Production and governance in hackerspaces

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Abstract

This paper deals with the phenomenon of hackerspaces and sheds light on the relationship of their underlying values, organizational structures and productive processes to those of the online communities of Commons-based peer production projects, such as Free/Open Source Software and Wikipedia. While hackerspaces adopt hybrid modes of governance, this study attempts to identify patterns, trends and theory that can frame their production and governance mechanisms. Using a diverse amount of literature and case studies, it is argued that, in many cases, hackerspaces exemplify several aspects of peer production projects' principles and governance mechanisms. We also highlight the role of hackerspaces and their impact on learning, social innovation and urbanism, i.e, how hackerspaces could influence the design and development of the urban web and potentially offer opportunities for meaningful social interactions amongst citizens.

Keywords

Commons, peer production, hacker ethics, community governance, open source