Making It At Cornell University Library: Developing the CUL Makerspace

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Makerspaces, sometimes also referred to as hackerspaces, hackspaces, and fablabs, are creative spaces where people can gather to create, invent, and learn...


Why in a library?

- Library already a place of knowledge creation
- New technology and new educational curricula break down distinction between thinking, writing and creating physical things

Goals and Development Process

- Surveyed the 'landscape' of making at Cornell, in Ithaca & beyond
- Reviewed literature and examples of makerspaces in libraries, esp. at universities
- Discussed the landscapes of making at Cornell in Ithaca & beyond

General Findings

- Users in specific programs, classes, organizations already had access to existing makerspaces
- Usually with expert staffing
- Possible open niche in the market for a makerspace for introductory, non-specialist audience

Challenges To Date:

- Time commitment
- Back to the world of 'stuff': Equipment wears out, consumables consumed
- Poor attendance at many events
- Steep learning curve for staff
- Difficulty creating new jobs & titles for
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- Poor attendance at many events
- Equipment
- Need to create new job and title for staff
- Slow process of physical design, safety

Phase 1 (spring 2016): Mobile Makerspace

Phase 2 (fall 2016 - spring 2017): MannYoufacture "closet" makerspace (Mann = Mann Library)

Phase 3 (late fall 2017): MannYoufacture permanent makerspace (in process)

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Poster created by Jeremy Cusker

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