A note from our CEO, Joi Ito:

When I last wrote in this space six months ago I said that Creative Commons had reached a threshold of adoption where we can now legitimately call CC a global standard. With your help, we’ve continued to increase our reach and depth of impact. Two evocative examples from just the month of February: CC Egypt has published draft licenses for public discussion, while the state of Victoria in Australia has committed to using CC as the default licensing system for its public sector information.

I believe that education is the area in which CC can make the most immediate and beneficial impact as a global standard. The potential impact of digitally enabled education is huge; however, this potential will not be reached until teachers, companies, and institutions share and collaborate at a larger scale. CC provides the necessary legal and technical infrastructure for ensuring that educational resources are not only accessible, but adaptable, interoperable, and discoverable.

We have many exciting initiatives in the open education space this year, addressing legal, policy, and technology issues, all imbued with a global vision. In support of this vision we’ve added Catherine Casserly to CC’s board of directors. Cathy, now a senior partner at The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, is one of the most important figures in the Open Educational Resources (OER) movement as well as a supporter of CC from its beginning from her previous position as Director of the Open Educational Resources Initiative at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

We count on your continued support to build and promote the commons needed to foster creativity and innovation in education, science, and culture. Please keep in touch and spread the word.

Sincerely,

Joi Ito
Chief Executive Officer
Creative Commons
Welcoming Cathy Casserly to the Creative Commons Board of Directors

From Joi Ito, CEO of Creative Commons: “The Creative Commons board of directors has elected Cathy Casserly as a new member. Cathy has been a foremost champion of the Open Educational Resources (OER) movement for a decade and of Creative Commons since its inception. She served as Director of Open Educational Resources Initiative at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. A year ago she joined The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as Senior Partner. Cathy has become a great personal friend and invaluable mentor as I ramp up my involvement in CC’s open education strategy. It is a great honor for me to welcome Cathy to the Creative Commons board of directors.”

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20358

Planning for Sustainable and Strategic Impact

Creative Commons recently celebrated its seventh anniversary, and in light of our continued growth and maturation, we are ever mindful of how CC can best ensure that as an organization we continue to increase our impact sustainably. As a provider of critical infrastructure that millions and more depend upon, this is our responsibility. Sustainability is not only or first a financial issue — though we will ask for your continued support in funding the organization — but depends on staying focused on our goals, executing on our strengths and core competencies, constantly looking for ways to streamline operations while empowering our vast international community, and avoiding mission creep however tempting.

Over the last six months we’ve been putting these thoughts into plans and action. Last summer we integrated the team supporting our international affiliates with our core team of experts based in San Francisco, eliminating two of our three Berlin-based staff positions. Over the next several months most of our science team (Science Commons) will move from Boston to San Francisco to align message and operations with our core, also. This month, we are integrating our education team (known heretofore as CC Learn).

In the coming months we’ll be making further announcements about our comprehensive integration of education and science into our core activities and messaging. Exciting developments are on the horizon with respect to new and enhanced legal and technical tools as well as explanatory materials and support for policy development in education and science. More importantly we’ll be asking for your support and input, including specific feedback on designs, prototypes, messages, and initiatives as they develop. Most importantly, we will be asking for your input on whether we’re on the right track. Have something to say about CC? We’re listening!

Full story: creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20292, creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20329

A Special Thanks to Lulu.com

The Creative Commons gratefully acknowledges support on behalf of Lulu.com in the form of a $50,000 annual five-year grant. The grant is from the Beal Fund of the Triangle Community
Foundation. This substantial investment demonstrates Lulu’s commitment to participatory culture and we are particularly grateful for it. “Lulu works every day to solve the problems of authors, educators, researchers and other content creators,” said Bob Young, Lulu’s founder and CEO. “We’re proud to support Creative Commons and its innovative solutions to this particularly complex issue. Its goal is the same as ours; to encourage and enable creators to bring their works to the world.”

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20110

Egyptian License Draft Open for Public Discussion

The past year witnessed some major achievements for Creative Commons in the Arab world. Highlights included Al Jazeera’s adoption of CC BY for the world’s first broadcast-quality online repository and CC Jordan’s substantial efforts on the first Arabic license port. 2010 promises more exciting developments for the rapidly-growing CC community in the Arab world. Today the legal team from CC Egypt, headed by Hala Essalmawi, produced the first BY-NC-SA license draft adapted to Egyptian law. Thanks to the ongoing efforts of Hala and her team, supported by CC Jordan’s Rami Olwan and Ziad Maraqa, the Egyptian draft is now ready for public discussion. The public discussion is an open forum where everyone — from lawyers to active license users, from linguists to translators — is invited to contribute.

