



TechShop
BUILD YOUR DREAMS HERE

2006–2017





As of Nov 15th, 2017, TechShop is closed. This document serves as a brief company history.

Making requires curiosity, creativity, and courage. Makers are people who think critically in order to find solutions to difficult problems. Finding the right solution, however, takes a lot of wrong prototypes. Only through this iterative process do we find the best path forward. This is true of both products and business models.

As a company, TechShop has gone through many iterations. We have grown from one location in Menlo Park to 10 locations across the US and 4 Internationally. We have tested new ideas through community engagement, education, youth programs, and business innovation with partners large and small. We have furthered the impact of the Maker Movement, guided the creation of more makerspaces, and launched countless individual enterprises. Now, however, we are bringing this final iteration of the company to a close.

For questions, email techshop.trustee@gmail.com.



Further information & contact:

- 1 Acquisition interest contact form:
<https://goo.gl/forms/RV2IR7Hr6XnPBkaN2>
- 2 All further questions, comments, and media inquiries can be referred to techshop.trustee@gmail.com.

About TechShop

Founded in October 2006, TechShop started as a membership-based, do-it-yourself (DIY) workshop and fabrication studio. Over a decade later, TechShop, Inc. grew into an international consulting company sharing it's makerspace expertise with grade schools and fortune 500 companies alike.

TechShop offered consulting, market assessments, licensing options, curriculum, and various other managed services to economic development councils, libraries, non-profits and educational institutions, design firms and other makerspaces. TechShop encourages you to find a way to grow the maker movement in your community. It's worth the effort.



TechShop was a grand experiment that touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of people...

"I'm very proud of what my team and I did to build TechShop. I'm very sad that we were not able to make TechShop into a sustainable business. It is my prayer that each of the people we touched will take those little sparks they received while they worked on their dreams at TechShop, and turn them into their own grand experiment."

*- Jim Newton
Member and Founder*





TechShop Impact

1

TechShop provided access to over \$1.4 million of high quality tools and machinery to its users for a membership fee of less than \$4 per day.

2

TechShop locations included: Allen Park, MI; Arlington, VA; Chandler, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; Redwood City, CA; Round Rock, TX; San Jose, CA; San Francisco, CA; St Louis, MO and Brooklyn, NYC.

3

TechShop had +9,000 active members in the United States alone. We engaged over 100,000 individuals since opening, including memberships, skill building classes and K-12 STEAM youth programs.

4

Over the past ten years, young minds engaged with our programs; the under-employed learned new skills; new products and jobs were created; and communities connected, collaborated and grew closer.

We've inspired thousands...

“As a veteran myself, I’m proud to say that TechShop has provided membership and training to over three thousand returning veterans. This program enabled veterans to develop skills and experience—preparing them for jobs in advanced manufacturing and helping dozens of vets to launch their own companies.”

*– Dan Woods
TechShop CEO and member*





TechShop:

A Retrospective



Intention

TechShop's vision was to develop a network of makerspaces, members, curriculum, standards, instructors, and learning that would fuel the birth of new technologies, products, jobs, and companies.



Company history

TechShop Opens in Menlo Park, CA

Jim Newton founds TechShop, the first of its kind: an open-access makerspace.

●
2006

2007
●

2nd Annual Maker Faire

After securing initial memberships and funding, TechShop joined the second annual Maker Faire to promote the Maker Movement.

●
2010

Ford Partnership

TechShop finds one of its first major partners: Ford Motors Company. Together, TechShop and Ford partner to open TechShop Detroit.

2011
●

Autodesk Partnership, CA Locations

Autodesk begins to provide all TechShop locations with its leading portfolio of Digital Prototyping software.

Additional California locations launch in San Francisco and San Jose.

●
2012

Veteran's Affairs & DARPA Partnership, New Locations in Michigan and Texas

TechShop Collaborates with DARPA and VA to Drive Innovation, Access to Public and Private Sectors.

TechShop Detroit and TechShop Austin-Round Rock open.

2013
●

Arizona State University Partnership, Pennsylvania Location

ASU announces partnership and plans to open the Chandler location in 2014.

Pittsburgh welcomes TechShop to the Bakery Square development.

