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Harnessing Wikipedia as a Tool: An Analysis of Traffic Sources

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Harnessing Wikipedia as a Tool: An Analysis of Traffic Sources

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Introduction

Today, users of all backgrounds obtain a huge amount of information from Wikipedia. Attempting to increase the visibility of the Wayne State University Digital Collections, I introduced links to our Collections on relevant Wikipedia articles. Following an analysis of data obtained through Google Analytics, I discovered that traffic to our Digital Collections from Wikipedia had increased significantly.



DIGITAL COLLECTIONS
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

Objectives

- To present real data as evidence that Wikipedia can be a viable tool for librarians to make their collections more widely accessible.
- To encourage librarians to use Wikipedia as a tool to support their mission of free and equal access to information.

Definitions

- Direct:** Direct traffic includes people who typed the website's URL into the browser and sessions where Google Analytics is unable to detect the source.
- New User:** People that visit your website for the first time in the selected date range (technically, a user without a previous cookie.)
- Pageview:** A pageview is reported when a page has been viewed by a user on your website
- Referral:** A referral is reported when a user clicks through to your website from another third-party website.
- User:** An individual person browsing your website (technically, a unique browser cookie.)

Methods

First, I searched Wikipedia for articles that were related to collections found in Wayne State University's digital collections. In the external links section in the bottom of the article, I added a link to the relevant collection by editing the page through my username. I originally added links to eight Wikipedia articles, but only included an analysis of two collections in this poster.

External links [edit]

- First U.S. Human-to-Human Heart Transplant[?] at Wayne State University Library contains high-definition images from this procedure, performed by Dr. Adrian Kantrowitz.
- Fortis Centre for Heart Failure & Transplant in India[?]
- Official Heart Transplant Museum - Heart Of Cape Town[?]
- Photograph of first U.S. heart transplant[?]
- Western Cape government, South Africa (21 February 2005). "Chris Barnard Performs World's First Heart Transplant"[?]. Cape Gateway. Retrieved 2007-01-10.

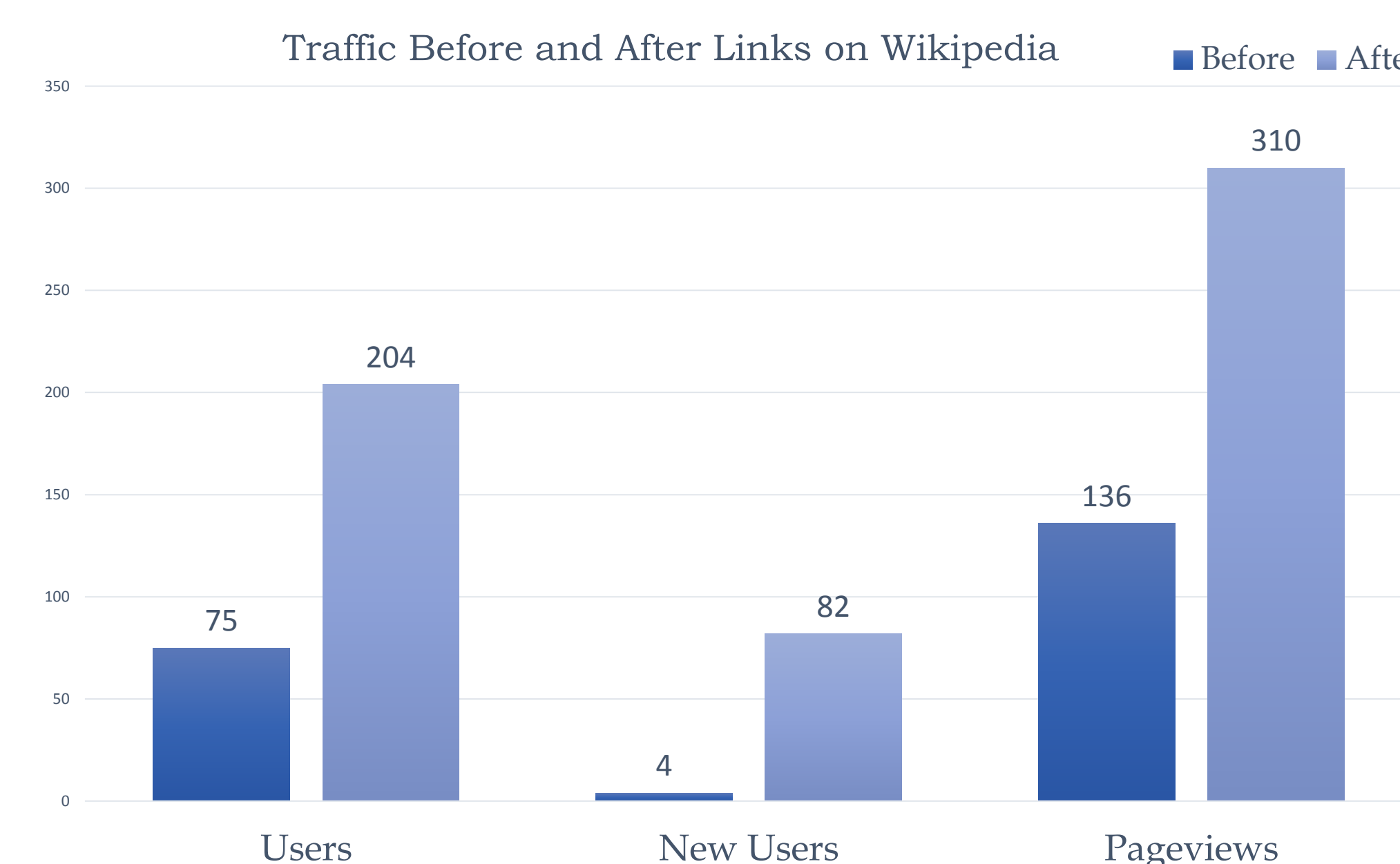
The digital collections are tracked using Google Analytics, which is a customizable web analytics service. Powered by the Google Analytics Tracking Code, which is a JavaScript code that users add to their websites that they wish to be tracked, Google Analytics collects visitor data and sends it to the Analytics server. Using Google Analytics, I was able to determine whether adding links to Wikipedia articles increased traffic to our digital collections or not.

