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Free To Make: How The Maker Movement Is Changing Our Schools, Our Jobs, And Our Minds



Synopsis

Dale Dougherty, creator of MAKE: magazine and the Maker Faire, provides a guided tour of the international phenomenon known as the Maker Movement, a social revolution that is changing what gets made, how it's made, where it's made, and who makes it. Free to Make is a call to join what Dougherty calls the "renaissance of making", an invitation to see ourselves as creators and shapers of the world around us. As the Internet thrives and world-changing technologies - like 3-D printers and tiny microcontrollers - become increasingly affordable, people around the world are moving away from the passivity of one-size-fits-all consumption and command-and-control models of education and business. Free to Make explores how making revives abandoned and neglected urban areas, reinvigorates community spaces like libraries and museums, and even impacts our personal and social development - fostering a mind-set that is engaged, playful, and resourceful. Free to Make asks us to imagine a world where making is an everyday occurrence in our schools, workplaces, and local communities, grounding us in the physical world and empowering us to solve the challenges we face.

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Customer Reviews

I teach Entrepreneurship and Innovation courses at a local university. I went to the Maker Fair this past fall and was fascinated by everything going on from hobbyist to professional. I wanted to be informed about the Maker Movement, its opportunities and its implications. This book has been fun to read, full of inspiring stories of creativity, regardless of the media used. If you are tired of the "consumer" mentality and want to read about creative people, you will enjoy this book.

I recommend this book to teachers, parents, young adults and adults. I found this book very inspirational and full of real life events and general examples. The author accomplishes what he intends: he makes making accessible and enticing! In addition, I found this book very prophetic in terms of how companies and jobs are and will evolve into.

This is an excellent resource introducing the Maker movement, it's history and future. It's very optimistic and enthusiastic. A great read. Inspiring.

Enjoyable reading

Is there a "New Industrial Revolution" underway? Chris Anderson, former editor of WIRED magazine, and founder of 3D Robotics company, thinks there is. According to this book there is a hands-on renaissance afoot, excuse the metaphor mix. According to the author of this book, Dale Dougherty, it's a mix of technology and DIY. This book examines the who-what-where-how of the Maker phenomenon, as Dougherty calls it. He even started a MAKE:magazine and yearly Maker Faires where Maker projects and products are featured. While many of the Makers combine technology and DIY, there's also Crafters. Crafters aren't making tea cozies and baby booties, or if they are it's "no tea cozies without irony" according to Crafter founder Leah Kramer from Boston. She started Crafter, a place to share hip and crafty designs. ETSY, founded in 2005, has 30 million members and 1 million 'stores' online notes this book. Regarding the who are the makers? It's interdisciplinary says Dougherty. He defines a Maker as 'someone who creates and shares projects'. One interesting project described in this book are kit planes - you can make your own plane from a kit. Or there's KAP's - Kite Aerial Photography. Dougherty originated the first Maker Faire in the Bay area which, in its 10th year, attracted over 100,000 people. More and more Maker Faires are featured around the country. There's even a Crafter Manifesto - included in this book - written by crafter Ulla Engstrom, which summarizes the attitude these new Makers have towards their work. These capture the spirit of this new Craft and Maker movement: 1. People get satisfaction for being able to create/craft things because they can see themselves in the objects they make. This is not possible in purchased products. 2. The things that people have made themselves have magic powers. They have hidden meanings that other people can't see. 3. The things people make they usually want to keep and update. Crafting is not against consumption. It is against throwing things away. 4. People seek recognition for the things they have made. Primarily it comes from their

friends and family. This manifests as an economy of gifts.⁵ People who believe they are producing genuinely cool things seek broader exposure for their products. This creates opportunities for alternative publishing channels.⁶ Work inspires work. Seeing what other people have made generates new ideas and designs.⁷ Essential for crafting are tools, which are accessible, portable, and easy to learn.⁸ Materials become important. Knowledge of what they are made of and where to get them becomes essential.⁹ Recipes become important. The ability to create and distribute interesting recipes becomes valuable.¹⁰ Learning techniques brings people together. This creates online and offline communities of practice.¹¹ Craft-oriented people seek opportunities to discover interesting things and meet their makers. This creates marketplaces.¹² At the bottom, crafting is a form of play. Much of the Maker movement uses advanced technology, such as 3D Printers. Various individuals, companies, towns, libraries and schools are working to create centers for equipment which Makers can use in their projects. These community spaces go by a mix of names such as: fabrication laboratories or "fablabs", TechShops, hackerspaces, or a more generic "makerspace". This book details five different types of these organizations, their spaces as well as the components, tools and markets involved in the how of the Maker movement. Dougherty hopes to infect the young with a Maker Mindset and Maker Learning experiences through schools, libraries, and community offerings. Those who aren't having success in traditional education, or learn better by doing, may find success through Maker experiences. One educator promoted a Maker Camp instead of summer school. A goal for the future is to have many small, local factories making things. Perhaps similar to the medieval Guild system, recreated in the Arts & Crafts movement of the late 1800's and early 1900's? Instead of shipping manufacturing overseas, make and produce and consume things made here. One effort is underway by individuals to revitalize Detroit with Maker projects. An example of successful locally made products is local breweries. Makers create a participatory culture says Dougherty. Most of the projects and products in this book were hands-on. It would be interesting to investigate more creative abstract communities which produce ideas, plays, books etc. I think it's possible this Maker Movement may gain even more traction considering our country's financial future. Some economists, who predicted the last financial meltdown of 2008, are predicting another cataclysmic financial crisis in the next few years as our debt is doubling and we are the largest debtor nation in the history of the world. It can't go on indefinitely. Even our non-partisan CBO economists say our spending is "unsustainable" and we are heading towards a "fiscal crisis". Some are talking Depression instead of Recession. So, communities and individuals who can make what they need to survive will have an advantage. Buying local may become an imperative. This New Industrial Revolution of Makers looks like it's here to stay for many reasons. This book offers a

fabulous survey of its roots, background, diversity and possibility. It's eye-opening. You will want to go out and make something after reading this book.

As a maker, formally educated engineer and person with a disability and associate of Philadelphia's hackerspace Hive76 and past author in Dale's Make Magazine I was extremely impressed with this first introduction to the social and educational side of the Maker Hobby. While many books exist on specific technologies and such books as "Zero to Maker" and "Zero to Maker: Learn (Just Enough) to Make (Just About) Anything" and "Maker Movement Manifesto" exist to describe the process and technologies employed by Makers; no book length treatment until now has dealt with the philosophy, life stories and social condition of Makers. Dale and Ariane report in a easily read fashion on the Maker Movement phenomena, Makers social, educational and developmental conditions mostly in the US but with connections in a worldwide movement. They outline stories of individuals such as Lisa Que (subsequently Que Federman) and Abe Federman who developed their own Maker device for sous vide cooking and monitoring out of classes in the Arduino microcontroller at the NYC Resistor hackerspace went on to develop a Kickstarter Project and afterward went on to found Nomiku the leading company in the sous vide cooker market. There are also stories of how makerspaces have transformed communities. I was most impressed and informed in spite of 5-7 years experience with the Maker Movement to learn of DIYAbility a New York-based Maker organization which both uses Maker skills to develop adaptive technology and enable differently enabled individuals to participate in the Maker Experience. I highly recommend this book to anyone who has ever considered making or fixing anything, those who seek to transform their communities and for the libraries of local Makerspaces.

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