●
2014

Arizona and Arlington Shops open

The Arizona State partnership results in TechShop Chandler. The Crystal City development in Arlington is the site for TechShop DC-Arlington.

2016
●

New CEO, St. Louis Opens

Dan Woods joins TechShop as CEO.

TechShop St. Louis opens in the Cortex Innovation District.

●
2017

Pivot to Licensing and Managed Services, NYC Locations

The TechShop corporate body pivots to a licensing model.

New York City opens its arms to TechShop Brooklyn.



At each TechShop location, tremendous community engagement and support was always palpable. TechShop attracted artists, artisans, engineers, designers, and creatives of all ages and skill levels. The combination of left- and right-brain types created a special kind of magic—it was a unique space where new projects and ideas were fostered and cross-pollination was the norm.

There are many examples of TechShop community members supporting and nurturing each other. This led to collaborations on projects and, in many cases, long-term partnerships. This collaboration is helped by the broad range of ages (8–80) represented in the membership and a fairly even ratio of males and females (typically, 60/40 across the facilities) a statistic we're quite proud of.

All TechShop locations served their community in three major ways: Education, Workforce Training, and as an Advanced Manufacturing/Creative Hub...

Education and Next-Generation

01

TechShop's natural platform for supporting STEAM educational needs in a city through schools, universities, and after-school programs made what we hope will be a lasting impact on the hundreds of young minds we hosted.



Workforce and Employment Training

02

TechShop provided (re)training for disadvantaged populations and employees in evolving industries or roles where rapid familiarity with new tools is required.



Advanced Manufacturing Creative Hub

03

TechShop aggregated the most creative people in a city and created a community focused on creativity and making. It acted as an “anchor” in innovative hubs, drawing other innovative businesses, and became a center that can revitalize/reinvigorate communities (e.g., 5M Project in San Francisco, the CORTEX-led project in St. Louis, and Futureworks NYC in New York City).





Intention

Since the first scrappy location, filled with used equipment and wildly creative makers, TechShop has accomplished much of its original mission.



In our communities

"TechShop has proven across its cities that it attracts a diverse range of people who have projects and products that they wish to develop. Many take advantage of both the tools and expertise found at TechShop to develop new products that would never have been produced without having had access to a TechShop."

*- Dale Dougherty
Founder, MAKE Magazine & Maker Faire*

2014 impact study

2K

Direct impact of jobs created
in the San Francisco bay area

Across ten stores

148

Average number of startups
per location

Since 2006

+8K

Youth served through STEAM
education programs

Future scientist & pro wrestler

“TechShop has helped me prepare for being a scientist and wrestler because you have to be strong and not be scared to do things.”

When we soldered the LED robots at TechShop summer camp, I was scared but I did it anyway!”

*– Ro'Shell
Summer camper*



+3,000 Veteran memberships

“This will allow even more innovators, especially veterans, to have access to the tools and services they need to participate in the design and build process.”

*– Jonah Czerwinski,
Sr. Advisor to the
Secretary of Veterans Affairs*



1,500 U.S. Patents

In 2016, Ford employees submitted more patents than any other automaker. The number of U.S. patents awarded to Ford employees represents a 25% increase versus 2015; total Ford patents globally reach 3,200 in 2016.

According to @FordOnline, a company newsletter, “a springboard to even greater innovation, Ford worked with TechShop to open TechShop Detroit...Backyard tinkerers and engineers alike can develop ideas and build prototypes using the facility’s tools, equipment and computers loaded with design software.”





Success

Stories



Embrace

+200,000 infants reached

+13,000 health care workers trained

105 programs in 20 countries

A life-saving incubation blanket for babies. In 2008, a group of Stanford students sought to address high mortality rates among premature and low-birth-weight babies by designing a better incubator for the developing world.

The invention, the Embrace infant warmer, was prototyped at TechShop San Francisco and is now saving thousands of lives worldwide.





Oru Kayak

2014: Won Product of the Year at ISPO Munich

Oru Kayak creator Anton Willis grew up in Mendocino County, CA, kayaking in the ocean and local waterways.

