Story Archives

Keyword Search:

GO!

Advanced Search

Civic/Charity Organizations

Tacoma Sports
American Red Cross
City Club of Tacoma
Donation Depot
Tacoma Chamber
Tacoma D-town Lions Club
Tacoma Goodwill
Tacoma Network
The Tacoma Club
World Trade Center Tacoma

Government/Government Agencies

Economic Development Board
Labor and Industries
Metro Parks Tacoma
Pierce County
Pierce Transit
Sound Transit
Tacoma
Tacoma BIA
Tacomaspace
Wired Tacoma

Places of Interest

Asia Pacific Cultural Center
Harold E. LeMay Museum
Intern Match
Museum of Glass
Pacific Towers
Pierce College
Pioneer Motorcycle Museum
Point Defiance
Port of Tacoma
Proctor Business District
Puyallup Fair
Salishan
Sound Publishing, Inc.
Spanaway-Parkland
Tacoma Art Museum
Tacoma Community College
Tacoma Convention Center
Tacoma Dome
Tacoma Farmers Market
Thea Foss
Tacoma Historical Society
Thea's Landing
Travel Tacoma
University of Puget Sound
UW Tacoma

BACK   SEND TO A FRIEND   FEEDBACK

It's OK to Wiki while you work

By Dana Greenlee, Technology Columnist
Oct 27 2006

Two people sit down at a table in a restaurant. One scribbles an idea on a napkin. The other modifies the idea on the napkin -- changing the wording, adding new thoughts, drawing

DANA GREENLEE

sketches or otherwise contributing new content. That common method of collaboration is the origin of some great ideas -- but it can be limiting.

Take your shared napkin into cyberspace and you have a wiki, a virtual white board. A wiki is what happens when you stir together a blog, a forum and a social network. It's a Web site where users can add, remove, and edit every page using a Web browser. It's so terrifically easy for people to jump in and revise pages that wikis are becoming known as the tool of choice for large, multiple-participant projects.

The word comes from "wiki wiki," Hawaiian for "fast." Wiki technology creates what is essentially a public weblog, one which anyone with a Web browser can add to or modify.

Wikipedia.org is a classic example. It is an online, self-correcting, self-evolving encyclopedia updated by a community of users, trusting the good intentions of the posters. Jimmy Wales started Wikipedia in 2001 and it has over 1.3 million contributions to date. Remember the old days when you would pay hundreds of dollars for a set of encyclopedias? Now you can actually write content for one, in essence, 'democratizing' information.

Let's say you want to set up a wiki for your business, perhaps a new project in the works. Anyone who is authorized can go into the shared workspace and add, delete or edit content anywhere on the wiki's Web page. You can even allow anonymous editing. Unlike bulletin boards and blogs, users are not limited to changing their own posts or commenting on others' contributions. They can actually change the existing content, even to the point of modifying another person's posts.

A blog usually belongs to one person, and mistakes are set in stone on bulletin boards. But a wiki is a community forum where history is dynamic. Wikis offer any number of people the chance to think aloud, comment and correct one another.

My friend started a wiki about the show "Boston Legal" a week ago. She created a basic structure for episodes, cast and characters and anyone can go to http://bostonlegal.wetpaint.com , click 'easy edit' and write about the show or add an image. She did this using a free wiki site from Seattle-based WetPaint.com.

You might want to use a wiki for your project, whether for work or personal interest. It takes no time at all to set up a free wiki at http://www.wetpaint.com/cyo . Some benefits include:

-- Good for writing down quick ideas or longer ones, giving you more time for formal writing and editing.

-- Instantly collaborative without emailing documents, keeping the group in sync.

-- Accessible from anywhere with a web connection

-- Your archive, because every page revision is kept.

-- A wiki is immediate, and empowering - everyone has a say.

Contributing to a wiki is so much fun that it's easy to

become a wiki-addict. I visit my friend's Boston Legal wiki several times a day and will add a detail or bit of trivia to one of the pages before going back to work. It's such a fun mental break and I'm helping grow a larger, permanent archive of information. I might be headed toward wikimania, not that there's anything wrong with that.

The emergence of wikis and community-based information is on the rise. Wikimania is taking the Internet nation by storm and developing as one of the fastest, self-reinforcing processes on the World Wide Web to date.

To listen to Rob and I interview Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia.org, visit http://www.itconversations.com/shows/detail443.html .

Find Your Old School Here:

— City —

— State —

Search

Your High Schoo

Jefferson High School

Ridgemont High Schoo

John Hughes High

classmates·con