction is made? Is it clear for users how to mark some/all of them as visited?

What was tested

Recent changes Help

This is a list of recent changes to Wikipedia.

This page: Discuss this page – What does this page mean? Recent changes for: Featured articles – Good articles – Living people – Vital articles

Utilities: RC patrol – New pages – New editors' contribs – IPs' contribs – Mobile contribs – Cleanup – Vandalism – Deletion – RFC – Backlogs

About Wikipedia: Introduction/FAQ/Policy – Stats – News – Milestones – Village pump – Mailing lists – Chat – *Wikipedia Signpost*

Saved filters ▾

Active filters

Human (not bot) × Page edits × Page creations × Logged actions ×

Filter recent changes (browse or start typing)

Show last 50 changes ▾ 7 days ▾

Show new changes starting from 07:55, 31 July 2017

31 July 2017

- (diff | hist) . . Prisoners (2013 film); 07:55 . . (0) . . KungFuYung (talk | contribs) *(Fixed typo)* *(Tags: Mobile app edit, Mobile edit)*
- (diff | hist) . . Newport-Delano NiD 29; 07:55 . . (+186)

List of abbreviations (help): [hide]

- r** This edit may have problems and should be reviewed (more info)
- N** This edit created a new page
- m** This is a minor edit
- b** This edit was made by a bot



The live RC filters beta page

[CC BY-SA 4.0 (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Beta_page.jpg)], via Wikimedia Commons

What was tested

Recent changes

This is a list of recent changes to Wikipedia.

Other review tools ▼ Saved filters ▼

Active filters

Human (not bot) × Page edits × Page creations × Logged actions × 🗑️

Filter recent changes ☰ 👤 🔍 ⋮

Show last 100 changes ▼ 📅 7 days ▼ ▶ Live updates < Newer 100 Older 100 >

[View newest changes](#)

27 September 2016

- (User creation log); 10:39 . . User account [Arulmani 95](#) (talk | contribs) was created
- (diff | hist) . . Jane Turner (FBI whistleblower); 10:39 . . (+51) . . [FeanorStar7](#) (talk | contribs) (*→External links: add cat; cat resort*)
- (diff | hist) . . Harish, Israel; 10:39 . . (+22) . . [Mhorvitz48](#) (talk | contribs) (*Link was broken. I switched it to a live link.*) (Tag: Visual edit)
- (diff | hist) . . User:Gatoclass/sandbox; 10:39 . . (+2) . . [Gatoclass](#) (talk | contribs) (*→Remedy: limited civility block (LCB)*)
- (diff | hist) . . Spirit photography; 10:39 . . (-546) . . [74.190.107.223](#) (talk)
- (diff | hist) . . m Alan Walker (producer); 10:39 . . (-1) . . [Hayman30](#) (talk | contribs) (*→Walker Tour 2016: Fixed typo*) (Tags: canned edit, Visual edit)
- (diff | hist) . . Daggett's Eagle; 10:38 . . (+32) . . [William Avery](#) (talk | contribs) (*Added {{R from other capitalisation}} tag to redirect*)
- (diff | hist) . . C.D. Municipal Limeño; 10:38 . . (-39) . . [BKReRuns](#) (talk | contribs) (*→Coaching staff*)



Prototype of RC page with integrated filters

[CC BY-SA 4.0 (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Integratedfiltersprototype.jpg)], via Wikimedia Commons

What was tested

Recent changes Help

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Saved filters ▾

Active filters

Human (not bot) ✕ Page edits ✕ Page creations ✕ Logged actions ✕ 📌 🗑

☰ Filter recent changes (browse or start typing) 📄 🏠

Show last 50 changes ▾ 📅 7 days ▾ ▶ Live updates

Show new changes starting from 07:59, 31 July 2017

31 July 2017

- (diff | hist) . . Human (Death album); 07:59 . . **(+1,929)** . . Jason Quinn (talk | contribs) *(Undid revision 793199495 by Jason Quinn (talk) didn't work)*

