

Wikimapia

Wikimapia is a privately owned internet company that provides an open-content collaborative mapping project. The project implements an interactive "clickable" web map with a geographically-referenced wiki system, with the aim to mark and describe all geographical objects in the world.

Wikimapia was created by Alexandre Koriakine and Evgeniy Saveliev in May 2006.^[1] The data, a crowdsourced collection of places marked by registered users and guests, has grown to just under 28,000,000 objects as of November 2017,^[5] and is released under the Creative Commons License Attribution-ShareAlike (CC BY-SA).^{[4][6]} Although the project's name is reminiscent of that of Wikipedia, and the creators share the "wiki" philosophy,^[1] it is not a part of the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation family of wikis.

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Type of site	Collaborative mapping
Available in	101 languages, including English
Created by	Alexander Koryakin and Eugen Saveliev ^[1]
Revenue	From AdSense and Wikimapia Ads ^[2]
URL	www.wikimapia.org (https://www.wikimapia.org/)
Alexa rank	6,383 (October 2018) ^[3]
Commercial	no
Registration	Optional
Users	2,500,000 (latest available figure)
Launched	May 24, 2006
Current status	Active
Content license	Creative Commons (CC-BY-SA) ^[4]

Main principles

According to the website, Wikimapia is an open-content collaborative mapping project, aimed at marking all geographical objects in the world and providing a useful description of them.^[7] It aims to create and maintain a free, complete, multilingual and up-to-date map of the whole world. Wikimapia intends to contain detailed information about every place on Earth.^[7]

Features

Viewing

The Wikimapia website provides a [Google Maps API](#)-based interactive web map that consists of user-generated information layered on top of Google Maps satellite imagery and other resources. The navigation interface provides scroll and zoom functionality similar to that of Google Maps.

The Wikimapia layer is a collection of "objects" with a polygonal outline (like buildings, forests or lakes) and "linear features" (streets, railroads, rivers, ferry). Streets are connected by intersection points to form a street grid. Both kinds of items may have textual descriptions and photos attached to them. Viewers are able to click on any marked object or street segment to see its description. Descriptions can be searched by a built-in search tool. Tools for refining existing places according to category as well as measuring distances between objects are also available. Objects marked as buildings can have internal places (such as a business inside of a larger office building) added.

Categories are organized in a hierarchy such that viewing by a more general category includes having the specific category included. This is such as viewing "house" includes viewing "detached house". The hierarchy is not a strict hierarchy. For instance, the category "convenience store" appears in multiple places in the hierarchy.

The interface is available in many languages, and the textual description of each item may have multiple versions in different languages. Wikimapia maps can also be embedded on other websites.

Map editing

The data in Wikimapia is derived from voluntary [crowdsourcing](#).^[4] All users, registered or unregistered (*guests*), are allowed to add a place on the Wikimapia layer, but guests cannot edit places created by registered users, and have some other limitations. Using a simple graphical editing tool, users are able to draw an outline or polygon that matches the satellite image layer underneath. Each object or "tag" has specific information fields which include categories, a textual description, street address, and a related Wikipedia link. Users are likewise capable of uploading several relevant photos.

Registered users have fewer restrictions on map editing and are able to edit and/or delete existing places as well as draw "*linear features*" (roads, railroads, rivers and ferry lines). A "watchlist" could be manually set up to monitor all activity or object changes made in one or more of the assigned rectangular areas on the map.

Administration

The website is maintained and developed by a small team of administrators (the *Wikimapia Team*), who introduce new features and determine further evolution course.^[1] Improvements are largely based on a feedback system from registered users through public forum discussions, bug reports and feature requests.

User levels and special roles

The registered user community is largely self-organized, with users communicating through an internal message system and through a public forum. Map editing rewards the user "experience points" and milestone "awards" assigned by the system.^{[8][9]}

Registered users are automatically ranked in levels according to accumulated experience points, with higher levels gaining access to advanced tools and having fewer restrictions on editing activity. A registered user may be promoted to "Advanced User" (*AU*) status as other existing *AUs* deem it fit. Additional editing and moderation tools, which include the authority to ban users, are given to an Advanced User, who is given the responsibility of countering vandalism in the map.^{[10][11]}

Special roles of maintaining the website forum, place categories, and the Wikimapia Documentation (*Docs*) are also given by the *Wikimapia Team* to some users.^[11]

Quality of contents

The data in Wikimapia is derived from voluntary contributors who visit and add the information on the website.^[4] The textual description attached to each place object is in free format, having no restriction on style, with the exception of possessing a Neutral Point of View, where "neutral" is defined as excluding "feelings, opinions, experiences, words which display a personal bias or agenda, politics and/or religion".^[7] Citing the source of the information is optional, and a link to a relevant and existing Wikipedia article is encouraged.

In spite of these recommendations, map coverage is generally uneven, with some areas, usually in developing countries, being cluttered with crude outlines, private residences, subjective evaluations or advertisements, requiring constant attention and refining by regular editors. Information can either be edited or deleted by registered users as they deem it inappropriate.

Licensing

In December 2009, Wikimapia launched an API and made its content available in several formats for non-commercial use. In December 2010, the data was announced as being available under a Non-Commercial Creative Commons license.

In May 2012, Wikimapia announced that all the content was available under Creative Commons License Attribution-ShareAlike (CC BY-SA).^{[4][6][12]}

Business model

The site generates some income from AdSense and Wikimapia Ads.^[2]

Interoperability

Wikimapia functionality is available on:

- Google Earth, using Google Earth dynamic layer in KML file.^[13]
- Embedded in any HTML page.^[14]
- Most Java-enabled cellphones using 3rd party software such as Mobile GMaps.
- iOS (iPhone/iPad) application.^[15]
- Android application.^[16]

See also

- [Bhuvan](#)
- [Collaborative mapping](#)
- [Google Earth](#)
- [Google Map Maker](#)
- [HERE Map Creator](#)
- [List of GPS Software for Mobile Phones](#)
- [List of wikis](#)
- [OpenStreetMap](#)
- [Participatory GIS](#)
- [Public Participation GIS](#)
- [Yandex Maps](#)

References

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External links

- [Official website \(http://wikimapia.org/\)](http://wikimapia.org/) _
 - [Wikimapia at OpenStreetMap \(https://wiki.openstreetmap.org/wiki/Wikimapia\)](https://wiki.openstreetmap.org/wiki/Wikimapia)
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