

# A Tale of Language Support

Siebrand Mazeland

Product Manager Localisation

Wikimedia Foundation





# Wikimedia and MediaWiki

- MediaWiki is the software Wikipedias and sister projects run on
- 800 wikis
- 285 languages
- 23,000,000 content pages
- 500,000,000 readers
- 18,000,000,000 page views



**WIKIPEDIA**  
*The Free Encyclopedia*



Powered By  
**MediaWiki**



# What is language support about

## Removing language related barriers

- ✦ Internationalisation - Allow localisation
- ✦ Localisation - Deliver a native language user experience
- ✦ Input - How can content be contributed in MediaWiki
- ✦ Output - How do users see content
- ✦ Translation - Facilitate making content available in multiple languages





# Everyone is involved



[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikimedia\\_Hackathon\\_Berlin\\_2011\\_group\\_photo.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikimedia_Hackathon_Berlin_2011_group_photo.jpg)  
CC-BY-SA 3.0 DE / Tobias Schumann

- ✦ Reader: Report issues
- ✦ Translator: Content translation
- ✦ Translator: Localisation
- ✦ Language team: Describe language properties
- ✦ Developer: Use i18n best practices
- ✦ i18n developer: Provide i18n frameworks



# Translation

## Translating documentation and messaging

- ✦ Page translation enabled on Meta, mediawiki.org, incubator, ...
- ✦ Structured multi-user translation
- ✦ Review feature
- ✦ Workflow states

Message group	Messages	Untranslated	Completion	Outdated	Status
<a href="#">_High priority requests</a> <a href="#">[expand]</a>	8	0	100%	0%	(unset)
<a href="#">Fundraising 2012</a> <a href="#">[expand]</a>	103	0	100%	0%	(unset)
<a href="#">Funds Dissemination Committee/Framework for the Creation and Initial Operation of the FDC/Summary</a>	14	14	0%	0%	(unset)
<a href="#">Funds Dissemination Committee/Update on the Funds Dissemination Design Process</a>	9	9	0%	0%	In progress
<a href="#">Global Development/Arabic Language Initiative strategic plan</a>	33	33	0%	0%	(unset)
<a href="#">Grants:Index</a>	82	0	100%	0%	Proofreading
<a href="#">IPv6 initiative/2012 IPv6 Day announcement</a>	15	0	100%	0%	(unset)
<a href="#">Language committee</a>	29	15	48%	0%	(unset)
<a href="#">Mobile Projects/Mobile Gateway/Mobile homepage formatting</a>	30	30	0%	0%	(unset)

Screenshot of [\[\[Special:LanguageStats/n\]\]](#) at Meta-Wiki



# Localisation

Translating a product for use in a language

- ✦ Translate software in as many languages as possible
- ✦ Quality assurance: Review changes
  - ✦ Style, patchwork messages, <the things developers do>...
  - ✦ Support gender and plural forms
  - ✦ Namespace names, magic words, special page URLs
  - ✦ Date and time notation, and more



Logo translatewiki.net / © 2008 Danny B.



# Internationalisation

Make software ready for use in multiple languages

- ✦ Translatable messages
- ✦ Plural forms
- ✦ Gender
- ✦ Namespaces, magic words, URL of special pages
- ✦ Prefix and suffix for grammatical cases, number conversion, toolbar buttons, script conversion
- ✦ Many languages look a lot like English. In India that's very far from the truth



[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Petersburger Platz.JPG](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Petersburger_Platz.JPG)  
CC-BY-SA 3.0 / Achim Raschka



# Input

Not every language and user are the same

- ✦ No or developing Unicode standards
- ✦ No keyboards
- ✦ Not always using the same computer



