Re:Flex Toolbar - an extensible system for exploring social translucence

Overview

The Re:Flex toolbar is a **plugin framework** that enables users to analyze data on Wikipedia.
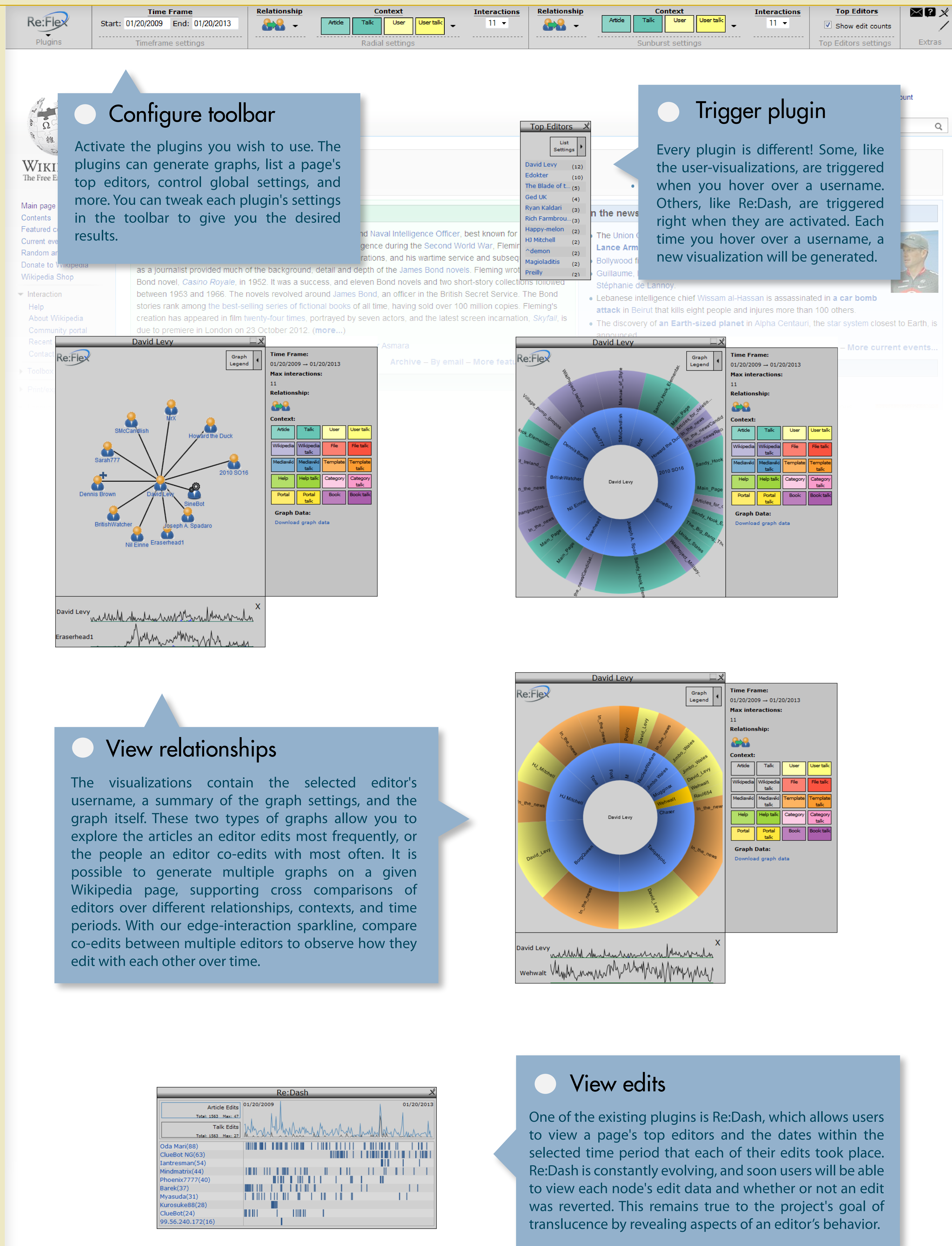
Motivation

Re:Flex was created to allow users to **explore the social behavior behind Wikipedia** and to quickly display useful information that is otherwise scattered amongst millions of Wikipedia pages. Such explorations enable toolbar users to arrive at deeper understandings about relationships within the social media system.

Inspiration

Our team is inspired by **social translucence** and its potential application to social media systems like Wikipedia. We've tackled some technical problems behind organizing all the available data within the system into an accessible format.

Benefits

Re:Flex aims to be beneficial to all users of Wikipedia, from avid editors to occasional browsers. Re:Flex will be released as a **free service**, and we will encourage developers to create their own plugins.

Configure toolbar

Activate the plugins you wish to use. The plugins can generate graphs, list a page's top editors, control global settings, and more. You can tweak each plugin's settings in the toolbar to give you the desired results.

Trigger plugin

Every plugin is different! Some, like the user-visualizations, are triggered when you hover over a username. Others, like Re:Dash, are triggered right when they are activated. Each time you hover over a username, a new visualization will be generated.

View relationships

The visualizations contain the selected editor's username, a summary of the graph settings, and the graph itself. These two types of graphs allow you to explore the articles an editor edits most frequently, or the people an editor co-edits with most often. It is possible to generate multiple graphs on a given Wikipedia page, supporting cross comparisons of editors over different relationships, contexts, and time periods. With our edge-interaction sparkline, compare co-edits between multiple editors to observe how they edit with each other over time.

View edits

One of the existing plugins is Re:Dash, which allows users to view a page's top editors and the dates within the selected time period that each of their edits took place. Re:Dash is constantly evolving, and soon users will be able to view each node's edit data and whether or not an edit was reverted. This remains true to the project's goal of translucence by revealing aspects of an editor's behavior.

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