

Wikis have recently been adopted to support a variety of collaborative activities within libraries. This article and its companion wiki, LibraryWikis (<http://librarywikis.pbwiki.com/>), seek to document the phenomenon of wikis in libraries. This subject is considered within the framework of computer-supported cooperative work (CSCW). The author identified thirty-three library wikis and developed a classification schema with four categories: (1) collaboration among libraries (45.7 percent); (2) collaboration among library staff (31.4 percent); (3) collaboration among library staff and patrons (14.3 percent); and (4) collaboration among patrons (8.6 percent). Examples of library wikis are presented within the article, as is a discussion for why wikis are primarily utilized within categories I and II and not within categories III and IV. It is clear that wikis have great utility within libraries, and the author urges further application of wikis in libraries.

In recent years, the popularity of wikis has skyrocketed. Wikis were invented in the mid-1990s to help facilitate the exchange of ideas between computer programmers. The use of wikis has gone far beyond the domain of computer programming, and now it seems as if every Google search contains a Wikipedia entry. Wikis have entered into the public consciousness. So, too, have wikis entered into the domain of professional library practice. The purpose of this research is to document how wikis are used in libraries. In conjunction with this article, the author has created LibraryWikis (<http://librarywikis.pbwiki.com/>), a wiki to which readers can submit additional examples of wikis used in libraries. The article will proceed in three sections. The first section is a literature review that defines wikis and introduces computer-supported cooperative work (CSCW) as a context for understanding wikis. The second section documents the author's research and presents a schema for classifying wikis used in libraries. The third section considers the implications of the research results.

Literature review

What's a wiki?

Wikipedia (2007a) defines a wiki as:

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a type of Web site that allows the visitors to add, remove, edit, and change some content, typically without the need for registration. It also allows for linking among any number of pages. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for mass collaborative authoring.

Wikis have been around since the mid-1990s, though it is only recently that they have become ubiquitous. In 1995, Ward Cunningham launched the first wiki, WikiWikiWeb (<http://c2.com/cgi/wiki/>), which is still active today, to facilitate the exchange of ideas among computer programmers (Wikipedia 2007b). The launch of WikiWikiWeb was a departure from the existing model of Web communication, where there was a clear divide between authors and readers. WikiWikiWeb elevated the status of readers, if they so chose, to that of content writers and editors. This model proved popular, and the wiki technology used on WikiWikiWeb was soon ported to other online communities, the most famous example being Wikipedia.

On January 15, 2001, Wikipedia was launched by Larry Sanger and Jimmy Wales as a complementary project for the now-defunct Nupedia encyclopedia. Nupedia was a free, online encyclopedia with articles written by experts and reviewed by editors. Wikipedia was designed as a feeder project to solicit new articles for Nupedia that were not submitted by experts. The two services coexisted for some time, but in 2003 the Nupedia servers were shut down. Since its launch, Wikipedia has undergone rapid growth. At the close of 2001, Wikipedia's first year of operation, there were 20,000 articles in eighteen language editions. As of this writing, there are approximately seven million articles in 251 languages, fourteen of which have more than 100,000 articles each. As a sign of Wikipedia's growth, when this manuscript was first submitted four months earlier, there were more than five million articles in 250 languages.

Author's note: Sources in the previous two paragraphs come from Wikipedia. The author acknowledges the concerns within the academy regarding the practice of citing Wikipedia within scholarly works; however, it was decided that Wikipedia is arguably an authoritative source on wikis and itself. Nevertheless, the author notes that there were changes—insubstantial ones—to the cited Wikipedia entries between when the manuscript was first submitted and when it was revised four months later.

Wikis and CSCW

Wikis facilitate collaborative authoring and can be considered one of the technologies studied under the domain of CSCW. In this section, CSCW is explained and it is shown how wikis fit within this framework.

CSCW is an area of computer science research that considers the application of computer technology to support cooperative, also referred to as collaborative work. The term was first coined in 1984 by Irene Greif (1988) and

Paul Cashman to describe a workshop they were planning on the support of people in work environments with computers. Over the years there have been a number of review articles that describe CSCW in greater detail, including Bannon and Schmidt (1991), Rodden (1991), Schmidt and Bannon (1992), Sachs (1995), Dourish (2001), Ackerman (2002), Olson and Olson (2002), Dix, Finlay, Abowd, and Beale (2004), and Shneiderman and Plaisant (2005).

Publication in the field of CSCW primarily occurs through conferences. The first conference on CSCW was held in 1986 in Austin, Texas. Since then, the conference has been held biennially in the United States. Proceedings are published by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM, <http://www.acm.org/>). In 1991, the first European Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work (ECSCW) was held in Amsterdam. ECSCW also is held biennially, in odd-numbered years. ECSCW proceedings are published by Springer (<http://www.ecscw.uni-siegen.de/>). The primary journal for CSCW is *Computer Supported Cooperative Work: The Journal of Collaborative Computing*. Publications also appear within publications of the ACM and CHI, the Conference on Human Factors in Computing.

