Wikipedia
Awareness, Attitudes & Usage Research
UK

Project Context

As the Wikimedia movement begins defining their vision for the next fifteen years, they required foundational knowledge of their readers in high awareness countries, for their largest and most well-known project, Wikipedia. Among internet users, they required an understanding of Wikipedia's awareness, attitudes toward Wikipedia, and usage habits and patterns.

This presentation summarizes key findings and opportunities from online, quantitative survey research conducted in France, Germany, Japan, Spain, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, in June 2017. Wherever possible, the questions used mirrored past research to help establish global benchmarks.

This presentation was prepared by Wellspring Insights & Innovation, Inc., a research and innovation firm based in Miami, Florida. Full field data from this study has been shared with WMF.

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Content

Objectives

- To better understand awareness, attitudes, and usage of internet users in high-awareness countries or regions to inform the movement strategy direction for the next 15 years

- Gain insight into GenX, GenY and especially GenZ - the unique perspectives of younger users, as they will be our future readers

- Gain insight into how respondents in high-awareness countries or regions and low-awareness countries or regions differ or are the same (in comparison to New Reader and other research completed in the past)

- Scope is not intended to gain a complete understanding of all countries or regions or insights that the movement might need for Brand identity research, product development, or other planned work streams.

- As applicable, a secondary benefit will be to help guide Wikipedia's future development and growth by identifying opportunities to expand reach, attract new readers, improve positioning, and optimize product and service features.

Scope & Methodology

- The survey was fielded in France, Germany, Japan, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States via an online survey accessible on a PC, laptop or device (tablet, smartphone).

- A total of 1,150 surveys with internet users (individuals who can access the internet via any device type and connection) were completed in each country

- All respondents were between 13-49 years old; GenX 36 to 49 years, GenY 20-35, and GenZ 13-19

- Non-probability sampling was utilized.

- Participants were sourced from multiple online research panels to reduce bias by adding people from all socioeconomic levels, geography and interest.

- Quotas were established per country in order to balance the sample and provide a nationally representative population by age cohort, gender, ethnicity, household income and geography. All data has been weighted to reflect this balance.

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Generation X, Y and Z definitions

	GENX 36-49 in our survey	GENY 20-35 in our survey	GENZ 13-19 in our survey
Iconic Technology	VCR, Walkman, IBM PC	Internet, Email, SMS, DVD, Ipod, Xbox	Iphone, Ipad, Google, social media, 4KHD, VR
TV & Movies	M-TV, ET	Pay TV, Titanic	Smart TV, Avatar
Influencers	Pragmatic practitioners	Experiential peers	User-generated forums

Sources: McCrindle Research, Vision Critical. 2012, 2015.

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Key Findings

At the outset of this research our hypothesis was that, in the United Kingdom and other high-awareness countries, we would observe large differences in awareness, usage and attitudes toward Wikipedia between the generations; from Generation X's analog childhood to the digital natives of Generation Z.

By 2030, the oldest GenX'ers will be 63, heading toward their next, and perhaps final, career phase. The oldest GenY'ers will be 53, and have already made their mark on the world of technology, particularly in social media.

In 2030, the oldest members of Generation Z will turn 35, and they will have had a smartphone since they were about the age of 13. Already, they are being called the greatest visual communicators ever raised; creators, collaborators and curators of culture.

"Technology is an important component, but what's changed is this generation's (Z) relationship with culture. They are empowered, connected, empathetic self-starters that want to stand out and make a difference in the world."
– the Wildness, 2015 research study.

Key Findings

In our survey we found that internet users in the United Kingdom between the ages of 13 and 49 are nine times more likely to think of Google over Wikipedia when they "think about finding information online." About eighty-percent (79%) mentioned Google as compared to Wikipedia (18%) and Yahoo! (8%) or UK news sites (5%).

Only 78% of Generation Z internet users are aware of Wikipedia, and they are equally likely to say that YouTube (48%) is one of top three sites that they go to when they want to find information than is Wikipedia (50%).

GenZ is also more likely to say they never read it, making it the generation in the UK with the highest non-reading population (27%). Given their age, about 40% of GenZ first found out about Wikipedia at school, and regardless of device they choose, chances are they are doing homework. GenX and Y are looking up topics on Wikipedia that were referenced in conversation.

Six of ten or internet users in the UK know Wikipedia is a non-profit. Yet across all generations, more than half don't know it's funded primarily by reader donations, and about half don't know that its content is created by volunteers.

Key Findings

Regarding usage, 55% of GenX and 67% of GenY read Wikipedia on a weekly basis, while 32% of GenZ says they read it only a few times a month.

This may be owing to their focus on schoolwork, or to other factors such as how they approach websites and apps, or how they derive utility. It is an important question for Wikipedia to answer in the near future, given that UK GenZ association Wikipedia's values was the weakest of the three generations.

What readers in the UK find personally important is also what they most strongly associate Wikipedia with: being **useful**, **easy to read**, and **free**.

At the other end, transparency and no advertising were the words least associated with Wikipedia, especially by GenZ participants.

