
Subject: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [vivalaevolucion](#) on Sat, 19 Jan 2013 19:00:14 GMT
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Hi,
I am curious if we can print out 3d lego style pieces that snap together so we can make bigger items?

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 02:20:22 GMT
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Yes it's possible, and being done all the time!

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [vivalaevolucion](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 02:51:40 GMT
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Thank you so much for your quick reply. Do you know if this would it work for something as big as a life size coffee table? I want to make 3d print coffee tables using about 20 or so 3d printed pieces that can be easily snapped together by customer. If possible please let me know what 3d program you recommend using to create something like this . Thanks again for your help. I can't wait to start working on it I believe 3D print is the future of furniture manufacturing.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [stop4stuff](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 07:34:12 GMT
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Youknowwho4eva wrote on Tue, 22 January 2013 02:20Yes it's possible, and being done all the time!

How many of those models contravene the LEGO Group's IP rights

@vivalaevolucion

Asides from cost, there's no reason why something like you describe won't work out.

Check out some of the 3D applications via

<http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&th=2043&start=0&app>

Paul

stop4stuff Modeller for hireShapeways Shop - Controller PendantTwitterYouTube

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces

Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 13:49:21 GMT

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stop4stuff wrote on Tue, 22 January 2013 07:34 How many of those models contravene the LEGO Group's IP rights

That's for them and their lawyers to decide. Of course if they ask us to take it down because it violates our terms and conditions, we will.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces

Posted by [stop4stuff](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 17:09:26 GMT

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Youknowwho4eva wrote on Tue, 22 January 2013 13:49stop4stuff wrote on Tue, 22 January 2013 07:34 How many of those models contravene the LEGO Group's IP rights

That's for them and their lawyers to decide. Of course if they ask us to take it down because it violates our terms and conditions, we will.

I must say Mike, that for an employee of Shapeways, your attitude is a tad blasfÃ©.

Click on the link -> LEGO Fair Play policy and have a read.

Basically, all that needs to be done with many of the examples in your search reference is to change the order of the wording for the title so that the item does not claim to be a LEGO product and no models need to be taken down. It has little to do with Shapeways policies, but everything to do with the IP rights of the LEGO Group and how they chose to allow their registered trademarks to be used.

Paul

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces

Posted by [vivalaevolucion](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 18:01:27 GMT

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I actually had problems using the word Lego on cafepress and zazzle. I had a Lego evolution design that got kicked off, but i re-uploaded it under a different name (without mention of the word lego) and it was accepted. Also, I believe using the phrase "Lego Style" would probably be ok. On a related note, I sell some knock-off Eames Chairs that I call Eames-Style Office Chair, and haven't had any problems. As long as the customer is not getting the impression that they are buying genuine Lego brand products then it should be ok.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Piers](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 18:18:12 GMT
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Wouldn't this be a similar situation to 3D systems suing Kickstarter? Kickstarter hasnt actually infringed on any patents, yet they promoted and raised cash to start Formlabs and Miicraft (who apparently have). So they are indirectly liable.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [BillBedford](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 18:39:22 GMT
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Allegedly

Until the case goes to court and there is is a judgement, whether Kickstarter is liable or not is up for debate.

It looks to me like a not very secure company trying to stifle competition.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Phxman](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 19:14:21 GMT
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I think it is important to not look like passing-off as a genuine Lego part.
- it would be interesting to know what rights they claim for the connecting matrix between pieces - how many "dimples" before it becomes a matter of Patent or Copyright?

To do that it would be necessary to keep your items at arms length by

saying compatible with Lego.

As Bill Bedford would know, this is achieved in the model railway world by saying an item is compatible with Hornby, Bachmann, Dapol etc. Probably because everyone is using common specs'!

Someone even has a Patent for the whole Manufacturing Management process for a 3D Printing Business: not the process itself, but also the monitor & control tasks applied to manage the Process [US Patent Application 20110313878]

- be interested to know if Shapeways has received any flack in the way they operate.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [stop4stuff](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2013 20:12:15 GMT
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With the LEGO Group, they make it plain and simple for people wanting to use their registered trademarks (not a copyright or patent) - link already provided twice above. I really do not see what there's any issues about if people play fair

In the early days of LEGO bricks, before they started using ABS plastic, LEGO did patent a lot of their designs but so much has changed since then - for instance the standard 2 x 4 stud brick has, iirc, had at least eight different variations over the last 40 years. These days the LEGO inventory stands at something like 33,000 different designs of elements, hardly any of which are 'patented'. Most of the elements that are 10 years or older are publically available as basic 3D models via LDraw.org - even instruction leaflet/books are available for download via Peeron.com.

