What are the uses of Zoho Wiki? What does it do?

What purpose does it serve?
The purpose of Zoho Wiki is to give people somewhere to share thoughts, as well as businesses and industries a place to stay in touch and talk about work topics outside of the workplace.

What does it do?
Zoho Wiki provides an easy way for people to talk and share their thoughts about life, school, and current events happening around the world.

Who Uses Zoho Wiki?
Anyone who wants to share their activities and daily lives and thoughts

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1. History

1.a Development

Who Started It?

Zoho Wiki, along with all of the other Zoho applications, was developed by a company called AdventNet, Inc. They are an American company which is privately owned and operated out of California. They also have international headquarters that are located in areas around the world such as in Europe, Japan, and China. AdventNet, Inc. itself was established in 1996. AdventNet founded Zoho Wiki late in the year 2006.

What is included?
Zoho, the division of AdventNet, Inc. who is responsible for Zoho Wiki, is referred to as "the online office application tools suite." This Zoho application allows for the integration of many other Zoho applications into Zoho Wiki, such as the Zoho spreadsheet "Zoho Sheet" application and "Zoho Creator," which allows users to make their own forms such as job applications, menus, catalogs, and much more.

**How has it progressed?**

An update for Zoho Wiki that went into affect on July 15, 2007 made it possible to link different wiki pages to each other by clicking links (similar to hyperlinks) on a page. The other feature that was added to Zoho Wiki during this update was that the administrator of a wiki page will be emailed once a day informing them of the changes that have taken place on their wiki. Another update not long after the first gave rise to many more features that we now can see in the current Zoho Wiki. Each free account through Zoho Wiki can now have two different wikis instead of only one. Administrators can provide their group or team members with the domain name in order for them to delete, add, or edit pages on their personal wiki. The only way users can get to a company's wiki page is through their own email address with the company's domain which is registered with Zoho Wiki. This update allows users to block unwanted viewing of their wiki or choosing who is allowed to edit it. There also was a new option added that allows viewers to see their images as thumbnails. Lastly, you can now delete old or unwanted versions of attachments to your Zoho Wiki page.

**1.b How Zoho Wiki Works**

**How do I create an account?**

1. Click on "Sign Up" or click on "Google" or "Yahoo" to log in with your account information from either of those sites. See the image below for clarification.

![Sign Up Screen](image1.png)

2. Create a username and password, and enter your email address. Your email is used to send you your forgotten password and other Zoho news.
3. Verify that you are real by typing the code that is shown in the picture.
4. Click the box beside "I agree to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy." Then choose whether or not you would like the Zoho newsletter. Subscribing is NOT required to create an account.
5. Click "Sign Up" when you have finished entering your information.

Once you click "Sign Up" a new window will appear that tells you that a verification email has been sent to the email address you provided. Then click "Continue" to go on to the next page to begin creating your wiki.
After you complete registration and any time you log in, this screen will appear. It lists all of your wikis (maximum of 2, unless you upgrade).

It's easy to customize your wiki. All you have to do is click “Settings” and change what you want.

How do I create a new wiki?

Since you can have up to two wikis under one name, you click the “create new wiki” button in the top right hand corner. If you have already reached your maximum of two, it will give you the option of purchasing more wikis or returning to your list of wikis. Otherwise, you will create a name for your new wiki.
How do I edit my wiki?

Zoho Wiki allows you to add information to your Wiki page in many ways. Information can be added through a "Web Form Builder" which helps you to create simple and easy forms of HTML to customize the view of your webpage. You even have the option to change the layout of the "Web Form Builder" itself so that it shows only the information you would like to be able to edit in your HTML form. Once you pull up your wiki, there is a search button that makes it easy for you to find any information contained within your wiki.

Follow the images below to see how to edit and make simple changes to your wiki.
Save your progress without closing the window
Add a widget
Change font color
Add a picture
Save your work and close the editor
Close the editor without saving
1.c Getting More out of the Application

How many people can use a page?

A Zoho Wiki page can be set to private for only one person to see or set for multiple people, such as an entire high school English class that could join one page to critique and edit work. Guests, not necessarily members of Zoho Wiki, can comment on other people's pages as long as the page is not set to private. Users can turn a Zoho Wiki page into their own personal website, public or private.

Zoho Wiki is very user-friendly and has a very easy navigation system along with a helpful "How To" page for potential users.

Is it safe?

When using a Zoho application, all the information entered into a page is securely stored online, but the public may still be able to see the page if it is not private. Zoho Wiki lets its users interact with people from all over the world, gain advice from them, and you can even include many types of media like images, screen shots, videos, and interactive applications.

What if I need help?

The forums provide input and advice from current users about their issues with Zoho Wiki and the positive aspects of the application. There are also videos showing step-by-step “How To” instructions on their website for help with more difficult tasks. The help section of Zoho Wiki also contains many articles that clearly describe common issues and give helpful hints.

