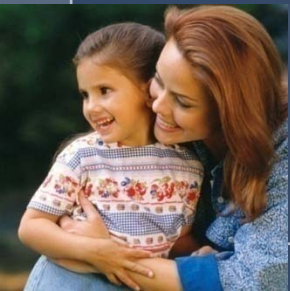


FamilySearch Wiki

A Semantic Wiki for Your Grandmother




FAMILYSEARCH
WHERE GENERATIONS MEET



Who We Are



FamilySearch is the brand name for the genealogical products and services provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



Why a Wiki?

We have a need to provide advice on how to research one's family history. We have limited staff at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, and the volunteer staff at our outlying family history centers are rarely accredited genealogists.

We certainly don't hold a monopoly on the world's family history expertise, so why not let the community help the community?



Who is Our Community?



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8kAWOyG1sl>



We have set up a wiki at <https://wiki.familysearch.org>. Full attempt has been given to make it as user-friendly as possible.

However, there remains a steep learning curve for our majority audience in how to write in wikitext, how to categorize, and how to effectively link pages.

In addition, MediaWiki's search capabilities are very low, and we need the ability to perform intelligent searches based on dates and places.



Semantic MediaWiki?

Semantic MediaWiki seemed to be a good solution, but, even with using Semantic Forms as an input method, SMW adds more layers of complexity.

Our users need fewer!



Enter Halo and Semantic Forms

At SemTech 2008, Vulcan and Ontoprise unveiled Halo (now SMW+) as a UI that simplified the following:

- Ontology creation
- Tagging wiki pages with properties
- Creating semantic queries
- Performing a search and finding the right result



A Semantic FamilySearch Wiki

With UI and better search options covered, we have begun the journey toward a semantic wiki, keeping in mind the whole time that we need to keep as close as we can to creating a zero-training application.

We are working on the following main areas:

- Creating an ontology
- Contributing and editing pages
- Improving findability



Ontology

We have created a baseline ontology centered primarily around time and place. It also contains properties for record types and research methods.



Sample of the Ontology

Categories

- + [Bernice](#) (open)
- + [Events](#) (open)
- + [FamilySearch Wiki Templates](#) (open)
- + [FamilySearch Wiki documentation](#) (open)
- + [Form templates](#) (open)
- + [GardeningLog](#) (open)
- + [Glossary Terms](#) (open)
- + [Historical Information](#) (open)
- + [Jurisdictions](#) (open)
- + [Mollie](#) (open)
- + [Records](#) (open)
- + [Repositories](#) (open)
- + [Research Helps](#) (open)
- + [Research interest groups](#) (open)
- + [Research strategies](#) (open)
- + [System Help](#) (open)
- + [System Policies](#) (open)
- + [Users](#) (open)

