

Title: How wiki-intranet changes internal communication?

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Wiki technology enables easy publishing and editing of information in the web environment. The features of wiki support collaborative information work and information sharing. Wikipedia is one and maybe the most widely known example of the possibilities of wiki technologies. Wiki can also be used as an organization-wide intranet. This paper describes how the newly implemented wiki-intranet has changed the internal communication in the National Public Health Institute of Finland. The presentation is based on the results of a survey and interviews that were accomplished in the spring of 2008.

Before the wiki-intranet, the Institute had a basic HTML-based intranet. Editing and adding the intranet pages was done through hierarchical folder structure, which had limited access and editing rights. Also, certain software was used for the publishing. The software had an expensive license and therefore it was only in a limited use. In a survey that studied the requirements for the new intranet, the current intranet was criticized for its hierarchical structure and the lack of editing rights. There were intranet pages of different projects and units missing, because adding and editing was seen as difficult. Finding relevant information was also considered difficult as too much outdated information was available.

The goals for the new intranet solution were to support the easy editing of intranet pages, to support the different units in making their own intranet pages, to support collaborative information work, to support personalization, and to support the easy publishing of news in the intranet. With these goals in mind the intranet project group chose to implement a wiki-based intranet. The new intranet was implemented at the end of February 2007.

The main principle for the new intranet was chosen to be openness. Every employee has the right to access, edit and comment on any intranet page. The pages can be edited directly in the browser window. The new intranet implementation was supported by user education, user guides, and help pages including a discussion board. The use of wiki-intranet is integrated in the daily communication practises and both the administrative and the research related work.

The presentation discusses how the wiki-intranet has changed the communication practises and if wiki-intranet supports information and knowledge sharing. It will also discuss the possibilities of developing the wiki-intranet further as a group work tool supporting collaborative information work. The results of the survey and interviews are compared with the goals set for the new intranet. The presentation will also discuss the possibilities for libraries and information services in using wiki as a collaborative information environment.