



(Avoiding) the Travesty of the Commons

Tom Gruber
Co-Founder and CTO, RealTravel
tomgruber.org

The Promise of the People-Powered Web

- More people know more things.
- More people have more diverse perspectives and assumptions.
- Collectively we can know more.

But...

- *When is More Better?*
 - *If you build it, will they come?*
-

Everybody's Doing It

POSTED A BLOG



ADDED INFORMATION TO OWN WEBSITE



ADDED INFORMATION TO A WORK OR GROUP WEBSITE OR A BLOG



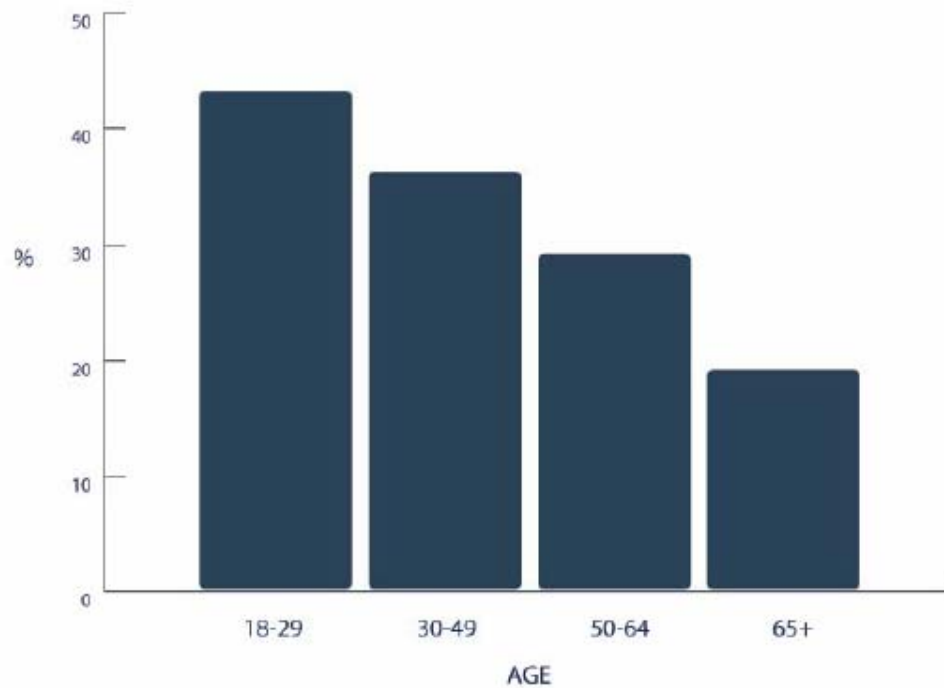
SHARED ON THE INTERNET CREATED CONTENT SUCH AS PHOTOS, VIDEOS, WORDS



- over a third of adults in US and Australia have contributed content to the public Internet
- ~100M blogs
- ~100GZ photos

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project (Dec 05), McNair Ingenuity Research (Jun 06)

