

broaden their business goals from making a profit to making a positive impact on society, workers, the community, and the environment.³¹ Community-owned businesses, worker-owned businesses, cooperatives, guilds, and other organizational forms offer alternatives to the traditional corporation. Collectively, these alternative market entities are changing the rules and norms of the market.³²

"A book on open business models" is how we described it in this book's Kickstarter campaign. We used a handbook called *Business Model Generation* as our reference for defining just what a business model is. Developed over nine years using an "open process" involving 470 coauthors from forty-five countries, it is useful as a framework for talking about business models.³³

It contains a "business model canvas," which conceives of a business model as having nine building blocks.³⁴ This blank canvas can serve as a tool for anyone to design their own business model. We remixed this business model canvas into an *open* business model canvas, adding three more building blocks relevant to hybrid market, commons enterprises: *social good*, *Creative Commons license*, and "*type of open environment that the business fits in.*"³⁵ This enhanced canvas proved useful when we analyzed businesses and helped start-ups plan their economic model.

In our case study interviews, many expressed discomfort over describing themselves as an open business model—the term *business model* suggested primarily being situated in the market. Where you sit on the commons-to-market spectrum affects the extent to which you see yourself as a business in the market. The more central to the mission shared resources and commons values are, the less comfort there is in describing yourself, or depicting what you do, as a *business*. Not all who have endeavors **Made with Creative Commons** use business speak; for some the process has been experimental, emergent, and organic rather than carefully planned using a predefined model.

The creators, businesses, and organizations we profile all engage with the market to generate revenue in some way. The ways in which this is done vary widely. Donations, pay what you can, memberships, "digital for free but physical for a fee," crowdfunding, matchmaking, value-add services, patrons . . . the list goes on and on. (Initial description of how to earn revenue available through reference note. For latest thinking see *How to Bring In Money* in the next section.)³⁶ There is no single magic bullet, and each endeavor has devised ways that work for them. Most make use of more than one way. Diversifying revenue streams lowers risk and provides multiple paths to sustainability.

Benefits of the Digital Commons

While it may be clear why commons-based organizations want to interact and engage with the market (they need money to survive), it may be less obvious why the market would engage with the commons. The digital commons offers many benefits.

The commons speeds dissemination. The free flow of resources in the commons offers tremendous economies of scale. Distribution is decentralized, with all those in the commons empowered to share the resources they have access to. Those that are **Made with Creative Commons** have a reduced need for sales or marketing. Decentralized distribution amplifies supply and know-how.

The commons ensures access to all. The market has traditionally operated by putting resources behind a paywall requiring payment first before access. The commons puts resources in the open, providing access up front without payment. Those that are **Made with Creative Commons** make little or no use of digital rights management (DRM) to manage resources. Not using DRM frees them of the costs of acquiring DRM technology and staff resources to engage in the punitive practices associated with restricting access. The way the commons provides access to everyone levels the playing field and promotes inclusiveness, equity, and fairness.