

In fairly short order, we realized the book we set out to write was quite different from the one that was revealing itself in our interviews and research.

It isn't that we were wrong to think you can make money while using Creative Commons licenses. In many instances, CC *can* help make you more money. Nor were we wrong that there are business models out there that others who want to use CC licensing as part of their livelihood or business could replicate. What we didn't realize was just how misguided it would be to write a book about being **Made with Creative Commons** using only a business lens.

According to the seminal handbook *Business Model Generation*, a business model "describes the rationale of how an organization creates, delivers, and captures value."¹ Thinking about sharing in terms of creating and capturing value always felt inappropriately transactional and out of place, something we heard time and time again in our interviews. And as Cory Doctorow told us in our interview with him, "*Business model* can mean anything you want it to mean."

Eventually, we got it. Being **Made with Creative Commons** is more than a business model. While we will talk about specific revenue models as one piece of our analysis (and in more detail in the case studies), we scrapped that as our guiding rubric for the book.

Admittedly, it took me a long time to get there. When Paul and I divided up our writing after finishing the research, my charge was to distill everything we learned from the case studies and write up the practical lessons and takeaways. I spent months trying to jam what we learned into the business-model box, convinced there must be some formula for the way things interacted. But there is no formula. You'll probably have to discard that way of thinking before you read any further.

In every interview, we started from the same simple questions. Amid all the diversity among

the creators, organizations, and businesses we profiled, there was one constant. Being **Made with Creative Commons** may be good for business, but that is not why they do it. Sharing work with Creative Commons is, at its core, a moral decision. The commercial and other self-interested benefits are secondary. Most decided to use CC licenses first and found a revenue model later. This was our first hint that writing a book solely about the impact of sharing on business might be a little off track.

But we also started to realize something about what it means to be **Made with Creative Commons**. When people talked to us about how and why they used CC, it was clear that it meant something more than using a copyright license. It also represented a set of values. There is symbolism behind using CC, and that symbolism has many layers.

At one level, being **Made with Creative Commons** expresses an affinity for the value of Creative Commons. While there are many different flavors of CC licenses and nearly infinite ways to be **Made with Creative Commons**, the basic value system is rooted in a fundamental belief that knowledge and creativity are building blocks of our culture rather than just commodities from which to extract market value. These values reflect a belief that the common good should always be part of the equation when we determine how to regulate our cultural outputs. They reflect a belief that everyone has something to contribute, and that no one can own our shared culture. They reflect a belief in the promise of sharing.

Whether the public makes use of the opportunity to copy and adapt your work, sharing with a Creative Commons license is a symbol of how you want to interact with the people who consume your work. Whenever you create something, "all rights reserved" under copyright is automatic, so the copyright symbol (©) on the work does not necessarily come across as a marker of distrust or excessive protectionism. But using a CC license *can* be a symbol of the opposite—of wanting a real human relationship, rather than an impersonal