List of abbreviations (help): [hide]

- r** This edit may have problems and should be reviewed (more info)
- N** This edit created a new page
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- b** This edit was made by a bot



Current beta page with live updates feature turned on

[CC BY-SA 4.0 (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Liveupdates.jpg)], via Wikimedia Commons

What was tested

Watchlist

For Cronopio([View relevant changes](#) | [View and edit watchlist](#) | [Edit raw watchlist](#) | [Clear](#))

327 pages on your watchlist, not separately counting talk pages. Pages that last visited them are shown in **bold** with a filled marker.

✔ Mark all pages visited

▾ Saved filters ▾

Active filters

Human (not bot) ×

Page edits ×

Page creations ×

Logged actions ×



☰ Filter recent changes



Show last 100 changes ▾

📅 7 days ▾

▶ Live updates

< Newer 100

Older 100 >

[View newest changes](#)

27 September 2016

- (diff | hist) . . N [Category talk:60s BC establishments](#); 10:38 . . (+40) . . [Dimadick](#) (talk | contribs) (*←Created page with ''{{WikiProject Years|class=limportance=}}''*)
- (diff | hist) . . N! [User:MadsBuus/sandbox](#); 10:38 . . (+59) . . [MadsBuus](#) (talk | contribs) (*←Created page with ''{{Lama Soubra}} <!-- E THIS LINE --> Swiss Singer''*)
- (diff | hist) . . N [Talk:Bluefield State Owls](#); 10:38 . . (+37) . . [Jweiss11](#) (talk | contribs) (*←Created page with ''{{WikiProject Sports|class*
- (diff | hist) . . N! [Sumeneo Waterfall](#); 10:38 . . (+625) . . [Di Ran](#) (talk | contribs) (*←Created page with '''''Sumeneo Waterfall''' is a touris*

Watchlist activity

- With new activity**
Edits for pages in your watchlist with new activity (not visited yet).
- Without new activity**
Edits for pages in your watchlist you already visited.



Prototype of Watchlist page with integrated filters and watchlist filter set

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(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Watchlistmirrorprototype.jpg>, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Watchlistfilters.jpg>), via Wikimedia Commons

About the testing

- Moderated research sessions
- Pages tested:
 - Live beta
 - Integrated filters prototype, watchlist mirror
 - Live updates feature
- 5 participants
 - 5 men
 - Contributions made to: en.wiki (4), en.wikiversity (1), zh.wiki (1)

About the testing

- Research protocol
 - Review participants' experiences with the RC beta
 - Allow participants to evaluate the integrated filters, live updates, and watchlist mirror; first impression and more extensive task-based reviews

RC Filters Beta



Summary

Overall, the users feel that the beta feature provides a cleaner interface and a better experience than the current RC page. Though not without caveats; there are user suggestions for improvement, and adoption and use of the Content Quality and User Intent filter categories does not appear widespread. Improvements should be made to clarify the filters' function, means of usage, and reliability, and other user concerns and suggestions should be evaluated and addressed.

The primary applications of the filters are related to vandalism patrol, and users are generally able to achieve their intended goals using the beta page.

Findings

Overall

All 5 users indicate that the beta provides benefits and more ease of use.

Of the 5, 4 indicate that they prefer the beta to the current page.

All participants experience some confusion during their beta interactions. Examples include: not noticing a feature or filter they would have used otherwise, lack of clarity on a particular filter's function and how combinations of filters work, or about some other element on the page.

