

Reputation on Wikipedia: Why, What, How?

Workshop, Wikimania 2009

Why reputation on the Wikipedia?

- **Motivate contributors:**
 - Every article could list the user who most contributed
 - User profile could auto-link to the pages where the user did the most contributions.
- **Grant privileges** (permission to modify critical pages, ...)
- **Awards** (barnstars, ...), select members for service
- **Give information** to readers (who is really this user who wrote this?)
- **Copyright** issues (every page can list the top N contributors)

Others? What do you think?

Reputation, according to WikiTrust

Reputation = a history of preserved contributions.

- **Encourages constructive behavior.**
 - Authors whose contributions are preserved gain reputation (even if the contribution is reworded).
 - Authors whose contributions are undone lose reputation (even if the contribution is mostly, but not fully, reverted).
- **Automatic:** no user input required, computed via text analysis. Every edit judges previous ones. No bias in favor of more vocal users.
- **Language independent** (works for all languages)
- **Resistant to attacks** (fake identities, self-praise)

What should reputation be?

More measures?

- **Metrics on text quality.** But are they robust? Are they language independent?
- **Users vote** on other users/contributions.
 - How to avoid “vocal user bias” (only more vocal users care to vote)?
 - How to make this resistant to collusion, attacks?
 - I keep your contribution, but vote you down
 - You do nothing, yet I vote for you
- **Combine with relevance:** should edits to often-visited pages matter more? But some deep contributions (e.g. math) are not visited often.

What else? What would you want reputation to be?

Which behaviours should we encourage?

We can measure many things: whether a user adds text, deletes it, moves it around; how big each contribution is, etc.

Ideas:

- We could give reputation only to the users who contribute big chunks of lasting text. Reverting spam, or word-smithing, would not count much.
- People who delete too much, without also adding, could lose reputation. Patrolling = no reputation gain.
- Should we praise more people who contribute a lot to a single page, or a little to many pages?
- How fast should reputation decay?
- Whom do we wish to encourage? Who are the people that really contribute?

One or many reputations?

It would be nice if we could agree on a single, robust, language-independent, all-encompassing notion of user reputation...

... but this may be unlikely...

- Should we strive towards a unified notion?
- Should we have multiple notions of reputation? For example, user A can have
 - Reputation 4.5 (out of 10) according to WikiTrust
 - Reputation 6.7 according to XY
 - ...
- Should there be an API to add notions of reputation, so others can develop their notion and add it?

Which information to show or share?

To whom should reputation information be shown?

A user can check his own reputation, but only have a summary of other users' reputations?

- Never show negative reputations?

How much detail to show to whom?

- Should we tell users in detail how much each of their edits affected their reputation?
- If users complain, what will we do? Algorithms will never be 100% correct nor 100% reasonable.
- Can we find a notion of reputation that is informative, yet flattering enough that it can be shown with little recrimination?
- Should reputation be visible via an API?