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Makers: The New Industrial Revolution



CHRIS ANDERSON

Author of the bestseller *The Long Tail*

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Synopsis

Wired magazine editor and best-selling author Chris Anderson takes you to the front lines of a new industrial revolution as today's entrepreneurs, using open source design and 3-D printing, bring manufacturing to the desktop. In an age of custom-fabricated, do-it-yourself product design and creation, the collective potential of a million garage tinkerers and enthusiasts is about to be unleashed, driving a resurgence of American manufacturing. A generation of "Makers" using the Web's innovation model will help drive the next big wave in the global economy, as the new technologies of digital design and rapid prototyping gives everyone the power to invent - creating "the long tail of things".

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a good book on an interesting topic. I run cabinet shop in Toronto and have been prattling to my wife about the remaking of the industrial revolution for a few years now. Anderson sums up many of these themes with lots of interesting stories in an easily readable style. I think there are a few things worth adding. First while digital fabrication technology is amazing it is only as useful as the people using it. A cnc router won't make you a good cabinet maker any more than a word processor will make you a good writer or a digital synthesizer will make you a good musician. A synthesizer enables a good musician to become a whole orchestra almost instantly. But a bad musician still sounds like a bad musician and a bad writer is just as annoying as ever to read. What these technologies do is allow the talented craftsman, musician, writer to be more productive than ever, and also lower the barriers to entry for the people with talent who are not part of the

established social hierarchy. In my own shop I don't have my own cnc equipment. When I take on a project like a kitchen, I simply email lists of parts (doors, drawers, carvings) to fabricators not far from my shop and in some cases the parts come back to me the next morning. My suppliers don't stock inventory, they fabricate the parts digitally and so they can produce whatever I want in whatever sizes I want. This is the easy part of my job. The hard part getting the clients to decide on what they want, and figuring out how to fit everything they want into the space they have on their budget. To use a car analogy most clients want something like a "Hummer/Lamborghini/Porsche/Lexus/Rolls" for the price of a Focus. They often send me 3d cad drawings of their dream kitchen.

The latest book from bestseller author and Wired's editor in chief Chris Anderson is dedicated to the Maker Movement, what has been dubbed as the [start of the] third industrial revolution. If you never heard about Makers, 3D-printing, digital fabrication, Arduino, Kickstarter, and the new DIY movement, then this book is a great start (also check out the article The third industrial revolution by The Economist). As in his previous books (The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More and Free: How Today's Smartest Businesses Profit by Giving Something for Nothing), Anderson does a great job in explaining a nascent trend in an easy language and with plenty of examples. Much of what he writes about is backed by his personal experience and through his access to key actors of the maker movement. The book tells the story of the maker movement and compares it to the previous industrial revolutions, presenting the thesis that this shift in manufacturing could offer a way for the USA (and the Western world in general) to fend off the predominance of China in the production of physical objects. Anderson explains how manufacturing ("the world of things"), or more appropriately, digital manufacturing, is following the same steps as the Web, which has democratized publishing, broadcasting and communications, into the world of atoms, allowing almost anybody with a smart idea and a little expertise to make those ideas into physical objects.

"Makers: The New Industrial Revolution" by Wired's magazine Editor in Chief Chris Anderson, is his recently published book about the things we are able to build by ourselves in current time, empowered by desktop digital fabrication tools, and how this technologies might change the world. Proposing that a technology like 3D printing -- which is becoming increasingly cheaper, better, faster and omnipresent -- can change the world, and actually calling it a new industrial revolution might raise lot's of neck hair stand on end. But the author's experience as an editor and writer (I also

recommend his two other books: the Long Tail about the rise of niche products and services in a mass market global economy, and Free, a book about how pricing schemes of \$0 and giving thing away can still be a profitable business model) plays to his favour, crafting a coherent and enthusiastic discourse with enough back up stories to make it sound not only believable, but desirable as well. In his vision of the near future, or even more, our current present, home-brew manufacturing stands to revolutionise the American economy. Is he right about this? In 1776 the (first) Industrial Revolution replaced human power with machine power, thus amplifying human potential. Machines could take a simple gesture, or small physical effort from a person first, a water, steam, diesel or electrical machine later, and obtain faster results with less effort. "Things" could be built, but more to that, industries were born, both in the sense of a place with building facilities, and also in the economical terms of marketplace and trade. He proposes there's a second Industrial Revolution, the digital revolution of the late seventies and early eighties, with Personal Computers.

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