Read the whole story to find out how and learn more: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20415

Intellectual Backing for the CC Paradigm Shift

“Intellectual property rights grants can be used as the basis for licenses that help keep innovation open as well as keep it closed.” Our board member Hal Abelson points us to Modeling a Paradigm Shift: From Producer Innovation to User and Open Collaborative Innovation, an important new paper by Carliss Y. Baldwin and Eric von Hippel. In it they make the case for policy that does not cripple the commons, and examine underlying theory. If you’re interested in the theoretical case for the ascendancy of innovation and creativity in the commons — and for policy that does not cripple the commons — read, or at least skim these highly readable 29 pages.

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/19891

CC@7: Wrap-up of Creative Commons’ 7th Birthday Round the World

From a “Happy Birthday” rendition in Korean to apple schnapps in Reykjavik and a Free Culture debate in Poland, Creative Commons’ seventh birthday was celebrated this month with originality and cheerful camaraderie. The global parties kicked off in Beijing at the opening of “Remix and Share”, a contemporary art exhibition featuring 60 acclaimed artists across the country. Afterward a discussion forum explored the event’s theme, led by CC Project Leads and representatives from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, and others in the Asia-Pacific region. The icing on the cake appeared literally later that evening when CC China Mainland volunteers threw a surprise CC birthday party. “Happiness was seen on everyone’s face,” the team recounts.

Read about the worldwide celebration: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/19965
CC News in Government

Victorian Government Commits to CC as Default Licensing System

The UK government recently made a splash with its move towards opening government data. Now CC Australia’s Jessica Coates shares a promising government initiative in her home country. The Victorian Government has become the first Australian government to commit to using Creative Commons as the default licensing system for its public sector information (PSI). Many of its reports and other works will use CC BY, which she explains is becoming the preferred license for Australian PSI: “The commitment is part of the Government’s response to its Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee’s Inquiry into Improving Access to Victorian Public Sector Information and Data, which recommended that the Victorian Government adopt a “hybrid public sector information licensing model comprising Creative Commons and a tailored suite of licences for restricted materials.”

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20619

UK Moves Towards Opening Government Data

In a step towards openness, the UK has opened up its data to be interoperable with the Creative Commons Attribution Only license (CC BY). The National Archives, a department responsible for “setting standards and supporting innovation in information and records management across the UK,” has realigned the terms and conditions of data.gov.uk to accommodate this shift. Data.gov.uk is “an online point of access for government-held non-personal data.” All content on the site is now available for reuse under CC BY. This step expresses the UK’s commitment to opening its data, as they work towards a Creative Commons model that is more open than their former Click-Use Licenses. From their blog post: “This is the first major step towards the adoption of a non-transactional, Creative Commons style approach to licensing the re-use of government information.”

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20228
CC News in Arts & Media

La Stampa and Global Voices Online Collaborate on Voci Globali

Voci Globali is a new collaboration between Italian newspaper La Stampa and Global Voices Online that aims to expose Italian audiences to citizen media from around the world. GVO will assist in translating select international blogs into Italian, releasing the stories they publish under a Creative Commons Attribution license.

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20765

CC Talks with Brooklyn Museum

Regarding openness and sharing, the Brooklyn Museum is an exemplary institution. They are major contributors to the commons on Flickr, license their online image collection under a CC Attribution-NonCommercial license license, provide API access to this collection, and recently ran a CC-licensed remix contest with Blondie’s Chris Stein. Needless to say, we were eager to catch up with Shelley Bernstein, Brooklyn Museum’s Chief of Technology, and learn more about how they are using our licenses to open up their catalog of amazing work, shaping the role museums play in a digital age in the process.

Read the full interview: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20496

Daily Life in Iraq — New Footage at Al Jazeera

Last year, Al Jazeera launched their Creative Commons Repository with 12 videos shot in Gaza under CC’s most open license, Attribution only (CC BY). Since then, Al Jazeera’s collection has grown, and their most recent footage includes videos documenting everyday life and culture in Iraq. Since all Al Jazeera CC repository videos are available via CC BY, you can edit, adapt, translate, remix or otherwise use them as long as you credit Al Jazeera. We’re delighted to see such valuable and unique content being added to the commons!

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20183

CC Licenses and the Haiti Relief Effort

In the immediate aftermath of the 2010 Haiti earthquake a number of efforts were put in place to connect survivors with their family and loved ones. In all its good intention, this led to numerous websites that, in the words of Marc Fest of the Knight Foundation, became “silos” of information with no ability to interact. As a result, Fest – who is VP of Communications – sent an impassioned plea to news organizations to utilize an open-source Google app that was not only collecting similar information but releasing the data under a CC Attribution license (CC BY). Read more about this and other efforts employing the open ideals of Creative Commons licensing to ensure a more efficient and long-term relief effort in Haiti:

http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20216, http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20350
Copyright Criminals: PBS Documentary on Sampling

Copyright Criminals is a new documentary on the rise of sampling, specifically in hip-hop music, and the cultural and legal effects it has caused. From the Copyright Criminals Web site: Copyright Criminals examines the creative and commercial value of musical sampling, including the related debates over artistic expression, copyright law, and (of course) money.” In conjunction with the film’s development a contest was held at ccMixter challenging community members to sample select voice-overs from the film to create an original track. Winner Dermes’ track Sounds that Sound good is featured on the Copyright Criminals DVD as well as a compilation CD featuring the other 12 top entries. All of the tracks are available for free at ccMixter under a CC Attribution-NonCommercial license (CC BY-NC).