CSCW and libraries

As libraries are, by nature, collaborative work environments—library staff working together and with patrons—and as digital libraries and computer technologies become increasingly prevalent, there is a natural fit between CSCW and libraries. The following researchers have applied CSCW to libraries. Twidale et al. (1997) published a report sponsored by the British Library Research and Innovation Centre that examined the role of collaboration in the information-searching process to inform how information systems design could better address and support collaborative activity. Twidale and Nichols (1998) offered ethnographic research of physical collaborative environments—in a university library and an office—to aid the design of digital libraries. They wrote two reviews of CSCW as applied to libraries—the first was more comprehensive (Twidale and Nichols 1998) than the second (Twidale and Nichols 1999). Sánchez (2001) discussed collaborative environments designed and prototyped for digital library environments.

Classification of collaboration

Technologies that facilitate collaborative work are typically classified within CSCW across two continua: synchronous versus asynchronous, and co-located versus remote. If put together in a two-by-two matrix, there are four possibilities: (1) synchronous and co-located (same time, same place); (2) synchronous and remote (same time, different place); (3) asynchronous and remote (different time, different place); and (4) asynchronous and co-located (different time, same

place). This classification schema was first proposed by Johansen et al. (1988). Nichols and Twidale (1999) mapped work applications within the realm of CSCW in figure 1.

Wikis are not present in the figure, but their absence is not an indication that they are not cooperative work technologies. Rather, wikis were not yet widely in use at the time CSCW was considered by Nichols and Twidale. The author has added wikis to Nichols and Twidale's graphical representation in figure 2. Interestingly, wikis are border-crossers fitting within two quadrants: the upper right—asynchronous and co-located; and the lower right—asynchronous and remote. Wikis are asynchronous in that they do not require people to be working together at the same time. They are both co-located and remote in that people working collaboratively may not need to be working in the same place.

It is also interesting to note that library technologies also can be mapped using Johansen's schema. Nichols and Twidale (1999) also mapped this, and figure 3 illustrates the variety of collaborative work that goes on within libraries.

Method

In order to discover the widest variety of wikis used in libraries, the author searched for examples of wikis used in libraries within three areas—the LIS literature, the Library Success Wiki, and within messages posted on three professional electronic discussion lists. When examples were found, they were logged and classified according to a schema created by the author. Results are presented in the next section.

The first area searched was within the LIS literature. The author utilized the Wilson Library Literature and

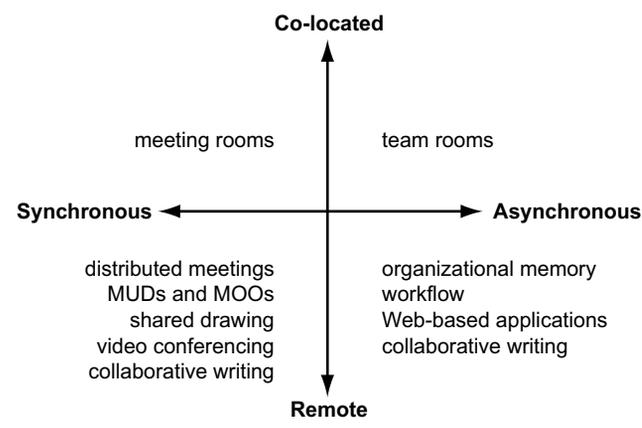


Figure 1. Classification of CSCW applications

Information Science database. There were two main types of articles: ones that argued for the use of wikis in libraries, and ones that were case studies of wikis that had been implemented.

The second area searched was within Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki (<http://www.libsuccess.org/>) (see figure 4), created by Meredith Farkas, distance learning librarian at Norwich University. As the name implies, it is a place for people within the library community to share their success stories. Posting to the wiki is open to the public, though registration is encouraged. There are many subject areas on the wiki, including management and leadership, readers' advisory, reference services, information literacy, and so on. There also is a section about collaborative tools in libraries (http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Collaborative_Tools_in_Libraries), in which examples of wikis in libraries are presented. Within this section there is a presentation about wikis made by Farkas (2006) titled Wiki World (http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Wiki_World), from which examples were culled.

The third area that was searched was professional electronic discussion list messages from Web4lib, DIG_REF, and LIBREF-L. The Web4Lib electronic discussion list (Tennant 2005) is "for the discussion of issues relating to the creation, management, and support of library-based World Wide Web servers, services, and applications." The list is moderated by Roy Tennant and the Web4Lib advisory board and was started in 1994. The DIG_REF electronic discussion list is a forum for "people and organizations answering the questions of users via the Internet" (WebJunction n.d.). The list is hosted by the Information Institute of Syracuse, School of Information Studies, Syracuse University, and was created in 1998. The LIBREF-L electronic discussion list is "a moderated discussion of issues related to reference librarianship

(Balraj 2005). Established in 1990, it's operated out of Kent State University and moderated by a group of list owners. These three electronic discussion lists were selected for two reasons. First, the author is a subscriber to each electronic discussion list, and prior to the research noted there were messages about wikis in libraries. Second, based on the descriptions of each electronic discussion list stated above, the selected electronic discussion lists reasonably covered the discussion of wikis in libraries within the professional library electronic discussion lists.

