

# What Can Wikipedia Learn From Open Source Software Projects?

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# Commonalities

## Wikipedia and Open Source Communities:

- Rely upon globally distributed volunteers
- Use Internet based infrastructure
- Provide free content
- Sustain transparent revision/development processes
- Are mission driven – one to provide a freely available knowledge base and the other to ensure choice and access in the market

# Differences

## Wikipedia

- Anyone can contribute – expertise more likely to be subject related than technical
- Few dependencies among entries
- Commercial competitors concerned about displacement
- No specific distinction between development and release

## Open Source SW

- Anyone can contribute ‘fixes’ or ideas
- Execution via commit access requires technical expertise
- More technical interdependencies
- Commercial third parties redistribute and have influence
- Code in progress easily distinguished from release

# Why This Panel?

- Extensive variation in the OS model
- Thousands of projects incubated on sourceforge, savannah- most don't survive past idea stage
- A few dozen grow a thriving ecosystem
- Many successful projects are celebrating 10+ years – moving on from sustainability questions
- Reverse question may also be of interest – **What can open source projects learn from wikipedia?**

# Our Plan

- Introduction
- **Joel West, San Jose State** – Information Economics of Open Content Resources
- **Kevin Crowston, Syracuse University** – FLOSS Work Practices
- **Siobhan O'Mahony, Harvard Business School** – Maturation of the Open Source Model
- Q&A/Discussion