Dispute Resolution on the English Wikipedia

By Steven Zhang

What is dispute resolution?

- Process to resolve disputes over article content and user conduct

- Can involve the assistance of a third party

- A variety of techniques are used, including consensus-building, collaboration, or compromise

Why is dispute resolution important?

- Can help with editor retention - happier, more productive users

- Leads to article neutrality, quality and stability

"Wikipedia is a machine – dispute resolution is the grease that keeps it all running"

Conclusion: Dispute resolution is ineffective and inefficient

- Full survey results: [[WP:Dispute resolution survey]]

- Four out of five respondents rated their experience poorly.

- Problems: Duration, complexity and lack of volunteers

- 70% of respondents had volunteered

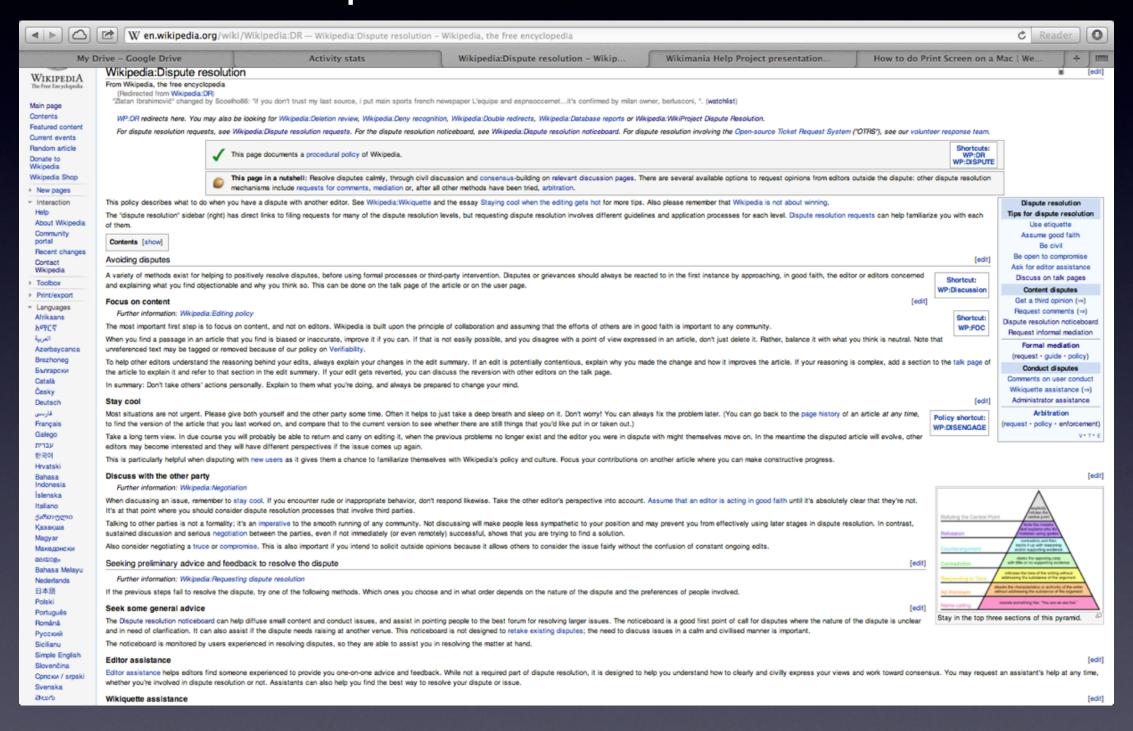- Resolution rate: 47%*

Problems with dispute resolution

When asked about the problems with dispute resolution, the most common responses were:

"It takes so long for a dispute to be resolved"

General response times: 5 to 24 hours

General resolution times: 2 to 28 days

Problems with dispute resolution

"The process is too hard to use"

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Problems with dispute resolution

"The process is too hard to use"

- 43% said there were too many forums

- 39% described the process as complex

- 30% didn't know where to take their dispute

Problems with dispute resolution

"There aren't enough volunteers"

- 70% have volunteered at some point, but only one in three do so frequently

- 52% thought there were not enough volunteers

- Reasons for participation: Dispute resolution being critical to Wikipedia, keeping articles balanced or just helping people

- Reasons for non-participation: Disputes too toxic, complex and lengthy, lack of knowledge on how

How we can change dispute resolution and why

- Simplify the way to request dispute resolution - a workflow system has been created to do this

- Make it easier for editors to do dispute resolution

- Investigate technical and policy changes such as dispute-detecting bots, edit filters and page-specific blocking.

How you can get involved in the change

- Try volunteering - it's not that as hard as you think!

- Keep an eye on discussions at the Dispute Resolution Wikiproject ([[WP:DRP]])

- Ask lots of questions - the existing volunteers will be more than happy to help

Questions?