After moving to a small apartment in San Francisco, Anton found it problematic to store his kayak. Inspired by origami, he began folding paper with the idea of designing a boat he could keep in the city. With paper models in hand, Anton joined TechShop in 2011 to make and test real prototypes. Oru Kayak is now distributed internationally and sold by major retailers such as Amazon, REI, and Backcountry.com.





DODOcase

“TechShop was a perfect place to prototype. I was able to use hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of equipment that I could have never afforded to buy myself.”

*– Patrick Buckley
Founder*

DODOcase’s first product married the emerging iPad trend and the disappearing art of bookbinding. Patrick made his first prototype at TechShop for under \$500. In the first year of operation, DODOcase brought in \$3 million. Today, they continue to thrive by artisan aligning products with cutting-edge technology releases, recently launching a pop-up virtual reality viewer.





Lumio

"You can say that it's access to tools that started [Lumio], but really it's also access to knowledge and the network itself. There's so much impromptu interaction among [TechShop] members that allowed me to build the stepping stone to where I am today, and it's very exciting."

*- Max Gunawan
Founder*

Launched in 2013 after a wildly successful Kickstarter campaign, Lumio has doubled its revenue each year since then and is primed to keep growing in exclusive, international retail partnerships with Neiman Marcus and MoMA.

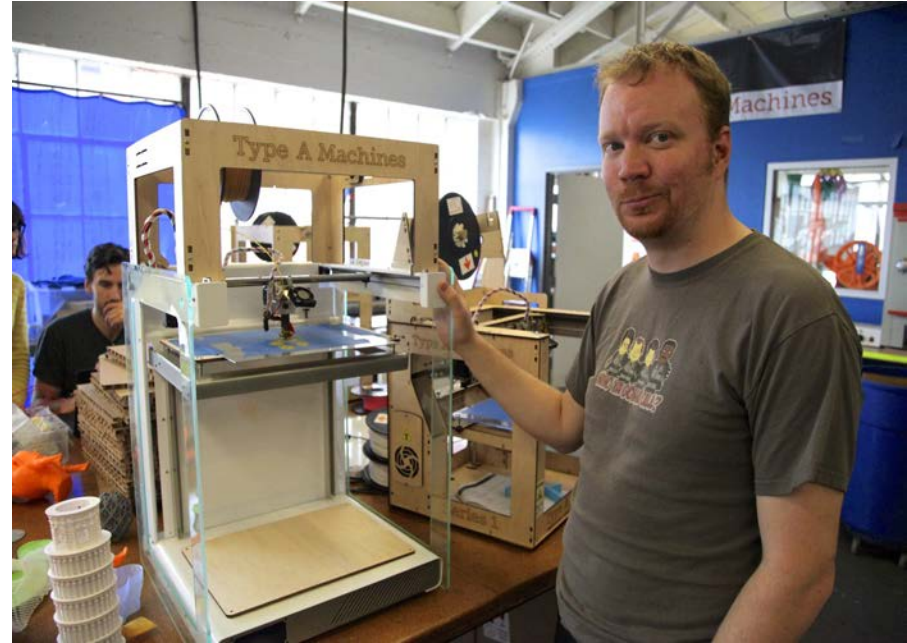




Type A Machines

Type A Machines makes the award winning Series 1 line of 3D printers, the industry's first parallel-production printing solution featuring up to 60 networked printers.

This company is empowering design professionals and manufacturers worldwide to move into the 3D manufacturing era. As part of the grassroots RepRap community, Andrew Rutter's innate knack for technology and practical design gained attention.





abiliLife

AbiliLife is a bioengineering company dedicated to improving the quality of life for patients with Parkinson's and other neurodegenerative diseases. After earning a PhD in Organizational Behavior and Theory from Carnegie Mellon, Courtney focused her time at AlphaLab Gear and TechShop on inventing and perfecting the brace. AbiliLife is a woman- and minority-owned business that manufactures its product in the USA.





FAQs

1. Bankruptcy

Why is TechShop closing?

In spite of many months of effort to restructure the company's debt and raise new capital to fund our recently announced strategic pivot, we have depleted our funds. We are left with no other options. We've worked with members, partners, and investors to try to turn the ship around. This meant slashing corporate spending, executive pay, and introducing an entirely new business model. But, in the final analysis, it wasn't enough. It didn't work.

