Arduino & RepRap - Creating Wealth by Giving it Away: ICED11 Mechatronics Keynote

Because it is sometimes possible to convert one into the other, money and wealth are often confused. But they are distinct: money is pieces of paper or numbers in a computer; wealth is corn to make bread, or a motor car. Both money and wealth grow as time advances: growth in money is inflation, growth in wealth is longevity and prosperity. Is it possible to grow wealth independently of money? This talk will be from Adrian Bowyer - creator of RepRap, the open-source replicating 3D printer - and from David Cuartielles - creator of Arduino, the open-source microcontroller. Both projects have founded significant and growing industries - and hence significant and growing wealth - by giving away all the data required to build RepRaps and Arduinos completely free. They have also short-circuited most conventional industrial infrastructure by placing the ability to create wealth directly in the hands of private individuals. The presenters contend that this is the way of the future: companies, and - more importantly - those private individuals will be giving away their primary products and making a living on the sideline activities that such donations attract. Software has been heading in that direction for decades. Now hardware is following.