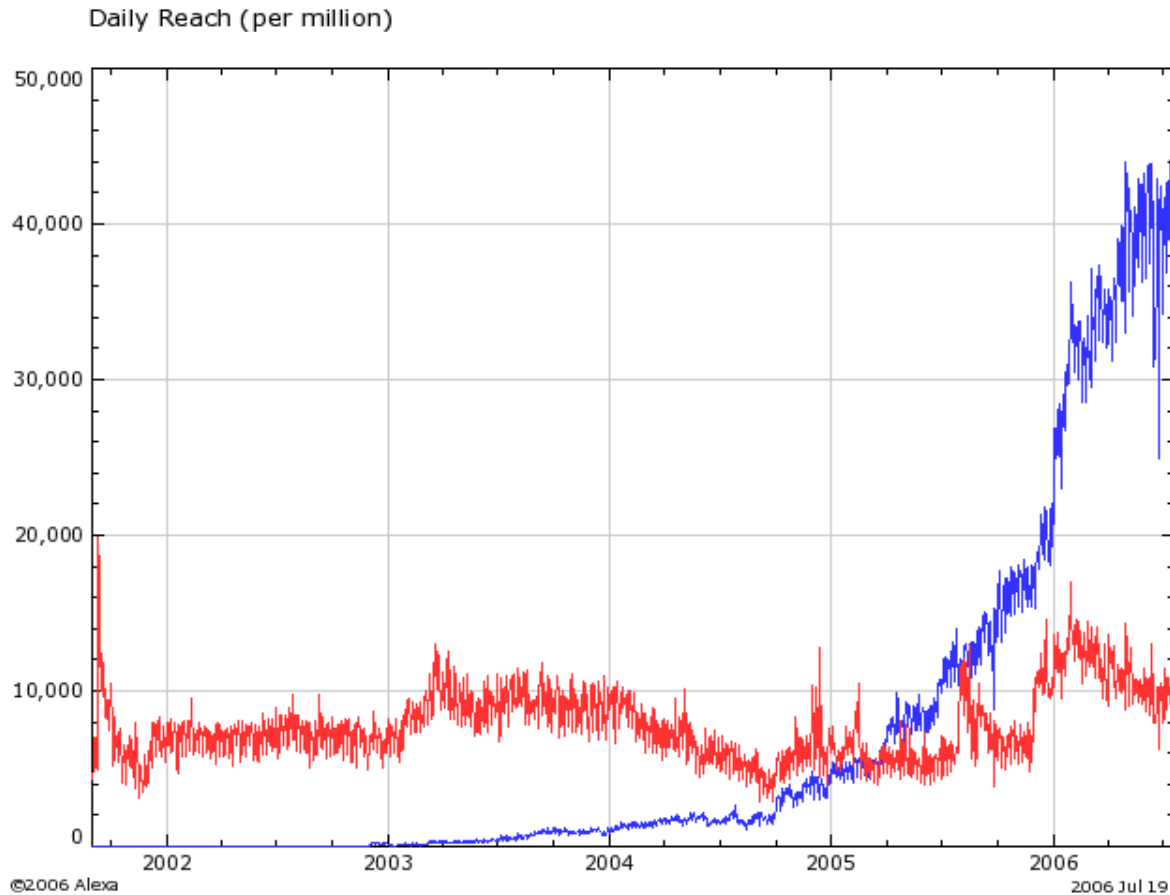
Web Content Creation by Age



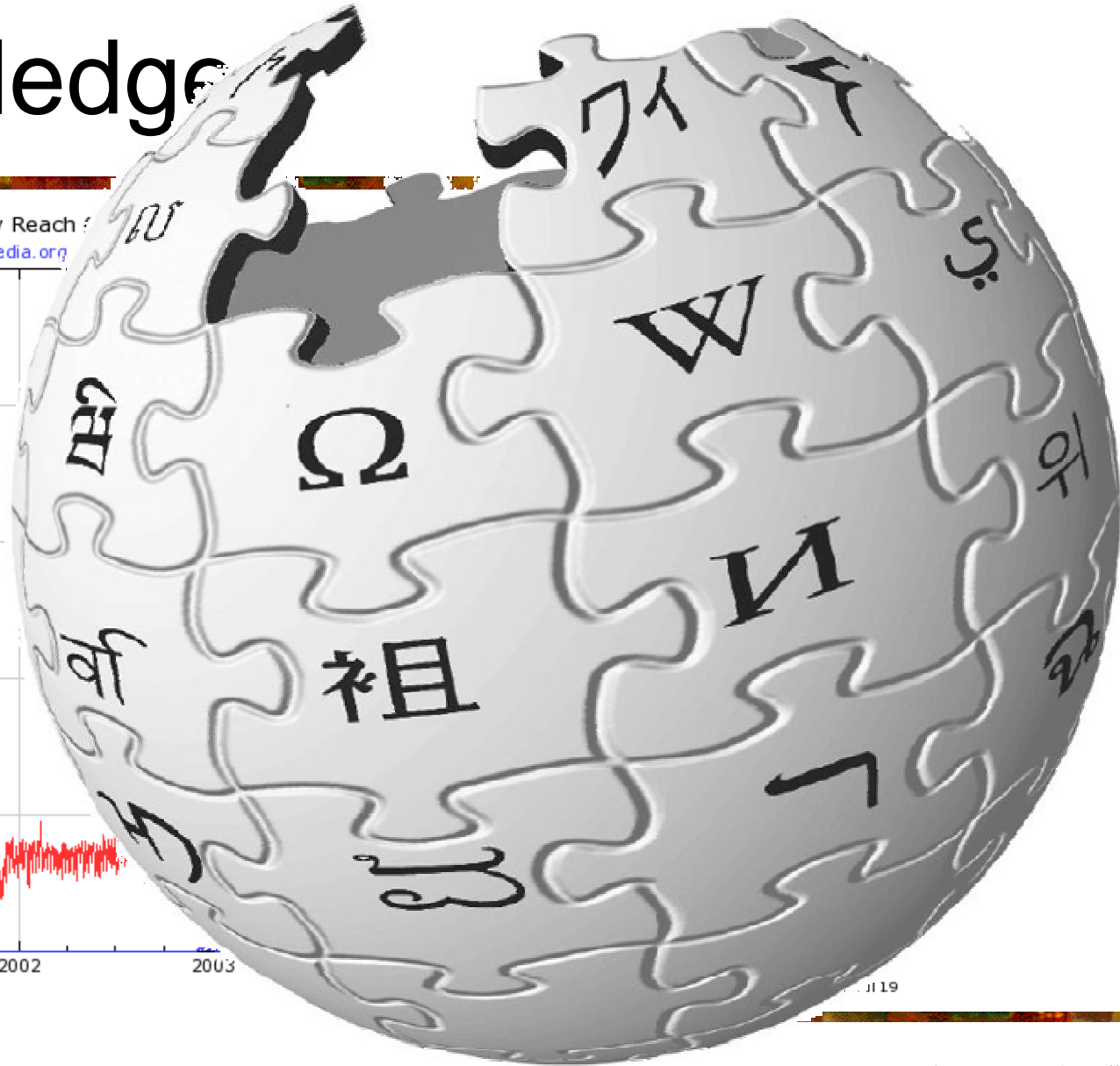
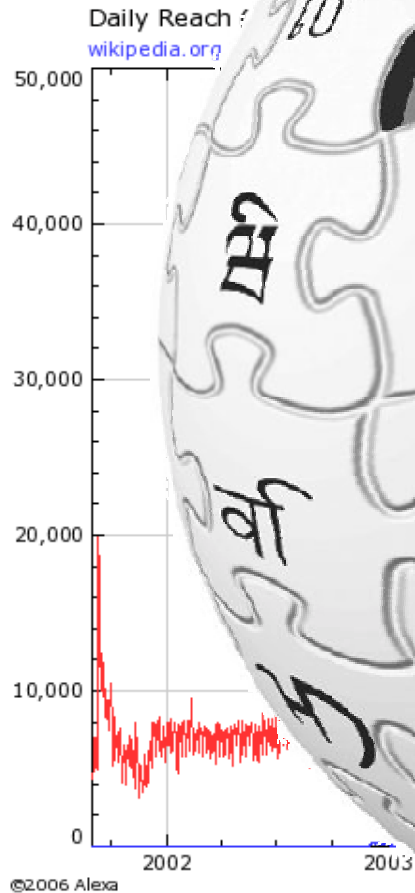
18% of adults over 65 have contributed content to the web

