

This is an archival forum from the **FamilySearch Wiki Contributors' Corner forum**.

View Poll Results: Should Adoption sign be @ top or bottom of adopted pages lacking infobox/topic box?

| | | |
|---|----|--------|
| Adoption sign should be at the top of the page. | 12 | 70.59% |
|---|----|--------|

| | | |
|--|---|--------|
| Adoption sign should be at the bottom of the page. | 5 | 29.41% |
|--|---|--------|

Voters: 17. You may not vote on this poll

27.03.2011, 10:14

RitcheyMT

Should Adoption sign be @ top or bottom of adopted pages lacking infobox/topic box?

Various threads have mentioned that regular contributors of the wiki feel unwelcome to edit pages that have adoption signs. We're trying to soften the feeling of "ownership" or territorialism that people are feeling regarding adoption signs. There have also been comments that "content is king" -- that since genealogical content is more useful to readers than an adoption sign, adoption signs should not be placed on the top of a page as they initially were. Instead, readers say, they want the top of the page reserved for genealogically-useful content.

It seemed like adoption signs placed in infoboxes and topics boxes didn't get in the way of browsing genealogically-useful content if they were placed at the *bottom* of those boxes, so we took a poll on it to find the community was unanimous in their feeling that the adoption signs should go at the bottom of such boxes. But at the time, we didn't have a solution for where the adoption sign should be placed on pages that lack topics boxes or infoboxes.

Enter Fran Jensen. While redesigning the Utah page she moderates -- a page that doesn't employ infoboxes or topics boxes -- Fran created a design that has a "Contributors" section at the bottom which seems like a neat solution. Not only does it feature the adoption sign, but it also mentions other Utah content contributors as well. That does a lot to achieve what we've been shooting at for months -- to be more even-handed regarding the level of recognition given to adopters, moderators, and other major contributors. And since the Contributors' section is at the bottom of the Utah page, it doesn't soak up prime space at the top of the page where readers want the genealogical content to be.

Another nice thing about the placement of the Contributors' section on the bottom of the Utah page is that we're going to be adding a contributor recognition widget at the bottom of each page of the wiki this summer that lists the most recent and the most prolific contributors of the page. Having the Contributors' section adjacent to that seems like a good move.

28.03.2011, 04:01

cottrells

Quote:

Originally Posted by **ritcheymt**

we're going to be adding a contributor recognition widget at the bottom of each page of the wiki this summer that lists the most recent and the most prolific contributors of the page. Having the Contributors' section adjacent to that seems like a good move.

I can understand the desire to recognise contributors, but until I hear more about how this planned widget will work, it seems that it will recognise quantity (bytes added or edits made) over quality. I know quality is subjective and therefore harder to measure, but it should not go unrecognised.

29.03.2011, 14:11

Unregistered

Guest

Re: Location of adoption sign

When FamilySearch management asked me to work on adoptions, we were told to tell people this sign would be displayed prominently on the page, as a way of advertising the adopting organization. The wording in the agreement still states "prominently" in the first paragraph of the agreement, see: <https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Help:Adopt-a-page>. Website marketers would agree that "prominently" equates to above the fold of the page, as it is displayed on the agreement page.

If something like this is voted on and changed, it will damage my reputation as a professional.

Nathan W. Murphy

29.03.2011, 17:00

cottrells

Nathan, in your view, does having the adoption sign at the bottom of an infobox meet the *prominently* test? If so then I think the answer is that the preference should be that adoption signs are placed on a page at the same time an infobox is added, if not already in place.

29.03.2011, 18:18

Taneya

To use this online poll as a basis for a decision on whether or not to move the adoption boxes is biased. The poll only exists here on the wiki forum pages and to date, only 9 people have responded. I would not thus conclude that "the community was unanimous in their feeling that the adoption signs should go at the bottom of such boxes."

Has the wiki team inquired directly with the organizations who have partnered with

FamilySearch Wiki to adopt the pages and reach out to them via email for their thoughts? As Nathan suggests, the efforts to engage partners did in part include "prominent" placement and some groups may react unfavorably towards a decision to change that now that they have been brought on board. Nathan is correct in that this could cause a violation of trust between FamilySearch and the adoption partners.

I would love to better understand why people feel they cannot contribute? The tagline is pretty clear, the "Edit this Page" box is at the top of each screen, the info box icon does say that adoption partners welcome contributions" and the front page features a big section that says "Write." To me, this is the more interesting question...

I think there is a lot to consider here and I would love to see more discussion and input from others.