What else should I know?
Zoho Wiki has all of the basic wiki features which include creating, editing, versioning web pages, notifications, and many more. Whoever creates the Zoho Wiki account is the owner of the wiki under that account name. Zoho Wiki has a “rich text” area to enter text in without any special code, such as Java, and maintenance of the application is simple. Zoho Wiki can also help with business meetings and projects. If you are in charge of a certain part of your company's page on Zoho Wiki, then you can "watch" that section, which means that when a change is made to that page, (if someone edits the page), then you will be emailed about the change. This can be very useful, especially if you are trying to reach a deadline. It also can guarantee you that your teammates are actively participating in your activity when you yourself are not logged into Zoho Wiki.

Zoho Wiki is an easy application to help many different groups of people and individuals get started with their personal websites and allow them to stay in touch with the world.

2. How Zoho Wiki Relates to Other Applications

2.a Comparison to Competitors

Zoho Wiki is very similar to other wiki programs such as Confluence, pbwiki, and Wikia. There are many benefits to using Zoho Wiki. Zoho Wiki is not a source for users to search for articles or information on a specific topic. It is a place where users can create their own wiki pages to store or display information that they choose to share.

Unique Uses of Zoho Wiki?

Zoho Wiki offers many different tools and can be accessed by anyone that you invite to join your page by simply sending them an email. This gives users the freedom to work from any environment with access to the internet. This also leads to more collaboration within the company or group. Each page does not have to be maintained or edited by a single person. With Zoho Wiki you can see everyone’s progress on one page. The “sitemap” allows the creation of sub-pages and lists them in a table of contents so users can easily access and view different folders. Changes can be made very easily with the drag and drop tool. A great benefit of Zoho Wiki is it saves itself very often. You are also allowed to change your wiki back to an older version, such as the version before you last saved changes, if needed. This helps if someone accidentally wipes out a large amount of information. No background experience is required to use Zoho Wiki. Zoho Wiki offers step by step videos and directional assistance to those who are not quite sure if they need or want to have a Zoho Wiki account. Zoho Wiki is free to sign up for and use with a username and password. There are many different customizable designs available with many different types of fonts and colors. You can choose your own style.

What if I want more?

A subscription to Zoho Wiki also allows you many different applications of Zoho. For an advanced subscription, one can pay and receive more options. However, there are many different options and tools that can be accessed with just one free username and password account. These include Zoho Notebook, Zoho Sheet, Zoho Meeting, Zoho Chat, Zoho Creator and Zoho Planner.

2.b Unique Ways to Use Zoho Wiki

Business Uses

One way this product is being used is through businesses. Since Zoho Wiki can be accessed from any computer in the world that has internet access, it is very convenient for businesses to use the site for organizational purposes. They can choose whether or not the information is available to the public so that it can be kept private. It is also set up so that the administrator is notified via email anytime someone makes a change on the wiki. This is a quick way for administrators or group leaders to keep track of the work that is being done. Since people working in the business field often travel, the international access to the wiki is very helpful. It would prevent any stalls in work because of travel purposes. One wiki could be set up and different pages could be made off of that wiki for different sections within the business including departments such as Sales, Marketing, or Human Resources. Different sections would be able to see what other sections are working on, and they could play off of each others’ ideas. These departments could have their newsletters and company events highlighted on their own wiki.

Non-Profit Organization Uses

Non-profit organizations can use the wiki as well. There is a free option, the most basic, but priced options are also available which provide more space, administrators, and other options. Non-profit organizations receive a 15% discount off of any of the prices.
Classroom Uses

Another way to use Zoho Wiki is in the classroom. Many teachers have used it to create unique lessons for their students. They have used it to create "interactive online courses for their students." It is a great resource for students to come to where they can have links to sites and information laid out for them. Teachers can post homework assignments, project assignments, study materials, maintain schedules and calendars, post slide shows, photo galleries, and video clips. Parents can also be kept updated on classroom objectives, course work, and events.

College Student Uses:

College students can also use Zoho Wiki for research purposes. Students can manage study groups and mentor matching, post participation opportunities in a research group and access information from a meeting that group member may have missed. College graduates can form pages on which they keep information, post brainstorming ideas on particular topics, build communities to further develop their expertise in a subject area, organize, and share information found including articles, videos, links, blogs and course materials.

3. Real World Application

3.a Educational Lesson Plans

Elementary Level Lesson Plans

Leaf Identification #17

Adapted from: http://www.museum.state.il.us/ismdepts/botany/herbarium/LeafCollection_Lesson.html


Cooperative Story #18

Adapted from: http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/createwrite2.html


Creating a Database: Social Studies: Africa and Technology #19

*Adapted from:* http://www.lessonplanspage.com/CJSSCreatingADatabaseOnAfrica45.htm


Secondary Level Lesson Plans

Leafy Green #20

*Adapted from:* http://www.lessonplanspage.com/ScienceExIsGreenOnlyColorInLeafMO68.htm


Expository Essay #21

*Adapted from:* http://www.edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_33_34.html


Scriptwriting With Zoho Wiki #22
Post Secondary Level Lesson Plans

Student Teaching Journal #23
*Adapted from:* http://www.edci.purdue.edu/phillion/edci205/205proj2.html