What is Chapter 7 bankruptcy?

Also called straight bankruptcy or liquidation bankruptcy. It's the type most people think about when the word "bankruptcy" comes to mind. In a nutshell, the court appoints a trustee to oversee your case. Part of the trustee's job is to take your assets, sell them and distribute the money to the creditors who file proper claims.

Why didn't TechShop file Chapter 11?

Over the past week TechShop leadership has worked tirelessly to explore options for filing Chapter-11 bankruptcy. This alternative would have allowed us to restructure our debt as a significantly reduced company while proposing a new business plan to the creditors and the bankruptcy court. To file Chapter-11, however, TechShop would need cash to pay an even further reduced workforce, instructors, rent, utilities, insurance, and the like. That is money that this company simply does not have. TechShop can no longer ask instructors, employees and contractors to work when the company does not have adequate cash reserves to pay them. Most regrettably, the only viable path forward is filing Chapter-7.

Why didn't members/investors/makers find out sooner?

TechShop leadership and council explored every possible outcome. These options included selling the company, soliciting a corporate cash injection, and appealing to shareholders and lenders. As part of these exploratory conversations, we were optimistic that continued operations were possible. Discussion of bankruptcy would have jeopardized those possibilities. The Chapter-7 decision was not finalized until every other option was exhausted.

Who/what is the trustee?

When a chapter 7 petition is filed, the U.S. trustee appoints an impartial case trustee to administer the case and liquidate the debtor's nonexempt assets. As an officer of the Department of Justice, the trustee is assigned to represent the debtor's estate in a bankruptcy proceeding. Although a bankruptcy judge has the ultimate authority on the distribution of assets, the trustee is charged with evaluating and making recommendations about various debtor demands in accordance with the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.

Who is/receives techshop.trustee@gmail.com?

This email address was created in order to facilitate communication with the court appointed trustee. Who may choose to share additional contact information and resources in the coming days.

2. TechShop, The Company

I thought this shop was profitable, why is my TechShop closing?

While a few individual LLCs have been able to maintain a steady flow of income and cash flow, the company as a whole, including the majority of shops, have not been profitable and as a result the company as a whole incurred a great amount of debt that could not be sustained any further. While a few LLCs have occasionally been cash flow positive, none of the LLCs are nor have consistently been cash flow positive.

Can I purchase equipment or other assets?

By declaring bankruptcy TechShop has surrendered all assets to the court appointed trustee who may choose to liquidate said assets. Most likely you will be able to purchase equipment through an auction advertised and run by the trustee. TechShop no longer exists as a company and therefore cannot sell any equipment. See link to interest form below.



Are the Locations/Individual LLCs publicly available for sale?

At this time it is unknown if the bankruptcy court will allow purchase of the LLC or the contents outside of a general liquidation, we will continue to work with the Trustee to help identify potential entities interested in stepping in and acquiring individual locations or potentially the entire company. If you represent the interests of such an entity, please fill out this [google form](#) to begin contact with the trustee or email techshop.trustee@gmail.com.

What happens to the international locations?

All international locations (Tokyo, Abu Dhabi, Paris, Lille) are operated by overseas entities under license by TechShop. These locations will continue to operate. For more information regarding our international licensees, email paul@techshop.global.



3. Other

What is the refunds policy?

In filing for bankruptcy, this will be in the control of the trustee and the bankruptcy process. For specific questions email techshop.trustee@gmail.com.

How can I get my personal items out?

The Trustee will contact members with available dates and times where members can remove personal property.

I'm an instructor, what happens to my invoices?

All outstanding debts and payments owed will be settled by the Trustee. TechShop is advising instructors be ranked high priority, as they were an integral part of our operations. To submit an outstanding invoice to the trustee, email techshop.trustee@gmail.com.

TechShop
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WWW.TECHSHOP.WS

Contact



Further information & contact:

- 1 Acquisition interest contact form:
<https://goo.gl/forms/RV2IR7Hr6XnPBkaN2>
- 2 All further questions, comments, and media inquiries can be referred to techshop.trustee@gmail.com.



