



1. [http://strategy.wikimedia.org/wiki/Former\\_Contributors\\_Survey\\_Results](http://strategy.wikimedia.org/wiki/Former_Contributors_Survey_Results)
2. [http://www.wikipediasurvey.org/docs/Wikipedia\\_Overview\\_15March2010-FINAL.pdf](http://www.wikipediasurvey.org/docs/Wikipedia_Overview_15March2010-FINAL.pdf)  
--susanpgardner Sun Feb 27 2011 18:23:51 GMT-0800 (PST)
3. [http://www.wikipediasurvey.org/docs/Wikipedia\\_Overview\\_15March2010-FINAL.pdf](http://www.wikipediasurvey.org/docs/Wikipedia_Overview_15March2010-FINAL.pdf)  
--susanpgardner Sun Feb 27 2011 18:25:34 GMT-0800 (PST)
4. [http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Research\\_Committee/Areas\\_of\\_interest/Expert\\_involvement/2011\\_survey](http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Research_Committee/Areas_of_interest/Expert_involvement/2011_survey)  
--susanpgardner Sun Feb 27 2011 18:25:55 GMT-0800 (PST)
5. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wikipedia\\_Signpost/2009-11-09/New\\_pages\\_experiment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wikipedia_Signpost/2009-11-09/New_pages_experiment)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Newbie\\_treatment\\_at\\_CSD](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Newbie_treatment_at_CSD)

--susanpgardner Mon Feb 28 2011 14:38:04 GMT-0800 (PST)

6. Two respondents wrote write-in comments re usability on the Former Editors Survey: "The interface and writing methods are quite complicated. I'm quite computer savvy and even I get a little overwhelmed at times; this really limits the number of people who can add useful information to only those who are adept with computers." And this "Please make coding wiki more simple"

7. This was the core finding of our original usability studies. Since then, usability has improved, but there has not been a radical transformation.

--susanpgardner Mon Feb 28 2011 17:20:44 GMT-0800 (PST)

8. The former editors survey targeted only the E20-99 group and is not applicable here.

9. The decline is steepest among new editors, not experienced editors.

10. No relevant question included in survey, but no free text comments surfacing this as a major issue either

11. Non-editors cited as their number one reason for not editing, that it was not clear to them that they had anything to contribute. This could be interpreted to support this theory, and/or it could speak to people's self-assurance.

12. Although many very obvious topics are covered (e.g., the Sun, the Moon, the Bible), many commenters talked online about obvious subjectmatter areas they feel are NOT yet well covered.

13. There was a long discussion on the Internal list (I think) trying to debunk the myth of every possible topic has been written (which obviously depends on what is considered "a topic"). Editors often discuss the Gold Rush theory, and it does seem self-evidently to have some truth to it. But yes, it depends very much on what a topic is: many many non-editors and former editors see obvious gaps in Wikipedia's coverage.

14. Many respondents to the Former Editors Survey say they do want to edit Wikipedia, and are sad to have stopped editing, but they found it too difficult, mostly for reasons related to a negative culture.

15. Lots of people are still trying to edit; they are just bouncing off the barricades.

16. At least among subject matter experts, this seems not to be true (judging from recurring comments left by survey participants): a lot of people who responded would like to edit Wikipedia but end up not doing so because of barriers of various nature --dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 22:25:47 GMT+0000 (GMT)

17. This study indirectly suggests that people who want to edit will be reverted in ways they will find unpleasant.

18. This might be an effect, not the actual cause of the declining trend: if user activity is a function of user attention, this may depend on the effectiveness of notification / awareness mechanisms (see below). Since Web users have a limited attentional span, I'd expect that those websites that succeed at engaging a larger part of user attention are those that see a higher amount of commitment or activity. A slightly separate hypothesis is that people spend more time on other websites because that's where their friends and contacts are--dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 15:49:28 GMT+0000 (GMT)

19. Nobody in the Former Editors Survey cited the appeal of other online activities as a specific reason for their departure. On the other hand, other commitments (new job/hobbies/family) were given as the most common reason for stopping contribution.

20. Studies seem to suggest that activities like Facebook take time away from offline activities more than online -- e.g., from television watching or face-to-face socializing or studying/work. See for example --

At the same time, see: [http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online\\_mobile/time-spent-on-facebook-up-700-but-myspace-still-tops-for-video/](http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/time-spent-on-facebook-up-700-but-myspace-still-tops-for-video/)

21. Nobody in the Former Editors Survey cited this as a reason for leaving.

--susanpgardner Sun Feb 27 2011 18:20:18 GMT-0800 (PST)

22. It is not a sudden drop-off but rather, a gradual decline.

23. Nobody in the Former Editors Survey cited this as a reason for leaving.

--susanpgardner Sun Feb 27 2011 18:20:46 GMT-0800 (PST)

24. Many respondents to the Former Editors Survey cited bullying behaviour as a reason for leaving.

25. We hear many, many anecdotes of experienced contributors leaving because of conflict. While these cases are surely true, there doesn't appear to be a mass defection of experienced editors over the past several years. --howiefung Mon Feb 28 2011 17:50:50 GMT-0800 (PST)

26. Partly supported by early analysis of the qualitative data in the survey --dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 22:28:38 GMT+0000 (GMT)

27. not necessarily an indicator of "conflict", but higher user crowding correlates with slower growth in the registered user population of wikis (from a study looking at population growth in a large set of wikis)

Roth, C., Taraborelli, D., and Gilbert, N. Measuring wiki viability. An empirical assessment of the social dynamics of a large sample of wikis. In WikiSym '08: Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Wikis (New York, NY, USA, September 2008), ACM.