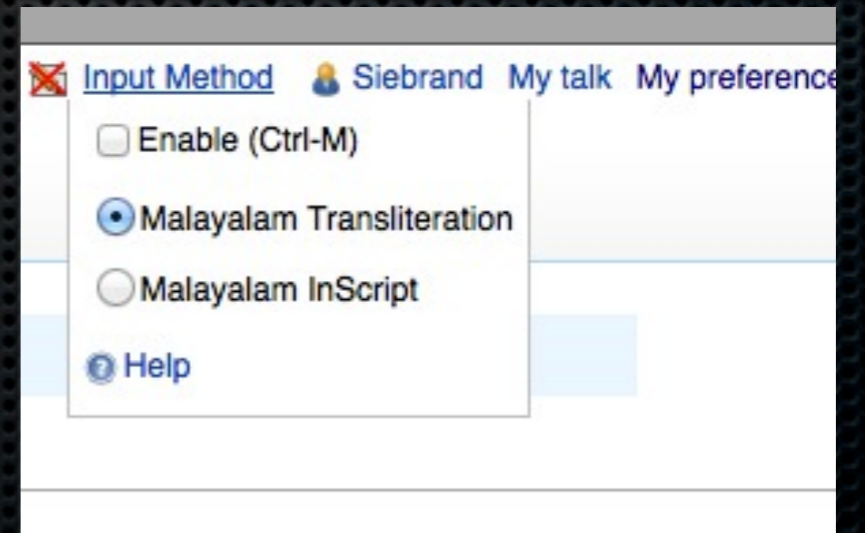
Tibetan keyboard / MIT license / [[en>User:EdC]]



# Input

[[mw:Extension:Narayam]]

- ✦ Choose your keyboard layout in MediaWiki
- ✦ Future: on-screen keyboard for even better accessibility

