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Knol, the Google encyclopedia, will possibly become a viable alternative to Wikipedia
timiddlegrades

[Google Encyclopedia Challenges Wikipedia](#)

Beta version of Knol, "a unit of knowledge"

Google announced yesterday the launch of [Knol](#), "a unit of knowledge", as its creators have entitled it. Knol is an online encyclopedia with topics from all fields and with articles that can be written by anyone who considers himself or herself up to the task. The only condition, however, is the disclosure of the person's name. Google says that this helps the authors primarily, as authorship is recognized and the contributors can establish, in time, their own audience. Moderated collaboration is something new that Google brings in the field of online scientific databases. This means that, after a "knol," which stands for the abbreviation for knowledge, is introduced, people can suggest corrections and add-ons. Until the author doesn't give his/her consent to include the information or chooses to ignore it, nothing in the article will change. "This allows authors to accept suggestions from everyone in the world while remaining in control of their content. After all, their name is associated with it!" say Cedric Dupont, Product Manager, and Michael McNally, Software Engineer, who announced the launch of the new project on Google's official blog. For those who consider that they should be rewarded for their work, Google will attach some ads to the articles and a share of the revenue will go directly to the author. Also, contributors can choose to pull out their work at any given time. "People can submit comments, rate, or write a review of a knoll," says the Google team, making everyone's contribution seem important to the project. For the time being, most of the articles are related to diseases and medical treatments, and have professional contributors. However, knowledge does not equal the ability to express oneself well in writing and this is underscored by Amy J. Markowitz, Editor and Scientific Writing Specialist, by posting an article on "Scientific and Medical Writing," with tips and tricks for the future contributors. It seems like this summer is an auspicious time to launch online encyclopedias, as [Medpedia](#), a comprehensive reference work of medicine was also announced, while Wikipedia added some interesting [pages](#) to its already impressive database. Google couldn't have fallen behind. With the company getting involved in so many projects, from global warming prevention to continuously launching contests for everyone to join in, an encyclopedia was the only thing missing.