Of related interest, WikiProjects with more members as well as projects that were created later in Wikipedia history are more likely to have members withdraw from contributing to project effort. Increased tenure diversity is a cause of conflicts in WikiProjects.

J. Chen, Y. Ren, and J. Riedl. The effects of diversity on group productivity and member withdrawal in online volunteer groups. In Proc. CHI 2010, pages 821–830, Atlanta, GA, USA, 2010. ACM.

--dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 21:30:32 GMT+0000 (GMT)

28. See other comments below.

29. Participants were overwhelmed and confused, not just by wiki syntax, but also by editorial instructions and warnings.

30. In the write-in comments describing their "worst" experiences, one departed editor writes about how there is 'a ton of do's and don'ts.'

31. The Editor Trends data certainly suggest this strong evidence in favor, but we need to document the various policies put in place during 2006-2007 (Steven Walling is helping with this). --howiefung Mon Feb 28 2011 17:51:55 GMT-0800 (PST)

32. See above.

33. Greater overheads associated with a large body of guidelines and policies

Kittur, A., Suh, B., Pendleton, P.A., and Chi, E.H. He Says, She Says: Conflict and Coordination in Wikipedia. In Proc. of ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI2007), 453-462, April 2007.

--dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 21:27:43 GMT+0000 (GMT)

34. 16% of respondents to the Former Editors Survey name "stubborn, difficult editors" as one of their reasons for leaving. 10% cite "rudeness." These were

among the most-cited answers that specified problems within the Wikipedia community. Also, editors talked about "bullying" "power-hungry" "rude" "snobs" in their write-in comments asking about their "worst" experiences on Wikipedia.

35. 17% of respondents to the Former Editors Survey claimed as a reason for leaving that "my work kept getting undone." Reversions and deletions came up also in the write-in section where editors talked about their "worst experiences" on Wikipedia.

36. In this study, experienced editors wrote 20 articles that didn't contravene any of enWP's guidelines, while posing as new editors. Of the 20, 19 were tagged for deletion, 11 were tagged for speedy deletion, and three were deleted, one within two minutes of being published.

--susanpgardner Mon Feb 28 2011 17:11:23 GMT-0800 (PST)

37. The Russian Wikipedia is the fastest growing Wikipedia. One key difference between the Russian Wikipedia and others is that in the Russian Wikipedia, new editors are encouraged to start articles in an incubator, where they receive special support and tolerance.

--susanpgardner Fri Mar 11 2011 11:49:59 GMT-0800 (PST)

38. Suh et al. report that the survival rate of newly created page has been consistently decreasing since 2005. However this may be a sign of an increasing volume of spammy pages created due to the increased popularity of Wikipedia.

Anecdotically, deletions are considered a strong disincentive to participations for new users but we don't have data yet on what part of deletions affect pages created by new editors and whether this changed over time. This is work that can potentially be done with data we already have in house (ETS + AfD data)

Suh, B., Convertino, G., Chi, E. H., and Pirolli, P. The singularity is not near: slowing growth of Wikipedia. In WikiSym '09: Proceedings of the 5th International Symposium on Wikis and Open Collaboration (New York, NY, USA, 2009), ACM, pp. 1–10.

39. As their "best experiences" editing Wikipedia, editors cited barnstars and praise from other editors.

40. Just under half of new editors who built good articles were officially welcomed. Note that this doesn't tell us that lack of welcoming deters new editors; all it tells us is that welcoming is inconsistent.

--susanpgardner Mon Feb 28 2011 17:17:34 GMT-0800 (PST)

41. In the write-in comments for worst experiences, one editor writes this: As+a+new+user+there+is+a+ton+of+"do's+and+don't"+that+I+tried+to+read+up+on,+but+

even+before+I+really+started+I+was+already+geing+warnings+that+I+was+doing+X+and+Y+wrong.+

42. In this study, experienced editors wrote 20 articles that didn't contravene any of enWP's guidelines, while posing as new editors. Of the 20, 19 were tagged for deletion, 11 were tagged for speedy deletion, and three were deleted, one within two minutes of being published.

--susanpgardner Mon Feb 28 2011 17:13:01 GMT-0800 (PST)

--susanpgardner Mon Feb 28 2011 17:12:19 GMT-0800 (PST)

43. This was cited as a reason for leaving by respondents to the Former Editors Survey.

44. The body of norms and policies in Wikipedia has grown dramatically, However, policy citations are not exclusively made by veteran users, Beschastnikh et al. report that in every week over 10% of people citing policies are first-timers, suggesting that (a) policies tend to be inclusive but (b) an important part of people citing policies are first-timers. Citing a policy as an early act of an editor strengthens community membership but may affect the survival of other new editors.

Beschastnikh, I., Kriplean, T., and McDonald, D. W. Wikipedian Self-Governance in action: Motivating the policy lens. In Proceedings of the 2008 AAAI International Conference on Weblogs and Social Media (2008).

--dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 21:55:24 GMT+0000 (GMT)

45. Note this hypothesis is unlikely to be supported by any study unless people are directly asked how this affects their participation (and to my knowledge no one studied this aspect before in relation to Wikimedia projects) --dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 15:38:38 GMT+0000 (GMT)

46. The only actual mechanism of social awareness in Wikipedia is watchlists, "checking one's watchlist is one of the editors' primary tasks whenever they log on." Wikipedia hasn't pushed this functionality any further.

Bryant, S. L., Forte, A., and Bruckman, A. Becoming Wikipedian: Transformation of participation in a collaborative online encyclopedia. In Group'05, Sanibel Island, FL, USA (Nov 6-9 2005).

--dtaraborelli Wed Mar 16 2011 21:36:17 GMT+0000 (GMT)