Developing
A Creative Economy

By Pamela Schallhorn, Educator
Community & Economic Development
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Welcome

Permission to Be Creative!
The Speaker

- University of Illinois Extension – Community & Economic Development Educator

- Former Vice President of Commercial Lending; Bachelor’s in Finance; Master’s in Political Studies

- Developed a class called Creating the Creative Business in 2010 and have taught hundreds of creative entrepreneurs in Rockford Illinois area as well as two classes in West Loop, downtown Chicago. The course was developed to teach business skills to the right-brain learner, and participants included artists, chefs, designers, filmmakers, writers, musicians, specialty food producers and boutique-retailers. The course was also taught, during the summers, at two Rockford Housing Authority housing developments.

- One of the four contributing educators on Etsy’s 2015 Craft Entrepreneurship textbook.

- Directed the Downtown Entrepreneurship Project in Rockford from 2011 to 2013 for the River District Association including developing the Attitude, Awareness & Usage Survey and the Storefront Workshop Series

- Developed and implemented the Shop Downtown Rockford project in cooperation with 18 downtown creative enterprises (2012)

- On the steering committee that developed the Rockford City Market from 2010 to 2014. Focused on creative entrepreneurial development at the market. The market currently has over 6,000 visitors weekly and dozens of the creative enterprises that were established in the market have expanded into storefronts in downtown and other areas of the city since 2010. The majority of whom attended the Creating the Creative Business course

What is a Creative Economy?

• A **creative economy** is an economic system where value is based on novel imaginative qualities rather than the traditional resources of land, labour and capital.\(^2\)

• **The most valuable assets in a creative economy are people** and their personal qualities of imagination and curiosity, their relationships, their intellectual property and their ability to make a fair deal.\(^2\)

• Some observers take the view that **creativity is the defining characteristic of developed 21st century economies**, just as manufacturing typified 19th and early 20th centuries.
A Creative Ecosystem

“Creativity by itself has no economic value until it takes shape, means something and is embodied in a product that can be traded (whether tangible or intangible). This, in turn, needs a market-place with active sellers & buyers, some ground-rules on laws and contracts, and some conventions about what constitutes a reasonable deal.”

J. Howkins (2013)
Howkin’s 3 Propositions for the Creative Ecology

✓ Everyone is born creative

✓ Creativity needs freedom

✓ Freedom needs markets
Who is the Creative?

- Open minded – the “dreamer”
- Independence of Mind – “single mindedly persistent even when others do not recognize what they are doing”
- NOT afraid of change
- Challenged by empty space – wants to put something in it!
- Well developed sense of humor
- Competitive & Ambitious

“We admire creative people because they turn something into something new and we may fear them for the same reason.” Howkins (2013)
What Creatives Do Not “LIKE”

✓ Rigid hierarchal systems of management or power **DO NOT** work
✓ Creatives **DO NOT** gravitate towards structure, discipline or the status quo
✓ **DO NOT** expect quick successes but a sense of urgency is OK – keeps them moving
✓ **DO NOT** steal their work – IP Laws & Education
What is a Creative Enterprise?

Creative enterprises are those individuals and businesses producing and using creativity of thought, form, design, and language for sustainable economic growth, addressing opportunity gaps in our communities, regions, and states. Industries that focus on this activity include advertising, broadcasting, architecture, crafts, culinary, cultural, design, fashion, film, fine arts, publishing, and software development.
Factors Impacting Creative Development

- Attitudes
- Conditions
- Culture
Attitudes

- Respecting the creatives especially those you already have
- More chaos theory less control
- Out of the box thinking (not just into a bigger box)
- Work with what is already happening
Conditions

✓ Unemployment
✓ Educational levels
✓ Millennials
✓ Infrastructure and Placemaking
✓ Population size (metro vs. rural)
✓ Per capita incomes
Culture

“Requires morphing the Protestant work ethic with bohemian values...into a creative ethos”- Richard Florida (2002)

✓ Is the community ready to include the creative economy into their economic development efforts?
✓ Is the community prepared to allow the creative to create something truly new or are traditional structures or values too unyielding?
Steps to Developing a Creative Economy

1. Become Creative Centric – creatives as assets

2. Be ready to understand and embrace change – breaking the rules is inevitable

3. Focus on identifying existing markets and/or create new markets and distribution channels to allow the creative to sell their product (structural capital)

4. Advertise – Promote – Support!

If the idea sounds weird, crazy or different – you are probably on the right track
✓ Permission to be Creative
✓ Please Pay Them! This is about Economics...
✓ Community Art Projects
✓ Women

Community Art Project – Ottawa, IL
Becoming Creative Centric

• Just for: Artists, writers, musicians, boutique retailers, designers (all types), specialty food producers and other creatives interested in starting or expanding a creative business.

• Module 1: Debunking the Starving Artist Myth & Confidence Building

• Module 2: The Creative Business Idea – Really… Only One?

• Module 3: Assessing the Competition

• Module 4: Creating Profit

• Module 5: Who is your Customer?

• Module 6: Creating the SWOT

• Module 7: Creating a Marketing Strategy

• Module 8: Creating a Great Customer Experience!
Prepare to Break the Rules

✔ The SipYard – Urbana

✔ Festival Zones - Rockford
Creating New Markets

- Public Markets
- Pop-up Shops
- In-Store Events
- The Co-BIZ
- Crowd-funding
- The Café a.k.a shared workspace
- Etsy
- Co-ops
- Galleries
- OR create something new!

"Informal grass roots, street-level, pop-up micro-activities, each of which may be short-lived, but which adds up to a continuous stream of events and experiences in a market-place of endless information which sharpens the producers’ and makers’ skills and buyers’ appetites."²
Promote, Support, Advertise

SHOPS & GALLERIES

1. ARTIFICIUM GALLERY & GIFTS
   Local & Regional Handmade Items
   333 E. State St. Ste 10

2. CD SOURCE
   Used CDs, DVDs, Vinyl & Vintage Stereo Equipment
   221 E. State St.

3. DOWNTOWN SHOES & BOUTIQUE

SHOPS & GALLERIES

13. RUNNER'S IMAGE
    Running Shoes & Gear
    491 E. State St.

14. SALVAGED BY SONYA
    Upscale Resale Shop specializing in Home Decor
    110 N. 1st Street

15. SYMBOLS CLOTHING
    Men's Clothing
    1 W. State St.

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OR WEEKLY EVENT SPECIALS!

FB.COM/SHOPDOWNTOWNROCK

GRAB A BITE!

A. THE IRISH ROSE
B. BAMBOO
C. VINTAGE @ 501
D. WIRED CAFE
E. DISTRICT 43
F. OCTAVIO'S
G. ROLY-POLY
H. OLIVIA'S

PLUSH BOUTIQUE
Fab Fashions for Girly-Girls
510 E. State St.

ROCKFORD ART DELI | RAD
Original T-Shirts. Gallery. Events & Fun
402 E. State Street

ROCKFORD ART MUSEUM | STORE
Unique Gifts & Original Art
721 North Main Street

Shop Local. Support Local!

FLYER DESIGNED BY:

[Rockford Art District Logo]
Artistic talents know no socio-economic boundaries, regardless of educational attainment, income levels, mental or physical disability, race, ethnicity or gender. They can only be underutilized or ignored.
Thanks to Cathy, Gen, Ron, Peter, Danny, Polly, Lorie, Becky & all the other creatives in downtown Rockford!
References