Tamil Wikipedia
தமிழ் விக்கிப்பீடியா

- A. Ravishankar
http://ravidreams.com

History of Tamil Wikipedia

- Started in September 2003
- Until early 2005 managed by single contributor named Mayooranathan.
- Growth started from 2005 when many leading contributors joined.
- 20,780 articles
- 14,482 members (19 admins)

User Base

- Second most viewed Indian Wiki after Hindi.
- Most readers from India, SriLanka, Canada and other countries having significant Tamil diaspora.
- Content used by Radio Stations, dailies, magazines.
- A Govt. middle school in Pudukkottai district uses Tamil Wiki content for essay, speech contests etc., The head master encourages referring Wiki and says even their teachers are learning more. Wiki replacing traditional library.

Content Coverage

- 1000 must have articles in all Wikis
- Tamil language and region based content (Places, history, literature etc.,)
- Cities and towns in India (Bot generated content)
- Tamil movies. More than 2000 articles on this written by Nirojan, a 20 year old guy from Canada (of Sri Lankan origin)
- Architecture. 100s of articles written by a practicing architect.
- Biology. 100s of articles by PhD students, doctorate holders.
- Current affairs, Technology.
- Maths. 100s of articles written by a retired Math Prof.
- This Day in History.

Community

- Average contributor age mainly 20 - 30 years. Many started in early 20's and contributing for last 5 years.
- Architect, Math Professor, Electronics Professor, Sotware engineers, Research students, popular writers, college students, School teachers, Bloggers etc.,
- Female contributors only 4 or 5.
- Major contribution from immigrant SriLankan Tamils.
- Contributions directly from SriLanka decreasing due to civil war conditions.
- Contributions from Tamilnadu picking up in last two years.
- Many work together in various forums and in friendly terms offline too.

Notable Wikipedians

- Mayooranathan - Wiki Pioneer - Architect - from UAE More than 3000+ articles in 6 years. Contributes quality articles every day.
- Natkeeran - Strategist - Software engineer - from Canada More than 2000+ articles in 4 years. Coordinates and plans various activities.
- Sridharan - from Australia - updates Current affairs, revived Wikinews etc.,
- Professor. C. R. Selvakumar - Electronics - from Canada
- Professor. Krishnamoorthy - Maths - from Bangalore
- Sundar - Software engineer - Interwiki ambassador - Bot help. Added 1 lakh words to Tamil Wiktionary by bots.

Notable Contributors

- Sivakumar, Ravishankar, Parithimathi, Balachandran, Manian, Magiznan, Daniel Pandian, Chandra vadhana, Sindhu, Chandravathana, Arafat, Kalai, Subramani, Hibayathullah, Kathick bala, Kurumban, Umapathy
- Gopi - Wiki cleanup
- Terens - Copyright issues, bot help
- Tha. Uzhavan - Major contributions to Tamil Wiktionary
- Paid contributors from Google Translation writing articles with quality and length. Their efforts need to be coordinated to conform to Wiki procedures.

Promotional activities

- Conducted five Micro Workshops from 2009. 15-20 participants. Few systems. One to one training in Wiki basics.
- Presentation in colleges, Tamil based events.
- Intro articles in popular print magazines, local radios.
- Leveraging blogosphere
- No formal support yet from Govt., or authorized bodies.

Major roadblocks

- Computer and internet availibility.
- Social stability
- Lack of resources / accessibility to resources in Tamil online.
- Tamil Typing
- People unused to Encyclopedia / wiki style of writing
- Unfamiliar wiki user interface

Trivia

- Tamil Wiktionary has more than 1 lakh words. Biggest in Indian wiktionaries. Top 20 in world. Majority of them imported by bot from Govt. supported online resources.
- Tamil Wikinews, Tamil Wikisource are next big and active projects.
- Some contribute exclusively to Tamil Wiktionary.
- Tamil Wiki leads Indian Wikis in many quality parameters. Malayalam wiki is the competitor :)
- Tamil diaspora passionate in contributing to Tamil is a major motivation. Many rarely contribute to English and other local language Wikis.

Future plans

- Continue to focus on quality
- Identify core topics and cover them
- Offline efforts - printing books with wiki articles, article writing contests etc.,
- Resource center for Tamil Wiki
- Intense promotion