



# What's cooking in MediaWiki

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Single sign-on, version tagging, and other goodies

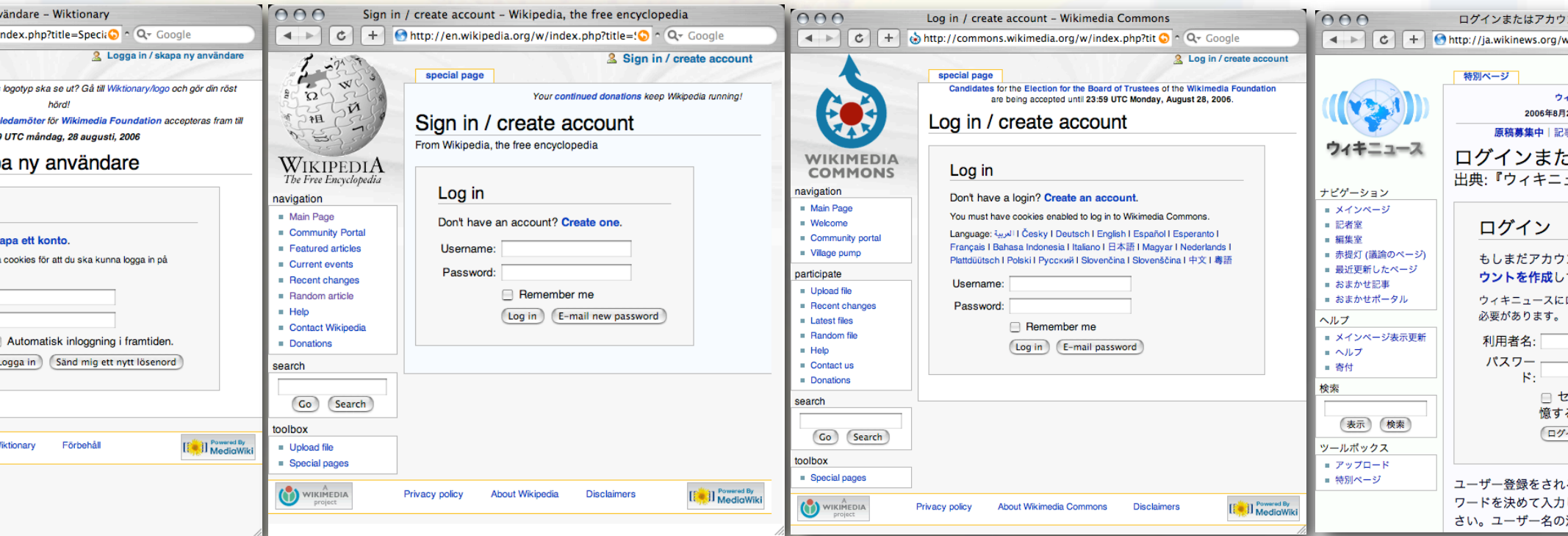
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Wikimania  
Cambridge, MA

# Too many accounts!

- Each language and project has its own set of user accounts



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- This makes cross-wiki operations like uploading an image to Commons harder:
    - log in again
    - have to create your account a second (third, fourth) time
  - Sometimes a username belongs to different people on two project or language wikis, creating confusion

# Immediate goals

- Let the same username and password work for logging in on any Wikimedia project wiki, once created a single time
- Let the same username belong to the same person on all Wikimedia project wikis

# Long-term goals

- Only have to log in once per session for all Wikimedia wikis
  - May require some fancy cookie work, so likely not immediately active
- Use unified accounts to support inter-site protocols such as OpenID authentication cleanly

# Why doesn't it work like this to start with?

- Sad answer: nobody got around to central user database support until hundreds of separate wikis were already in place
- Transition pain:
  - converting database entries
  - merging accounts

# Transition!

- Basic user data collected into a transitional database to be merged...

| lu_dbname | lu_id | lu_name | lu_email   | lu_editcount |
|-----------|-------|---------|--|--------------|
| enwiki    | 1     | Brion   | <a href="mailto:brion@wikimedia.org">brion@wikimedia.org</a> | 4200         |
| frwiki    | 30    | Brion   | <a href="mailto:brion@wikimedia.org">brion@wikimedia.org</a> | 1337         |
| jawiki    | 500   | Brion   | <a href="mailto:brion@pobox.com">brion@pobox.com</a>         | 87           |
| srwiki    | 700   | Brion   | <a href="mailto:brion@pobox.com">brion@pobox.com</a>         | 0            |

# Assign an account owner

- The global account is assigned first to the owner of one of the local wikis' accounts.
- In most cases, this will just be the account with the most edits.