Key Findings

Lastly, when it comes to enhancing Wikipedia readers' experience, UK readers across generations say that "more trustworthy content" (52%) and "higher quality content" (44%) would enhance their reading experience. The is also broad agreement that "more visual content" and more "neutral information" would help (36%, respectively).
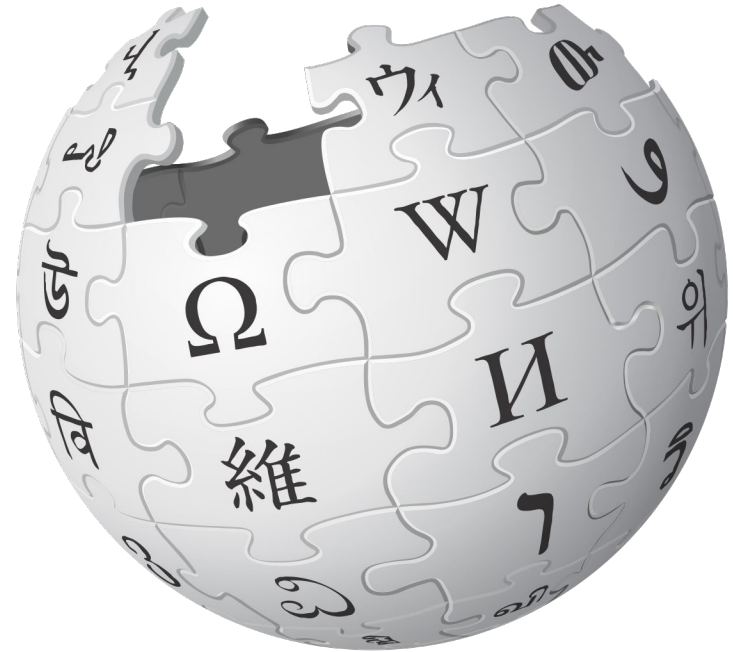
GenZ feels more strongly than GenX or Y that improved readability (45%), site navigation (38%) and design (37%) would help.

Of less importance to Wikipedia readers across the generations in the UK is more interaction with other readers.

Wikipedia Awareness

UK internet users by Generation
Total Base: 1150
Weighted Data

We asked internet users in the United Kingdom what website came to mind when they want to find information online.
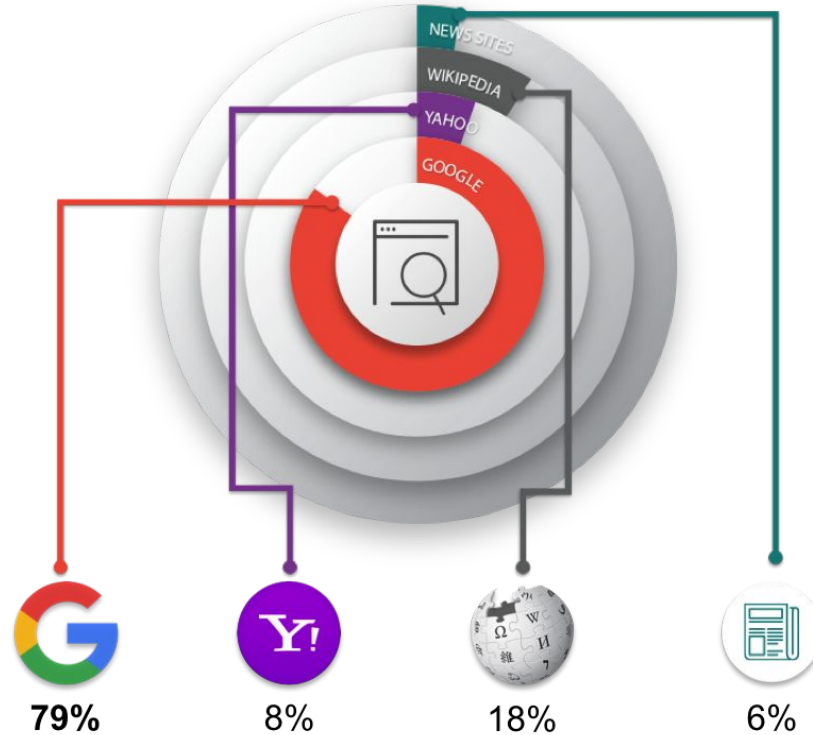
75% mentioned Google first.

8% mentioned Wikipedia.

In total mentions, Google had 79%.

Q6: When you want to find information online, what websites come to mind? Total Mentions. Base: 1150

| 79% | 8% | 18% | 6% |

Wikipedia may not be top-of-mind, but 83% of internet users in the United Kingdom are aware of it.

Yet fewer than half (45% overall) say it is one of the Top 3 sites to go to when they need information.

Top 3 Sites for Information

Q7a: When you want to find information online, what three
websites would you say you go to most often? Base: 1150

Half or less - across all three generations - include
Wikipedia as one of the top three sites they go to when they
want to find information online.

About 15% of GenX still includes Yahoo!, and 40% of GenY
and 48% of GenZ include YouTube as one of their top three
sites for information.

The BBC remains a popular destination for about
one-quarter of internet users in the UK when seeking
information.