One year of messages, November 15, 2005, through November 14, 2006, was analyzed for each list. Messages about wikis in libraries were identified through keyword searches against the author's personal archive of electronic discussion list messages collected over the

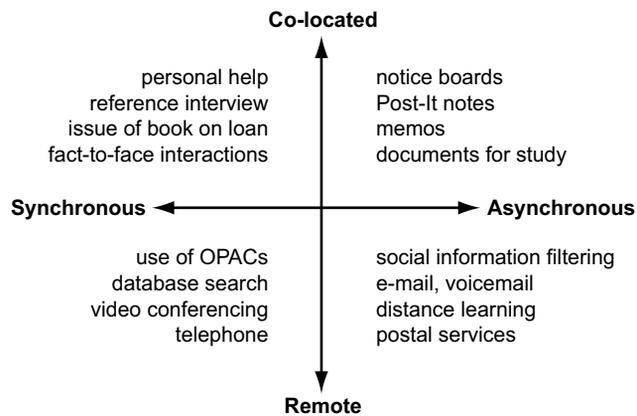


Figure 3. Classification of collaborative work within libraries

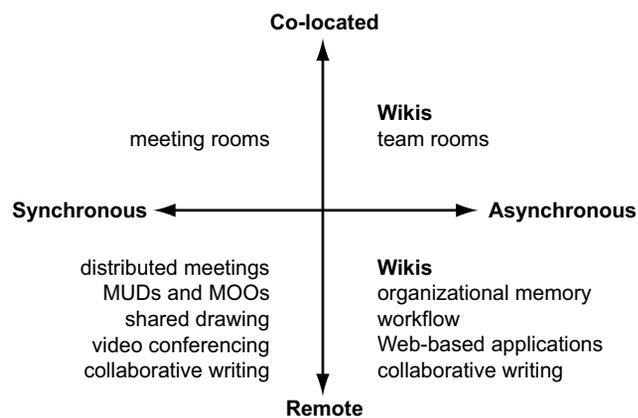


Figure 2. Classification of CSCW applications including wikis



Figure 4. Library Success: A Best Practices wiki (<http://www.libsuccess.org/>)

years. An alternative method would have been to search the Web archive of each list, but the author found it easier to search within his mail client, Microsoft Outlook. Messages with the word “wiki” were found in 513 messages: 354 in Web4lib, 91 in DIG_REF, and 68 in LIBREF-L. This approach had high recall, as discourse about wikis frequently included the use of the word “wiki,” though low precision, as there were many results that were not about wikis used in libraries. Common false hits included messages about the *Nature* study (Giles 2005) that compared Wikipedia to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and messages that included the word “wiki” but were simply referring to wikis, though not examples of wikis used within libraries. From the list of 513 messages, the author read each message and came up with a much shorter list of thirty-nine messages about wikis in libraries: thirty-two in Web4Lib, three in DIG_REF, and four in LIBREF-L.

Results

Classification of the results

After all wiki examples had been collected, it became clear that there was a way to classify the results. In Farkas’s (2006) presentation about wikis, she organized wikis in two categories: (1) how libraries can use wikis with their patrons; and (2) how libraries can use wikis for knowledge sharing and collaboration. This schema, while it accounts for two types of collaboration, is not granular enough to represent the types of collaboration found within the wiki examples identified. As such, it became clear that another schema was needed.



Figure 5. Wiki World (http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Wiki_World)

Twidale and Nichols (1998) identified three types of collaboration within libraries: (1) collaboration among library staff; (2) collaboration between a patron and a member of staff; and (3) collaboration among library users. Their classification schema mapped well to the examples of wikis that were identified; however, it too was not granular enough, as it did not distinguish among collaboration between library staff intraorganizationally and extraorganizationally, the two most common types of wiki usage found in the research (see appendix). To account for these types of collaboration, which are common not only to wiki use in libraries but to all professional library practice, the author modified Twidale and Nichols schema (see figure 6). The improved schema also uniformly represents entities across the categories—library staff and member of staff are referred to as “library staff,” and patrons and library users are referred to as “patrons.”

Examples of wikis used in libraries for each category are provided to better illustrate the proposed classification schema.

Collaboration among libraries

The Library Instruction Wiki (http://instructionwiki.org/Main_Page) is an example of a wiki that is used for collaboration among libraries (figure 7). It appears as though the wiki was originally set up to support library instruction within Oregon—it is unclear if this was associated with a particular type of library, say academic or public—but now the wiki supports library instruction in general. The wiki is self-described as:

a collaboratively developed resource for librarians involved with or interested in instruction. All librarians and others interested in library instruction are welcome and encouraged to contribute.

The tagline for the wiki is “stop reinventing the wheel”(Library Instruction Wiki 2006). From this wiki there

1. Collaboration among libraries (extra-organizational)
2. Collaboration among library staff (intra-organizational)
3. Collaboration among library staff and patrons
4. Collaboration among patrons

Figure 6. Four types of collaboration within libraries

is a list of library instruction resources that include the following: handouts, tutorials, and other resources to share; teaching techniques, tips, and tricks; class-specific Web sites and handouts; glossary and encyclopedia; bibliography and suggested reading; and instruction-related projects, brainstorm, and documents. Within the handouts, tutorials, and other resources to share section, the author found a wide variety of resources from libraries across the country. Similarly, there were a number of suggestions to be found under the teaching techniques, tips, and tricks section.