Taneya

Visit my genealogy blog - www.taneya-kalonji.com/genblog

29.03.2011, 20:38

Unregistered

Guest



Correct me if I'm wrong, but to my knowledge, a member of FamilySearch staff has not been selected to represent the "adopter constituency." Staff who started this conversation seem to represent the "user constituency." Who is representing adopters?

Nathan W. Murphy

30.03.2011, 08:37

RitcheyMT



You're right

Quote:

Originally Posted by **cottrells**

I can understand the desire to recognise contributors, but until I hear more about how this planned widget will work, it seems that it will recognise quantity (bytes added or edits made) over quality. I know quality is subjective and therefore harder to measure, but it should not go unrecognised.

You're right, Steve. We're also going to design a set of bronze/silver/gold awards for article quality. So we'll be recognizing contributors for quantity and quality.

30.03.2011, 10:37

murphynw

Steve --

I was not involved in the "unanimous" decision of 9 who voted on the location of the adoption sign within a county infobox. The adopters need to be asked what they think of

that. I know at least part of the adopter group was involved in that decision.

The major concern to me is moving the adoption sign to the bottom of the page. That is not what people signed up for.

30.03.2011, 10:50

RitcheyMT

Suggestions as to how to draw more voters?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Taneya**

To use this online poll as a basis for a decision on whether or not to move the adoption boxes is biased. The poll only exists here on the wiki forum pages and to date, only 9 people have responded. I would not thus conclude that "the community was unanimous in their feeling that the adoption signs should go at the bottom of such boxes."

Has the wiki team inquired directly with the organizations who have partnered with FamilySearch Wiki to adopt the pages and reach out to them via email for their thoughts?

Just to clarify, that first poll -- the one about moving adoption signs to the bottom of Topics boxes and Infoboxes -- had 217 views and the voters, some of whom were adopters, voted 9-0 in favor of the measure. The voter turnout was certainly disappointing, but the poll result was indeed unanimous.

I'd love if these polls drew more voters, Taneya, and I appreciate your idea of reaching out to adopters through email. Unfortunately, I have no way to identify who from the adopting organizations are actually engaged on the wiki. I generally only know one or two leaders from each organization, whereas they may have recruited scores of people from their organization to contribute, but we're blind to that. Therefore, I don't have a good way to reach out to them. We're working on that, but right now we're having to play with the cards we were dealt.

I should clarify, too, that while I didn't do a "get out the vote" initiative to specifically draw adopters to this poll, I also didn't lobby longtime contributors or Family History Library personnel on the poll either. I'm trying to be very even-handed about these issues by enabling a democratic process through polls and allowing the community to discover the polls through their own activity, without lobbying any specific constituencies. My concern is for the entire wiki community.

That said, this forum is where we will decide most issues because forums, unlike email, are public, transparent, and archived. And these forums, unlike many other tools, offer the functionality of polls.

I've been trying to get FHL staff, longtime contributors, adopters, and moderators to participate in these forum discussions. The community's participation here is indeed growing. But judging from my experience over the last couple years on trying to get

community members to vote on things, and also witnessing the percentage of people who vote in presidential and congressional elections, I'd say one problem among any voting population is apathy. That's reinforced by the fact that the initial poll thread received 217 views but only 9 votes.

I'm totally open to suggestions regarding how we can improve the democratic process here, Taneya. We are definitely smarter collectively than we are independently.

30.03.2011, 11:33

murphynw

Re: Absence of key volunteer spokesperson

One of the key players and volunteer spokesperson for adoption, Jane Colmenares, is on vacation. This discussion and poll are incomplete without her input. I don't believe she'll be back before the poll closes.

I would have to agree with Taneya, that if so few people vote, it is a logical fallacy (to quote my G.R.E. textbook) to consider the numbers meaningful. The sample size is too small.

30.03.2011, 12:24

jamestanner

Raises some interesting issues

I think the discussion here raises some fundamental issues about the operation of the Wiki. The question is whether or not changes in the Wiki require the input or agreement of some group or organization other than the participants in the Wiki forums? I agree, in principle, with ritcheymt that there is no other way to operate other than have those that participate be the decision makers. The fact that an issue receives a large number of views is irrelevant to the decision being made, only those people who vote (participate) end up having any valid input. Overall, it is well established that only a small percentage of Wiki users will contribute and of the contributors, it appears, that an even smaller number are willing to be involved in the organization and upkeep of the project. This really isn't a problem because almost anything that can be done, can also be undone.