Clean Up for Earth Day #24
Adapted from: http://www.eduref.org/cgi-bin/printlessons.cgi/Virtual/Lessons/Science/Environmental_Education/ENV0095.html


Elements of Physics #25
Adapted from: http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/ep_matter/


Business and Industry Lesson Plans

Business Promotion and Expansion #15
Adapted from: http://wiki.zoho.com/Zoho-Wiki-For-Business.htm


Understanding Wikis and Ethics/Responsibility of Internet Postings #26
*Adapted from:* http://www.lessonplanspage.com/CISSResponsiblyPostingWikisInfoOnInternet812.htm


Balancing Budgets  #27
*Adapted from:* http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/thereaganlegacybalancingact/


4. Demonstration of Educational Value

Zoho wiki enhances classroom communication and also international communication in several ways. School syllabi and any other essential classroom materials can be posted onto the wiki for the students to access and to share. Along with this, students can access powerpoint presentations and slide shows and stay up to date with all activities that are happening in the classroom. This means that if a student is absent from school, they can easily access their own class's wiki and view the content that they missed, as long as someone has loaded it onto the wiki for them to view. Teachers could leave messages for students on their wiki with homework instructions or messages to their parents.

In general, the use of Zoho Wiki provides a unique learning experience for the students. It gives the students a new and exciting way to work in groups and to make valuable contributions when it is convenient for them. Zoho Wiki would be effective in the classroom because it is more likely to keep the students entertained and focused on their work and also teaches them new skills. As a result of using Zoho Wiki in the classroom, all class members including the teacher, are involved in an ongoing process of creation and collaboration. The classroom teacher also has control of the wiki because they can manage the level of access that the students recieve and also “undo” previous edits to the wiki.

Current Classroom Uses
A teacher in the Balkans decided to set up a wiki for writing a publication together with his students. They were compiling a publication on EU-Western Balkans relations. Allowing his students to make full use of all the features in Zoho Wiki required some initial work on his part. He did research so that he would be able to show his students how to do anything they needed to do. It was a successful way for students to collaborate together on a project.

At another school, they are working with Zoho Wiki to make a school-wide website for teachers and administrators. They state that while they have run into a few small limitations on the editing side of their wiki, overall the program has been very effective. More importantly from a teachers' standpoint, they are fairly intuitive to use, and the layout of Zoho Wiki looks a little more polished and professional than some of the other wikis out there. They also like that Zoho has their whole suite of applications that can go along with the wiki like creator, word processing, and spreadsheets. This makes it much easier for teachers to use and make links to from their wiki with the added benefit of being able to access their documents from anywhere, anytime since each zoho document you create is given a unique URL.

However, there are several advantages and disadvantages to using this application in the classroom. These are discussed below.

**Advantages**

One of the main advantages of using Zoho Wiki in school lessons is that it is based online. Students can access their homework from anywhere with an internet connection, and this means that schools and the users of Zoho Wiki do not need to purchase software to use this application. Since the students store their work online, there is no need to carry around USB drives or floppy disks which can be easily damaged or lost. Perhaps the most important and beneficial advantage of using an application such as Zoho Wiki is that it provides students with important informational and communication technology skills. Information and communication technologies such as computers are used almost everywhere these days, so it is integral that students know how to effectively use them.

**Problems**

The use of Zoho Wiki in schools is not without its negatives. The main problem is that the use of this Web 2.0 application relies on the school having a constant and good internet connection. Not all schools have computers, let alone the internet. Internet security is also a big issue. When the students work is stored in a remote location online, there is a chance that someone else may get access to their work. Everyone is well aware of the danger related to children using the internet and the potential dangers that it holds.

**5. International Uses of Zoho Wiki**

Zoho Wiki along with all other Zoho online applications can be accessed for no fee by anyone around the globe with internet access. Zoho Wiki has four available interface languages. These are English, Japanese, Norwegian and Chinese. This allows all controls and directions to be given in all languages. Each of Zoho's applications all provide different languages. With Zoho Wiki it gives the ability to people from different parts of the world to work jointly on a project. Zoho Wiki has many customers from both New Zealand and Australia. These users are able to customize all of the applications in the Zoho Suite, including Zoho Wiki, to suit their needs.
Current International Uses

There is currently a teacher in the Balkans using Zoho Wiki for his students to study relations between the European Union and the Balkans. His students all have access to all of the features available on the site. This makes for easy collaboration and a polished final product.

Other schools overseas use the application to create school websites. It is free and offered in several different languages which makes it appealing to many different people. This also makes it easy for everyone to use. They do not have to rely on everyone knowing English and can customize their site to be in the language that they would like.

Our Project

An example of international uses of Zoho Wiki is the way that this project was completed. With the assistance of four international partners we were able to put together a very diverse project. Being half around the world from each other, some people might think it is hard to work on a project unless the partners are sitting in the same room. But with Zoho Wiki we could each edit the project when it was convenient for us and then check later to see what the other person had changed or added. This process would go back and forth until we had the project completed how we wanted it.

6. Presentation Material

Presentation Slides (PowerPoint 2007)
Presentation Slides (PowerPoint 97-2003)
Presentation Slides (Adobe PDF)
7. References


