

Lakewiki web service

Järviwiki

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Organisation: Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)

Country: Finland

Level of government: Central government

Sector: Environmental protection

Type: Digital, Methods, Public Service

Launched in: 2011

Overall development time: 8 months

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

Järviwiki, or Lakewiki, is a collaborative web service about Finnish lakes. It is built and maintained in cooperation by authorities and citizens. Lakewiki provides a webpage with information on each Finnish lake over 1 hectare in size, with pages on some 56 000 lakes. Anyone can contribute to Lakewiki by editing a lake's introduction, writing on discussion forums, uploading photos or maintaining an observation site.

On Lakewiki's observation sites, users can upload observations on water temperature, ice conditions, water level, algal blooms, water transparency and many other things. The observations are added to the site's observation archive, which is used to draw maps and time-series graphs. All uploaded observations are available according to open data principles.

Why the innovation was developed

- To encourage common people to take responsibility about their nearby waters.
 - To help in the cooperation between authorities and locals.
 - To set up a platform for gathering observations made by citizens.
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Objectives

Enhance public trust, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve user satisfaction, Increase citizen engagement

- Provide a virtual meeting point for everybody interested in a specific lake.
 - Create mutual trust and promote collaboration between citizens and authorities.
 - Improve access to information about lakes and water protection.
 - Gather in-situ observations from citizens.
 - Create new business by allowing open data access to observations.
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Main beneficiaries

Academia, Civil Society, General population, Government bodies, Government staff, Students

- Citizens interested in lakes and water quality.
- Authorities involved in water protection and lake restorations.
- Authorities responsible for monitoring water quality.
- The civil society as a whole benefits as the collaboration of citizens and authorities increases trust between different actors.

Results

Effectiveness

- Acquiring observations from citizens is easier than before.
 - Visualisations from both citizens' observations and many authorities monitoring campaigns are drawn automatically by Lakewiki.
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Service quality

Accessibility:

- Easier to find information: The Lakewiki page is usually among the top hits when a lake is googled.
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User satisfaction

- Lakewiki is a popular web service with approximately 10 000 - 30 000 weekly visitors.
- The amount of visitors has increased by approximately 25% each year.

Development

Design

The idea was generated at the Communication unit at the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) in 2010. It was a proposal for the development of the annual algal monitoring campaign on how to involve citizens more widely.

Design time: 1 month

Testing

- A pilot version was set up in 2010 which was used for testing and seeking funding.
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Implementation

Tools used:

- The service was developed using agile methods.
- Only open source software was used in implementing the web service.

Implementation time: 5 months

Diffusion

- At its launch, a "Region Lake Contest" was organised to promote Lakewiki: http://www.jarviwiki.fi/wiki/Region_lake_contest.
- Lakewiki has a facebook fan page: <https://www.facebook.com/jarviwiki>.

Diffusion time: 2 months

Partnerships

Maa- ja vesitekniikan tuki

Academics and Research Bodies

The Maa-ja vesitekniikan tuki, an association providing research funding, issued a EUR 50 000 grant for the establishment of Lakewiki.

Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute

Other Public Sector

The Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute provided data to be included in the service.

YLE - Finland's national public service broadcasting company

Other Public Sector

YLE revised their keywording in their media archives service (Elävä arkisto) so that links to video clips related to lakes could be easily inserted in Lakewiki.

EU Life+

Other Public Sector

After its launch, the Lakewiki was further developed in an EU Life+ funded project called GisBloom.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- There is huge potential and many things to gain in enhancing collaboration among and between citizens and authorities.
 - Observations made by common people and citizen's science in general can substantially supplement official monitoring.
 - Observations made by common people have turned out to be of high quality.
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Conditions for success

- A good brand: Lakewiki (Järviwiki in Finnish) is self-explanatory.
 - Active marketing to gather a large enough user base for lake-specific collaboration.
 - Continuous development of the service.
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