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Wikipedia

The word Wikipedia is a portmanteau of wiki and encyclopedia. As the name indicates, Wikipedia’s contents are complety generate and edited by the users. Wikipedia was born as a side project for Nupedia which was an English-lanugauge encyclopedia that when through formal review process. Wikipedia was launched on January 15, 2001 by Larry Sanger and Jimmy Wales. Within a year since the launch, Wikipedia had grown to approximately 20,000 articles and 18 language editions. Now Wikipedia is world 5th most visited website.

Content

Content of the Wikipedia is generated and edited by the users. According to Wikipedia, it follows the procrastination principle, which basically means one should wait for problems to arise before solving them. I believe Wikipedia is run by the Panopticon-like structure and Wikipedia is pushing that direction (vandalism). To prevent chaos and to protect the “neutrality” of information, Wikipedia has restriction system. The accuracy of Wikipedia articles has always been questioned, yet according to the study done by Nature, it has almost reached the level of Encyclopaedia Britannica.

User

Wikipedia is based on anarchistic principles, where there’s no one more authoritative to knowledge than the others. Thus Wikipedia is self-sustained website and it has proven to be successful. Just by looking at the size of the Wikipedia company, Wikimedia – it has only 187 employees – one can clearly see how the users of the website is sustaining the gigantic website. Yet the Wikipedia had to introduce some degree of hierarchy in the users to keep the peace. For example, users who has been elected as an admin have the ability to delete or protect articles. The lack of diversity and the decline of overall editors are the other issues that Wikipedia faces.