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project (Dec 05)

The Influence of Collective Knowledge



The Influence of Collective Knowledge



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Dreams About War and Retribution

War and Consequences [edit]

See Also: [Counterpoint to War and Consequences](#)

As the war in Iraq grinds on with almost daily deaths and the number of U.S. troops remains stubbornly fixed at 140,000, voices of dissatisfaction at home are becoming louder and more widespread. A few Republican Congressmen have joined Democrats in questioning just how long our troops will have to stay in Iraq. Colonels and generals estimate two or more years, although British colonial experience suggests these are optimistic estimates. Current polls indicate an increasing public unease with the war. A Gallup poll released Sunday found that 59% of Americans said some or all troops should be withdrawn; in April 2004, the figure was 37%.

Declining enlistments demonstrate that while some Americans may support this war, they are not willing to enlist. Protests against military recruiters on high school and college campuses suggest parents don't trust the system, either. Involuntary two year re-enlistments of National Guard units ominously portend the possible return of the draft.

Nevertheless, President Bush said last month he is "pleased with the progress" in Iraq, citing its national elections in January and the ongoing training of its military. Today, Baghdad experiences a car bombing almost daily; yet in all of 2004, there were 25. The elections may have represented progress; the escalating violence does not.

The president's assessment represents either wilful ignorance or blind optimism — probably both. Remember "Mission Accomplished"? The cliché "pleased with progress" may be appropriate for a CEO reporting that ongoing quarterly losses have been stemmed. It should not be an acceptable description of the continuing loss of American and innocent Iraqi lives. The media should cry foul at this deception.

Concrete Action Essential

The Bush administration should publicly set a target for the number of Iraqi soldiers and police who will be trained, equipped and capable of defending their country by July 1, 2006. That means troops able to protect their positions and go on the offensive against their enemies, with enough guns, bullets and tanks to do the job. If the objective is not reached, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld should be fired, along with the top U.S. military commanders in Iraq.

Different Result

Where is the wiktorial?

Unfortunately, we have had to remove this feature, at least temporarily, because a few readers were flooding the site with inappropriate material.

Thanks and apologies to the thousands of people who logged on in the right spirit.

Same People, Same Technology



creation



noise

Collective Knowledge is Real

- FAQ-o-Sphere (self service Q&A forums)
 - A-list Blogosphere for politics and tech
 - Product reviews for gadgets and hotels
 - Amateur Academia
 - Collaborative filtering for books and music
 - Social photo sharing
-

...and can be a real pain



- IP looting in music
 - Automated blog spam
 - Marketplace of fraudulent reviews
-

The Art and Science of Collective Knowledge

- Timing, luck, and vision are critical, but...
 - Claim:
Design principles can influence the result.
-

Case Study: RealTravel



- When planning travel, people want to benefit from experience of people who have been there.
 - Let's do this on a global scale.
-

Problem 1: Motivating Participation

- Why should I share my feedback and advice about my travel experience with strangers?
 - So I can share it with friends and family.
 - With style.
-

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TRIP JOURNAL



Around the World in 77 days...

a trip journal

Date of trip: Oct 13 '05

General Location: [The World](#)

Author: [Louis](#)

1 Comment



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Tags

[round the world](#)

Q: Give the reader some background on what inspired you to take this vacation, trip around the world, and so on?

A: Why not?

Trip Itinerary (Journal Entries)

1	London	Oct 13 '05	'Launch pad...' "Mission to Heathrow..."
2	Singapore	Oct 14 '05	'Singapore Slicker' "After travelling for a whole day, I'd finally arrived in Singapore to find i didnt have a room..."
3	Melaka	Oct 17 '05	'Melaka Melee' "Ground roots Malaysia with dusty air, buses and picturesque colonial sites..."
4	Kuala Lumpur	Oct 18 '05	'Krazytown KL' "This place gives a new meaning to 'organised chaos' and ignoring the fact i saw local mowed down by a moped and dragged lifeless from the road by his collar. Malavsia is a

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JOURNAL ENTRY



'The City of Angels'

from *Around the World in 77 days...*

Trip Date: Oct 29 '05

Location: Bangkok, Thailand

Author: Louis

2 Comments

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“If you can displace yourself from the pollution and vice of Khao San + Patpong, Bangkok offers a range of less obvious ... ”

Louis's Recommendations

New World Lodge
★★★★

"What one would expect for an expensive hotel..."