Findings

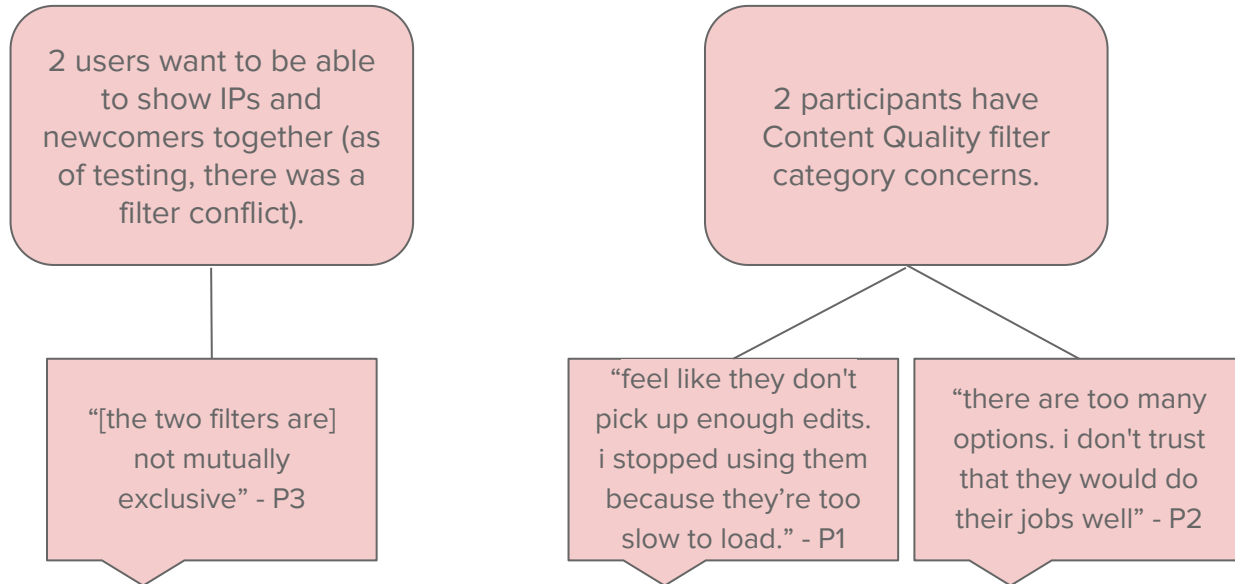
Filters usage

IP + newcomer is the most common combination of filters used.

Users' primary filters application is for vandalism patrol.

Findings

Filters usage



Findings

Other features

Participants describe features that are already in the pipeline when asked for their ideal RC page functionality.

2 ask for filtering by namespace, 2 ask for live updates, 1 asks for filtering by specific users.

Recommendation

Issues	Recommendations
<p>All participants experience some confusion during their interactions on the beta.</p>	<p>The page could benefit from some kind of holistic 'help page' or documentation, new user education tooltips, or the like.</p>
<p>2 users want to be able to show IPs and newcomers together (as of testing, there was a filter conflict).</p>	<p>The filter conflict mentioned has since been removed, and the user registration and experience categories have been merged.</p>
<p>2 participants have Content Quality filter category concerns.</p>	<p>As mentioned above, more overall user education and additional visibility to page elements like the explanatory 'What's this?' pop-up would give users a better understanding of how best to take advantage of the beta's features and functionalities.</p>

Integrated Filters, Live Updates Usability



Summary

Discoverability, general navigation, pagination

- Testing revealed no issues involving the discoverability of the dropdown menu
- Though participants successfully complete tasks involving ‘advanced’ filters (users, tags, namespaces, categories), their discoverability on the page is still lacking.
- Pagination does not appear to cause much confusion for users even when testing an atypical use case (sorting oldest first), although most do not process the need for that functionality on the page.

Live updates

- All 5 participants had overall positive reactions to the introduction of this feature, with some minor concerns and suggestions for improvement.

Related links

- All 5 participants use the options provided in the related links to some degree.
- Mixed reaction as to whether the section should be hidden/collapsible.

Findings

Advanced filters (user, namespace, tag, category)

Recent changes

This is a list of recent changes to Wikipedia.

Other review tools ▼

Active filters

Human (not bot) × Page edit

Filter recent changes

Saved filters ▼

Filter icons: 👤 🏠 🏷️ ⋮

Show last 100 changes ▼ 7 days ▼ ▶ Live updates < Newer 100 Older 100 >

Only 1 of 5 users noticed the advanced filter icons.

