The World Cup is Making Waves

The World Cup has been represented in Wikipedia since day one. During these 20 years, we can see the impact that the World Cup has had on the platform. From pageviews to revisions in different languages, the story of the World Cup comes and goes in waves.

When looking at pageviews, we can see that over the last 7 years there has been multiple peaks but the two most interesting come during the World Cup years, 2018 and 2022. English speaking users seem to visit the site the most compared to all other users but do not visit very often. These users seem to only want to view the page when it is a World Cup year. German and Czech speaking users seem to visit the site less overall but more frequently every year without much change during world cup years.



Here is a line graph depicting the number of total revisions for the World Cup Wikipedia page during its lifetime. This graph much more clearly identifies when a World Cup year occurs compared to the pageviews graph. As we can see, there was a World Cup in 2006 and it has occurred every four years all the way up to the present. One interesting aspect of this graph is that it does not show much, if any revision data for the 2002 world cup even though the page was created that year. This may be because the World Cup occurs during the summer and the page was created in the latter stages of that year. Another interesting point this graph shows is the total number of revisions seems to have dropped off dramatically after the 2006 World Cup, the first world cup which happened after the creation of Wikipedia. This could be a result of Wikipedia having a very active userbase and not many guidelines for editing and creating pages during the first 5 years of its existence. As more rules are established, the number of edits decreased to around 200 per world cup year.



When we look at the number of revisions with a rolling 28-day average we can see the data is cleaner and easier to see when the World Cup years occur. There are tiny increases in edits during the women's world cup years which can be seen in 2015, and 2019. It would be interesting to compare the pageviews and edits for both the men and women's world cups.



English is the most popular language among users who edit the Wikipedia page. German and Czech users are also in the top 5 rank of total users but they only make up a fraction compared to the English speaking users. Over the course of Wikipedia's existence, we can see a dramatic increase in the number of English users and even dramatic drop off points, most of which occur in the period after a world cup year. The language data is not as complete when comparing to more popular pages, but The World Cup does have over 10,000 edits in its lifetime.



Lastly we can check out a chart which shows the total number of links currently active on the World Cup Wikipedia page. The number of links seems to increase dramatically after the first recorded cup after Wikipedia's creation, but drops off before the next recorded cup in 2010. Since then, the number of links has always increased. This unusual drop off could be explained by the large number of new users wanting to have their say about their favorite sport during that first recorded cup in 2006. There were so many wrong or extra edits on the page that over the next couple of years, it needed to be rectified and fixed. With more concrete guidance and guidelines, we can see the increase of links slowly drops to only 10 or 20 added per year compared to the beginning years. This could also be explained by Wikipedia editors identifying missing information and just populating the new world cup Wikipedia page when there was nothing there before. It occurred in 2006 because that was the first cup that took place after the creation of Wikipedia and probably brought the most attention to it at that time. The "high" point of editing in the FIFA world cup page has already passed and probably will not reach those same numbers again.