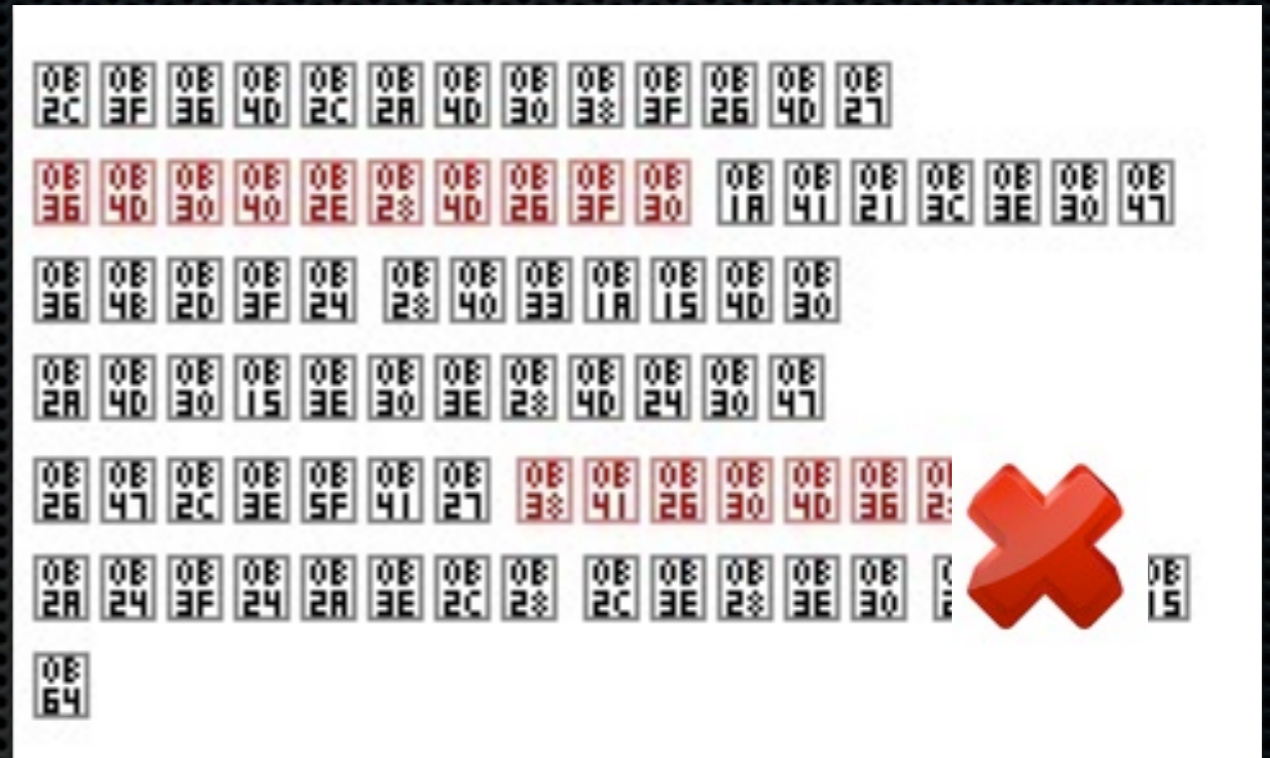




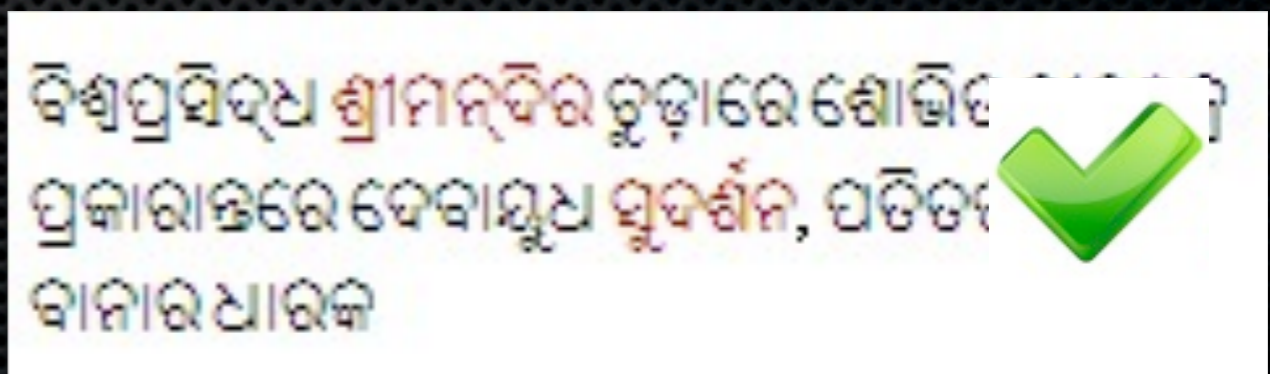
# Output

## Fonts are key

- ✦ `[[mw:Extension:WebFonts]]`
- ✦ Embed fonts
  - ✦ The website supplies fonts



Text in Odiya script  
without a font installed



Text in Odiya script  
with WebFonts installed



# Future developments

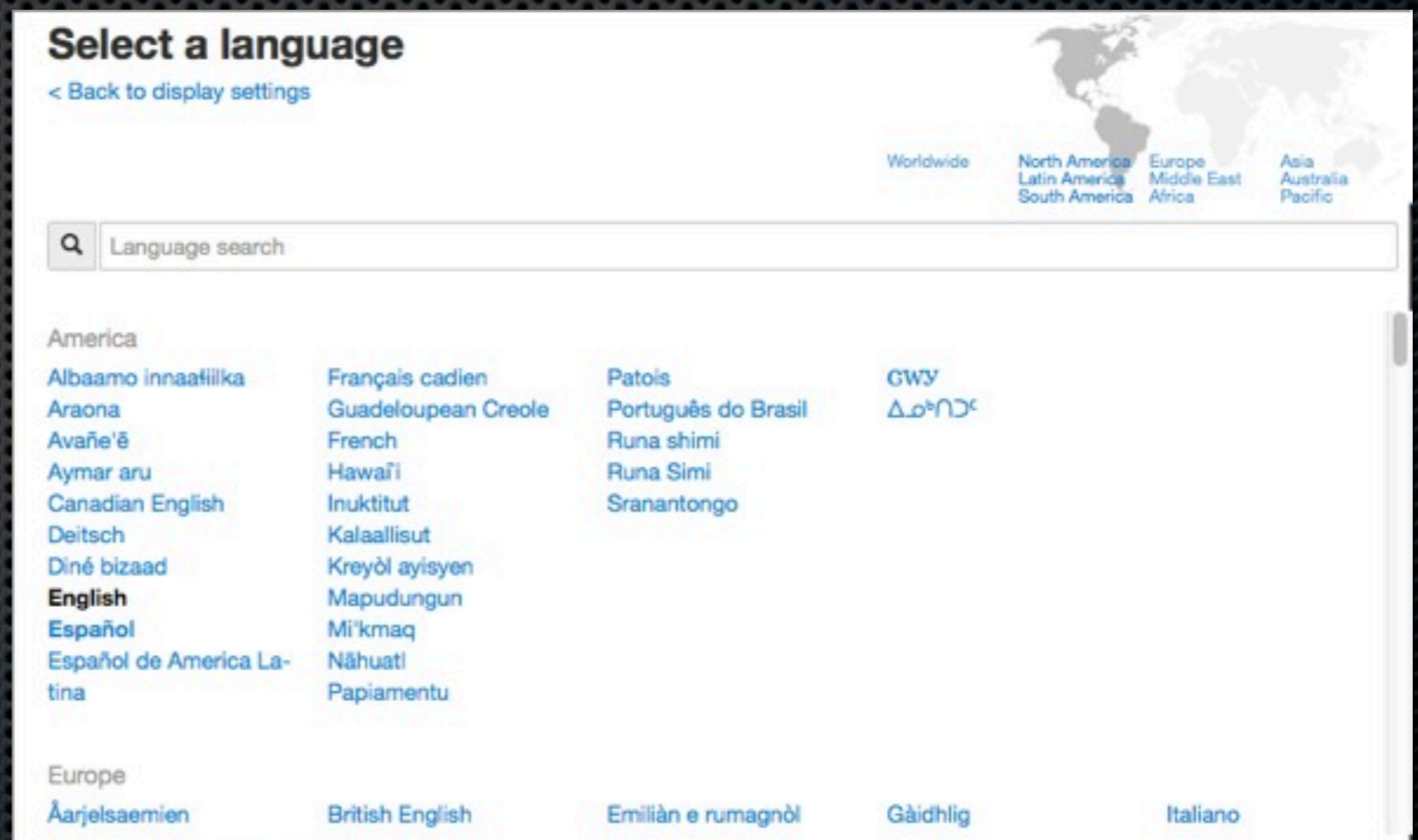
## Adapt and improve

- ✦ Universal Language Selector

- ✦ Ease of use

- ✦ Accept language

- ✦ Persistence



**Select a language**  
< Back to display settings

Worldwide North America Latin America South America Europe Middle East Africa Asia Australia Pacific

Language search

America

Albaamo innaafiiika	Français cadien	Patois	GWY
Araona	Guadeloupean Creole	Português do Brasil	Δαβ'ᲚᲗ
Avañe'ẽ	French	Runa shimi	
Aymar aru	Hawa'i	Runa Simi	
Canadian English	Inuktitut	Sranantongo	
Deutsch	Kalaallisut		
Diné bizaad	Kreyòl ayisyen		
<b>English</b>	Mapudungun		
Español	Mi'kmaq		
Español de America Latina	Nàhuatl		
	Papiamentu		

Europe

Àarjelsaemien	British English	Emiliàn e rumagnòl	Gàidhlig	Italiano
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# Future developments

## Adapt and improve

- ✦ Project Milkshake
  - ✦ Imagine a world in which every single open source project can freely have great internationalisation
  - ✦ Dual licensed
  - ✦ Non-MediaWiki dependent
  - ✦ Reusable
  - ✦ Setting standards



