



Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010

## **Interview with Festival of Media Keynote Speaker:**

### **Jimmy Wales, Founder, Wikipedia**

Jimmy Wales will be the first keynote speaker opening the conference at the 2010 Festival of Media in Valencia, Spain on Monday 19 April 2010. The Festival of Media brings together the leaders of the global media and advertising community to discuss the future of media communication.

***Q: Wikipedia is the symbol for the democratisation of information – do you feel that the internet has a part to play in democracy itself and if so, what?***

Jimmy Wales (JW): Absolutely. I think that some of the ideas behind Wikipedia are crucial to the future of democracy. The idea of approaching all public policy questions from a basis of polite, reasoned discussion and debate based on factual analysis is crucial - and too often, our democracies have been weakened by the tendency of some media to engage in pure emotionalism around the issues.

***Q: What opportunities do you feel that greater access to the internet through mobile is creating for internet content?***

JW: There are many aspects to this, but for me the most important is the opportunity for information to reach people who speak the languages of the developing world. Low-cost access to the Internet is driving the creation of huge amounts of information in languages where access to knowledge has previously been tiny. This is exciting and will be a powerful force.

***Q: How do you view the future of cross cultural communication via the internet?***

JW: We are all one world. We all use one Internet. There are opportunities now for direct cultural communication, facilitated by those who are bilingual of course, without the intermediaries we had in the past.

There is nothing more important for the future of the planet.

***Q: As the pioneer of free information on the internet, what are your views on how information and content online can be monetized?***

JW: There are several models which work quite well. Wikipedia is a charity that depends on donations from the general public. My separate for-profit company Wikia announced profitability last year based on a model of advertising. And still other organizations, with particularly specialized information, are doing quite well with paid subscription models.

***Q: As young people are interacting with content digitally in different formats, how in his view, might this affect the way in which humans digest information? What impact might this have on the human brain, human relationships and consumer attitudes? What are the implications for online commerce?***

JW: We are becoming much smarter. People have more access to information, better access to knowledge, and more skill in processing arguments to get at the truth. It becomes harder for companies to cover up a bad product with a large marketing budget - and easier for companies with a great product to let people know about it cheaply.

***Q: When it comes to opinion forming and aggregation - what advice might you have for brands trying to involve themselves in the blogosphere and in social networking?***

JW: Respect your community. Every product and every business has a community around it, and you can't yell your messages at them - it will be inauthentic. But you can engage in an honest dialogue and learn and teach about what makes your business good.

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For more information about The Festival of Media please contact [Francesca@csquared.cc](mailto:Francesca@csquared.cc)

Or visit [www.festivalofmedia.com](http://www.festivalofmedia.com)

Picture attached: Jimmy Wales, Founder of Wikipedia