James Tanner

<http://genealogysstar.blogspot.com>

30.03.2011, 12:530

RitcheyMT

Grandfather clause

[QUOTE=Unregistered;28362]When FamilySearch management asked me to work on adoptions, we were told to tell people this sign would be displayed prominently on the page, as a way of advertising the adopting organization. The wording in the agreement still states "prominently" in the first paragraph of t

Quote:

| |
|--|
| Originally Posted by Unregistered |
|--|

When FamilySearch management asked me to work on adoptions, we were told to tell people this sign would be displayed prominently on the page, as a way of advertising the adopting organization. The wording in the agreement still states "prominently" in the first paragraph of the agreement, see:
<https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Help:Adopt-a-page>.

Your reputation, the reputations of adopter leaders, the trust between adopting organizations and FamilySearch, and the objectives of the wiki community are all important, Nathan.

This poll is designed to see what the overall wiki community wants. That community includes "regular" contributors, adopters, and moderators.

If the community makes a decision that necessitates a change in adoption, we could allow adopters who joined before the change to follow whatever policies were in place when they joined. In other words, we could use a grandfather clause. We could also offer incentives to adopters to embrace changes. Some adopters already have done so with a great deal of grace and understanding. When I've talked to adopters about issues our regular contributors are having with adoption, they have been very empathetic and have offered great solutions to help.

30.03.2011, 13:09

RitcheyMT

Suggestions?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Nathan Murphy**

I was not involved in the "unanimous" decision of 9 who voted on the location of the adoption sign within a county infobox. The adopters need to be asked what they think of that. I know at least part of the adopter group was involved in that decision.

So Nathan, what are your suggestions regarding how we might draw more adopters, moderators, regular contributors, and FHL personnel to come here and discuss/refine/vote on issues that affect them? The best suggestions would involve solutions that don't require doing a bunch of manual tasks each time we want to draw readers to an issue.

30.03.2011, 15:18

murphynw

Adopter Incentives

I am very happy to hear about a grandfather clause. (Big sigh of relief)

I would fear though, if you eliminate incentives for future adopters, you may not see anyone else adopt.

I would like to see a staff person representing adopters' interests. That person would ensure adopters show up for polls on Forums. They would also ensure that the program doesn't die.

Scaring the living daylight out of people, like this vote did to me, is probably another way of getting people here. 🇺🇸

31.03.2011, 15:260

[murphynw](#)

Adopter Incentives

I'm interested in helping the adoption process work.

Nathan W. Murphy, AG

Accredited Genealogist (US Southern States, England)

Last edited by Nathan Murphy; 31.03.2011 at 16:39. Reason: incentive

31.03.2011, 17:15

[Unregistered](#)

Guest

Surely the adopters could find other ways to spend their time than helping FamilySearch with their wiki. Let's not make it more difficult for them to do that. I think that people who are willing to give of their own time and effort to help with the wiki by adopting pages should get as much support and appreciation as we can give them. At the very least let them have the incentives they were given when they signed on which is clearly described on this page: <https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Help:Adopt-a-page>. (note the example page shows the sign at the top of the page, which is very different than being at the bottom of the page.)

As moving the sign would change the incentive that the adopters signed up for, I would think that this should be discussed with the adopters before it is presented on a public forum.

31.03.2011, 22:26

[murphynw](#)

🇺🇸 **Motivations...**

I like the sign at the top.

Nathan W. Murphy, AG

Accredited Genealogist (US Southern States, England)

Last edited by Nathan Murphy; 02.04.2011 at 15:54. Reason: message relevance

01.04.2011, 17:42

[jamestanner](#).

More thoughts

I agree with Fran that adopters need to be encouraged not discouraged. On longer pages, many users may never see the bottom of the page.

James Tanner

<http://genealogyssstar.blogspot.com>

02.04.2011, 11:100

murphynw

Wiki's potential to damage FamilySearch relationships

This poll has made me concerned of FamilySearch Wiki's potential to damage relationships between FamilySearch and partnering organizations.

Parallel scenario

FamilySearch constantly makes contracts with archives and record custodians to microfilm or digitally capture images of their old records. Agreements are carefully drawn up specifying what FamilySearch and the other party promise to each other. Both parties mutually benefit from successful negotiations. FamilySearch is given specific regulations on how the records they copy can be reproduced and distributed. Some organizations specify that records we copy cannot be made available online.

Enter the Wiki. We are making similar carefully drawn up agreements with organizations we partner with through processes such as adoption. Like record reproductions agreements in FamilySearch, both organizations that enter the agreements should be expected to benefit from the partnership. Otherwise, how could the transaction take place?