Anyhow, my point before was not about 'compatible with LEGO' items, copyrights or patents, but the phrasing of the Shapeways model titles as provided by the search link Youknowwho4eva posted that blatantly use the LEGO trademark as the leading word. But, hey, if he don't care why should any of us.

The LEGO Group are approachable, they do communicate and help those who ask how their 'compatible with LEGO' items can be used - do the right thing by the LEGO Group, and they'll do the right thing by you.

Oh, just remembered, LEGO did have a Duplo play table that was a top and slot in legs on sale to the public, there are also many other LEGO designed play tables in educational/commercial environments that could be used as coffee tables. I would recommend careful research before releasing a modular table system based on anything like a LEGO product - easiest research in my

books is just to email the people and ask, if they say 'yes', push for endorsement of the product, if they say 'no', you know where you stand and can move on.

Paul

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Piers](#) on Wed, 23 Jan 2013 18:09:05 GMT
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@bill

your right, my bad. there should be a '?' instead a '.' at the end there.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [natalia](#) on Wed, 23 Jan 2013 19:18:55 GMT
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Hi guys,

To add a bit of light, the way we operate is under the DMCA (great wiki here:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_Millennium_Copyright_Act

We can not check every product for copyrights so we put that responsibility on the uploader. If someone is infringing a copyright, and the copyright holder contacts us (Shapeways), we will take down the model until the case is resolved. Shapeaways itself is not liable for any damages as we fall under the DMCA's "Safe Harbor" act. This means, just like YouTube, we are just a place where files are stored, we do not accept responsibility for them. But if we get a DMCA Takedown notice, we are obliged to remove the model/files and notify the owner.

So Paul, Mike was right in what he said, in that it is not up to us to police our users, rather, like you suggest, we hope they police themselves.

To make that easier, I have a quick update on the Copyright 101 guide!

We're currently at the US Patent Office Conference on 3D Printing in Washington D.C today and will be talking with Michael Weinberg from Public Knowledge next week so keep sending me your

questions in this thread and I'll make sure I cover all the bases!
http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&goto=60592&#msg_60592

-Natalia

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [stop4stuff](#) on Wed, 23 Jan 2013 19:44:29 GMT
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Natalia,

My point was and still is, the attitude that is conveyed.

People generally follow by example, if the examples they are shown are from a Shapeways employee as "That's for them and their lawyers to decide. Of course if they ask us to take it down because it violates our terms and conditions, we will." then what kind of example are people going to follow?

As an analogy, would anyone in their right mind steal a car and wreck it just because they had been told it is ok to do that because it is only wrong if you get caught? (car = IP rights, wreck it = rip off a tradename, getting caught = violating T&C's)

Yes people can 'police themselves' if they are shown how to.

Paul

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Bathsheba](#) on Thu, 24 Jan 2013 00:51:05 GMT
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Shapeways needs to be a platform not an agent -- if they were to start taking responsibility for policing users, it would expose them to an infinite level of liability. It won't happen.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [vivalaevolucion](#) on Thu, 24 Jan 2013 02:27:42 GMT
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i agree with Bathsheba that shapeways needs to be a platform and not an agent. In the future

there will probably be a phone app that allows people to scan just about any object and make 3d file that can be uploaded to shapeways. imagine how difficult it would be for shapeways to monitor everything uploaded to their site and cross check it with every imaginable product to make sure it is not violating some manufacturers intellectual property. It is up to name brand manufacturers to patrol the marketplace for that type of thing. I believe shapeways should focus on 3d printing, and also be looking into 3d woodworking and CNC wood routers, and leave the intellectual property violation monitoring to the name brand manufacturers. of course if shapeways is contacted by a manufacturer about a product listed on their platform that is in violation of an intellectual property or copyright then they should remove it.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [AmLachDesigns](#) on Thu, 24 Jan 2013 13:06:05 GMT
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Just to play Devil's Advocate:

If someone buys a model of mine (I wish!) from SW who are they buying it from? Me or SW?