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# E-mail match

- Any accounts with matching e-mail are next attached automatically.
- Passwords can be reset by e-mail, so any account with matching e-mail can be accessed by the same person.

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# Merge unused accounts

- Some accounts have never actually been used for editing.
- These can be reclaimed with little conflict.

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# First login: password check

- The next time the person logs in, we can merge any remaining accounts with matching passwords.
- Encrypted password storage means we can't compare them until the user types it in for us.

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# Yay, done!

- If everything could be matched like this, the accounts have been merged totally transparently.
- Just keep logging in like before, but now it works on wikis you haven't visited before, too

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# Conflict resolution

- It won't always go smooth, of course...  
We have to resolve conflicts if there are accounts with:
  - missing or different email address
  - AND different password
  - AND have been used for edits

# Where do conflicts come from?

- Registered by same person, but didn't keep passwords and email synchronized
- OR registered maliciously by an impersonator
- OR registered by a different person legitimately

# Resolving false conflicts

- Accounts that are owned by the same person but couldn't be matched automatically can be resolved on login:
  - Confirm you know both passwords by logging in
  - OR reset the password by e-mail

# Resolving true conflicts

- This is harder, but possible:
  - On login, the minority account holder will have the option of renaming their account so it no longer conflicts
  - After some time has passed (weeks?), remaining non-matching accounts may be forcefully renamed.



# Single user status

- This has been delayed a long time because every time devs discuss this, it becomes a big fight. Details are non-negotiable or we'll get sidetracked again!
- Basic back-end login and auto-transition code working
- Should be ready for live transition tests later this month, and can go live afterwards
- May delay final transition until Wikimedia board election is complete to avoid breaking votes



# Stable revisions

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tagging isn't always a crime

# Visibility control

- **We** know that Wikipedia is a work-in-progress and vandalism is temporary and harmless
- but **random visitors** to the site don't know this!
- A short time-delay or sometimes explicit approval before updating the view could perhaps reduce the impact of vandalism
  - Keep it easy to find and fix with a visible notice of new, hidden versions

article

discussion

edit this page

history

This article has been reviewed. (review log)  
There are 3 additional changes awaiting review. (compare to this version)

# Harvard Law School

Coordinates: 42.37787° N -71.12° E

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Harvard Law School (HLS)** is one of the professional graduate schools of [Harvard University](#). It is one of the world's leading law schools, with about 1,800 students in [Cambridge, Massachusetts](#). It is home to the largest law library in the world.

HLS routinely places as one of the top three schools in rankings, along with [Yale Law School](#) and [Stanford Law School](#), and usually receives the highest reputational scores from judges, academics and practitioners.

According to [U.S. News & World Report](#), its entering class boasts the highest [LSAT](#) scores in the nation and its graduates have a higher bar passage rate and average salary upon graduation than do graduates of its closest

## Harvard Law School



Established 1817

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# Revision tagging

- Planned for experiments on German Wikipedia
- Possible uses:
  - Marking stable versions for display
  - Marking reviewed versions for publishing subsets
  - Allowing edits on locked articles while default visitor view is to the last-checked version

# Neat? What's so hard?

- Templates and images!
  - May be vandalized or changed incompatibly since the original version was marked
  - A stable revision with a bunch of vandalism in a template... not so great.

# How can we solve this?

- Track the revision ID of the tagged page version...
- **and** the current revision IDs of each template used
- **and** the version of each image used

# Err, what's that mean?

- Unlike protected pages today, tagged versions will always display the same...
- even if someone changes the templates and images it uses.



# But who makes the decisions?

- Aye, that's a good question.
- Most likely, 'protection'-style tagging will be done by sysops like today
- Publishing tagging may be done by ad-hoc groups?
- It's still in experimental planning, details up in the air...