However, what appears to be different in FamilySearch Wiki agreements, is without the other parties knowing, the agreements are opened up to public debate. Polls are taken that can change the terms of the contract, by the "community."

What would happen if the agreements FamilySearch makes with archives were exposed to such public debate and alterations. If an archive told us specifically "You cannot reproduce these images online." Genealogists, who find out we have the records, but cannot place them online start getting upset. What if FamilySearch's solution was to allow the "community" to vote whether or not they liked the contract. Genealogists, in a very democratic fashion, vote that the images should be placed online because they want to see them, so, despite the terms of the contract, in order to appease the complaints of genealogists around the world, FamilySearch places the images online. The archive would probably sue FamilySearch if they did this.

That is what is happening with this current Wiki issue we are voting on.

Nathan W. Murphy, AG

Accredited Genealogist (US Southern States, England)

Last edited by Nathan Murphy; 02.04.2011 at 12:03. Reason: grammar

02.04.2011, 16:23

cottrells

I'm not a FamilySearch employee nor am I a member of any organisation that has adopted any of the page in the Research Wiki. I am active within the wiki community, making edits, attending meetings etc.

I can understand where Nathan is coming from with the concerns that he raises, but unless I'm wrong about the adopt-a-page program I didn't realise that adopting organisations were entering any formal, signed agreement when requesting/volunteering to adopt a page. I could understand if the pages were being sponsored that paperwork would need to be signed and legal agreements entered into. Adoption is not sponsoring.

For me the adoption sign are there to recognise the additional support the organisation has made to improve the quality of the page.

The wiki is a collaborative project and so I think that it is good that FamilySearch asks the wider community for input. To me there is more than just where the adoption sign goes to the issues of how the wiki real estate is being used. If it were possible to put the sign in-between the *Learn More* box and the navigation menus, would that be a better place?

As I've said before, with the options currently available, I think the best solution to this dilemma is to put the adoption signs inside an infobox. This will mean they will be in a prominent position, but it will also mean that the main space at the top of an article can be used for genealogically-useful content.

02.04.2011, 23:56

murphynw

Ideas

I like Steve's ideas about sign placement.

Steve, I don't think we'd have to worry about adopting organizations suing FamilySearch if agreements are altered, they were not drawn up by lawyers, but it could damage the relationship, as Taneya (one of our most prolific adopters) has indicated in her message on the first page of this discussion.

Adoption by USGenWeb, for example, has led to many positive outcomes. They are one of the most respected names in United States genealogy (their site has many similarities to UK's GENUKI). They have brought in many Wiki contributors well-known for their local expertise. The relationship with TNGenWeb was announced by FamilySearch Marketing as one of the most significant ways FamilySearch staff had "branched out" into the community at the annual business meeting. USGenWeb's National Coordinator, who has personally made over 150 edits to the Wiki, is happy with what has developed. USGenWeb has offered to donate a very significant genealogical database to FamilySearch Indexing. There has also been talk of how we can partner with them in other FamilySearch ventures. A high-ranking member of staff at the Family History Library announced at another recent meeting that one of the United States and Canada Unit's biggest accomplishments for 2010 was the relationship we are developing with USGenWeb. This all started with adoption.

I would hate to see something like this vote and possible negative reactions damage our relationship with such key players in the genealogy world.

Nathan W. Murphy, AG
Accredited Genealogist (US Southern States, England)

Last edited by Nathan Murphy; 03.04.2011 at 00:45.

03.04.2011, 13:27

jamestanner

Confusion about "Argeements"

In reading these last few posts, it seems to me they are like ships passing in the night, they are talking about a number of different issues and responding to different issues than those being raised.

I have looked at the Adopt-a-Wiki Page and there is a formal agreement between the Wiki and the Adopter. But the only thing that evidences an understanding or agreement is the incorporation of the logo and name in the badge on the page. The agreement is contained in the Wiki page. The agreement is in the nature of a license allowing the ID of the society etc. in return for a non-exclusive understanding to add information and edit the page. Is the agreement binding? This is a really strange question, as are any references to attorneys and law in this regard, I suppose if the adopter made modifications to the page they might think they have some kind of enforceable claim to keeping their badge on the page. But the "fine print" at the bottom of the page says "FamilySearch reserves the right to modify or discontinue the program and/or its terms at any time without notice." So even if this arrangement were considered to be some kind of a license or contract, it would not be enforceable. There are many reasons why "at-will" contracts are desirable, they avoid liability for just the things being discussed here.