27 September 2016

[View newest changes](#)

- (User creation log); 10:39 . . User account **Arulmani 95** (talk | contribs) was created
- (diff | hist) . . Jane Turner (FBI whistleblower); 10:39 . . (+51) . . FeanorStar7 (talk | contribs) (→External links: *add cat*; *cat resort*)
- (diff | hist) . . Harish, Israel; 10:39 . . (+22) . . Mhorrvitz48 (talk | contribs) (*Link was broken. I switched it to a live link.*) (Tag: Visual edit)
- (diff | hist) . . User:Gatoclass/sandbox; 10:39 . . (+2) . . Gatoclass (talk | contribs) (→Remedy: *limited civility block (LCB)*)
- (diff | hist) . . Spirit photography; 10:39 . . (-546) . . 74.190.107.223 (talk)
- (diff | hist) . . m Alan Walker (producer); 10:39 . . (-1) . . Hayman30 (talk | contribs) (→Walker Tour 2016: *Fixed typo*) (Tags: *canned edit* Visual edit)
- (diff | hist) . . Daggett's Eagle; 10:38 . . (+32) . . William Avery (talk | contribs) (*Added {{R from other capitalisation}} tag to redirect*)
- (diff | hist) . . C.D. Municipal Limeño; 10:38 . . (-39) . . BKReRuns (talk | contribs) (→Coaching staff)

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(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Integratedfiltersprototype.jpg>), via
Wikimedia Commons

Findings

Advanced filters (user, namespace, tag, category)

2 recommend adding text
“would like descriptors” - P1
“probably want some text” - P2

1 suggests relocation to
dropdown (with collapsible
sections) or indicated space

1 recommends a slider; user can
drag to select preferred # of icons
“separator is a slider [... it'll be] my
choice how much i see” - P3

Recent changes

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Other review tools ▼

Saved filters ▼

Active filters

Human (not bot) × Page edits × Page creations × Logged actions ×

Filter recent changes

👤 🔒 ⋮

Show last 100 changes ▼

7 days ▼

Live updates ▶

< Newer 100

Older 100 >

View newest changes

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[CC BY-SA 4.0

(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Integratedfiltersprototype.jpg>), via Wikimedia Commons

Findings

General navigation

No confusion about pagination options was observed, although some participants did not appear to find them salient (the current page does not have these options).

At various moments throughout testing, 3 users express frustration with the long dropdown menu.

Findings

A pagination case test

Recent changes

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Other review tools ▾

Saved filters ▾

Active filters

Human (not bot) × Page edits × Page creations × Logged actions ×

Filter recent changes

Show last 100 changes ▾

7 days ▾

Live updates ▶

< Newer 100

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- (diff | hist) . . C.D. Municipal Limerño; 10:38 . . (-39) . . BKRReruns (talk | contribs) (*→Coaching staff*)

3 of 5 participants were asked about the pagination options upon sorting oldest first. All 3 indicated they would select 'Newer 100' to move to more recent edits.

1 of the 3 suggested the pagination buttons exchange/switch labels when sorting oldest first.

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(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Integratedfiltersprototype.jpg>), via

Wikimedia Commons

Findings

Live updates

All 5 users have positive reactions to the live updates button.

Findings

Live updates usage

3 of 5 users noticed that the button is clickable to start/stop the feed. 1 of the 3 expressed he felt he couldn't click the same button again.

1 user wondered if the results were actually showing live or if there is a specific time elapse for pushing new results.

2 would like an option to tune the feed to push results slower or faster.

1 said he would not use on a large wiki, but would on a smaller wiki.

1 specifically mentioned he'd use this for vandalism patrol

1 noted it doesn't seem to work well with the navigation gadget (pop up doesn't disappear).