[read review](#) ▶

Thai Cozy House
★★★★

"Half the price of New World Lodge and just as good"

[read review](#) ▶

Lemongrass
★★★★

"Half the price of Thai Cozy!"

29th Oct

Ko Samui has without question the best looking airport ive ever been through. Forget metal sheeting, boring carpet lines and air-con duty free, and welcome with open arms the check in Huts and palm-tree lined runway with extended golf-buggies, like the ones in Disneyland, taking you from straw-thatched departure terminals to your plane...Happy days, though the security there was lax as you could blatantly penetrate the pot plants used to seal off the 'restricted area'!! Too knackered to argue with the tout at Bangkok and accepted the 1200Baht double deluxe room at New World Lodge Hotel which i later discovered is also the meeting point for my Cambodian tour early next month!!



the stunning and appropriate named: Grand Palace

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JOURNAL PHOTO

from the journal entry *'The City of Angels'* by Louis about a trip to Bangkok

◀ Previous ▲ Up Next ▶ 1 of 6



the stunning and appropriate named: Grand Palace

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HOTEL REVIEW



Review of Thai Cozy House

from the journal *'The City of Angels'* by Louis
 Review of Thai Cozy House, a hotel in Bangkok, Thailand
 Date of experience: Oct 29 '05
 Author: Louis



“Half the price of New World Lodge and just as good”

Louis's Ratings

- Overall: ●●●●●
- amenities: ●●●●●
- location: ●●●●●
- room: ●●●●●
- service: ●●●●●
- value: ●●●●●

Uber-friendly staff eager to fill rooms, so you can easily negotiate a discount especially if you take a twin room and you are a single traveller. Breakfast is meagre so dont get too excited by the seeming value. Room is fine with a/c and cable tv with no watchable channels. Bathrooms are nice but my shower leaked all night. The hotel contains many travel agencies and tour group shops and also a book of good comments from other travellers :) SLOW internet there, you can get better value and faster connections in the specialised shops just off Thanon Khao San.



Thai Cozy House, Bangkok




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JOURNAL MAP FOR LOUIS



click on map to go interactive!

The route described by the journal *Around the World in 77 days...* by Louis

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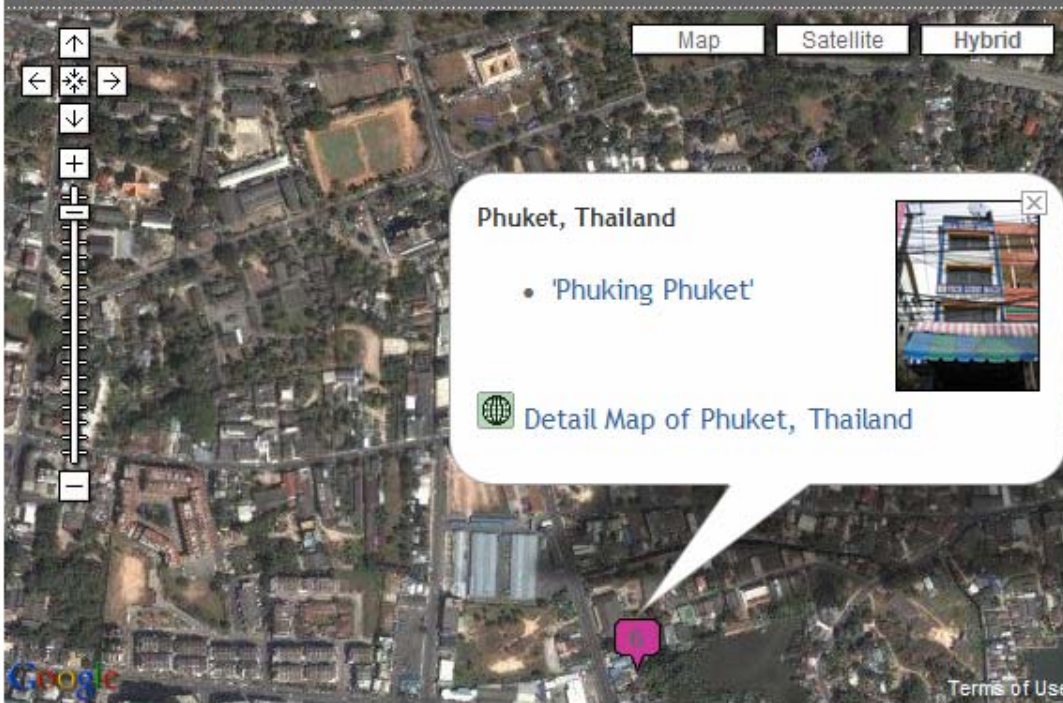
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- 3 Melaka, Malaysia
- 4 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 5 Penang, Malaysia
- 6 Phuket, Thailand
- 7 Ko Phi Phi Don, Thailand
- 8 Koh Samui, Thailand
- 9 Koh Phangan, Thailand
- 10 Bangkok, Thailand
- 11 Ayutthaya, Thailand
- 12 Kanchanaburi, Thailand
- 13 Siem Reap, Cambodia
- 14 Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- 15 Sihanoukville, Cambodia
- 16 Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- 17 Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vietnam
- 18 Nha Trang, Vietnam
- 19 Hoi An, Vietnam
- 20 Hue, Vietnam
- 21 Hanoi, Vietnam
- 22 Halong Bay, Vietnam
- 23 Hanoi, Vietnam

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JOURNAL MAP FOR LOUIS

Map Satellite Hybrid



Phuket, Thailand

- 'Phuking Phuket'

 [Detail Map of Phuket, Thailand](#)

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The route described by the journal *Around the World in 77 days...* by Louis

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JOURNAL ENTRY

'Phuking Phuket' from *Around the World in 77 days...*

Trip Date: Oct 23 '05

Location: Phuket, Thailand

Author: Louis





2 Comments

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"Exactly what it says on the tin, 'ibiza in thailand'...like Blackpool but with decent sand."