Another example of a wiki used for collaboration among libraries is the Library Success wiki (<http://www.libsuccess.org/>), one of the sources of examples of wikis used in this research. Adding to earlier descriptions of this wiki as presented in this paper, Library Success seems to be one of the most frequently updated library wikis and perhaps the most comprehensive in its coverage of library topics.

Collaboration among library staff

The University of Connecticut Libraries' Staff Wiki (<http://wiki.lib.uconn.edu/>) is an example of a wiki used for collaboration among library staff (figure 8). This wiki is a knowledge base containing more than one thousand information technology services (ITS) documents. ITS documents support the information technology needs of the library organization. Examples include answers to commonly asked questions, user manuals, and instructions for a variety of computer operations. In addition to being a repository of ITS documents, the wiki also serves as a portal to other wikis within the University of Connecticut Libraries. There are many other wikis connected to library

units; teams; software applications, such as the Libraries ILS; libraries within the University of Connecticut Libraries; and other University of Connecticut campuses.

The Health Science Library Knowledge Base, Stony Brook University (<http://appdev.hsclib.sunysb.edu/twiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome>) is another example of a wiki that is used for collaboration among library staff (figure 9). The wiki is described as "a space for the dynamic collaboration of the library staff, and a platform of shared resources" (Health Sciences Library 2007). On the wiki there are the following content areas: news and announcements; HSL departments; projects; troubleshooting; staff training resources, working papers and support materials; and community activities, scholarship, conferences, and publications.

Collaboration among library staff and patrons

There are only a few examples of wikis used for collaboration among library staff and patrons to cite as exemplars. One example is the St. Joseph County Public Library (SJPL) Subject Guides (http://www.libraryforlife.org/subjectguides/index.php/Main_Page), seen in figure 10. This wiki is a collection of resources and services in print and electronic formats to assist library patrons with subject area searching. As the wiki is published by library staff for public consumption, it has more of a professional feel than wikis from the first two categories. Pages have images, and the content is structured to look like a standard Web page. Though the wiki looks like a Web page, there still remain a number of edit links that follow each section of text on the Wiki. While these tags bear importance for those editing



Figure 7. Library Instruction wiki (<http://instructionwiki.org/>)

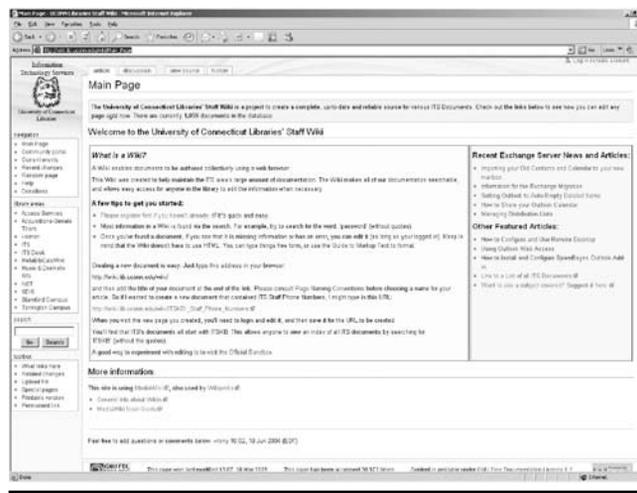


Figure 8. The University of Connecticut Libraries' staff wiki (<http://wiki.lib.uconn.edu/>)

the wiki—library staff only in this case—they undoubtedly puzzle library patrons who think that they have the ability to edit the wiki when, in fact, they do not.

Another example of collaboration between library staff and patrons that takes a similar approach is the USC Aiken Gregg-Graniteville Library Web site (<http://library.usca.edu/>) in figure 11. As with the SJPL Subject Guides, this wiki looks more like a Web site than a wiki. In fact, the USC Aiken wiki conceals its true identity as a wiki even more so than the SJPL Subject Guides. The only evidence that the Web site is a wiki is a link at the bottom of each page that says “Powered by PmWiki.” PmWiki (<http://pmwiki.org/>) is a content management system that uti-

lizes the wiki technology on the back end to manage a Web site while retaining the look and feel of a standard Web site. It seems that the benefits of using a wiki in such a way are shared content creation and management.

Collaboration among patrons

As there are only three examples of wikis used for collaboration among patrons, all examples will be highlighted in this section. The first example is Wiki WorldCat (<http://www.oclc.org/productworks/wcwiki.htm>), sponsored by OCLC. Wiki WorldCat launched as a pilot project in September 2005. The service allows users of Open WorldCat, OCLC’s Web version of WorldCat, to add book reviews to item records. Though this wiki does not have many book reviews in it, even for contemporary bestsellers, it gives a taste for how a wiki could be used to facilitate collaboration among patrons.

A second example is the Biz Wiki from Ohio University Libraries (http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/index.php/Main_Page) (see figure 12). The Biz Wiki is a collection of business information resources available through Ohio University. The wiki was created by Chad Boeninger, reference and instruction librarian, as an alternate form of a subject guide or pathfinder. What separates this wiki from those in the third category, collaboration among library staff and patrons, is that the wiki is editable by patrons as well as librarians. Similarly, Butler WikiRef (http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/butler_wikiref) is a wiki that has reviews of reference resources created by Butler librarians, faculty, staff, and students (see figure 13).

