

# Workshop on Why Wikis Work

Christoph Schneider  
College of Business  
City University of Hong Kong  
Kowloon, Hong Kong  
+852-2788-7241

christoph.schneider@cityu.edu.hk

## ABSTRACT

Wikis have been successfully used inside and outside of organizations, in open as well as proprietary environments, by groups small and large. Correspondingly, numerous views have been offered for why people are participating and why wikis work. This workshop offers an opportunity for participants to discuss and possibly integrate different perspectives about this issue.

## Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.3.5 [Information Storage and Retrieval]: Online Information Services; H.5.3 [Information Interfaces and Presentation]: Group and Organization Interfaces – *Web-based interaction*; K.4.3 [Computers and Society]: Organizational Impacts – *Computer-supported collaborative work*.

## General Terms

Management, Performance.

## Keywords

Wiki, success factors.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As wikis are increasingly being used inside and outside of organizations, numerous views have been offered for why people are participating and why wikis work. One perspective, which sees wikis as sustainable ecosystems, focuses on the volume of contributions and general activity rate. Another perspective stresses cooperation and thus the importance of practiced governance. Yet another perspective considers the process of content creation and thus targets the importance of ease of access and convenience of contributing, while yet another perspective highlights the importance of the technology that enables all these social processes. While each of these aspects may contribute to why wikis work, an integrated perspective will help to implement and use wikis so as to reap the greatest benefits.

Permission to make digital or hard copies of all or part of this work for personal or classroom use is granted without fee provided that copies are not made or distributed for profit or commercial advantage and that copies bear this notice and the full citation on the first page. To copy otherwise, or republish, to post on servers or to redistribute to lists, requires prior specific permission and/or a fee.

WikiSym '09, October 25-27, 2009, Orlando, Florida, U.S.A.  
Copyright © 2009 ACM 978-1-60558-730-1/09/10...\$10.00.

## 2. GOALS

This workshop is intended to bring together researchers and practitioners interested in unearthing why wikis work.

Specifically, this workshop aims to:

- offer the ability to share and discuss classic and emergent views of why wikis work,
- integrate perspectives from different researcher and practitioner communities,
- identify common factors that make wikis work, and
- develop a set of “golden rules” that help making wikis work in their respective settings.

## 3. WORKSHOP FORMAT

The half-day workshop will include the following activities (others may be added).

### 3.1 Workshop Introduction and Overview

### 3.2 Presentation of position papers

These papers are intended to stimulate discussions by providing diverse and potentially controversial viewpoints regarding what makes wikis work. Presenters will provide a short (about 5 minutes) overview of the key arguments of their viewpoints, followed by initial Q&A. Viewpoints to be presented will include the following:

- Role of community
- Role of critical mass and wiki activity
- Role of governance
- Role of process
- Role of technology

### 3.3 Breakout sessions

Following the presentation of the position papers, the presenters will join the other participants to form sub-groups. Two breakout sessions are planned; the first breakout session will focus on the factors that make wikis work, and whether/how they can be reconciled. The second breakout session will focus on developing a set of recommendations that can be implemented to make wikis work.

### 3.4 Presentation of results

The results of the breakout sessions will be presented and documented on a wiki page.

### 3.5 Closing remarks