Louis's Recommendations



"It was ok besides the bright blue floor..."

[read review](#)

Tags

[adventure](#)
[beach](#)[23rd Oct](#)

The crazy frog is an undeniable bane on all our lives, and trying to sleep on an island off the coast of NW Malaysia, one would think we could escape it...BUT no - together with karaoke versions of the equally teeth gnashingly awful cheeky girls theme, i began to wonder if 1) there was any part of the world saved from this and 2) if i'd get any sleep 3) why i felt homicidal...

Contrary to the advice of our travel agent, there was in fact no need to be



Vech Guesthouse

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Principle of motivation: *Enlightened Self Interest*

- Design services that reward individual behavior that has global benefit.
 - Communicate the value proposition to people who would recognize that value.
-

Motivators:

What Powers “People-Powered”

- entertainment value of participation
 - social connection
 - ego / ambition
 - altruism
- Design for these motivators.
 - Target audiences with these motivators.
-

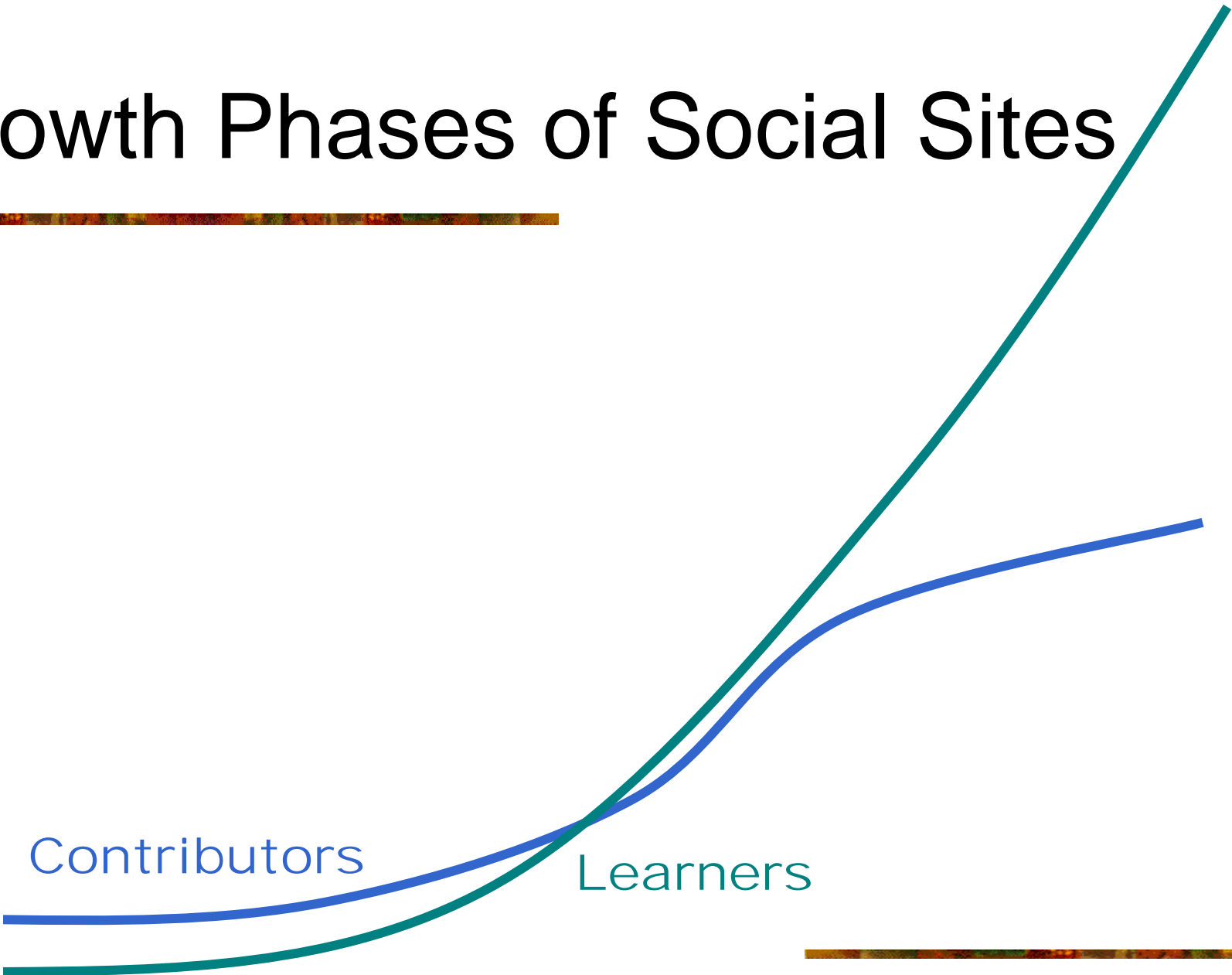
De-motivators

- Awkward or time-consuming UI
 - Nontrivial learning curve
 - *except for games*
 - Lack of positive feedback for desired behavior.
 - Design to avoid these de-motivators.
 - Target audiences who don't mind.
-

Problem 2: How to reach the right people?