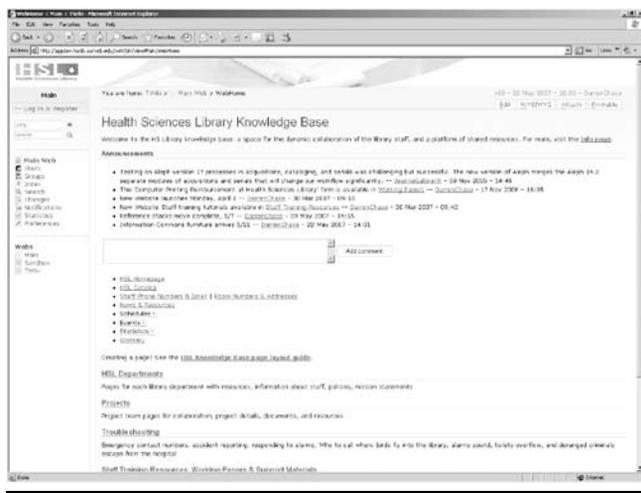


Figure 9. Health Sciences Library Knowledge Base (<http://appdev.hslclib.sunysb.edu/twiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome>)

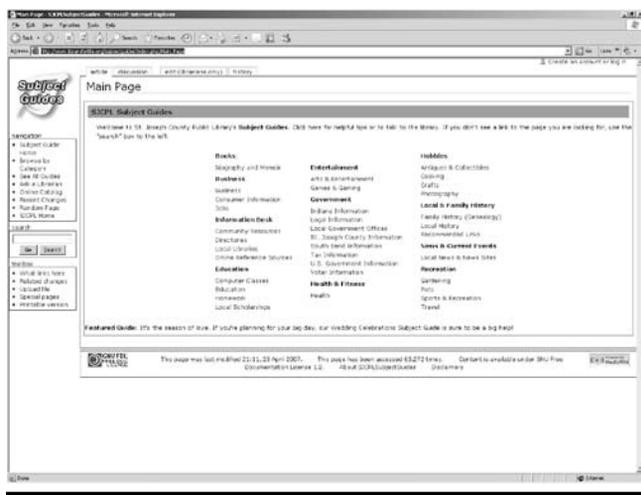


Figure 10. SJPL Subject Guides (http://libraryforlife.org/subjectguides/index.php/Main_Page/)

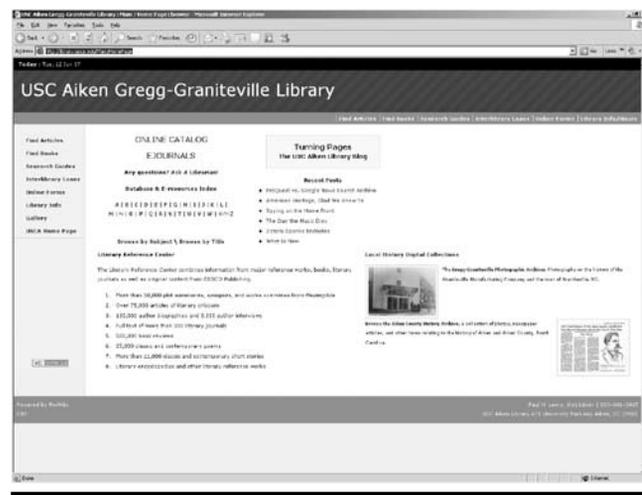


Figure 11. USC Aiken Gregg-Graniteville Library (<http://library.usca.edu/>)

Full Results

Thirty-three wikis were identified. Two wikis were classified in two categories each. The full results are available in the appendix. Table 1 illustrates how wikis were not uniformly distributed across the four categories: category I had 45.7 percent, category II had 31.4 percent, category III had 14.3 percent, and category IV had 8.6 percent. Nearly 80 percent of all examples were found within categories I and II.

As seen in some of the examples in the previous section, wikis were utilized for a variety of purposes. Here is a short

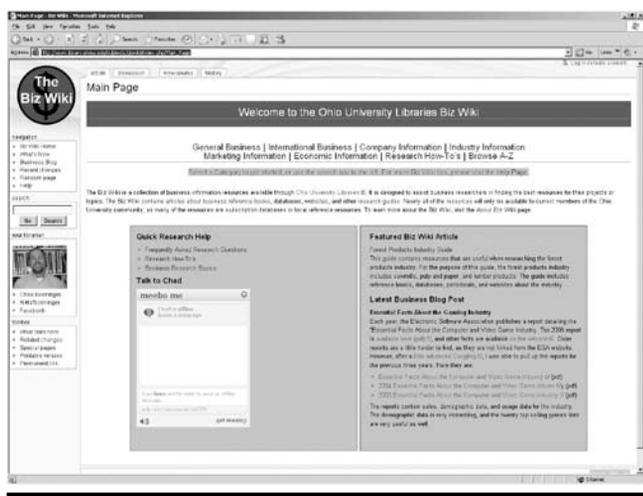


Figure 12. Ohio University Libraries Biz wiki (<http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/>)

