

many cases, requiring payment for your work is part of the traditional copyright system. Even a tiny cost has a big effect on demand. It's called the *penny gap*—the large difference in demand between something that is available at the price of one cent versus the price of zero.¹¹ That doesn't mean it is wrong to charge money for your content. It simply means you need to recognize the effect that doing so will have on demand. The same principle applies to restricting access to copy the work. If your problem is how to get discovered and find "your people," prohibiting people from copying your work and sharing it with others is counterproductive.

Of course, it's not that being discovered by people who like your work will make you rich—far from it. But as Cory Doctorow says, "Recognition is one of many necessary preconditions for artistic success."¹²

Choosing not to spend time and energy restricting access to your work and policing infringement also builds goodwill. Lumen Learning, a for-profit company that publishes online educational materials, made an early decision not to prevent students from accessing their content, even in the form of a tiny paywall, because it would negatively impact student success in a way that would undermine the social mission behind what they do. They believe this decision has generated an immense amount of goodwill within the community.

It is not just that restricting access to your work may undermine your social mission. It also may alienate the people who most value your creative work. If people like your work, their natural instinct will be to share it with others. But as David Bollier wrote, "Our natural human impulses to imitate and share—the essence of culture—have been criminalized."¹³

The fact that copying can carry criminal penalties undoubtedly deters copying it, but copying with the click of a button is too easy and convenient to ever fully stop it. Try as the copyright industry might to persuade us otherwise, copying a copyrighted work just doesn't feel like stealing a loaf of bread. And, of course, that's because it isn't. Sharing a creative work

has no impact on anyone else's ability to make use of it.

If you take some amount of copying and sharing your work as a given, you can invest your time and resources elsewhere, rather than wasting them on playing a cat and mouse game with people who want to copy and share your work. Lizzy Jongma from the Rijksmuseum said, "We could spend a lot of money trying to protect works, but people are going to do it anyway. And they will use bad-quality versions." Instead, they started releasing high-resolution digital copies of their collection into the public domain and making them available for free on their website. For them, sharing was a form of quality control over the copies that were inevitably being shared online. Doing this meant forgoing the revenue they previously got from selling digital images. But Lizzy says that was a small price to pay for all of the opportunities that sharing unlocked for them.

Being **Made with Creative Commons** means you stop thinking about ways to artificially make your content scarce, and instead leverage it as the potentially abundant resource it is.¹⁴ When you see information abundance as a feature, not a bug, you start thinking about the ways to use the idling capacity of your content to your advantage. As my friend and colleague Eric Steuer once said, "Using CC licenses shows you get the Internet."

Cory Doctorow says it costs him nothing when other people make copies of his work, and it opens the possibility that he might get something in return.¹⁵ Similarly, the makers of the Arduino boards knew it was impossible to stop people from copying their hardware, so they decided not to even try and instead look for the benefits of being open. For them, the result is one of the most ubiquitous pieces of hardware in the world, with a thriving online community of tinkerers and innovators that have done things with their work they never could have done otherwise.

There are all kinds of way to leverage the power of sharing and remix to your benefit. Here are a few.