I (hopefully) own the rights and am paid a license fee (the markup), but I would have guessed that since SW is making the physical object, taking the money and shipping the item they are the vendor. ALI backed up by the fact that I have no direct contact with the end customer unless they pm me...

And, discuss ...

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Bathsheba](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 00:23:12 GMT
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It's not very different from the fact that you can't sue your phone company if someone lies to you by phone. The telco is the one that you have the documented financial relationship with, and they have the deep pockets too. Nonetheless, they don't provide the content that they transmit, and they're not responsible for it.

Remember the RIAA trying to hold ISPs, and later Youtube, liable for music pirating? They were denied, and this clarified the federally protected "safe harbor" status of these platforms. A platform could decide to voluntarily assume that liability, but it would instantly be sued out of existence by a million copyright holders.

As far as I know, it hasn't been legally tested whether Shapeways does in fact fall into that "safe harbor" zone. We have to hope that it does, and meanwhile we can't expect them to say or do anything that might sound like wanting to police content for copyright violations.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Whystler](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 03:04:32 GMT
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If I were in charge of the world, the universe and everything

I would say if you're a company who is given a design by a user and you make that design in reality and deliver it *to that user*, then you are not responsible for the user's bad decisions regarding copyright.

I would also say that you you're a company who is given a design by a user, and you make that design in reality, and provide a marketplace where that design can be sold to customers other than that user, then you are entering into a partnership with that user and are jointly responsible for any bad decisions regarding copyright.

Licensing choices available to us today are all kinds of varying shades of grey. But when you don't have a license to produce a product or represent a trademark, then to me it's very black and white.

Good if you follow a licensing arrangement identified by a company who owns a design or trademark. Bad if you don't - whether the company pursues you or not. Also bad if you assume that since you haven't read anything that says you can't use a design or trademark, that there isn't a restriction.

Unfortunately, I fear that people have made more money from not respecting intellectual property than those who have respect.

-Whystler

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [vivalaevolucion](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 04:03:23 GMT
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check out the book called Against Intellectual Property, which talks about how it is contrary to a free market, holds back innovation, and creates scarcity of non-scarce resources. Is stealing information really the same as stealing someones tangible property? The people who benefit most from the US companies intellectual properties are the Chinese, as they don't give a F about it, and will gladly steal our ideas. if a US company creates a pill that cures cancer, and they decide to charge \$1 Mill for the pill, would you respect their intellectual property if you were broke and had cancer, or would you buy the Chinese or Indian version of the pill for \$20?

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Whystler](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 04:53:44 GMT
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Ah, yes, well then let me clarify myself.

The stance I have in the above message is based on our continued use of a capitalistic (free market) system. I personally, don't believe in this system.

In a perfect world without capitalism, we don't have to worry about people stealing our ability to make money. I would love to design things for the free use of everyone. I would love to be assured a roof over my head and food on my table, and see others building and expanding upon my ideas.

Unfortunately, in a capitalistic system, intellectual property becomes a necessity to protect one's income from those who might want to take it away via an easier road, skipping the hardest parts of production - the design process .. the time-expensive building and nurturing of a brand ... that sort of thing.

The book you are reading gives an extremely popular viewpoint that I've read in other publications within the last 5-10 years. It's a viewpoint that would thrive and be useful in a society that is not built on capitalism. However, it's a viewpoint that encourages those, in a capitalist society, who want to reap rewards easily based on the the hard work others do - having a ride on the coattails of others.

We have intellectual property laws as a bandaid fix for a flawed system. Ignoring intellectual property in this system does not lead to greater innovations and better work - it leads to the opposite when the greatest innovators are forced to spend time making money elsewhere instead of working on designs because entrepreneurs with a sense of entitlement think they should be allowed to copy their ideas.

Free market sounds so nice ... but it's not a system based on free. No system is. If you get something for free - someone somewhere always has to pay.

If you want my advice, make something great - by working with someone via a fair license - or by yourself from scratch. If you go by any other creed, you will likely be quite successful by free market standards, but you will not have the soul of an artist, a collaborator or an innovator.

