

Answers.com launches website for inquiring minds

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A South Korean woman uses a public computer set up at a subway station in Seoul on May 26. Answers.com has debuted a website that merges the power of crowds with knowledge from encyclopedias to sate the curiosity of inquiring minds.

Answers.com on Wednesday debuted a website that merges the power of crowds with knowledge from encyclopedias to sate the curiosity of inquiring minds.

The online question-and-answer service blends "wiki" style edits from users with information gotten from respected reference works, according to Answers.com associate product manager Shaya Loney.

"We are marrying the power of a community with the integrity of a library," the firm's chief executive Bob Rosenschein said while he and

Loney demonstrated the [website](#) at DEMO emerging technology conference in California.

"We are integrating a wiki-based community with hundreds of reference sources."

Questions on the Answers.com home page Wednesday ranged from how to make a car fly in the videogame "Grand Theft Auto" to which countries are enemies with Pakistan and what shape has two pairs of parallel sides and no square corners?

"[Wikipedia](#) is for specific facts like what swine flu is or details about Paris," Loney said. "We are for more personal questions like how to avoid getting swine flu or whether you should go to Paris for vacation."

Examples given by Rosenschein included Answers.com informing users that the phrase "wave a dead chicken" refers to the way programmers typically wave their hands at monitors after computer crashes.

"As more people come to our pages with questions, it builds on itself and becomes a more valuable resource," Rosenschein said. "It's a virtuous cycle."

Answers.com on Wednesday launched versions of the website in French, Spanish, German, and Italian.

"We are very excited about finally getting to the European languages," Rosenschein said.

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