# Future developments

## Streamline

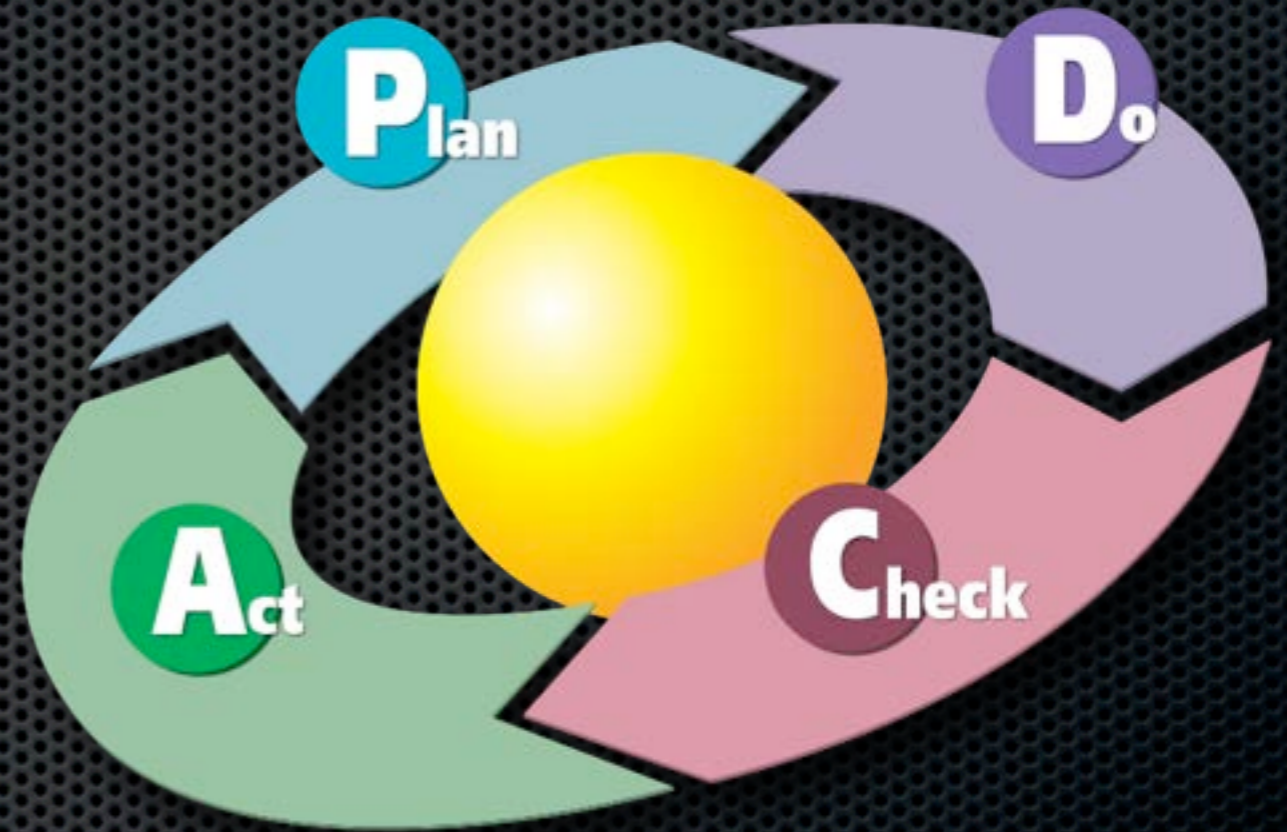
- ✦ Project Milkshake modules
  - ✦ Feature rich internationalisation
  - ✦ Language selector
  - ✦ Input methods
  - ✦ Web fonts



# Future developments

## Streamline

- ✦ i18n awareness with developers
- ✦ i18n/L10n code review mandatory
- ✦ i18n for mobile
- ✦ i18n for visual editor



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:PDCA\\_Cycle.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:PDCA_Cycle.svg)  
CC-BY / Karn G. Bulsuk



# Questions and answers

E-mail address: [siebrand@wikimedia.org](mailto:siebrand@wikimedia.org)

- ✦ Help with translations?

[translatewiki.net](http://translatewiki.net)

- ✦ Volunteer dev?

[mediawiki.org/wiki/Development](http://mediawiki.org/wiki/Development)

- ✦ We need help  
changing the world!

[jobs.wikimedia.org](http://jobs.wikimedia.org)

