

## **Wikipedia: The Online Know-It-All**

If you want to find out a piece of information about anything, one of the easiest places to search for it is Wikipedia. This online encyclopedia is written by thousands of people around the world. Anyone can add or change information if he or she finds something that is incorrect or poorly written. Therefore, people who know a lot about a certain subject can write about it even if they are not university professors.

The Wikipedia story started in 2001, when it was created by a philosopher named Larry Sanger and a businessman named Jimmy Wales. Both of them were excited about creating a free online English-language encyclopedia that anyone could edit. However, Wikipedia was only meant to boost traffic for Nupedia, another Internet encyclopedia that was written by experts.

As of May 2012, there were over 21 million articles on Wikipedia, and around four million of them are written in English. The other 17 million articles were written in one of 285 different languages. This makes Wikipedia one of the few websites on the Internet that is truly international. Internet users also use Wikipedia as a source of breaking news because it is constantly updated.

Researchers have discovered that countries with bad weather tend to have more Wikipedia pages than sunny countries have because people spend more time on their computers.

Wikipedia has its problems. There have been many complaints that some of the information on Wikipedia is not accurate and some important subjects are not included. Sometimes, this has led to arguments between contributors.

The people running Wikipedia have listened and responded to these complaints. They say that accuracy on the website is always improving. They must be doing something right, because Wikipedia has become the sixth most popular website on the Internet.