- Participants are not necessarily the same population as those who benefit from their contributions.
 - Participants are motivated differently
 - *Travel bloggers care about trips.*
 - *Travel researchers care about destinations.*
 - Design user experiences for targeted audiences.
-

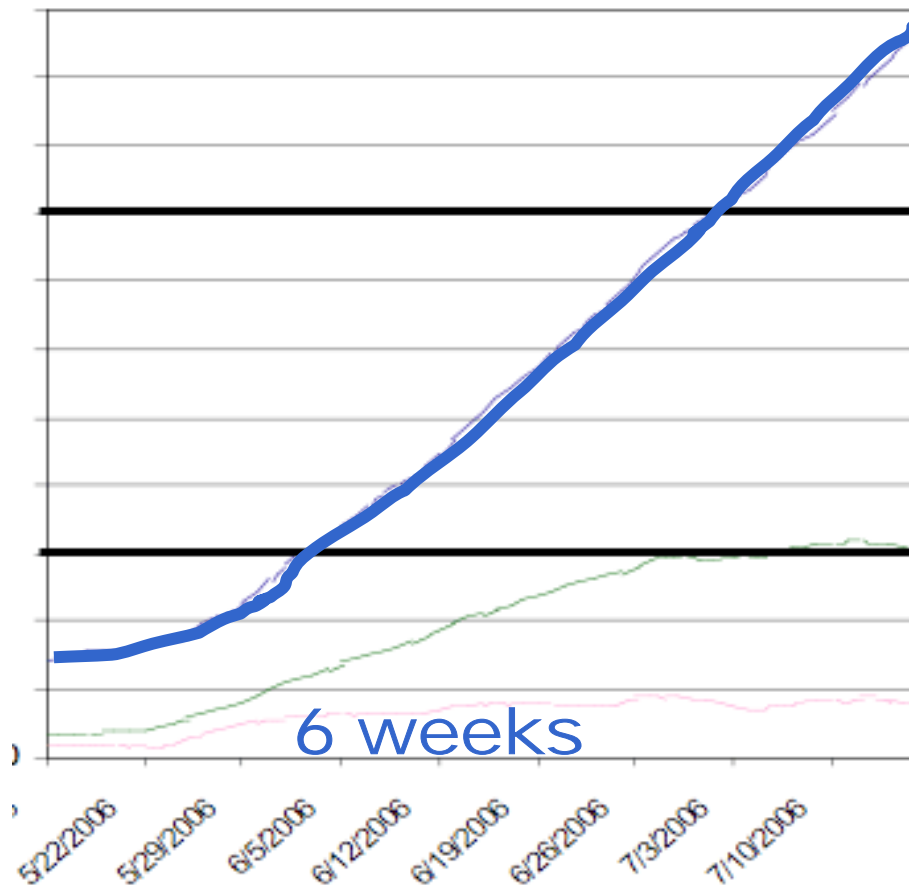
Growth Phases of Social Sites



Contributors

Learners

Viral is not the only way



- OurStory is a place for sharing life stories
- Targeted marketing campaign to grow participant base

Problem 3: How to Harvest Value

- Value of aggregate must be much greater than sum of parts
 - *need value for both contributors and learners*
 - Quality metrics of aggregate content are different than for individuals
 - *Completeness/coverage matters*
 - *Need “best first” criteria*
 - *Bad apples can spoil the batch*
-

Creating Aggregate Value: “Mash-up” with structured data

- Backbone of Web 2.0 offering is competence in domain-specific data
 - The aggregate site creates unique value by tightly integrating user contributions of understructured content with centrally managed structured data.
-

UI Technique: *Pivot Browsing*

- RealTravel manages an authoritative central database of destinations (places).
 - Contributors place their content into the destination hierarchy.
 - The combination offers travel researchers powerful browsing and search capabilities.
-

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The King and I. And Claire. (Mar 01 '06)

By: [Alan & Claire](#) on a trip to: [Bangkok, Thailand](#)

The King and I. And Claire. * Thailand is about the size of France * Building a replacement for its airport due to open this summer. Supposed to be the largest in Asia. * Bangkok the capital ... [read entry ▶](#)



Bangkok: Our "how many modes of transportation can we take in one day" challenge (Jun 13 '06)

"What's my favourite thing in Bangkok so far? Pad thai...in air conditioning."

By: [Caroline](#) in [Asia](#) on a trip to: [Bangkok, Thailand](#)

We woke up in time for the hotel's breakfast (or, more accurately, we set an alarm so that we wouldn't miss the free ... [read entry ▶](#)



'The City of Angels' (Oct 29 '05)

"If you can displace yourself from the pollution and vice of Khao San + Patpong, Bangkok offers a range of less obvious culture, lovely food and happy bustling people"

By: [Louis](#) on a trip to: [Bangkok, Thailand](#)

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By: [Louis](#) on a trip to: [Bangkok, Thailand](#)

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[160kph and no seat belt - Welcome to Bangkok](#) (Feb 06 '06)

"No speed limits, crazy driving and 13 million people!"