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20204

“The Complete Guide to Google Wave” under CC license

Gina Trapani and Adam Pash, editors at Lifehacker, have authored a new guide to Google Wave. A preview edition of The Complete Guide to Google Wave is now available for purchase as a DRM-free PDF. Trapani and Pash collaborated using MediaWiki and are releasing its content under the Attribution-ShareAlike license. This means the book is compatible with Wikipedia and free to share, sell, and reproduce online. A full Japanese translation is already available.

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/19017

Wall Street Journal on “Sita Sings the Blues” and Profit Numbers

An article posted November 23, 2009 by The Wall Street Journal reports on the profits made by Nina Paley for her film Sita Sings The Blues. Widely available for free online under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license, Sita has garnered $55,000 to date, an impressive amount for a film that has spent nothing on promotion or advertising.

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/19321
Search and Discovery for OER

One of the issues that comes up repeatedly when talking about open educational resources (OER) is search and discovery. CC licenses provide the legal basis for sharing OER, but there’s a large technical component to sharing, as well. Publishers want to make sure their work is visible to users, and learners or educators need to be able to find resources relevant to the subject they’re interested in. Too often web scale search engines don’t suffice; the amount of OER compared to the entire web is small, so the information you’re actually looking for is lost in the flood. We’ve created a resource, entitled “Towards a Global Infrastructure For Sharing Learning Resources” as a first step towards building the interoperability to make OER discoverable, but there is still much left to do.

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20675

“Python for Informatics” Open Textbook Remixed in 11 Days

Chuck Severance, clinical professor at the University of Michigan’s School of Information, recently published a new textbook in just 11 days because he was able to remix an existing textbook. The book, Python for Informatics: Exploring Information, is currently being used in his winter semester Networked Computing course. The textbook is based on the openly licensed book Think Python: How to Think like a Computer Scientist by Allen B. Downey. Python for Informatics is available under a CC BY-SA license. Severance explains, “the book is a cool example of a situation where I’ve finally got to the ‘remixing’ bit of the Open promise.”

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/20559

The Shuttleworth Foundation on CC BY as Default and Commercial Enterprises in Education

For those of you who don’t know Karien Bezuidenhout, she is the Chief Operating Officer at the Shuttleworth Foundation, one of the few foundations that fund open education projects and who have an open licensing policy for their grantees. A couple months ago, Jane Park of CC Learn (the division of CC dedicated to realizing the full potential of the internet to support open learning and open educational resources) had the chance to interview Karien, based in South Africa, via Skype, to ask her about Shuttleworth’s evolving default license (CC BY-SA to CC BY), her personal stake in OER, and how she envisions us (CC Learn and Shuttleworth) working together. She also gives insights into three innovative open education projects they have a hand in: Siyavula, M4Lit, and Peer 2 Peer University (P2PU).

Read the full interview with Karien: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/18906

U.S. Dept of Ed Funds Bookshare to Make Open Textbooks Accessible

Previously, the California Free Digital Textbooks Initiative resulted in 16 open textbooks that were licensed under a Creative Commons license allowing derivation. These books can be translated into other languages and otherwise modified to accommodate a wider range of students. Recognizing the value, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs has granted $100k to Bookshare, an online library for people with print disabilities.

Full story: http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/19362
MichiganView Releases Remote Sensing Data under CC0 Waiver

MichiganView is making available all of its more than 93 Gigabytes of Landsat 5 and 7, and NAIP imagery data in the public domain using the new CC0 Waiver provided by Creative Commons. The MichiganView consortium makes available aerial photography and satellite imagery of Michigan to the public for free over the Web. As part of the AmericaView consortium, MichiganView supports access and use of these imagery collections through education, workforce development, and research. CC0 (pronounced CC-Zero) waives any rights in a dataset, ensuring that all of the dataset is available to anyone without encumbrance of any kind.


Data Sharing on the Web

The February issue of Talis’ Nodalities magazine focuses on data sharing and includes an article by Kaitlin Thaney, Program Manager for Science. Last October, Kaitlin joined Jordan Hatcher, Leigh Dodds and Tom Heath to give a four hour tutorial titled “Legal and Social Frameworks for Sharing Data on the Web” at the International Semantic Web Conference (ISWC). The tutorial covered the legal and social issues commonly found in data publishing, using the Linked Data Cloud as a leading example of how copyright restrictions, complex licenses and lack of clarity can quickly exacerbate problems for data sharing efforts.

Full Story: http://sciencecommons.org/weblog/archives/2010/02/05/data-sharing-on-the-web/
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