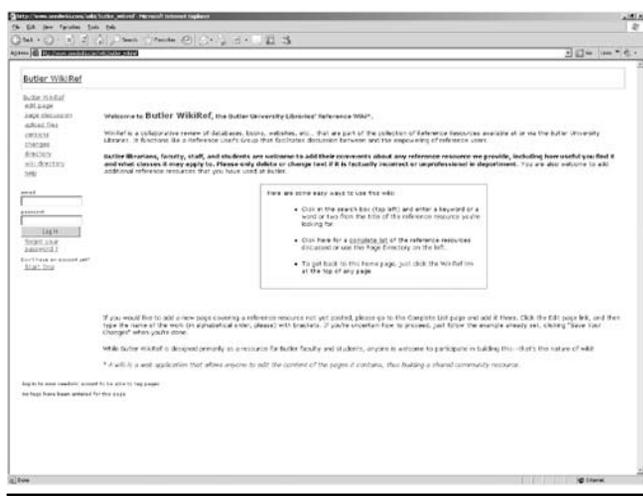


Figure 13. Butler WikiRef (http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/butler_wikiref)

list of purposes for which wikis were utilized: for sharing information, supporting association work, collecting software documentation, supporting conferences, facilitating librarian-to-faculty collaboration, creating digital repositories, managing Web content, creating Intranets, providing reference desk support, creating knowledge bases, creating subject guides, and collecting reader reviews.

Wiki software utilization is summarized in tables 2 and 3. MediaWiki is the most popular software utilized by libraries (33.3 percent), followed by unknown (30.3 percent), PBWiki (12.1 percent), PmWiki (12.1 percent), SeedWiki (6.1 percent), TWiki (3 percent), and XWiki (3 percent). If the values for unknown are removed from the totals (table 3), MediaWiki is utilized in almost half (47.8 percent) of all library wiki applications.

Discussion

With a wealth of examples of wikis in categories I and II and a dearth of examples of wikis in categories III and IV, the library community seems to be more comfortable using wikis to collaborate within the community, but less comfortable using wikis to collaborate with library patrons or to enable collaboration among patrons. The research results pose the questions: Why are wikis predominantly used for collaboration within the library community? and Why are wikis minimally used for collaborating with patrons and helping patrons to collaborate with one another?

Why are wikis predominantly used for collaboration within the library community?

This is perhaps the easier of the two questions to explain. There is a long legacy of cooperation and collaboration intraorganizationally and extraorganizationally within libraries. One explanation for this is the shared budgetary climate within libraries. All too often there are insufficient money, staff, and resources to offer desired levels of service. Librarians work together to overcome these barriers. Prominent examples include cooperative cataloging, interlibrary lending, and the formation of consortia to negotiate pricing. Another explanation can be found in the personal characteristics of library professionals. Librarianship is a service profession that consequently attracts service-minded individuals who are interested in helping others, whether they are library patrons or fellow colleagues. A third reason is the role of library associations, such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, the American Library Association, the Special Libraries Association, and the Medical Library Association, as well as many others at the international, national, state, and local lev-

els, and the work that is done through these associations at annual conferences and throughout the year. Libraries use wikis to collaborate intraorganizationally and extra-organizationally because collaboration is what they do most naturally.

Why are wikis minimally used for collaborating with patrons and helping patrons to collaborate with one another?

The reasons for why libraries are only minimally using wikis to collaborate with patrons and for patron collaboration are more difficult to ascertain. However, due to the untapped potential of using wikis, the proposed answers

Table 1. Classification summary

Category	No.	%
I: Collaboration among libraries	16	45.7
II: Collaboration among library staff	11	31.4
III: Collaboration among library staff and patrons	5	14.3
IV: Collaboration among patrons	3	8.6
Total:	35	100.0

Table 2. Software totals

Wiki software	No.	%
MediaWiki	11	33.3
Unknown	10	30.3
PBWiki	4	12.1
PmWiki	4	12.1
SeedWiki	2	6.1
TWiki	1	3
XWiki	1	3
Total:	33	100

to this question are more important and may lead to future implementations of wikis in libraries. Here are four possible explanations, some more speculative than others.

First, perhaps one of the reasons is the result of the way in which libraries are conceived by library patrons and librarians alike. A strong case can be made for libraries as places of collaborative work, and the author takes this position. However, historically libraries have been repositories of information, and this remains a pervasive and difficult concept to change—libraries are frequently seen simply as places to get books. In this scenario, the librarian is a gatekeeper that a patron interacts with to get a book—that is, if the patron interacts with a librarian at all. It also is worthy to note that the relationship is one-way—the patron needs the assistance of librarian, but not the other way around. Viewed in these terms, this is not a collaborative situation. For libraries to use wikis for the purpose of collaborating with library patrons, it might demand the reconceptualization of libraries by library patrons and librarians. Similarly, this extreme conceptualization of libraries does not consider patrons working with one another, even though it is an activity that occurs formally and informally within libraries, not to mention with the emergence of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work. If wikis are to be used to facilitate collaboration between patrons, the conceptualization of the library by library patrons and librarians must be expanded.

