

Film: The Democratization of Manufacturing

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This week's video, "The Democratization of Manufacturing," touches on how the world will profoundly change as a result of 3D printing. Additive manufacturing "factories" of the future will likely specialize in "printing" all sorts of "stuff," not just one type of product.

Digitization democratized music. Before the Internet, musicians were beholden to the then-six major labels. If an artist did not get signed to a major label, it would be difficult for that artist to get music out to an audience. That all changed with the Internet. Now a musician can produce a high quality recording in the home, mix it, and then publish it all over the world. There is no denying that the music industry of the 21st century is no longer a business about selling pieces of plastic to people; that business has been superseded in large part. Certain people in the music industry lost their jobs as a result. Others found opportunity.

3D printing technology coupled with an Internet connection means file-sharing for the rest of the world. Threats and opportunities.

Anyone can be a "manufacturer," including end consumers. Away from control. What about patents, copyrights and trademarks? Scan an object. Print it. Pirate Bay is now facilitating trading in a whole new category: PHYSIBLES. Spare parts industries are on high alert.

No longer will retailers have to carry large inventories on shelves. Goods will be custom-printed to order on demand. Other businesses will also change, including logistics/transportation companies who may not transport "finished" goods as much in the future. UPS and Amazon are already thinking about this.

Gartner analysts predict \$100 billion in intellectual property losses per year by 2018.

Every business should be thinking today about 3D printing.