Q7a: When you want to find information online, what three websites would you
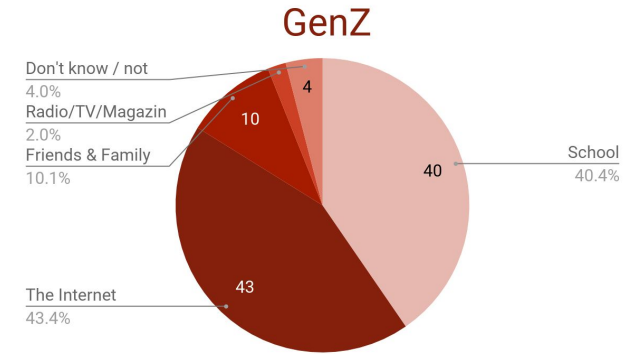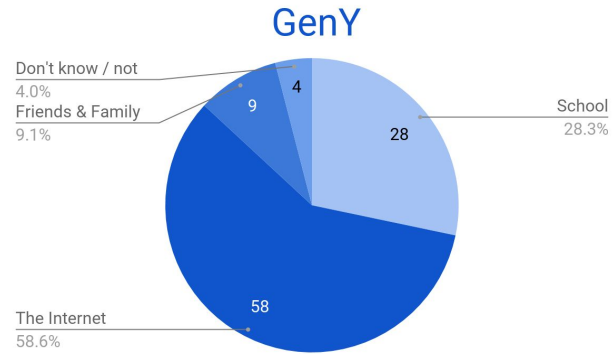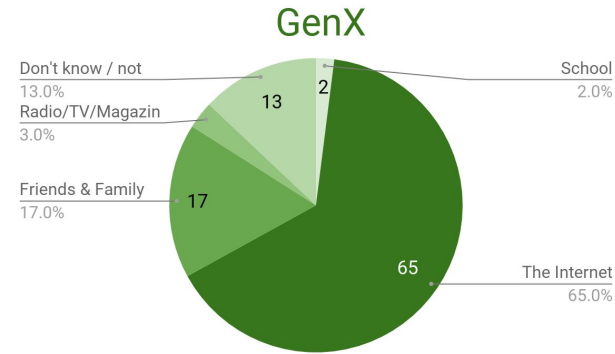say you go to most often? Base: 1150

	GenX	GenY	GenZ
Google	85%	84%	76%
Wikipedia	45%	44%	50%
YouTube	35%	40%	48%
BBC	28%	27%	21%
Facebook	15%	21%	14%
Yahoo	14%	9%	16%
Twitter	6%	8%	7%
WikiHow	4%	5%	11%
Daily Mail	5%	5%	3%

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While GenX and GenY first found Wikipedia online, GenZ is the most likely to first find out about it at school.

Q8: Where did you first find out about Wikipedia?
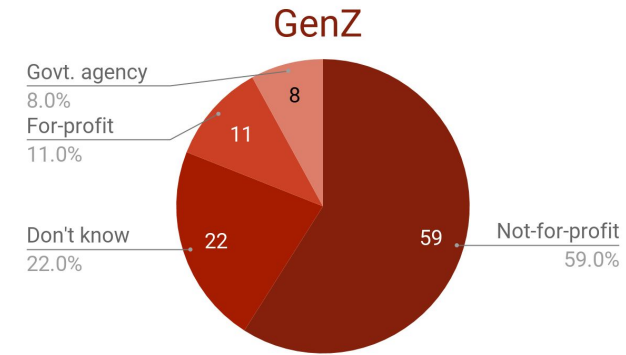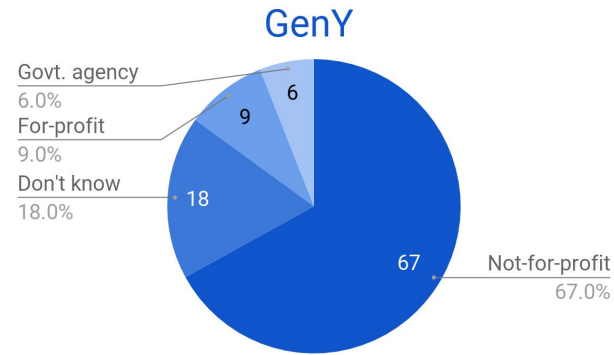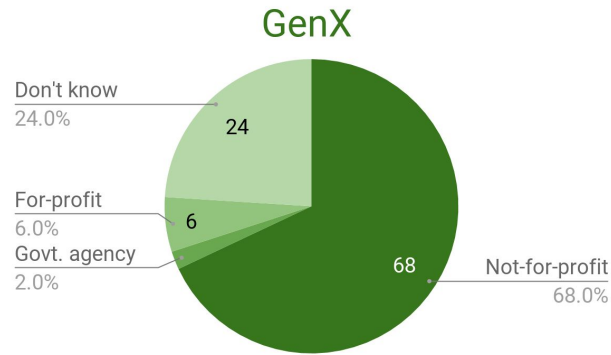Base: 1004 Aware Wikipedia.

GenX

Don't know / not 13.0%
Radio/TV/Magazin 3.0%
Friends & Family 17.0%
School 2.0%
The Internet 65.0%

13
2
17
65

GenY

Don't know / not 4.0%
Friends & Family 9.1%
School 28.3%
The Internet 58.6%

4
9
28
58

GenZ

Don't know / not 4.0%
Radio/TV/Magazin 2.0%
Friends & Family 10.1%
School 40.4%
The Internet 43.4%

4
10
40
43

Many internet users in the UK "get" Wikipedia. But some still don't.

Six of ten or internet users in the UK know Wikipedia is a non-profit. Yet across all generations, more than half don't know it's funded primarily by reader donations, and about half don't know that its content is created by volunteers.