Findings

Related links

2 suggest hiding the section but want user's choice maintained between sessions

1 doesn't think they need to be hidden

1 wants it hidden all the time

1 is apathetic

The 2 users mentioned above continue a trend of sentiment among participants to keep selections on a page as they are left between sessions.

Recommendation

Issues	Recommendations
Poor discoverability of advanced filters	With one exception, all users found advanced filters in the dropdown. Though the suggestions of adding descriptor text, adding a slider, and moving them again can all be explored, the macro level recommendation is to consolidate all content filters to the dropdown, and explore options for making all the dropdown contents more accessible and apparent.
Pagination when sorting oldest results first	Consider the user suggestion of switching pagination button labels to keep the chronology or 'order' consistent.

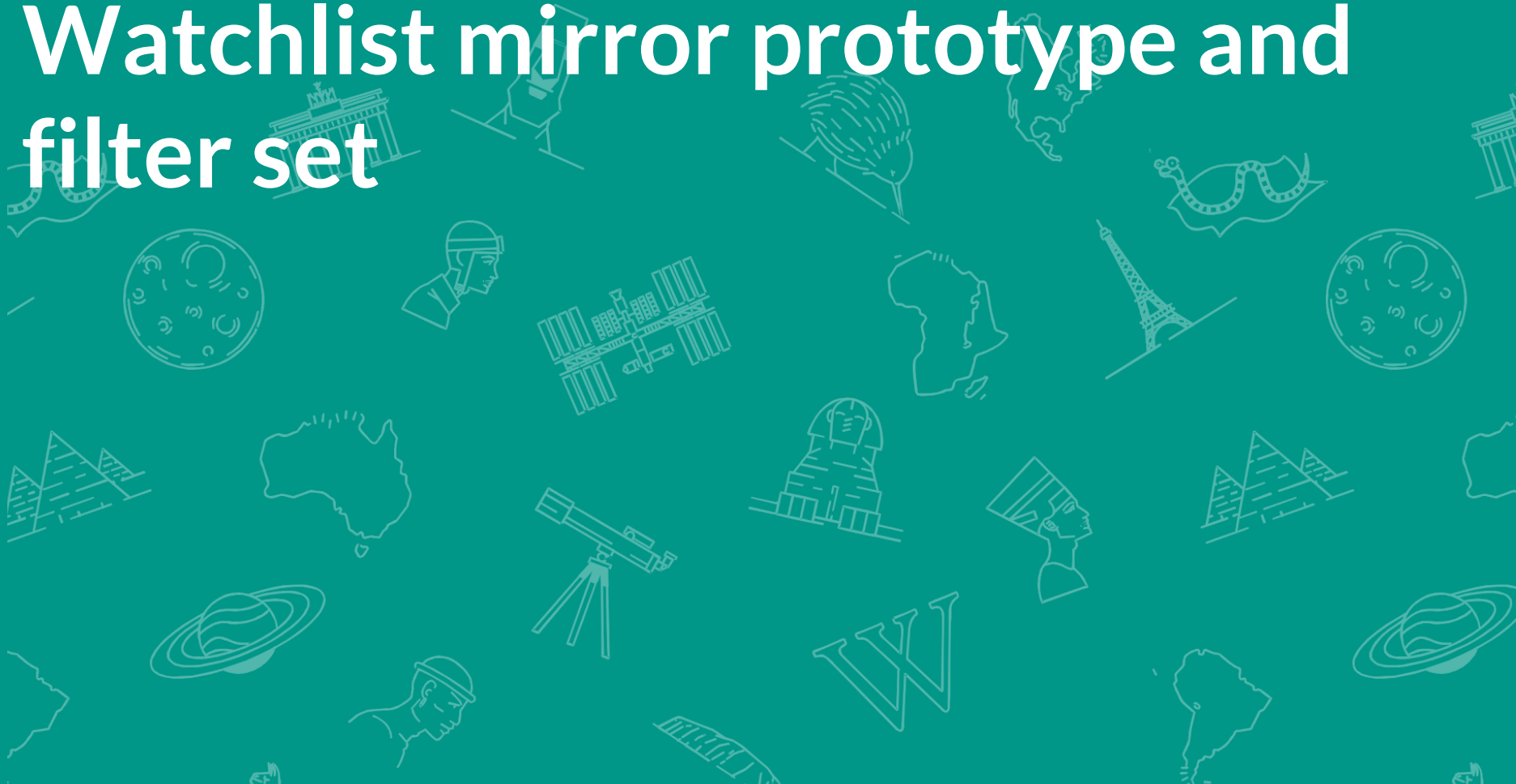
Recommendation

Issues	Recommendations
<p>Live updates usability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● issues clicking on desired result due to the live feed pushing text downward unexpectedly<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ hesitation around using feature on more active wikis● lack of clarity: live or interval-based push?● the navigation gadget pop-ups remain active even after user is no longer hovering on a diff, hist or article link	<p>Respectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● start/stop indicator ('play' and 'stop' indicator icons implemented)● corresponding hover text clarifying the live updates functionality, and ability to pause/stop● QA check compatibility with any gadgets that may apply on the RC page
<p>Results can populate quickly, and affect users' ability to click on desired results</p>	<p>If the start/stop clarity remains insufficient to address this concern, consider adding a live updates speed tuner if a significant number of requests is gathered.</p>