The time frames are

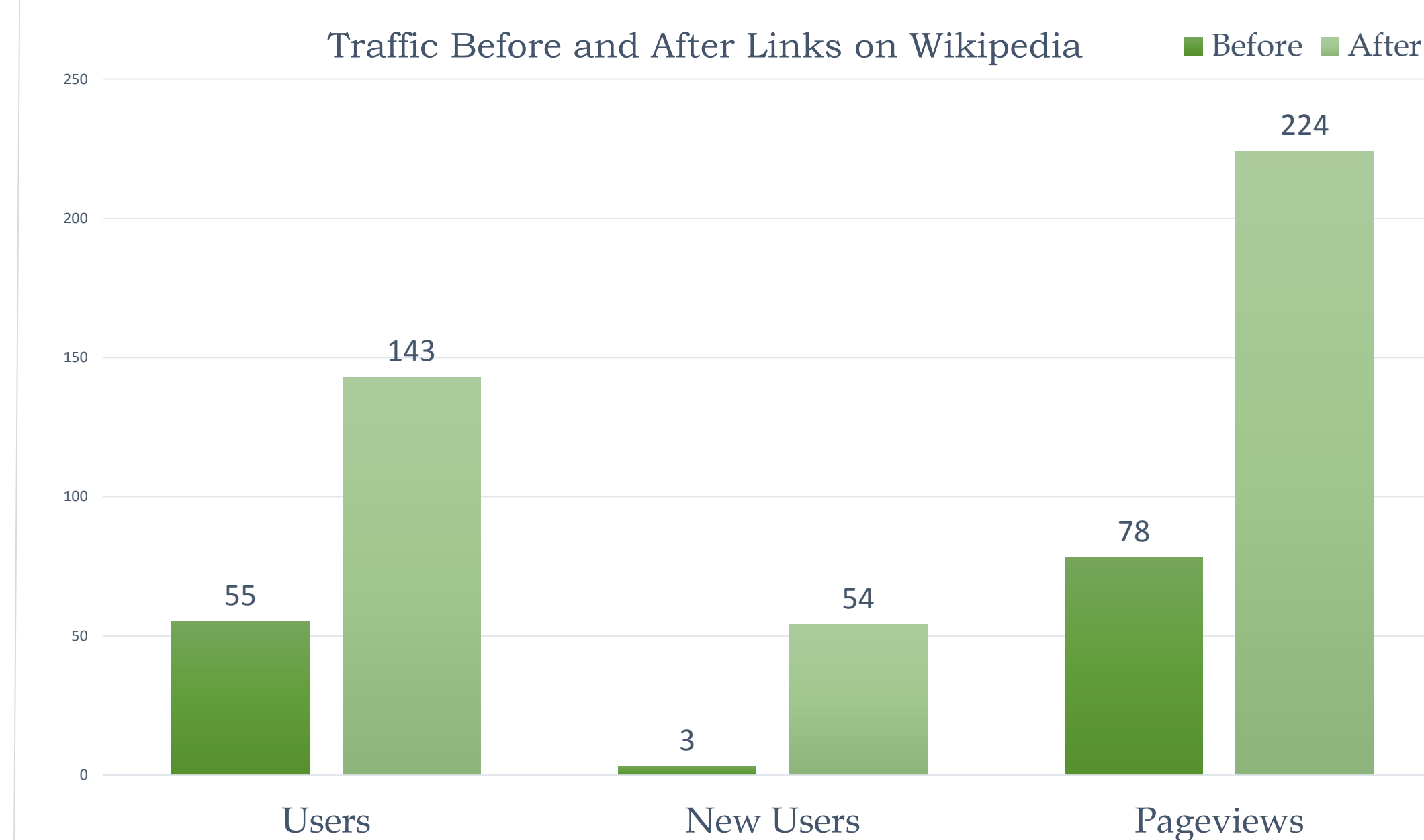
- Before the links: January 17, 2017 – November 19, 2017 (305 days)
- After the links: November 20, 2017 – September 20, 2018 (305 days)