A majority across generations know Wikipedia is is a not-for-profit. Fully one quarter of GenX, and 22% of GenZ "don't know."
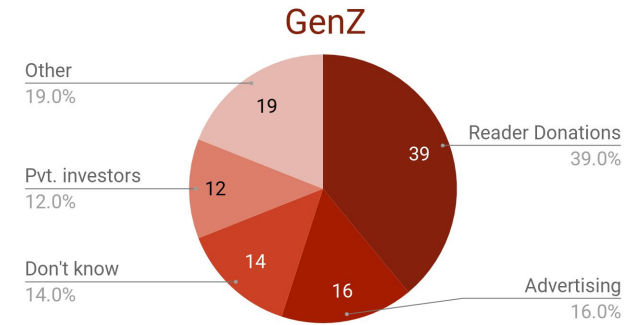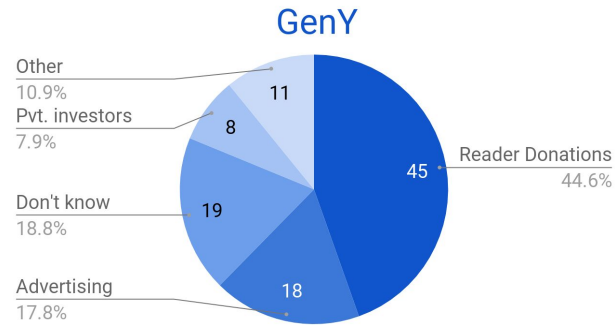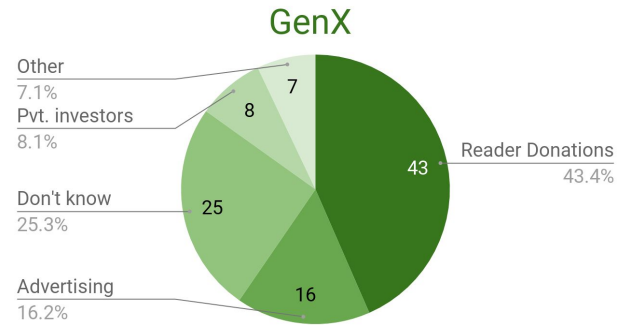
Q9: To the best of your knowledge, which of the following best describes
the organization that manages Wikipedia? Base: 1004 Aware Wikipedia.

Overall, GenZ is the least knowledgeable when it comes to Wikipedia's primary source of funding.

Q10: How do you think Wikipedia is primarily funded?
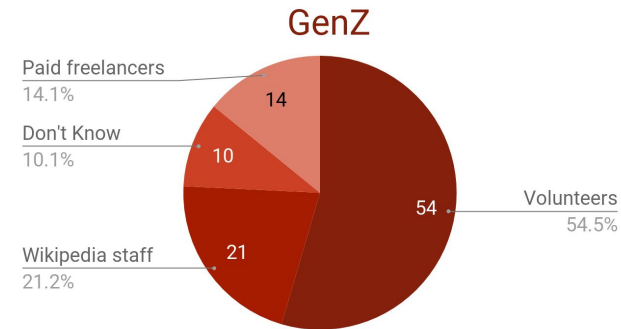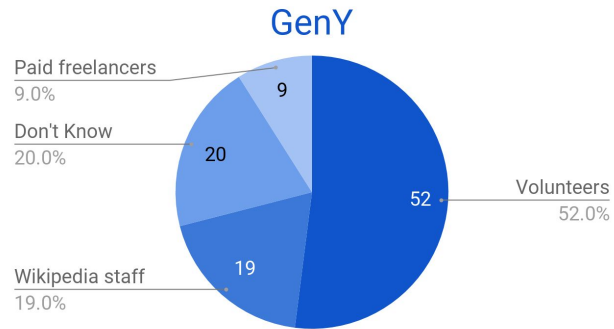Base: 1004 Aware Wikipedia.

GenX

Other 7.1%
Pvt. investors 8.1%
7
8
Reader Donations 43.4%
43
Don't know 25.3%
25
16
Advertising 16.2%

GenY

Other 10.9%
Pvt. investors 7.9%
11
8
Reader Donations 44.6%
45
Don't know 18.8%
19
18
Advertising 17.8%

GenZ

Other 19.0%
Pvt. investors 12.0%
19
12
Reader Donations 39.0%
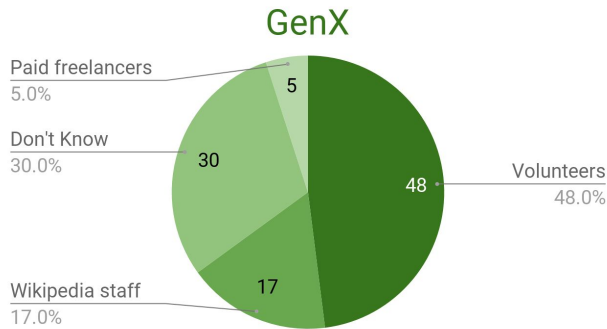39
Don't know 14.0%
14
16
Advertising 16.0%

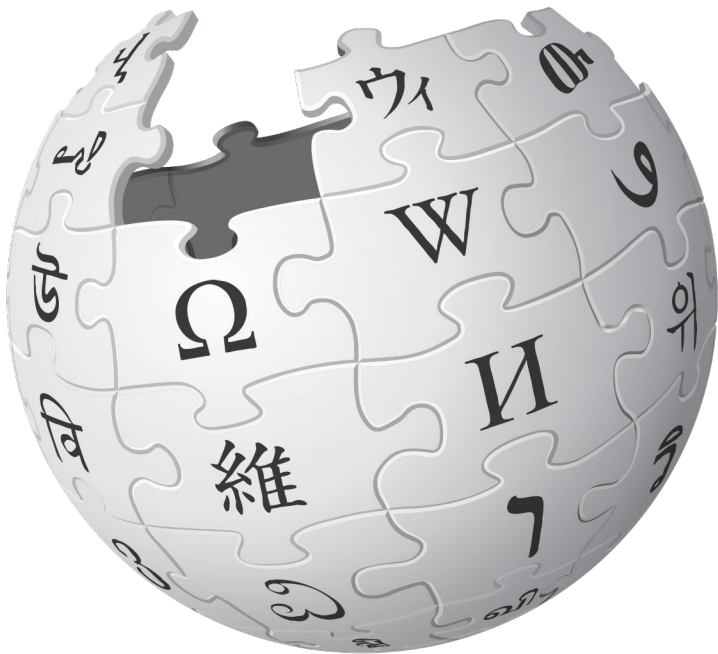"Other" category: Foundation or Govt. Funding

About half think content is created and maintained by volunteers, and another 20% say Wikipedia staff.