Recommendation

Issues	Recommendations
Related links	<p>Though there's not consensus on how related links should (or should not) be displayed, there has been a trend among participants over the rounds of RC filters testing that they prefer their settings on a page to remain as they left them (continuity and consistency in experience across sessions). If possible, implement general 'setting' on this page and similar pages across wikis.</p>

Watchlist mirror prototype and filter set



Summary

Among this cohort, the number of articles in their watchlists varies (along with the reasons for adding them) but their use of watchlist is rather consistent; they don't use the page much if at all and if they do, it is not rigorous and more of a casual scanning for new activity. The recruiting of this cohort, however, was based on their use of Recent Changes page, so they may not be representative of the opinions of heavy watchlist users.

A majority of participants indicate that they do not and would not use filters on their watchlist page, consistent with responses when presented with the hypothetical posed during beta satisfaction testing.

All participants understood the bold/filled bullet represented a page with new activity/not yet visited, and it's an expectation that clicking on any part of the entry (diff, hist, or article link) should mark the entry as 'read'.

Findings

On the theoretical idea of bringing filters to watchlist page

“no! that would be devastating” - P2

“doubt whether [filters] can really provide more help to the editor” - P5

“filters are designed for RC [...] don't think [filters] would be needed [on watchlist]” - P1

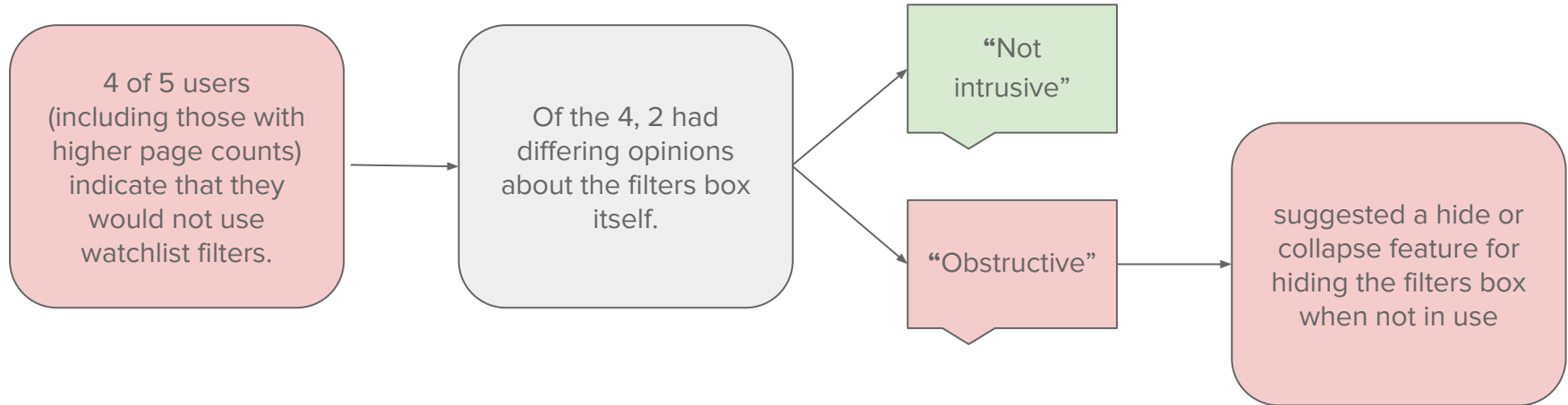
“fine with it, but don't want it to take too much space” - P3

