

Q: How are the majority of Creative Commons licenses being used?

A: Hundreds of thousands, billions, I'm not sure how many technically there are, but a lot of them are just blogs on the Internet and there is an option in the control panel that says 'oh license my work under creative commons' and so people pick that. And that's great and all but I don't know how much of an impact a random person's blog being under Creative Commons has.

Q: What are some more high-profile uses of Creative Commons licenses?

A: There are a number of higher profile works under Creative Commons. For instance Pearl Jam had a music video that they released that was under a Creative Commons license. It was pretty restrictive, like you couldn't make derivatives of it and I assume you couldn't use it commercially. But it does allow you to share it freely with people. I mean that makes perfect sense, right, it's a music video, it's like free promotion that you can share with your friends. And that's one example of really high profile work. There was another one, it was like a completely open source movie. It was a really short film called Elephant's Dream and it's completely CGI animated with an open source program called Blender.

Q: Tell me about Flickr

A: On Flickr, there is an option for Creative Commons and there is a huge amount of really really good Creative Commons artwork there. So when I have to do projects for classes sometimes I'll grab a work off there to throw into my essays or whatever. So that's kind of nice.

Q: How are Creative Commons licenses being used by academics?

A: I don't wanna say that academics are sort of afraid of change or sort of slow-moving. I haven't seen it used as much. There are a few cool examples like MIT Open Courseware. They basically put all their notes online, like lecture notes, references to the books they use, videos, stuff like that. They don't lose anything because people in India are looking at their notes, but they gain a lot by sharing all that knowledge with the world. So that's really cool. I'm not sure if anyone on campus, like teachers, are really big into it or license their writing or research or notes or anything under it [CC]. But there are a few really cool examples of it being used in education.

Q: What is the difference between explicitly using Creative Commons licenses and just not addressing the issue?

A: Under one of the copyright extension acts, the copyright is automatically applied to every work that you create as opposed to 'I need to explicitly say that this is copyrighted for it to be copyrighted'. Anything you create is copyrighted. So if you doodle in your notebook its copyrighted, it doesn't go into the public domain automatically. So if they don't add anything at all to it then it's copyrighted. But the difference between them explicitly saying it's Creative Commons as opposed to not saying anything about it...in the case of a teacher with their notes, its not so high profile and the teacher isn't going to yell at students if they share their notes with each other. But just explicitly saying its a Creative Commons license is like saying 'I allow you to share it with anyone or to change it and make it better or fix any mistakes or add your opinion in the middle of it'. I think that's very important because it shows a culture of 'Yes, we recognize that you have something to add, that this is a cultural atmosphere of learning and not just here are my notes, that's what I'm gonna teach you and that's all there is to it.'

Q: Do you put your pictures online under a Creative Commons license?

A: I put some of them on my website and I haven't been keeping up with putting new things on Flickr but most of my stuff that I actually like is on Flickr.

Q: What might some adverse effects of Creative Commons licenses be?

A: Well one sort of thing that's bad about Creative Commons is in some cases it adds complexity, because its not just there is a Creative Commons license, the license comes with a whole suite of options. So there is By, which is attribution, you have to say where you got this work from, you got this work from me, cause I'm the original author. Then there is Share Alike which means that any derivative work has to be under the exact same license and there is No Derivative which means you cant change it, you can share it, but you cant make derivative work. So mixing and matching all those options results in a huge amount of licenses you can have, which is good because it gives artists choices, which is the whole point of Creative Commons, but its bad because you can say 'oh this is cc', and people think they can change it, but that's not part of the actual license. So the complexity is bad but its a trade-off between options and complexity.