Q17: To the best of your knowledge, how is information primarily created
and maintained on Wikipedia? Base: 957 Wikipedia Readers.

GenX

Paid freelancers
5.0%

Don't Know
30.0%

Wikipedia staff
17.0%

Volunteers
48.0%

5
30
17
48

GenY

Paid freelancers
9.0%

Don't Know
20.0%

Wikipedia staff
19.0%

Volunteers
52.0%

9
20
19
52

GenZ

Paid freelancers
14.1%

Don't Know
10.1%

Wikipedia staff
21.2%

Volunteers
54.5%

14
10
21
54

Wikipedia Usage

UK internet users by Generation
Total Base: 1150
Weighted Data

Awareness & Usage Summary

With the lowest awareness of Wikipedia, GenZ is also more likely to say they never read it, making it the generation in the UK with the highest non-reading population (27%). Overall, GenY has the highest reading population.
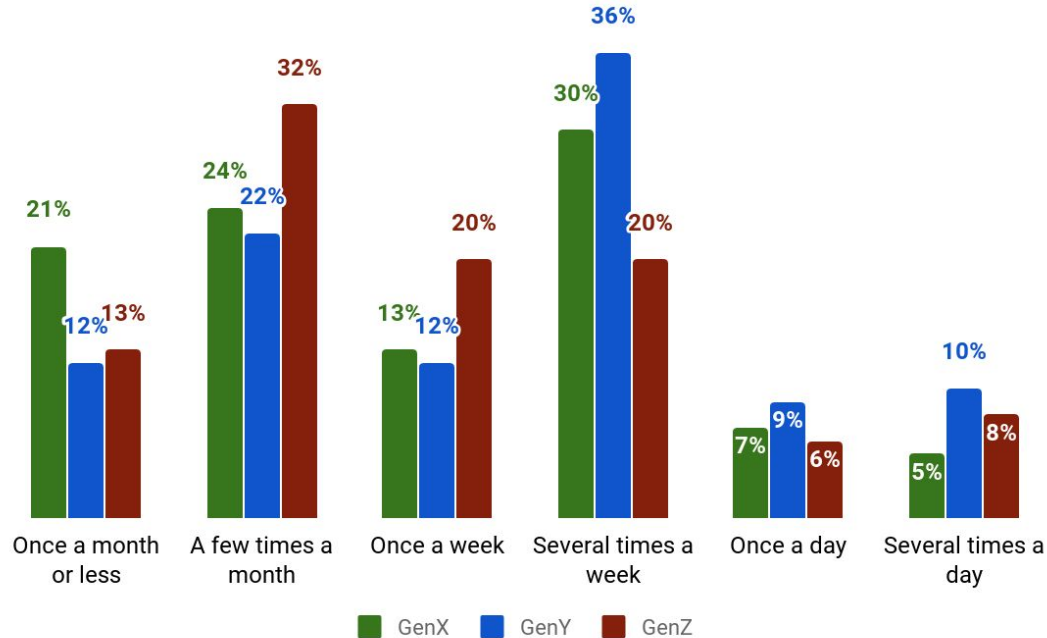
	GenX	GenY	GenZ
Aware of Wikipedia	83.4%	85.5%	77.7%
Read Wikipedia	79.7%	83.4%	72.3%
Never read Wikipedia	3.7%	2.3%	4.9%
Unaware of Wikipedia	16.6%	14.5%	22.3%
Total non-reading population	20.3%	16.8%	27.2%

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55% of GenX and 67% of GenY read Wikipedia on a weekly basis, while 32% of GenZ says they read it a few times a month.

Q14: How often do you read Wikipedia?
Base: 957 Wikipedia Readers.

	GenX	GenY	GenZ
Once a month or less	21%	12%	13%
A few times a month	24%	22%	32%
Once a week	13%	12%	20%
Several times a week	30%	36%	20%
Once a day	7%	9%	6%
Several times a day	5%	10%	8%