By: [Send Nick Packin](#) on a trip to: [Bangkok, Thailand](#)

Bangkok is a city of extremes. In this bustling metropolis you can find approx 13 million people carrying on their daily lives. Multi level ... [read entry](#) ▶



[Luxe last night in Bangkok](#) (Apr 20 '06)

"Ending the Trip in Style"

By: [Wanderer](#) on a trip to: [Bangkok, Thailand](#)

After our low-budget trip, we decided to live it up our last night and stayed at the Peninsula Hotel, located on the river in a business district. On arrival, the staff gave us ... [read entry](#) ▶

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Bangkok at Dusk



If this is Black Buddha,
why is he gold?



Bangkok Transport



Gold Mountain
Temple...closed



The Grand Palace in
Bangkok



Another Temple

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from the journal entry [Bangkok, ville de Bouddha](#) by Martin & Thuy-Ly about a trip to Bangkok

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Thuy-Ly a l'ouvrage! Test des features de sa camera!

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If this is Black Buddha, why is he gold?

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Ah non... il m'a touche!



Une promenade tres touristique



Thyu-Ly a l'ouvrage!
Test des features de sa camera!



Chiang Mai - Doi Suthep



Mega grosse fasse de Bouddha...



our guide taking it easy



Autre vue d'un site de temples



Temple on the river

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Mega grosse fasse de Bouddha...

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Contextual Tagging

- Tags are bottom up labels, words without context.
 - A structured data framework provides context.
 - Combining context and tags creates insightful slices through the aggregate content.
-

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photo by Pangdora

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beach in Thailand

experiences in Thailand about ["beach"](#)

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Life on the beach



a journal entry by [Looney](#)

"Prelude The waves chase each other across the sinewy landscape. The sky darkens as the sun finally gives up its hopes of a proper burial. There is no red today - blue is the master of these lands. The horizon is pockmarked with rocky ... " [read entry ▶](#)

Tags: [beach](#), [island](#), [cultural immersion](#)

Koh Phangan , Thailand



Looney

The King and I. And Claire.



a journal entry by [Alan & Claire](#)

"The King and I. And Claire. " Thailand is about the size of France " Building a replacement for its airport due to open this summer. Supposed to be the largest in Asia. " Bangkok the capital of Thailand and its twin city across the ... " [read entry ▶](#)

Tags: [golf](#), [architecture](#), [art & museum](#)

Bangkok , Thailand



Alan & Claire

Island Bliss



a journal entry by [banyantree](#)

"We loved Koh Phi Phi, it was 9 days of bliss on a very quiet beach, in a single 'resort' (beach shacks) with the nicest resort owner we have met thus far. Pon became our host, friend, doctor (when Chris stuck his foot on a sea urchin) ... " [read entry ▶](#)

Ko Phi Phi Don , Thailand



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photo by kathy

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Koh Phangan , Thailand



Looney

Tags: [beach](#), [island](#), [cultural immersion](#)

Liz's Birthday in Pangadaran's Paradise



a journal entry by Caroline in Asia

"Since it was my obvious inability to walk, they didn't want to embarrass me further by coming to my aid. Luckily, Liz does not subscribe to this culture, too!!"

An early start to the day led to a very LONG travelling adventure, including 4 hours by train, 6 hours by bus, a few cabs and culminating with a becak (the local tuk-tuk) ride. If you're looking for good ways to get to Pangadaran, I ... "

[read entry](#)

Pangadaran , Indonesia



Caroline in Asia

Tags: [hiking](#), [beach](#), [park](#), [wildlife viewing](#), [travel tips](#)

Sakal Bungalows



a place to stay reviewed by Louis

"this place attracted some interesting characters and great value for

Sihanoukville , Cambodia



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Problem 4: Guiding Behavior

- Question:
Why should a user do something for the benefit of the community?
 - Answer:
Wrong question.
 - Approach:
Reduce friction of useful behavior.
-

UI Technique: *Snap to Grid*

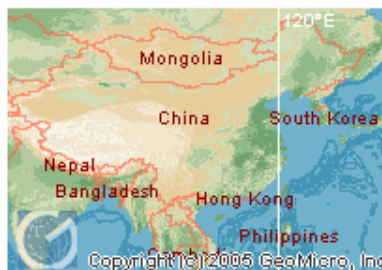
- Observation: Left to their own, users won't produce a consistent database.
 - Technique: Elicit their data in the context of structured data – let them snap to grid.
 - Inherit structure data to the unstructured contribution – provide value from the grid.
-



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JOURNAL OVERVIEW > CHANGE LOCATION

My Journal



China

Orient Destress

Add a new entry

Change Location

Edit Overview

Photos

Preview

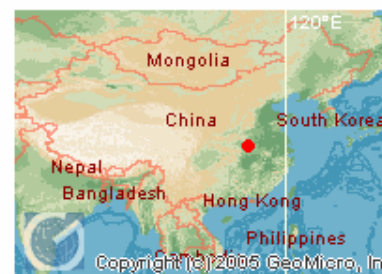
Share

What destination covers all the entries in your trip journal?