Results

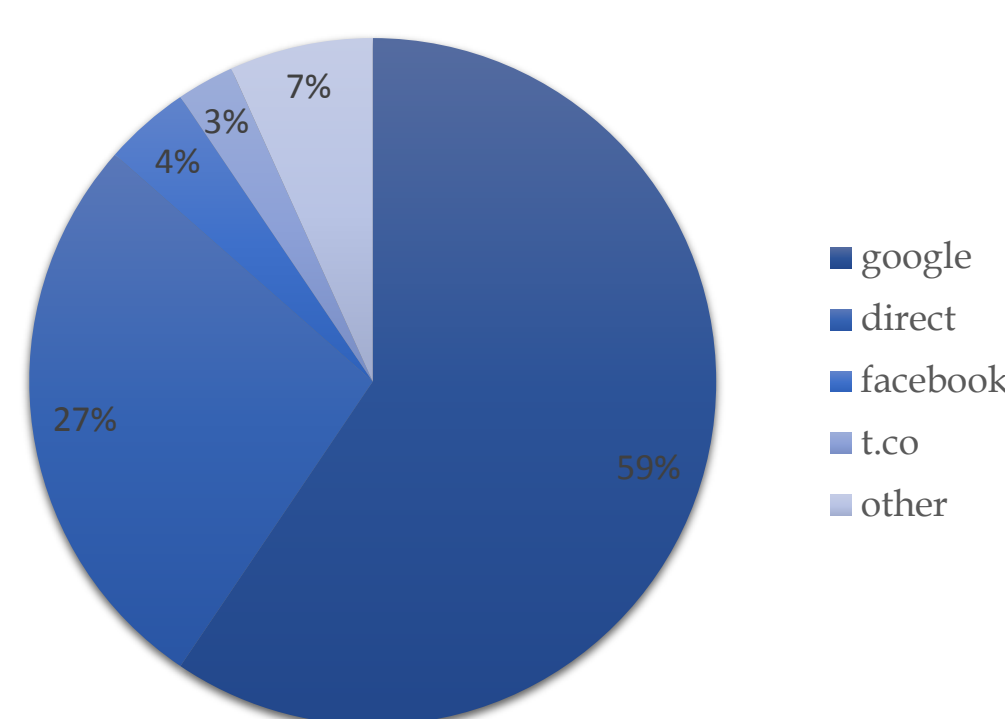
First U.S. Human Heart Transplant



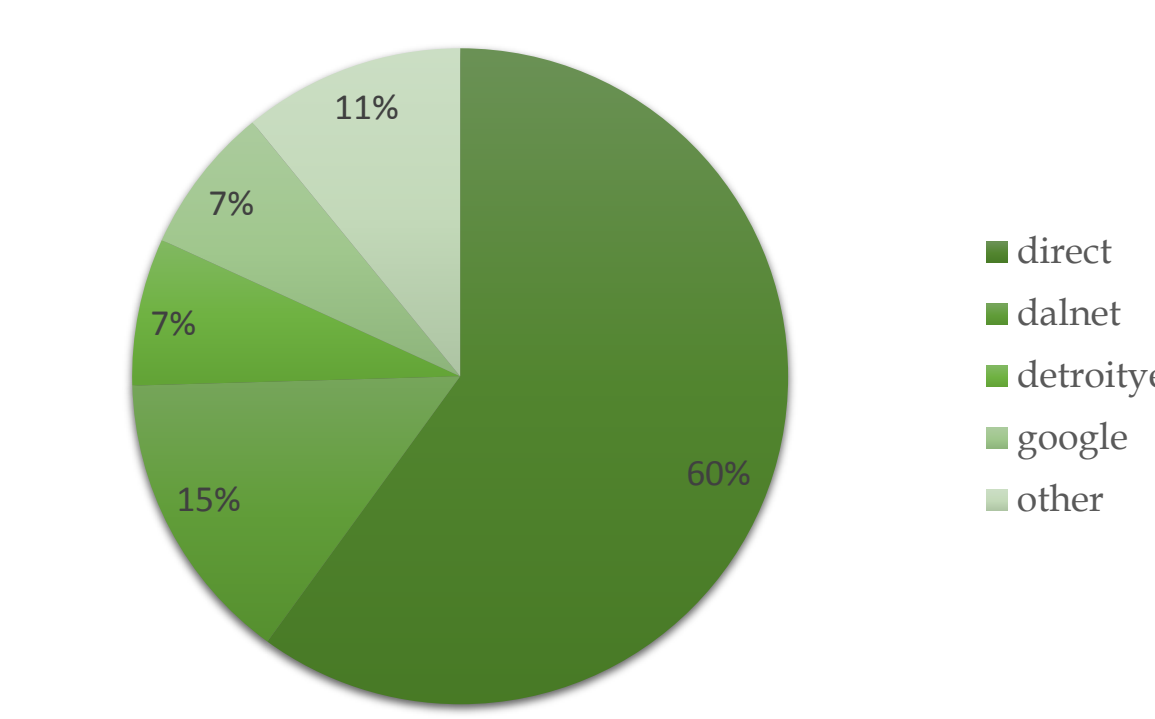
WPA Music Manuscripts



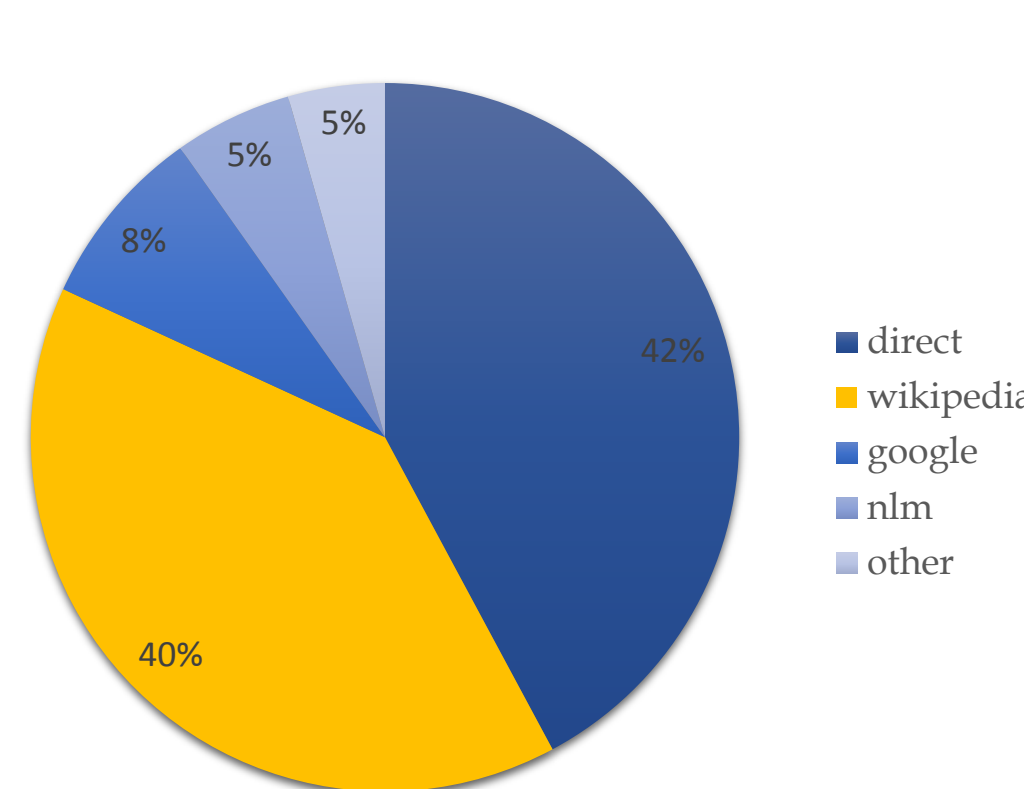
Referring Sources for Users - Before



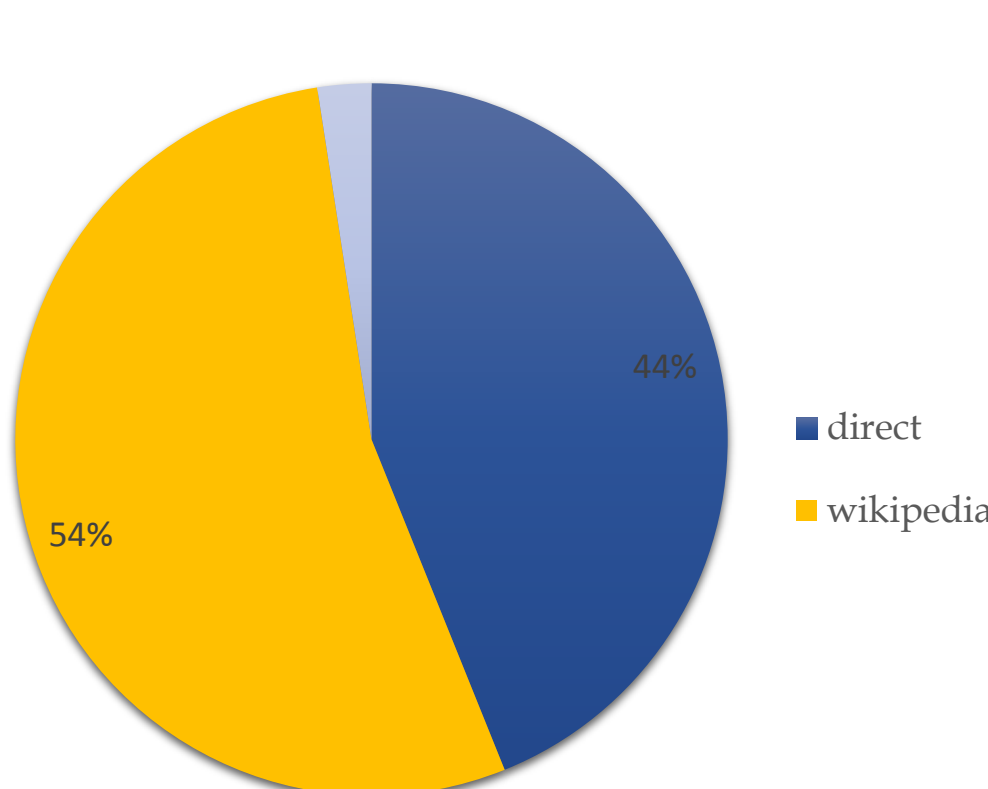
Referring Sources for Users - Before