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GenX and GenY are about information seeking, and GenZ is busy doing their homework.
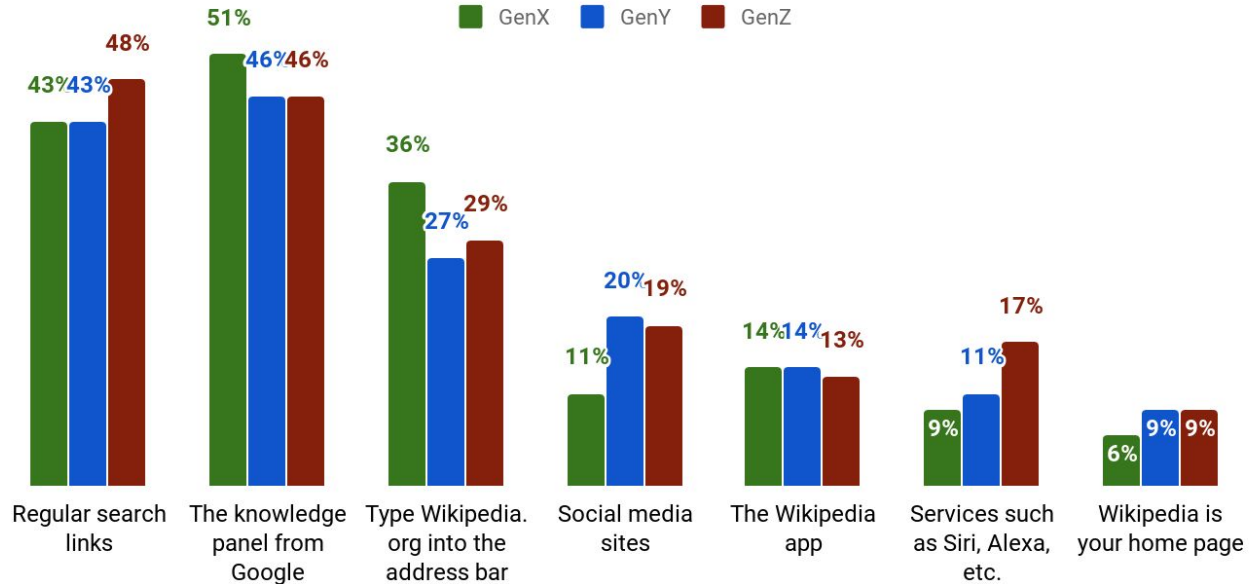
Q15b: Overall, would you say you use Wikipedia primarily to _____.
Base: 957 Wikipedia Readers.
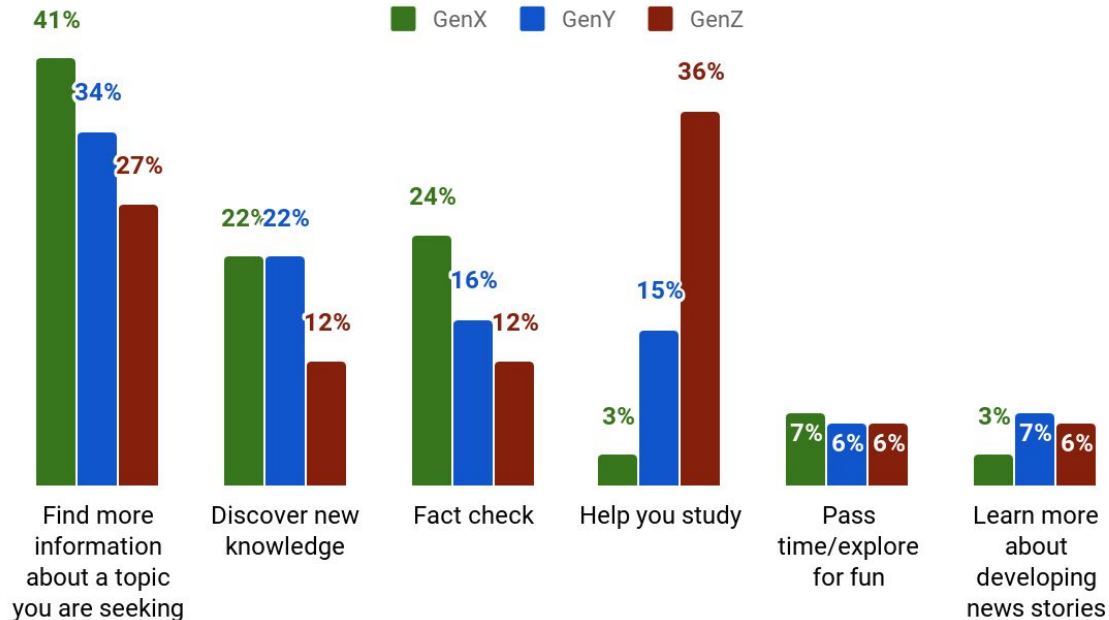
Most follow search links or click on the knowledge panel, and about one-third continues to go directly to the site.

Q16: What are all of the ways you find Wikipedia articles, or get to
Wikipedia articles? (Answer all that apply) Base: 957 Wikipedia Readers

Legend: ■ GenX ■ GenY ■ GenZ

	GenX	GenY	GenZ
Regular search links	43%	43%	48%
The knowledge panel from Google	51%	46%	46%
Type Wikipedia.org into the address bar	36%	27%	29%
Social media sites	11%	20%	19%
The Wikipedia app	14%	14%	13%
Services such as Siri, Alexa, etc.	9%	11%	17%
Wikipedia is your home page	6%	9%	9%

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The UK overall has low Wikipedia usage on desktops. GenY and GenZ point to the future (smartphones and digital voice assistants).

Q15: Please indicate how often you use each the following devices
to access and read Wikipedia. (Pct. replying "Often")
Base: 957 Wikipedia Readers.

Legend: GenX, GenY, GenZ
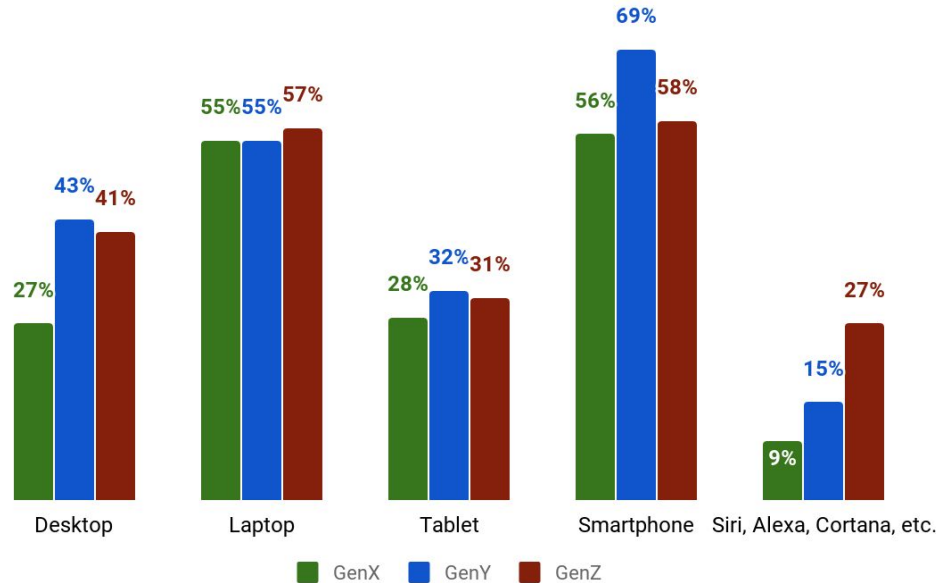
Top reasons for reading Wikipedia don't vary much by device. GenZ skews to school assignments, while GenX and GenY are more focused on topics that are referenced in the media or come up in conversation.

