In the four years since we launched CC, the Internet, and the world's understanding of the Internet, have changed dramatically. In 2002, the media was obsessed by something called "piracy." Today, they call it "user-generated content." Just around the time we launched, Wikipedia crossed 100,000 articles; today it is the most important testament to the Internet's potential to enable something different and extraordinary. When we started, none of us had any real idea about what the Internet would become. Mine was that the Internet would offer something different from the world of analog culture. While many were obsessed with how new technologies would radically change old businesses, I was eager to see the new ways of creating and interacting that would develop. iTunes does better what Tower Records did pretty well. But what would the Internet create in 2010 that didn't exist (in any significant sense) in 1990? One dream was what Andy Raskin called in his 2004 "Business 2.0" article about Creative Commons [http://money.cnn.com/magazines/business2/business2_archive/2004/05/01/368240/index.htm], the "sharing economy." The "sharing economy" is different from a traditional commercial economy. It is not simply people working for free. Instead, this is the economy that supports Wikipedia (and free and open source software before that). It is the economy that drives much of the creativity in YouTube and blip.tv. It is the world of "amateur" creators, meaning again, not those whose work is amateurish, but those who do what they do for the love of what they do, and not for the money. This sharing economy is not meant to displace the commercial economy. Its purpose is not to force Madonna to sing for free. Its aim instead is to enable the millions of other people around the world who are also creative, but who want to create in a different kind of community. The editors who make Wikipedia sing are not people who couldn't get a job at Encyclopedia Britannica. They instead create for a different reason, within a very different community of creators.
Ellos en su lugar crean por una razón diferente, dentro de una comunidad muy diferente de creadores.

At its core, Creative Commons is designed to support this sharing economy. Our free tools give creators a simple way to signal the rules under which they want to create. And, perhaps more importantly, by signaling clearly and reliably these freedoms, they encourage others who otherwise might hesitate to share and build upon that work. Thus, for example, the Public Library of Science [http://plos.org] publishes all of its articles under a CC license that gives users the freedom to share those articles broadly. Libraries and institutions around the world can now archive these works and make them available locally. Without the confidence of the CC licenses, no doubt lawyers within these different institutions would have panicked. The CC licenses let that panic be avoided, and invite many (who otherwise would not) to help share and build upon that work.

En el corazón, Creative Commons está diseñado para apoyar esta economía del compartir. Nuestras herramientas gratuitas brindan a los creadores una manera simple de señalar las reglas bajo las cuales ellos desean crear. Y, quizás de manera más importante, señalando clara y confiablemente estas libertades, ellos alientan a otros quienes de otra forma dudarían compartir y crear a partir de esa obra. Así, por ejemplo, la Biblioteca Púlica de la Ciencia [http://plos.org] publica todos sus artículos bajo la licencia CC que brinda a los usuarios la libertad de compartir dichos artículos ampliamente. Las bibliotecas y las instituciones de todo el mundo pueden ahora archivar estas obras y hacerlas disponibles localmente. Sin la confianza de las licencias CC, sin duda los abogados dentro de estas diferentes instituciones hubieran entrado en pánico. Las licencias CC permiten evitar el pánico e invitan muchos (quienes de otra manera no lo harían) ayudar a compartir y crear a partir de la obra.

The next challenge is to figure out how this sharing economy interacts with a traditional commercial economy. What happens when Time wants to use a fantastic CC-licensed Flickr photo? Or how does a hit on ccMixter move into the commercial space? CC will never become a part of that commercial economy. But it is important, I believe, that we play a role in enabling this crossover. The alternative is a world we're seeing too much of all ready: large entities that create sandboxes for “sharing,” but then effectively claim ownership over everything built within that sandbox. This is, in my view, not a sharing economy. It is instead simple sharecropping.

CC nueva formará parte de dicha economía comercial. Pero es importante, creo yo, que desempeñemos un papel en permitir este traspaso. La alternativa es un mundo que ya estamos viendo mayormente: grandes entidades que crean cajones con arena para “compartir,” pero luego efectivamente reclaman la propiedad sobre todo lo construido sobre el cajón de arena. Esto no es, desde mi punto de vista, una economía del compartir. En cambio, se trata simplemente de recoleccion compartida.

The key is to build alternatives that creators on the Internet can use to both create as they wish and keep control of their creativity. That’s the challenge I see over the next four years. And as we review over the next few weeks some of the best of CC from around the world, you’ll begin to see how this challenge might be met.

This email is part of a weekly series written by Lawrence Lessig. If you would like to be removed from this list, please click here.
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