

Ann ... n ... nc
... n LA
... n ...

... AL A ...

B c ... n ... n n ... n ... n ... n y mn ... y n
... n ... n ... n ... c Ln B n
AL A ... n ...

Ac ... n ... c ... n

A AL A ...
Submitted by Linda Braun

What is a wiki? It is a piece of server software that allows multiple users from multiple locations (as opposed to a single web master) to freely create, edit and contribute to web page content using any web browser. To view a wiki, visit ALA's Annual Conference Wiki at: http://meredith.wolfwater.com/ala2006/index.php?title=Main_Page

Creating a wiki gives:

- YALSA the opportunity to create a valuable perk of membership
- YALSA the chance to provide content in an appropriate format using recently emerged technology.
- Members the ability to collaborate
- Members the chance to create content
- Members and the teens with whom they work a platform on which to publish content
- YALSA-BK members fewer emails as some list content could be transferred to the wiki.

There are many ways in which YALSA could use a wiki as a member perk. However, the primary use to begin (which would definitely be a value add for members) would be as a tool

Using a framework similar to what is currently used for the blog. A YALSA member or staff person would be responsible for the management of the wiki. That person would work with a team of members who would create and update lists based on interests, discussion on various lists, and so on.

Assigning committees and task forces to wiki areas. For example, the Technology for Teens Committee might be responsible for creating and maintaining a list of resources that focus on technology and that would be of interest to teen workers. The booklist task force could continually create and maintain lists related to topics of interest to librarians working teens. Enabling any YALSA member to edit and create content for the wiki. This would be similar to how a tool like Wikipedia works. After registering for the wiki (and authenticating membership as a part of the registration process) any YALSA member would be able to work on the wiki content. Within this framework one person (or several people) would be responsible for viewing the wiki on a regular basis to validate content.

With these options in mind, the real member perk however is in developing a tool that allows for the creation of lists similar to those regularly asked for and distributed via YALSA-BK.

In order to get the wiki up and running YALSA would need to:

- Develop policies and guidelines for wiki use
- Determine moderating procedures
- Decide if the wiki would be available on the World Wide Web to the general public, or only available to members through the For Members Only portion of the web site
- Determine what wiki software to use
- Add start-up content to the wiki

There are several free or low-cost options for the wiki software. In determining which software to use for the YALSA wiki topics to consider include:

- Where the wiki will live – on the ALA server, on the wiki software provider's server, or on another party's server.
- Whether or not the software needs to be free or if YALSA can pay a fee for the product
- If content creators need to understand the wiki syntax in order to add content
- If RSS is integrated into the software
- If moderators can receive email notification of new or revised content
- Whether or not files can be attached
- Whether or not images can be added
- The number of user accounts that are available for no cost or lo-cost
- The method used for login and authentication

As a final point, while a lists wiki may be the best choice at this time, there are many other ways a wiki can be used by YALSA and its members. For example, YALSA might create a wiki in which members add content about best practices in a variety of teen services areas – TAGs, technology, collections, etc. Or, there might be a technology specific wiki (perhaps for Teen Tech Week) in which YALSA members (and teens they work with) add content about emerging technologies.

Ultimately, the wiki can be a tool that librarians use to create content not only to help improve teen services, but also they can create content with the help of the teens whom they serve. Teens, working with their member librarians, might develop and edit lists, they could create glossaries of technology terms, or they might write a variety of reviews. More than any other tool currently used by YALSA, the wiki promotes collaboration among members and the teens they serve.