Second, there may be fears within the library community about authority, responsibility, and liability. Libraries have long held the responsibility of ensuring the authority of the bibliographic catalog. If patrons are allowed to edit the library wiki, there is potential for negatively affecting the authority of the wiki and even the perceived authority of the library. Likewise, there is potential liability in allowing patrons to post to the library wiki. Similar con-

Table 3. Software totals without unknowns

Wiki software	No.	%
MediaWiki	11	47.8
PBWiki	4	17.4
PmWiki	4	17.4
SeedWiki	2	8.7
TWiki	1	4.3
XWiki	1	4.3
Total:	23	100.0

cerns have been raised in the past about other collaborative technologies, such as blogs, bulletin boards, mailing lists, and so on, all aspects of the Library 2.0 movement. If libraries are fully to realize Library 2.0 as described by Casey and Savastinuk (2006), Miller (2006), and Courtney (2007), these issues must be considered.

Third, perhaps it is due to a matter of fit. It might be the case that wikis are utilized in categories I and II and not within categories III and IV because the tools are better suited to support the types of activities within categories I and II. Consider some of the activities listed earlier: supporting association work, collecting software documentation, supporting conferences, creating digital repositories, creating Intranets, and creating knowledge bases. Each of these illustrates a wiki that is utilized for the creation of a resource with multiple authors and readers, tasks that are well-suited to wikis. Wikipedia is a great example of a wiki with clear, shared tasks for multiple authors and multiple readers and a sense of persistence over time. In contrast, relationships between library staff and patrons do not typically lead to the shared creation of resources. While it is true that the relationship between patron and librarian in the context of a patron's research assignment can be collaborative depending on the circumstances, authorship is not shared but is possessed by the patron. In addition, research assignments in the context of undergraduate coursework are short-lived and seldom go beyond the confines of a particular course. In terms of patrons working together with other patrons, there is the precedent of group work; however, groups often produce projects or papers that share the characteristics of nongroup research assignments listed above. This, of course, does not mean that wikis are not suitable for collaboration within categories III and IV, but perhaps the opportunities for collaboration are fewer or that they stretch the imagination of the types and ways of doing collaborative work.

Fourth, perhaps it is a matter of "Not yet." While the research has shown that libraries are not utilizing wikis in categories III and IV, this may be because it is too soon. It should be noted that wikis are still new technologies. It might be the case that librarians are experimenting in safer contexts so they will gain experience prior to trying more public projects where their expertise will be needed. If this explanation is true, it is expected that more examples of wikis in libraries will soon emerge. As they do, the author hopes that all examples of wikis in libraries, new and old, will be added to the companion wiki to this article, LibraryWikis (<http://librarywikis.pbwiki.com/>).

Conclusion

It appears that wikis are here to stay, and that their utilization within libraries is only just beginning. This article

documented the current practice of wikis used in libraries using CSCW as a framework for discussion. The author located examples of wikis in three places: within the LIS literature, on the Library Success wiki, and within messages from three professional electronic discussion lists. Thirty-three examples of wikis were identified and classified using a classification schema created by the author. The schema has four categories: (1) collaboration among libraries; (2) collaboration among library staff; (3) collaboration among library staff and patrons; and (4) collaboration among patrons. Wikis were used for a variety of purposes, including for sharing information, supporting association work, collecting software documentation, supporting conferences, facilitating librarian-to-faculty collaboration, creating digital repositories, managing Web content, creating Intranets, providing reference desk support, creating knowledge bases, creating subject guides, and collecting reader reviews. By and large, wikis were primarily used to support collaboration among library staff intraorganizationally and extraorganizationally, with nearly 80 percent (45.7 percent and 31.4 percent respectively) of the examples so identified, and less so in the support of collaboration among library staff and patrons (14.3 percent) and collaboration among patrons (8.6 percent). A majority of the examples of wikis utilized the MediaWiki software (47.8 percent). It is clear that there are plenty of examples of wikis utilized in libraries, and more to be found each day. It is at this time that the profession is faced with extending the use of this technology, and it is to the future to see how wikis will continue to be used within libraries.

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Appendix. Wikis in Libraries