It seems to be more of an advantage to the society or organization adopting the page than anything else, they get free advertising on the Wiki. They certainly have no claim to the placement of the badge or any expectation that the community or FamilySearch or whomever, will not change the Wiki or its rules at any time. 😊

James Tanner
<http://genealogysstar.blogspot.com>

07.04.2011, 12:24

evancol

Quote:

Originally Posted by **ritcheymt** ➤

I'd love if these polls drew more voters, Taneya, and I appreciate your idea of reaching out to adopters through email. Unfortunately, I have no way to identify who from the adopting organizations are actually engaged on the wiki. I generally only

know one or two leaders from each organization, whereas they may have recruited scores of people from their organization to contribute, but we're blind to that. Therefore, I don't have a good way to reach out to them. We're working on that, but right now we're having to play with the cards we were dealt.

I think, unless I am mistaken, that the largest adopter is still USGenWeb. I have repeatedly told you and other members of the FS staff that if there was anything you felt needed the attention of "my" adopters that all that needed to be done was to send me an e-mail that you want published and that I would put it out on the mailing list for each of the adopted states.

Not only did I receive nothing about this to send out to our adopters, I am only just seeing this after returning from a 2 week absence. At the very least, I would have hoped for someone to let me know this issue was once again being raised.

I share Taneya's concerns about a potential bias in the way the polls are presented. I believe it is easy to gauge the outcome that is desirous in the explanation of the poll.

It seems to be lost in the process that adopters ARE contributors too ... and I would venture to say there are several adopters who are very significant contributors, yet often I don't believe we are included in discussions that precipitate these polls, those "discussions with contributors."

I do understand the premise of legal and binding contracts, and have never considered the idea that I was brokering a contractual agreement between FS and the USGenWeb states that have adopted. I had always thought I was entering into a good faith agreement.

Moving the signs to the bottom of the page further devalues the role of an adopting entity. I have always supported the "content is king" philosophy, but I think some recognition needs to be given to the fact that on most of the adopted pages there would be very little content were it not for the adopter. Is Family Search considering moving their logo to the bottom of the page as well ?

If the contribution adopters make to the project is no longer considered important, and perhaps even a detriment, then maybe abolishing the adoption process is the route to go rather than just removing any component of the program that benefits the adopter.

Jane

07.04.2011, 12:33

evancol

Quote:

Originally Posted by **jamestanner**

It seems to be more of an advantage to the society or organization adopting the page than anything else, they get free advertising on the Wiki. They certainly have no claim to the placement of the badge or any expectation that the community or

FamilySearch or whomever, will not change the Wiki or its rules at any time. 😊

I did want to respond to this. The "free" advertising we get is only free if you totally discount the fact that we are taking an almost blank page and developing it into a resource, as well as agreeing to monitor it and regularly update it.

Given the Wiki premise, we can go on any page we want (assuming it is pertinent) and add numerous links to our websites in the content section of the page (where everyone agrees is the only place readers care about) without agreeing to add any additional information or providing upkeep, which we do as adopters.

I know I have always recognized that the Wiki could change the rules at any time, or alter any of it's programs. What I did expect was that terms of existing relationships would be honored.

Jane

07.04.2011, 23:03

jamestanner

More than one issue

It still seems to me that there is more than one issue being discussed. In my opinion, the placement of the Badge should be as prominent as possible. Preferably at the top. The second issue seems to be with the way the discussions are conducted. I am not comfortable with the idea that anyone in the Wiki community has an obligation to notify someone else about an issue. I think the concept of notification is resolved with the ability to subscribe to any posts or sub-forums. I think it would be somewhat unwise to start down the notice path. I have spent almost my entire life arguing about whether one party or another had notice of some claim or motion or another. If you really want to get bogged down, like the U.S. Court system, you only have to worry about everyone getting some kind of proper notice.

If there are terms of an existing relationship, they should be honored. But I don't think that an expectation is a term of an existing relationship. 😊

James Tanner

<http://genealogysstar.blogspot.com>

07.04.2011, 23:42

bj819

Adoption Sign

My wife and I are Ward Family History Consultants and I am a Family History Center Assistant Director.

The Adoption Sign on a Wiki entry tells me, a novice geneologist, that an organization specializing in genealogy research has taken an interest in, and will provide direction that I

can trust in the given topic. I like this idea, and I don't have a preference if the sign is at the top or bottom. I do think that the sign will give the average user the incentive to look into the information that is provided, whether the sign is at the top or bottom. I understand that the organization may have a preference, but I don't think it will matter when the user recognizes the integrity of the organization. I also think that users will become familiar with where the sign is located and look for the sign.

Bruce Jaeger