



Powered by Clickability

Wikipedia may go to print

NEW YORK, New York (Reuters) -- Entries from Wikipedia, the popular free online encyclopedia written and edited by Internet users, may soon be available in print for readers in the developing world, founder Jimmy Wales said on Monday.

He said content from the Web site may also be burned onto CDs and DVDs so computer users in places like Africa, who lack access to high-speed Internet, could consult parts of the reference work offline.

Wales also described as incorrect reports, one of them from Reuters, that certain pages of the Wikipedia could be subject to tightened controls or "frozen" for good to prevent vandals and pranksters from tampering with them.

"We are talking to several agents and publishers about what they would be interested in," Wales said of the book project.

He cited health, football and histories of World War Two or rock 'n' roll as examples of how entries could be grouped into subjects.

"I have always liked the idea of going to print because a big part of what we are about is to disseminate knowledge throughout the world and not just to people who have broadband," Wales said by telephone from St. Petersburg, Florida.

Issues like funding, distribution and topics were still being discussed but a first printed work could be ready from mid-2006, he added.

Wales, a 39-year-old former options trader, set up Wikipedia in 2001. The site operates through the Wikimedia Foundation, a nonprofit organization that relies on donations to pursue its goal of spreading knowledge for free.

The reference work uses "Wiki" software, which gives anyone with access to the Internet the opportunity to edit any page.

Some 350,000 people have contributed terms, background, context or simply corrected spellings for more than 2 million Wikipedia entries in more than 25 active languages. About 800,000 entries are in English.

Wales, an American, said a core group of around 2,000 contributors did the bulk of the work and formed the backbone of the Wikipedia "community."

In August, Germany's Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspaper quoted Wales as saying that "controls" could be tightened to protect potentially sensitive pages of Wikipedia. Reuters picked up the report and, in translating sections of it, said some pages could be "frozen" in perpetuity.

"The idea that we are going to tighten our editorial 'rules' is completely not correct (and) the articles would not be frozen in perpetuity," Wales said. He said he had been misinterpreted and mistranslated.

Wales said new software would be deployed from the end of the year that would allow changes to very active pages which might be prone to vandalism to appear on the site with a time delay, so members of the community could review them.

Enthusiasts had also been discussing whether to create "stable" versions of certain pages that would stand as the most recent reliable entry on a given topic.

These would be available behind the latest contributed version and would also be updated as necessary, Wales said.

Copyright 2005 [Reuters](#). All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Find this article at:

<http://cnn.worldnews.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=CNN.com+-+Wiki...> 11/2/2005