

Creative Commons Licenses

Read the article at <https://edtechbooks.org/-yZN>

Background

Creative Commons provides the open licenses used by the vast majority of open content, including over 880M items according to a [recent report](#).

The breadth and depth of license options available through Creative Commons licenses provides any creator with a wide range of opportunities to license any type of work with a human readable license, a “legalese” version of the same license, as well as a machine readable version of the license. While fixing overaggressive copyright is the best solution, Creative Commons provides authors and creators with a relatively simple way to share their work in the current legal context.

All CC licenses carry the attribution term “BY.” From there the creator can select from an array of other options which include the following:

- Share Alike (SA) – if you make changes to the material and distribute that changed version, you must license your new version using the same CC license
- NonCommercial (NC) – you cannot use the material in way primarily intended for or directed towards commercial advantage or monetary compensation
- No Derivatives (ND) – no changes can be made to the material

Key Points

- Licensors can retain copyright while sharing their work.
 - Allows them to get credit.
- License Selection Wizard asks two questions:
 - Does the licensor want to allow commercial use?
 - Does the licensor want derivatives to be shared alike?
- Layers of License
 - Legal code – traditional
 - Human readable – Summarizes and expresses the most important information in language a normal human being can understand.
 - Machine readable – allows search engines to index content based on the license.
- Licenses
 - CC BY = Attribution
 - CC BY-SA = Attribution-ShareAlike
 - CC BY-ND = Attribution -NoDerivs
 - CC BY-NC = NonComercial
 - CC BY-NC-SA = NonCommerical-ShareAlike
 - CC BY-NC-ND = NonCommercial-NoDerivs
- One of the purposes is the reduce friction
 - It can be difficult to track down copyright holders to get permission even if they want to give it
 - There is just the one, the historical licenses (e.g. open content), encourage you not to use them anymore.
 - There will never be another license to avoid license proliferation

Discussion Questions

1. Which is the best license?
2. Under what circumstances would you choose to use which licenses?
3. Discuss the pros and cons of not using the NC license, thereby allowing commercial use of openly licensed materials for gain.
4. Under which circumstances would it be best to use a ND license?

Additional Resources

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