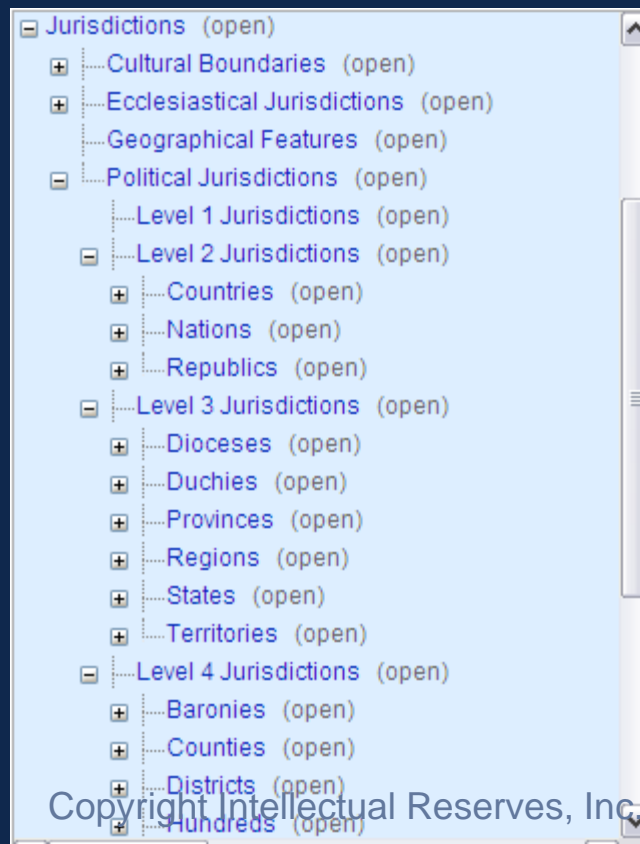
Properties

- + [Current population](#) (open)
- + [Description](#) (open)
- + [DiscourseState](#) (open)
- + [Ecclesiastical jurisdictions categories](#) (open)
- + [Ended on date](#) (open)
- + [Event type](#) (open)
- + [Existed from year](#) (open)
- + [Existed until year](#) (open)
- + [Exists Today](#) (open)
- + [Formerly called](#) (open)
- + [Formerly part of](#) (open)
- + [Free](#) (open)
- + [General record type](#) (open)
- + [Glossary](#) (open)
- + [Glossary](#) (open)
- + [Glossary](#) (open)
- + [Has capital](#) (open)
- + [Has synonym](#) (open)
- + [Historical event type](#) (open)
- + [Houses record](#) (open)
- + [Involves language](#) (open)
- + [Involves location](#) (open)
- + [Later was called](#) (open)
- + [Latitude and longitude](#) (open)
- + [Level 1 jurisdiction categories](#) (open)
- + [Level 2 jurisdiction categories](#) (open)
- + [Level 3 jurisdiction categories](#) (open)
- + [Level 4 jurisdiction categories](#) (open)
- + [Level 5 jurisdiction categories](#) (open)
- + [Located in](#) (open)
- + [Past population](#) (open)
- + [Permission level](#) (open)
- + [Pertains to interest group](#) (open)
- + [Question](#) (open)
- + [Record Type](#) (open)
- + [Record attribute](#) (open)
- + [Records that refer to locality](#) (open)
- + [Region categories](#) (open)
- + [Related help page](#) (open)
- + [Research help type](#) (open)
- + [Shares borders with](#) (open)
- + [Society or organization type](#) (open)
- + [System help type](#) (open)
- + [Website](#) (open)



Sample, cont.

Categories offer a particular challenge, since many locality types are grouped as equals, we want queries to treat them as such, and we don't want excess forms for the admins to upkeep.





Contributing and Editing

To ease the content contribution process, we are implementing Semantic Forms. Since the number of properties to gather on a page can be excessive and daunting, we also plan to integrate the forms with the Header Tabs extension to simplify the view for our users.

We also will embed the FCK Editor into the forms so that users need not use wikitext to format the page.



Sample Form

We have yet to design a prototype form. The example below illustrates the idea we are pursuing.

Overview	Snobbery	Contact info
Business Type	CD/DVD Manufacturing, Mastering & Design	
Goods	CD/DVD Manufacturing, Mastering & Design	
Services	CD/DVD Manufacturing, Mastering & Design	
Description	Abet Disc ia a family owned and operated business specializing in optical disc media manufacturing, highest quality 64-BIT Audio Mastering, professional creative packaging design, CD replication, CD duplication, DVD replication, DVD duplication, insert printing, packaging and free UPC barcode with any size order!	
Website	http://www.abetdisc.com	
Address	411 E. Huntington Dr. #107-372, Arcadia, California, USA	

http://www.themusicsnob.com/wiki/Abet_Disc



Finding Pages

Semantic MediaWiki already offers faceted results after a search. SMW+ brings an additional feature that autocompletes your search input with names of pages that exist in the wiki, and it has a UI for browsing by property and category.



Browsing for Pages

To supply multiple methods for finding pages, we plan to also use the Semantic Drilldown extension, or build a browse interface of our own.

For a wonderful example of Semantic Drill down, see:
<http://www.themusicsnob.com/wiki/Special:BrowseData/Businesses>



Challenges

We have significant challenges in the following areas that have delayed our deployment:

- MW and SMW+ compatibility
- Maintaining the ontology
- Migrating content



Compatibility

SMW+ is not compatible with the new MediaWiki version 1.13. We need 1.13 due to new additions and bug fixes that are essential to other areas of our wiki.

Ontoprise is working on the situation.



Maintaining the Ontology

Because our users understand the classification of content better than we, we need a way to allow them to add to the ontology. However, because of who most of our users are, we need to insure against their inadvertently breaking the semantic ability of the wiki.

We are working on a model that allows only the ontology engineer to edit certain categories and all properties, but allows the users to edit and create other categories.



Migrating content

Our current wiki has over 10,000 pages in the Main namespace, and we have people globally adding and editing on a daily basis. As time moves on, it becomes harder to place an editing freeze on the wiki to make the transition, and it is very difficult to retag all the content pages.

We are looking for the right way to include the whole of the wiki community to help with the semantic tagging



Roadmap

- In the near future, FamilySearch Wiki will be accessible through www.familysearch.org.
- For the next few months, we intend to build the semantic wiki with the help of contractors.
- FamilySearch (Semantic) Wiki will be available by Q3 2009.



Acknowledgements

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