

# ***“The Creative Economy – What the Heck Is It, Anyway?” If you’re reading this, you’re probably part of it!***

By Tom Tresser

OK, I’m a right-brain person who has always had trouble with numbers.



Inspired to be a future creative worker?  
Image by Tom Tresser

But here’s a really big number to conjure with: \$1.2 trillion.

That’s the projected world-wide revenue total for the entertainment and media industries for 2003.<sup>1</sup>

For the United States, the total is projected to be \$479.4 billion.<sup>2</sup>

These industries, sometimes referred to as the core copyright industries, comprise the heart of what is now being referred to as the Creative Economy.

The Creative Economy is where the action is for post-Industrial, post-Service and post-Modern societies. This is where the most value will be created and the highest-paying jobs will be. It’s also where the fun is.

And it’s projected to grow by a 4.8 percent compound annual growth rate through 2007.<sup>3</sup>

So, in case you were wondering, creativity REALLY matters.

Creativity is big business and getting bigger.

So let’s take a closer look at what makes up the Creative Economy.

John Howkins, executive chairman of London-based Tornado Productions, and advisor to some thirty governments on their creative industries, wrote a book in 2001, “The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas.” He identified 15 segments of the Creative Economy including the media-related businesses which make up the core copyright industries.

The 15 segments are:

1. Advertising
2. Architecture
3. Art
4. Crafts
5. Design
6. Fashion
7. Filmed entertainment (including videos and DVDs)
8. Music
9. Performing arts
10. Publishing
11. Research and development
12. Software
13. Toys and games (excluding video, PC games)
14. Video games
15. TV and radio

Howkins computed the total revenues of the United States’ Creative Economy in 1999 to be \$960 billion. This is higher than the PricewaterhouseCoopers figure because it includes segments, such as crafts and R&D that the PwC study didn’t and excludes things PwC did capture, such as sports.<sup>4</sup>

Still, you get the picture.

It’s a BIG picture.

How big? Well, to compare, the U.S. auto industry is expected to bring in \$244 billion in 2004.<sup>5</sup> And the auto industry is in turmoil and not a great champion of innovation and creativity.

So who labors in the Creative Economy? Whose brainpower fuels all this creativity that results in compelling products, enthralling entertainment and new inventions?

Richard Florida, the author of "The Rise of the Creative Class," identifies a range of creative workers whose efforts make the Creative Economy work. He calls them the Creative Class and breaks them into two large segments, The Super-Creative Core and Creativity Professionals.<sup>6</sup>



#### Super-Creative Core:

- Computer and mathematical occupations
- Architecture and engineering occupations
- Life, physical, and social science occupations
- Education, training, and library occupations
- Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations



#### Creative Professionals:

- Managerial occupations
- Business and financial operations occupations
- Legal operations
- Healthcare practitioners and technical operations
- High-end sales and sales management

Florida calculates that there are 38.3 million Americans in the Creative Class, of which some 15 million workers are the Super-Creatives. The Creative Class comprises some 30 percent of the entire U.S. workforce, having grown from some 3 million workers in 1900.<sup>7</sup>

Are you one of them?

If so, how do you think of yourself? Do you identify yourself with your company? Or do you place yourself as a member of a profession, say visual artist or software developer?

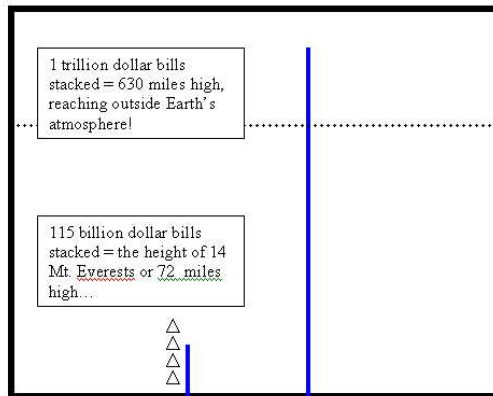
I'd like to suggest that you start thinking about your membership in the Creative Class and what you and it, overall, needs to succeed and thrive going forward.

In future columns we'll take a look at the Creative Economy for Illinois and Chicago. We'll also start to lay out some of the issues that we all need to be aware of if we want this thing called the Creative Economy to continue to flourish.

In the meantime, stay creative!

---

**INFO DEBRIS – How big is a trillion?<sup>8</sup>**



### References or related links:

1. "Global Entertainment and Media Outlook: 2002-2006 Executive Summary," PricewaterhouseCoopers, May 2002, p. 27. Order the latest version of this report: [https://www.materiallogic.com/cgi-bin/OrderSites/pwc\\_gemo](https://www.materiallogic.com/cgi-bin/OrderSites/pwc_gemo).
2. Same, p. 18.
3. Press release at <http://www.pwcglobal.com/extweb/ncpressrelease.nsf/DocID/D34E8B94A65AEF0C85256D42006B3F2D>.
4. "The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas," Penguin UK, 2001, p. 116. Buy the book: <http://www.penguin.co.uk/Book/BookFrame/0,1007,,00.html?id=0140287949>.
5. U.S. Industry & Trade Outlook 2000, excluding parts and accessories.
6. "The Rise of the Creative Class," Basic Books, 2002, p. 328. Buy the book: <http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?userid=2XOYQO9S28&sourceid=00397386026354107388&bfdate=07%2D04%2D2003+13%3A55%3A06&isbn=0465024769&itm=1>
7. Same, p. 74.
8. Nigel Holmes - TED X Presentation, Monterey, CA, 2000.

Tom Tresser is a consultant, producer, educator and trainer who can help individuals, companies and communities leverage and amplify their creative assets in order to solve problems, create economic value and trigger civic engagement. Tom has been a long-time advocate for an increased appreciation for the role of creativity in the life of the community. In 1991 he started an organization that organized artists and cultural workers for political activism and taught "Arts and Public Policy" at Roosevelt University, where he organized a center for the study of cultural policy. Tom was Director Cultural Development at Peoples Housing, a nonprofit community development corporation operating in northeast Chicago, where he organized a community arts program that combined culture and economic development. Tom served as lead organizer for the Chicago Park District for two years in a pilot project that transformed a major regional park into a community cultural center. In April 2004, Tom was elected to a two-year term for the Local School Council for the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood. He lectures on "The Politics of Creativity" and conducts leadership training sessions for artists and creative professionals. He teaches classes on arts and civic engagement at DePaul University and Loyola University.



[www.tresser.com](http://www.tresser.com) – [tom@tresser.com](mailto:tom@tresser.com)