“would use watchlist more” - P4

3 users mention never using filters on their watchlist, with 1 (with a high page count) explicitly saying it 'wasn't worth it' to have filters on this page

Findings

After reviewing watchlist filters
prototype page



Findings

Read/unread, visited/unvisited,
filled/unfilled bullets, bold/regular text

All 5 users understood what the bold/filled bullet and text formatting signified.

Users are confused when clicking the 'diff' or 'history' does not mark a page as read/visited.

Other comments:

2 noted that once a page has been visited, it should disappear from the 'with new activity' filter results

1 pointed out an inconsistency. the filter is either about not having visited or about having new activity, both are mentioned in different locations in the UI.

1 noted that he'd want to be able to tag pages as 'unread/unvisited', and suggested making the bullet bigger.

Recommendation

Issues	Recommendations
<p>Reactions to the new filters on the watchlist vary</p>	<p>The ideal solution may be similar to that of related links; that is, allow users to hide the filters box and maintain users' page settings/preferences between sessions.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Clicking diff or hist links does not mark a page as 'read/visited'2. Entries do not automatically update within the filters results if their state changes3. Language is inconsistent with regard to 'not yet visited' / 'new activity' watchlist filters4. Inability to mark a page as unread	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Users expect that clicking diff, hist, or the article link itself should then mark that page as 'read'.2. If a user selects the 'with new activity' filter and then proceeds to review pages in the results, those pages should be removed from the results.3. Select 'visit' or 'new activity' as the trigger, and keep the language consistent throughout the UI.4. Increase the size of the bullet, and allow for it to be clickable to allow for users to mark pages as unread. <p>Maintain consistency with bullet element in Alerts/notifications.</p>

Comments and Recommendations

Issues	Recommendations
<p>Filters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Recent changes results excluding particular users● Filtering by user group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Apply exclude functionality to users filters also● Add functionality if feasible
<p>Filters interface</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Active filters box is easy to miss● Participants indicated that the active filters box takes up a lot of space● Participants remark that the dropdown is long and, again, takes up too much space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Explore ways to make the active filters more visually prominent● Collapsible active filters box when it is not needed / in use● Collapsible filter categories in the dropdown

Comments and Recommendations

Issues	Recommendations
<p>Filters interface (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Confusion as to why the filter categories have less visual emphasis than the filters themselves● For consistency, use the ⓘ icon in conjunction with or in place of the ‘What’s this?’ link● More highlight color options● Remove the highlight color overlap display	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Explore filter categories in bold and filters in normal font weight● Precisely the comment.● Precisely the comment.● Explore visual options that allow for quick user identification of results’ associated filters that can better place the color muddle that can result currently
<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ability to set specific filter settings to have distinct URLs for bookmarking● Remove white space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Consider this request when implementing the beta and any iterations● Precisely the comment.

Resources



General

- [RC Filters Integrated + Beta Satisfaction Planning](#)

Participant* Video

- [P1](#)

* list shows only participants who did not limit sharing

THANK YOU



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