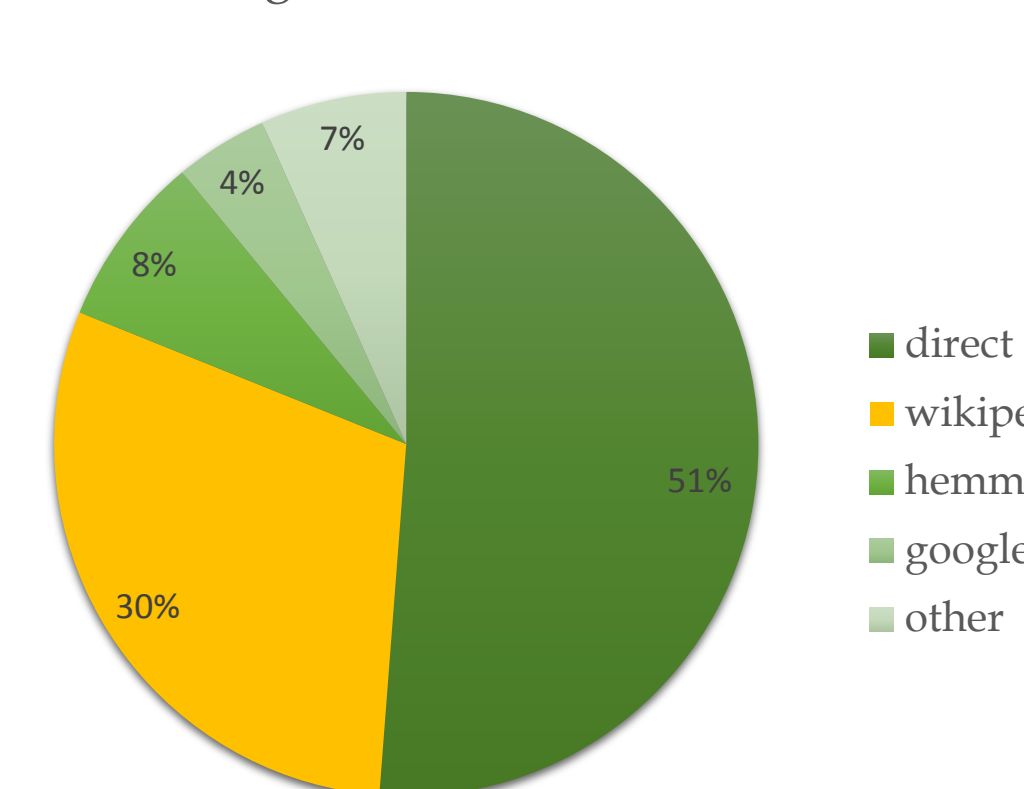
Referring Sources for Users - After



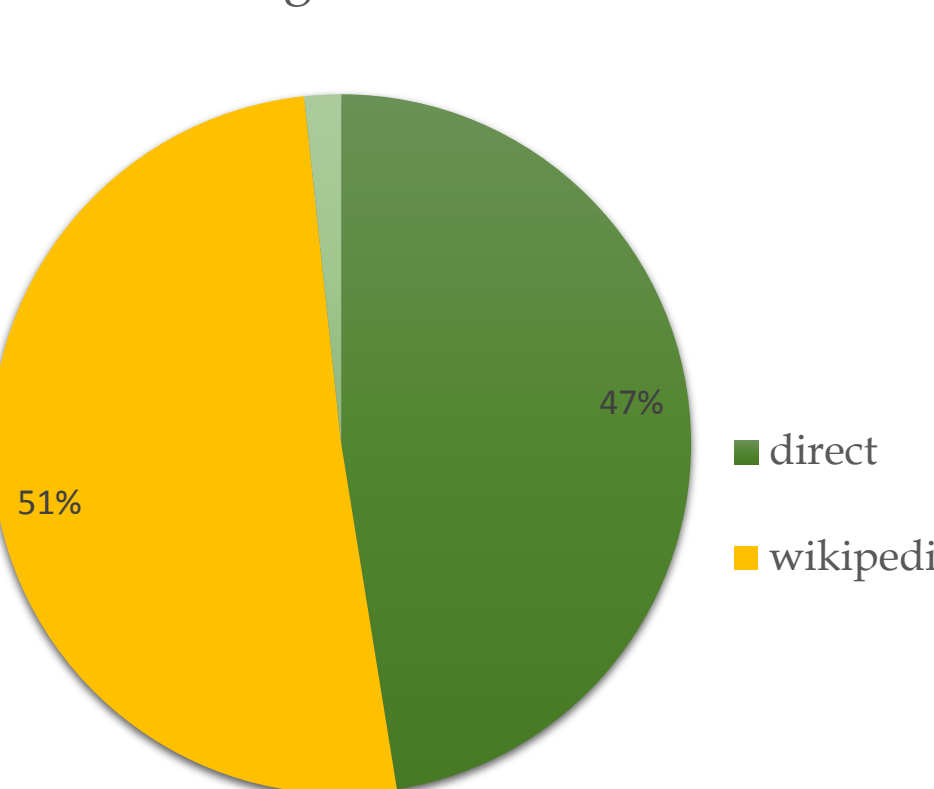
Referring Sources for New Users



Referring Sources for Users - After



Referring Sources for New Users



Conclusions

- All collections with links added to Wikipedia articles experienced an increase in traffic
- The noted collections experienced a dramatic increase:
 - First U.S. Heart Transplant:
 - Users: 172% increase
 - New Users: 1950% increase
 - Pageviews: 128% increase
 - WPA Music Transcripts:
 - Users: 200% increase
 - New Users: 2167% increase
 - Pageviews: 228% increase

Contributing to Wikipedia

- Familiarize yourself with Wikipedia's Purpose and Core Content Policies:
 - Neutral Point of View
 - Verifiability
 - No Original Research
- Set up an account
- Review tutorials on how to edit Wikipedia

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