|	GenX	GenY	GenZ
Desktop	A conversational topic / topic I am interested in 57%	A conversational topic 56%	Work or school assignment 68%
Laptop	A conversational topic 57%	A topic referenced in the media 50%	Work or school assignment 68%
Tablet	A conversational topic 55%	A conversational topic 48%	Work or school assignment 48%
Smartphone	A conversational topic 64%	A conversational topic 56%	Work or school assignment 53%
Digital Voice Asst.	A topic referenced in the media 45%	A conversational topic 47%	Work or school 38% / Topic from media 37%

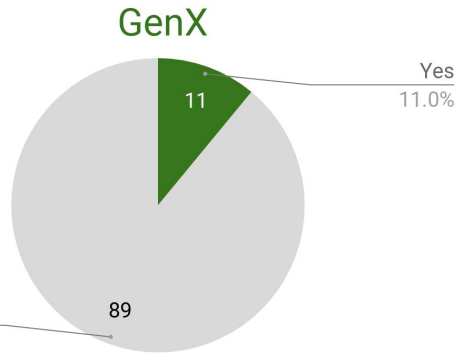Q15a: When you access Wikipedia on your _____, what do you read it for? Base: Access Wikipedia via device.

A quarter of GenY and about one-third of GenZ readers in the UK have tried to edit an article.

Q18a: Have you ever tried to edit a Wikipedia article?
Base: 678 Readers who know anyone can edit.

GenX

Yes
11.0%

11

No
89.0%

89

GenY

Yes
26.0%

26

No
74.0%

74

GenZ

Yes
32.0%

32

No
68.0%

68
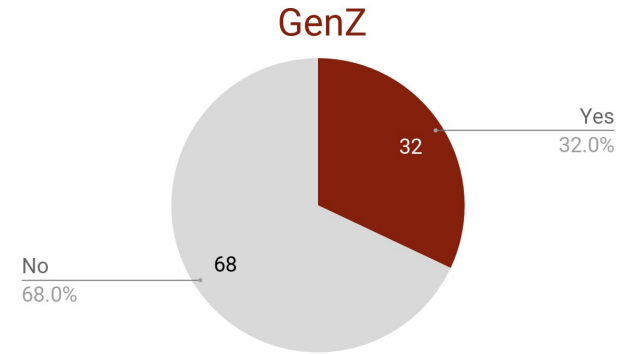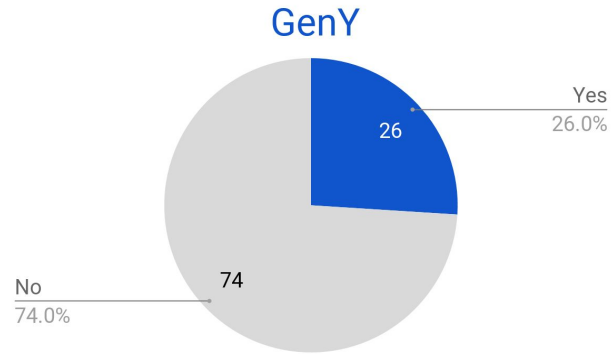
Two factors prevent most people from trying; a lack of interest or the fear of making mistakes.

Q18b: Which of the following best explains why you have never tried to edit a Wikipedia article? Base: 531 Readers who have never tried to edit.
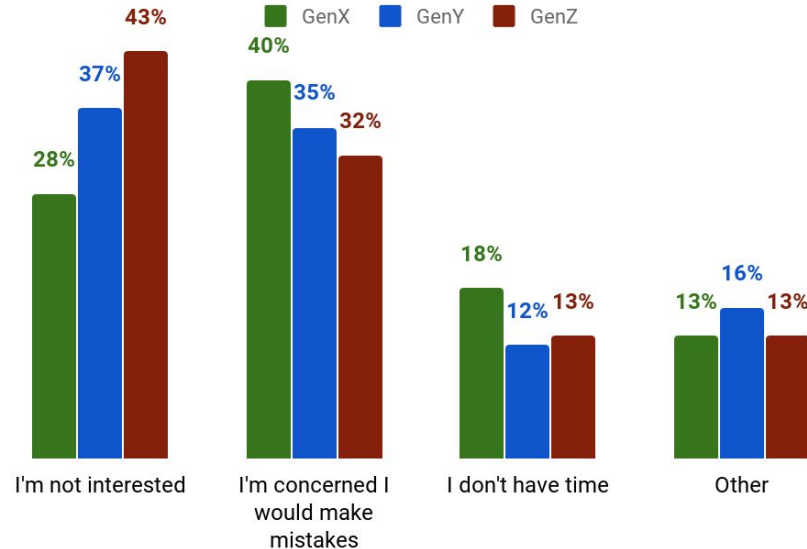
Across the generations, about more than eight out of ten readers have never made a donation to Wikipedia.

Q19: Have you made a financial donation to Wikipedia?
Base: 957 Wikipedia Readers.