I = Collaboration between libraries

II = Collaboration between library staff

III = Collaboration between library staff and patrons

IV = Collaboration between patrons

Category	Description	Location	Wiki Software
I	Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki—a wiki capturing library success stories. Covers a wide variety of topics. Also features a presentation about wikis http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Wiki_World	http://www.libsuccess.org/	MediaWiki
I	Wiki for School Library Association in Alaska	http://akasl.pbwiki.com/	PBWiki
I	Wiki to support Reserves Direct. Free, open-source software for managing academic reserves materials developed by Emory University.	http://www.reservesdirect.org/wiki/index.php/Main_Page	MediaWiki
I	SUNYLA New Tech Wiki—a place for State University of New York (SUNY) librarians to share how they are using information technologies to interact with patrons	http://sunylanewtechwiki.pbwiki.com/	PBWiki
I	Wiki for librarians and faculty members to collaborate across campuses. Being used with distance learning instructors and small groups	Message from Robin Shapiro. On [DIG_REF] electronic discussion list dated 10/18/2006.	Unknown
I	Discusses setting up three wikis in last month: “one to support a pre-conference workshop, another for behind-the-scenes conferences planning by local organizers, and one for conference attendees to use before they arrived and during the sessions” (30).	Fichter, Darlene. 2006. Using Wikis to Support Online Collaboration in Libraries. <i>Information Outlook</i> 10, no.1: 30-31.	Unknown
I	Unofficial wiki to the American Library Association 2005 Annual Conference	http://meredith.wolfwater.com/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page	MediaWiki
I	Unofficial wiki to the 2005 Internet Librarian conference	http://ili2005.xwiki.com/xwiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome	XWiki
I	Wiki for the Canadian Library Association (CLA) 2005 Annual Conference	http://wiki.ucalgary.ca/page/CLA	MediaWiki
I	Wiki for South Carolina Library Association	http://www.scla.org/Governance/HomePage	PmWiki
I	Wiki set up to support national discussion about Institutional Repositories in New Zealand	http://wiki.tertiary.govt.nz/~InstitutionalRepositories	PmWiki
I	The Oregon Library Instruction Wiki used for sharing information about library instruction	http://instructionwiki.org/	MediaWiki
I	Personal Repositories Online Wiki Environment (PROWE)—An online repository sponsored by The Open University and the University of Leicester that uses wikis and blogs to encourage the open exchange of ideas across communities of practice	http://www.prowe.ac.uk/	Unknown

Category	Description	Location	Wiki Software
I	LIS Wiki—space for collecting articles and general information about Library and Information Science	http://liswiki.org/wiki/Main_Page	MediaWiki
I	Making of Modern Michigan—a wiki to support a state-wide digital library project	http://blog.lib.msu.edu/mmmwiki/index.php/Main_Page	Unknown (Behind Firewall)
I	Wiki used as a Web content editing tool in a digital library initiative sponsored by Emory University, the University of Arizona, Virginia Tech, and the University of Notre Dame	http://sunylanewtechwiki.pbwiki.com/	PBWiki
II	Wiki at SUNY Stony Brook Health Sciences Library used as Knowledge Base	http://appdev.hsclib.sunysb.edu/twiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome ; presentation can be found at: http://ms.cc.sunysb.edu/%7Edachase/wikisinaction.htm	TWiki
II	Wiki at York University used internally for committee work. Exploring how to use wikis as a way to collaborate with users	Message from Mark Robertson. On Web4lib electronic discussion list dated 10/13/2006.	Unknown
II	Wiki for internal staff use at the University of Waterloo. They utilize access control to restrict parts of the wiki to groups	Message from Chris Gray. On Web4lib electronic discussion list dated 08/09/2006.	Unknown
II	Wiki at the University of Toronto for internal communications, technical problems, and as a document repository	Message from Stephanie Walker. On LIBREF-L electronic discussion list dated 10/28/2006.	Unknown
II	Wiki used for coordination and organization of Portable Professor program, which appears to be a collaborative information literacy program for remote faculty	http://tfpp-committee.pbwiki.com/	PBWiki
II	The University of Connecticut Libraries' Staff Wiki which is a repository of Information Technology Services documents	http://wiki.lib.uconn.edu/wiki/Main_Page	MediaWiki
II	Wiki used at Binghamton University Libraries for staff intranet. Features pages for Committees, Documentation, Policies, Newsletters, Presentations, and Travel Reports	Screenshots can be found at http://library.lib.binghamton.edu/presentations/CIL2006/CIL%202006_Wikis.pdf	MediaWiki
II	Wiki used at the Information Desk at Miami University	Described in: Withers, Rob. "Something Wiki this Way Comes." C&RL News 66, no. 11 (2005): 775–77.	Unknown
II	Use of wiki as knowledge base to support reference service	http://oregonstate.edu/~reset/RDM/	Unknown
II	University of Minnesota Libraries Staff Web site in wiki form	https://wiki.lib.umn.edu/	PmWiki
II	Wiki used to support the MIT Engineering and Science Libraries B-Team. The wiki may no longer be active, but is still available	http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/b-team	SeedWiki
III	A wiki that is subject guide at St. Joseph County Public Library in South Bend, Indiana	http://www.libraryforlife.org/subjectguides/index.php/Main_Page	MediaWiki

Category	Description	Location	Wiki Software
III	Wiki used at the Aiken Library, University of South Carolina as a content management system (CMS)	http://library.usca.edu/Main/HomePage	PmWiki
III	Doucette Library of Teaching Resources Wiki—a repository of resources for education students	http://wiki.ucalgary.ca/page/Doucette	MediaWiki
IV	Wiki WorldCat (WikiD) is an OCLC pilot project (now defunct) that allowed users to add reviews to Open WorldCat records	http://www.oclc.org/product-works/wcwiki.htm	Unknown
III and IV	WikiRef lists reviews of reference resources—databases, books, Web sites, etc. —created by Butler librarians, faculty, staff, and students.	http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/butler_wikiref ; reported in Matthies, Brad, Jonathan Helmke, and Paul Slater. Using a Wiki to Enhance Library Instruction. <i>Indiana Libraries</i> 25, no. 3 (2006): 32–34.	SeedWiki
III and IV	Wiki used as a subject guide at Ohio University	http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/index.php/Main_Page ; presentation about the wiki: http://www.infoday.com/cil2006/presentations/C101-102_Boeninger.pps	MediaWiki