# What about ratings?

- Ratings or reputation systems could become part of how taggable revisions are identified, though automation might be too scary

# Revision tagging status


- Some back-end proof-of-concept code has been done to confirm the template versioning can work
- UI mockups for versioning badges
- Still needs final decisions on how it will be used
- Depending on developer load and community excitement, will see the light of day in one to three months



# OpenID

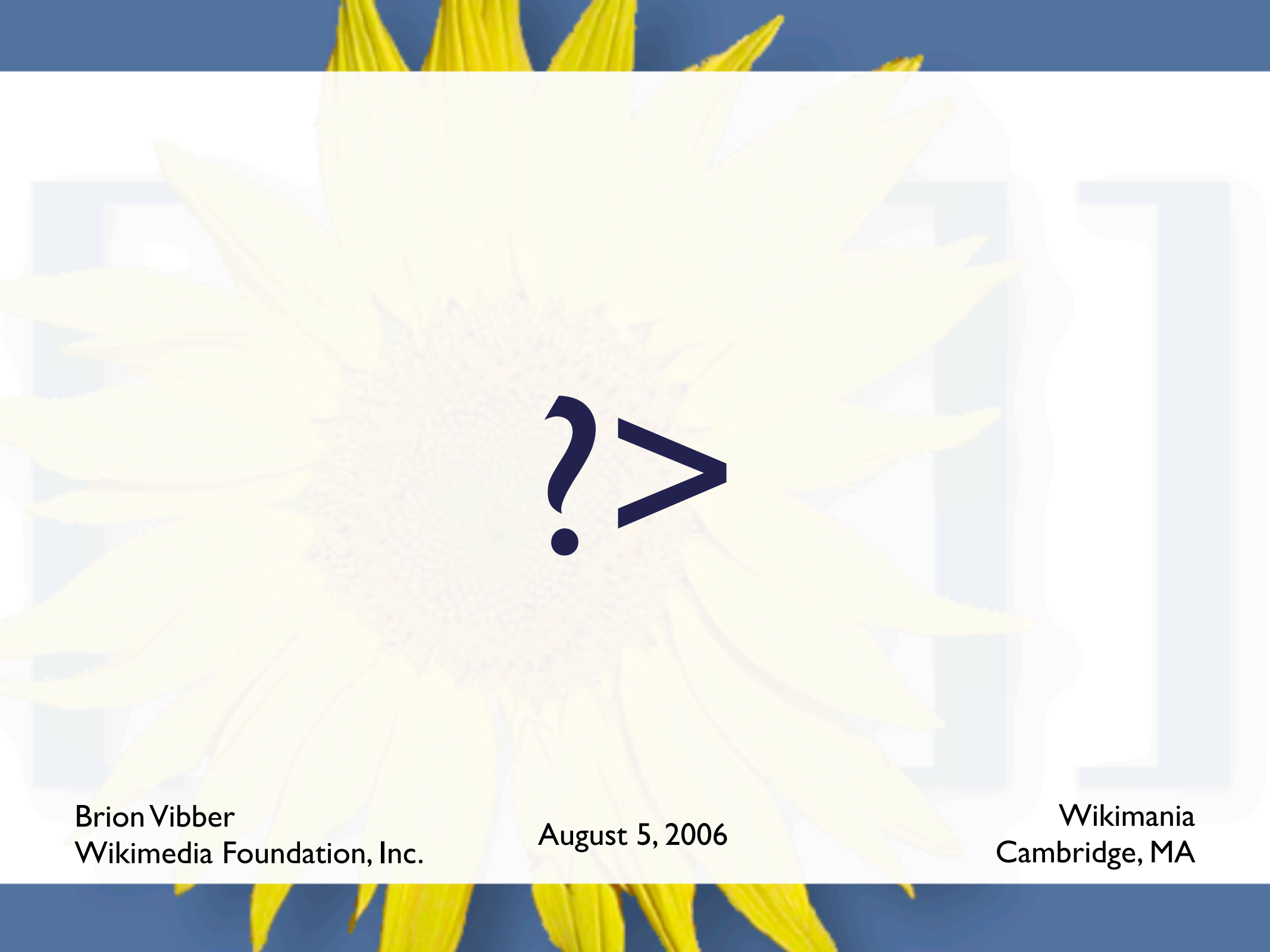
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multi-site authentication

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- use your Wikimedia account to identify your posts on blogs and wikis supporting OpenID
  - use your blog or wiki account to identify your edits on Wikimedia wikis
    - a step up from anonymous IP addresses

# OpenID status

- Evan Prodromou's OpenID extension code available in Subversion
- Live on Wikitravel
- Planned to go live on Wikimedia sites after single user unification is complete



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