

Bringing Wikipedia to IUPUI University Library: #1lib1ref Participation

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A good Wikipedia article is one that contains citations to reliable sources so that readers can verify the information and find even more information related to that topic. Many Wikipedia articles, however, are missing a needed citation. For that reason, the Wikipedia Library came up with an initiative last year in an effort to bridge the citation gap. They launched the #1lib1ref campaign in January 15, 2016, which coincided with Wikipedia's 15th birthday. The idea behind this global campaign was to encourage every librarian to provide Wikipedia with the gift of one citation to an article in need.¹ The success of this initiative motivated the Wikipedia Library to host this event again in 2017 where a noticeable increase in participation was recorded. There was also an increase in the number of Wikipedia workshops and sessions held at libraries across the globe in order to provide new editors with the necessary tools to undertake the task of adding citations to the online encyclopedia.² Reflecting the library's strong interest in supporting free access to quality information, IUPUI University Library was one of the institutions that participated in this effort.

Getting Ready for 1lib1ref

On January 5, 2017, we held our first Wikipedia event as part of the library's biannual "Org Week" schedule. Library staff and faculty joined a working meeting to learn about Wikipedia and its core principles, to discuss why we thought it was important to contribute to it, and to get started as editors. During the session, attendees created an account (if needed), learned how to edit their User Profiles, and completed their Conflict of Interest Statements. Attendees also saw a quick demonstration of how to add a citation as we were getting ready to participate in the #1lib1ref campaign.

As part of this first session, we started by asking participants (n=23) to complete a three-question survey to learn about their involvement with Wikipedia. On a scale of 1 (not often) to 5 (very often) our attendees reported 3.4, meaning that they use Wikipedia regularly. However, only 32% of attendees had contributed to Wikipedia prior to the session. These contributions could have been anything from creating new articles, adding links to external resources, adding citations, or improving the quality of the content in existing articles. The majority of attendees (80%) reported not having a Wikipedia account.

Demographics

¹ "Spotlight: 1Lib1Ref." *The Wikipedia Library Books & Bytes* 15 (2016): 2.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The_Wikipedia_Library/Newsletter/December-January2016

² "#1Lib1Ref." *The Wikipedia Library Books & Bytes* 21 (2017): 1-3.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The_Wikipedia_Library/Newsletter/January-March2017

This session had 23 attendees, of which 52% were female, and included staff members, librarians, archivists, and developers.

Outcomes

At the end of the session, we had 20 new Wikipedia users. Of these users, 16 created their User Page and 13 added a Conflict of Interest Statement. Some even went on to add categories and userboxes to their pages. Participants left with an appreciation and better understanding of how Wikipedia works.

lib1ref in Action

On February 2, 2017, we held our second Wikipedia event. In this session, we walked through the steps of adding a citation to an existing Wikipedia article and shared best practices for selecting sources. Those who were interested in participating in this global campaign but were unable to attend the session still added citations on their own time and shared their contributions with us.

Demographics

This session had 10 attendees, of which 60% were female. Participants included staff members, librarians, and one archivist.

Outcomes

During this session, we had two new users create their Wikipedia accounts. One of them also created a User Page and added a Conflict of Interest Statement. One participant added new content to an underdeveloped article and another participant edited an incorrect article. In terms of citations, 15 were added before the event took place, 15 during the event and 3 afterwards. This accounted for a total contribution of 33 new citations added to existing Wikipedia articles. Participants were excited to learn how to add citations and understood the importance of using reliable sources to back up the article's content.

Next Steps for Wikipedia at IUPUI Libraries

Although our number of contributions was small compared to other organizations (33 citations added), the effort shows that great things can happen when a group of motivated individuals work towards a common goal: making Wikipedia more reliable. This campaign was the right venue to provide a safe environment for those that were hesitant to contribute to the encyclopedia as the task in hand was fairly easy to achieve. Adding citations to Wikipedia during the event gave many the motivation to continue their participation even after the campaign. This proved that the library community is eager and interested in helping shape the 5th most used website, Wikipedia.

As we were thinking and planning our involvement with Wikipedia, we decided to create a GLAM Wiki project page for our library.³ The idea behind creating this page was to have a central place where we could manage the project and to show our commitment to contributing to the online encyclopedia. On this page, new and existing users can find tools and guidelines that will help them

³ "GLAM/IUPUI University Library." Wikipedia 25 Jan. 2017. Wikipedia. Web. 25 Apr. 2017.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:GLAM/IUPUI_University_Library

get more comfortable with editing Wikipedia. We also offer suggestions for quick edits and share how to get involved with our project. In addition, we provide information about our past and upcoming Wikipedia events. Wikipedia is a widely-used platform and our library employees have access to the necessary resources to improve it. In addition to improving and creating pages about topics relevant to our state, communities, and collections, we are also interested in contributing to ongoing efforts to make Wikipedia a more diverse and equitable information environment.