To pick a country, select it in Step 1. You can be more specific by picking a region or city in Step 2.

1. Select the **country** or area of the location:

- China
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China



Selected: China

Can't find my location

Back

Quit

Continue

to edit my journal overview

patent pending

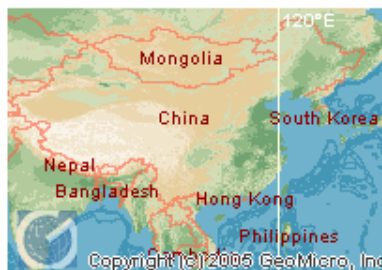
Tips For Picking Locations of Journals



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JOURNAL > NEW ENTRY > PICK LOCATION

My Journal



China

Orient Destress Edit

New Entry

Pick Location Write Entry Photos Preview Share

Where did you go first on your trip?

Pick the city, state, or other travel destination you visited.

1. Select the **country** of the location:

China

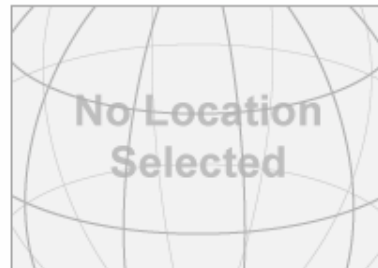
2. Enter the name of the **city** or place.
(pause typing to view suggestions):

sh

3. Pick the correct location from the list that appears (* indicates a popular location):

- Shanghai*
- Shangri-La*
- Shanxi (region)*
- Shennongjia, Hubei*
- Shenyang*
- Shenzhen*
- Shaanxi (region)
- Shandong (region)
- Shanghai (region)
- Shanghai, Shanghai

Showing 25 matches.
There are at least 6673 more.



No Location Selected

Can't find my location

Back Cancel Continue to write my entry

patent pending

Tips For Picking a Location

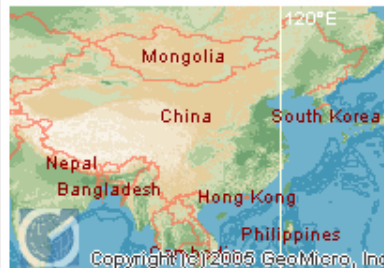
◆ Why do this? The Pick Location form helps solve the travel writer's problem: *where exactly did I stay?* It uses a



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My Journal



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Orient Destress Edit

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China

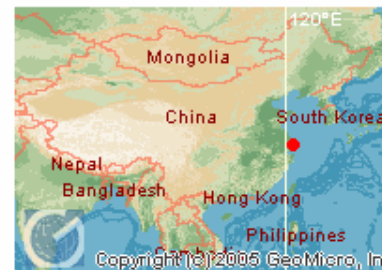
2. Enter the name of the **city** or place.
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3. Pick the correct location from the list that appears (* indicates a popular location):

- Shanghai*
- Shangri-La*
- Shanxi (region)*
- Shennongjia, Hubei*
- Shenyang*
- Shenzhen*
- Shaanxi (region)
- Shandong (region)
- Shanghai (region)
- Shanghai, Shanghai

Showing 25 matches.
There are at least 6673 more.



Selected:
Shanghai

Can't find my location

Back Cancel Continue to write my entry

patent pending

Tips For Picking a Location

◆ Why do this? The Pick Location form helps solve the travel writer's problem: *where exactly did I stay?* It uses a



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JOURNAL > WRITE NEW ENTRY

My Journal



Shanghai, China

Orient Destress Edit

New Entry

- Change Location
- Edit Entry**
- Photos
- Preview
- Share

Your entry for Shanghai

Title

Date When did you visit Shanghai?
 --month-- [v] --day-- [v] --year-- [v] for days

Quick Highlights for Shanghai

Did you like the hotel, or find a great place to eat? What was your favorite attraction?

Lodging -- lodging type -- [v]

Dining -- dining type -- [v]

Thing To Do -- activity type -- [v]

Your Story What was it like in Shanghai?

ABC Paragraph Style ▾



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photo by tom

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Serious diving and rambles in the jungle

Manado , Indonesia

a journal entry by kwfletch

"The flight from Singapore was uneventful although Wendy thought it was a bit bumpy! Manado has a reputation as one of the cleanest cities in Indonesia - a reputation which is, I'm afraid, thoroughly undeserved! In fact it's a bit of a ... "

[read entry](#)



kwfletch

Tags: [island](#), [diving & snorkeling](#)

Just one more...

Semporna , Malaysia

a journal entry by Lindsay

"So, this is probably the only journal that I have written while I am still in the place I am writing about, but I guess it had to happen at some point in this trip, just don't let it set any expectations for future entries ok.... I ... "

[read entry](#)



Lindsay

Tags: [wildlife viewing](#), [diving & snorkeling](#)

Life on the beach

Koh Phangan , Thailand

Group Discussion: Techniques of Design for Participation

- Motivating participation
 - *answer faqs in the context of the wiki*
 - *connecting it to the social group that exist*
 - *competitiveness – score keeping*
 - Reaching targeted audiences
 - Harvesting value
 - Guiding behavior toward global benefit
 - *make it easy to upload and share itinerary*
-

Thank You



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RealTravel.com

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