Message from

Dan Woods





It is with a very sad heart and deep disappointment that I announce that TechShop is shutting down its operations effective November 15 and will file for bankruptcy under Chapter-7. In spite of many months of effort to restructure the company's debt and raise new capital to fund our recently announced strategic pivot, we have depleted our funds. We are left with no other options.

We are closing all of our ten U.S. locations and small corporate group effective 8AM November 15. The TechShop Global locations will not be effected as they are all owned by overseas licensees. We will announce dates and times for members to come in a remove their personal materials and projects as soon as we can coordinate with the bankruptcy Trustee.

We've been operating on exceedingly low cash balances for quite some time now. We've been trying to do whatever we could to keep the doors open and remain operational so that we could see the light of the next day and hopefully close on a couple of large licensing deals we had been working on. However, the current cash conditions—and the toll they are taking on employees, instructors, and members—are entirely unacceptable.



Over the past week we have worked tirelessly to explore options for filing Chapter-11 bankruptcy. This alternative would have allowed us to reorganize and restructure our debt. To file Chapter-11, however, we would need cash to pay an even further reduced workforce, instructors, rent, utilities, insurance, and the like. That is money that we simply do not have. I can no longer ask instructors, employees and contractors to work when we do not have adequate cash reserves to pay them. Most regrettably, the only viable path forward is filing Chapter-7.

As dark a moment as this is, I also want to acknowledge the enormous impact TechShop has had on our members and their communities over the past ten years.



I first met our Founder, Jim Newton, when I was at Make: Magazine. We were setting up for our very first Maker Faire in 2006. From his small maker table, Jim spent that entire weekend sharing his vision for an open access community makerspace where anyone could build their dreams. By the end of that year Jim opened the very first TechShop location in Menlo Park. It was a scrappy space filled with used equipment and wildly creative makers. It quickly leveraged the ideas, operational know-how, people, and community to bring TechShop to other cities. The essence of the TechShop vision was to develop a network of makerspaces, members, curriculum, standards, instructors, and learning that would fuel the birth of new technologies, products, jobs, and companies. TechShop has accomplished much of this vision.

We have inspired thousands of youth to view themselves as inventors, problem solvers, creators, and makers. As a veteran myself, I'm proud to say that TechShop also provided membership and training to over three thousand returning veterans. This program enabled veterans to develop skills and experience—preparing them for jobs in advanced manufacturing and helping dozens of vets to launch their own companies.

TechShop employees, investors, and Jim, can hold their heads high in the knowledge that their vision, perseverance, and hard work produces great results. Together, the TechShop community inspired and transformed tens of thousands of people and dozens of neighborhoods; led directly to the creation of thousands of new jobs; and helped generate billions in net worth and new technologies—some of them life-saving.

As we examine our success, we must also examine our failures. A for-profit network of wholly owned makerspaces is impossible to sustain without outside subsidy from cities, companies and foundations, often in the form of memberships, training grants, and sponsored programs. This kind of funding is readily available to non-profits, and very rarely an option for for-profit enterprises. This is why we announced a pivot—to leverage our know-how, experience, systems and processes. The goal of TechShop 2.0 was to help non-profits, corporations and universities launch and operate their own makerspaces. We would get out of the business of owning makerspaces and instead focus on enabling other entities to build and operate makerspaces.



What we accomplished over the past ten years has been nothing less than monumental. I encourage our members, employees, partners, and the entire maker community to take something constructive from TechShop's experience: the world needs makerspaces. Jim Newton, TechShop employees, members, and investors will go forward with their experience. Many will find a way to collaborate and work together again. The world will be a far better place for TechShop's experience.

This was a difficult decision, and this will be a difficult transition to a world without TechShop. In the coming months, however, I intend to reflect on and learn from our experiences at TechShop. Then, move forward. I encourage you to do the same.

As makers, we must learn from our mistakes.

We iterate. We innovate. We fearlessly continue the pursuit of curiosity. We make.

Dan Woods,
TechShop CEO



Never stop making... Thank you.

For questions, email techshop.trustee@gmail.com.

**TechShop**
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