

them.”<sup>22</sup> If even the tiny act of volition of paying one penny for something changes our perception of that thing, then surely the act of remixing it enhances our perception exponentially.<sup>23</sup> We know that people will pay more for products they had a part in creating.<sup>24</sup> And we know that creating something, no matter what quality, brings with it a type of creative satisfaction that can never be replaced by consuming something created by someone else.<sup>25</sup>

Actively engaging with the content helps us avoid the type of aimless consumption that anyone who has absentmindedly scrolled through their social-media feeds for an hour knows all too well. In his book, *Cognitive Surplus*, Clay Shirky says, “To participate is to act as if your presence matters, as if, when you see something or hear something, your response is part of the event.”<sup>26</sup> Opening the door to your content can get people more deeply tied to your work.

### Use CC to differentiate yourself

Operating under a traditional copyright regime usually means operating under the rules of establishment players in the media. Business strategies that are embedded in the traditional copyright system, like using digital rights management (DRM) and signing exclusivity contracts, can tie the hands of creators, often at the expense of the creator’s best interest.<sup>27</sup> Being **Made with Creative Commons** means you can function without those barriers and, in many cases, use the increased openness as a competitive advantage. David Harris from OpenStax said they specifically pursue strategies they know that traditional publishers cannot. “Don’t go into a market and play by the incumbent rules,” David said. “Change the rules of engagement.”

### Making Money

Like any moneymaking endeavor, those that are **Made with Creative Commons** have to generate some type of value for their audience or customers. Sometimes that value is subsidized by funders who are not actually beneficiaries of that value. Funders, whether

philanthropic institutions, governments, or concerned individuals, provide money to the organization out of a sense of pure altruism. This is the way traditional nonprofit funding operates.<sup>28</sup> But in many cases, the revenue streams used by endeavors that are **Made with Creative Commons** are directly tied to the value they generate, where the recipient is paying for the value they receive like any standard market transaction. In still other cases, rather than the quid pro quo exchange of money for value that typically drives market transactions, the recipient gives money out of a sense of reciprocity.

Most who are **Made with Creative Commons** use a variety of methods to bring in revenue, some market-based and some not. One common strategy is using grant funding for content creation when research-and-development costs are particularly high, and then finding a different revenue stream (or streams) for ongoing expenses. As Shirky wrote, “The trick is in knowing when markets are an optimal way of organizing interactions and when they are not.”<sup>29</sup>

Our case studies explore in more detail the various revenue-generating mechanisms used by the creators, organizations, and businesses we interviewed. There is nuance hidden within the specific ways each of them makes money, so it is a bit dangerous to generalize too much about what we learned. Nonetheless, zooming out and viewing things from a higher level of abstraction can be instructive.

### Market-based revenue streams

In the market, the central question when determining how to bring in revenue is what value people are willing to pay for.<sup>30</sup> By definition, if you are **Made with Creative Commons**, the content you provide is available for free and not a market commodity. Like the ubiquitous freemium business model, any possible market transaction with a consumer of your content has to be based on some added value you provide.<sup>31</sup>

In many ways, this is the way of the future for all content-driven endeavors. In the market,