GenX
Yes
8.0%
8
No
92.0%
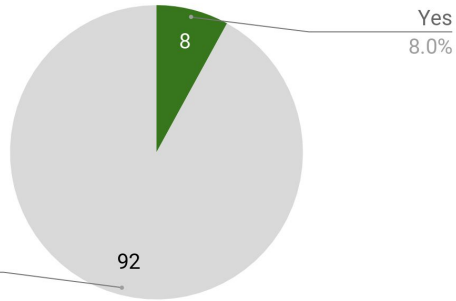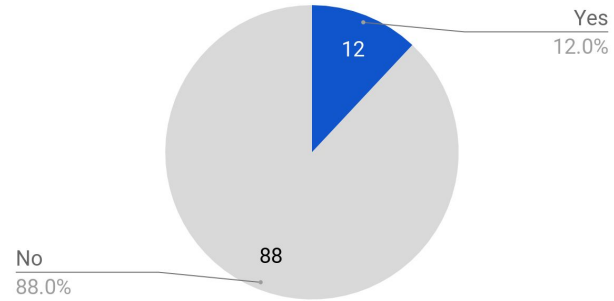92

GenY
Yes
12.0%
12
No
88.0%
88

GenZ
Yes
17.0%
17
No
83.0%
83
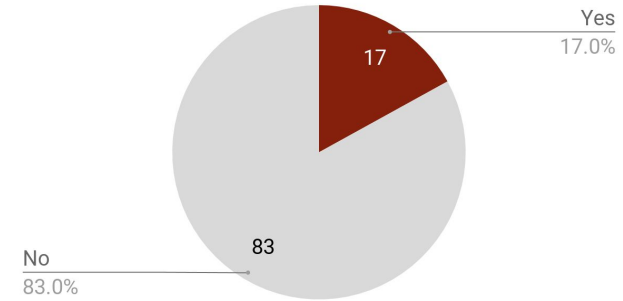
About four of ten say they either didn't know Wikipedia relied on donations, or they don't know what the donation would be used for.

Q20a: Which of the following best explains your decision NOT to make a
donation to Wikipedia? Base: 842 never donated.

■ GenX ■ GenY ■ GenZ

	I don't usually donate to anything	I didn't know Wikipedia relied on donations	I don't know what it would be used for	I am uncomfortable making online donations	I do not use Wikipedia that often	Wikipedia probably gets enough donations, they don't need mine	I found Wikipedia's fundraising appeal too intrusive
GenX	22%	29%	23%	20%	18%	6%	2%
GenY	28%	23%	23%	22%	16%	10%	7%
GenZ	31%	20%	24%	18%	23%	9%	7%

30

Attitudes toward Wikipedia

UK internet users by Generation
Total Base: 1150
Weighted Data
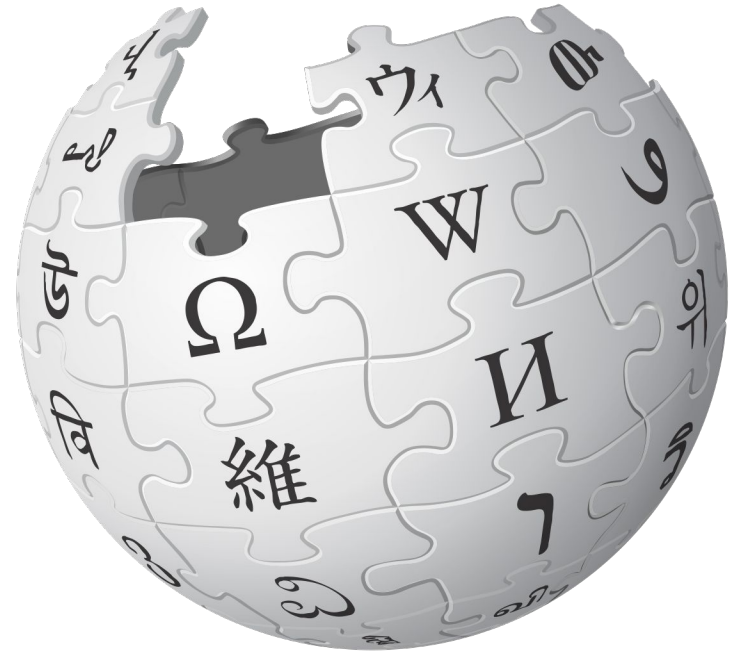
What readers find personally important is also what they most strongly associate Wikipedia with: being useful, easy to read, and free knowledge for every person.

	GenX		GenY		GenZ	
	Mean Association Rating	*Personal Importance Ranking*	*Mean Association Rating*	*Personal Importance Ranking*	*Mean Association Rating*	*Personal Importance Ranking*
Useful	8.0	1	8.0	1	7.4	1
Easy to read	7.8	T2	7.6	T2	6.2	T2
Free knowledge for every person	8.2	T2	8.2	T2	8.0	T2
High Quality	7.2	3	6.9	3	6.5	3
Comprehensive	**7.6**	4	7.1	5	6.5	5
Neutral, unbiased content	6.8	5	6.6	4	6.2	4
Professional	7.2	T6	6.9	6	6.6	6
Free of advertising	7.1	T6	6.9	7	6.8	7
Transparency	6.9	7	6.7	8	6.0	8

(Note that GenZ gave Wikipedia lower association scores across the board.)

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Most say more trustworthy content would enhance their reading experience. GenZ feels that improved readability, site navigation and design would help.

Q22a: As a Wikipedia reader, please indicate how much each of the following changes would enhance your personal experience? A lot, a little, or not at all. Base: 957 readers.

Pct. answering "a lot"

Legend: GenX, GenY, GenZ

Categories:
- More trustworthy content
- Higher quality content
- Improved readability
- More visual content
- Improved site navigation
- Improved site design
- Easier ways to interact with the
- More neutral information
- More interaction with other users
- Improved local language content

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THANK YOU