-Whystler

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [mkroeker](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 11:08:18 GMT
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Quote:The people who benefit most from the US companies intellectual properties are the Chinese, as they don't give a F about it, and will gladly steal our ideas
Excuse me for helping derail this thread, but if you read that, then also read about how US industrial power came to be (mostly by not giving a F about British patents), or how "Made in Germany" started out as a mandatory warning on cheap ripoffs. History just keeps repeating - give it another ten years and chinese designers and engineers will be mightily frustrated about the Indians, Russians or whoever else not giving a F...

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [AmLachDesigns](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 11:39:19 GMT
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Bathsheba wrote on Fri, 25 January 2013 00:23It's not very different from the fact that you can't sue your phone company if someone lies to you by phone. The telco is the one that you have the documented financial relationship with, and they have the deep pockets too. Nonetheless, they don't provide the content that they transmit, and they're not responsible for it.

Remember the RIAA trying to hold ISPs, and later Youtube, liable for music pirating? They were denied, and this clarified the federally protected "safe harbor" status of these platforms. A platform could decide to voluntarily assume that liability, but it would instantly be sued out of existence by a million copyright holders.

As far as I know, it hasn't been legally tested whether Shapeways does in fact fall into that "safe harbor" zone. We have to hope that it does, and meanwhile we can't expect them to say or do anything that might sound like wanting to police content for copyright violations.

I am not criticising SW or saying that I expect them to do anything other than they currently are,

I'm just trying to think this through.

Wrt your specific points, if SW was just showing our models and we fulfilled the orders, I think your telco analogy stands, but since the customers' total engagement is with SW, I think it becomes a bit grey. Outside of the 3d printing world most people would say that SW DO provide the content, i.e. atoms and that we are just the designers getting a percentage.

As for the RIAA thing, I think a relevant case more recently is MegaUpload. Their defence was that they were just a service, the content was nothing to do with them. That went well...

I too hope SW and similar companies can continue to be places that we can design stuff and get it made and have that thrill, but I can't help feeling we're in a golden age at the moment, and pretty soon there will be issues with the companies that own often appropriated IP and probably the emergence of IP Troll companies in the same way that they exist in the Patent world (great article, Wired).

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Bathsheba](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 13:30:40 GMT
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AmLachDesigns wrote on Fri, 25 January 2013 11:39

Wrt your specific points, if SW was just showing our models and we fulfilled the orders, I think your telco analogy stands, but since the customers' total engagement is with SW, I think it becomes a bit grey. Outside of the 3d printing world most people would say that SW DO provide the content, i.e. atoms and that we are just the designers getting a percentage.

I actually think there's a pretty good case that the design is the content. If SW sent customers baggies of unorganized atoms we might see some complaints, even from people not very familiar with 3DP.

Quote:

As for the RIAA thing, I think a relevant case more recently is MegaUpload. Their defence was that they were just a service, the content was nothing to do with them. That went well...

True dat. It's an interesting case -- they're being charged (according to Wikipedia) money laundering, racketeering and wire fraud in addition to copyright infringement. I wonder, without knowing much about it, whether that indicates that the Feds felt they wouldn't be able to force a takedown for copyright issues alone...?

Quote:I too hope SW and similar companies can continue to be places that we can design stuff and get it made and have that thrill, but I can't help feeling we're in a golden age at the moment, and pretty soon there will be issues with the companies that own often appropriated IP and probably the emergence of IP Troll companies in the same way that they exist in the Patent world (great article, Wired).

Yes, I agree that the big players are just waiting for the legal environment to get a bit more coherent before they move in and take over. And probably also for the marketplace to grow enough to be worth the trouble. There won't be a damn thing any of us can do about it when that happens.

I don't know anything about philosophy and have no political opinions to speak of. I'd just like this platform to continue existing.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Whystler](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 15:55:57 GMT
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AmLachDesigns wrote on Fri, 25 January 2013 11:39 I can't help feeling we're in a golden age at the moment, and pretty soon there will be issues with the companies that own often appropriated IP and probably the emergence of IP Troll companies in the same way that they exist in the Patent world (great article, Wired).

Golden Age - nice analogy. I feel the same way - so many people are taking advantage of companies who are overlooking the issues, but soon something will happen to make it easier for them to bring the hammer down hard.

I guess some of our design decisions are based on...

...whether we want to have a quick buck riding on someone else's meme/brand property

...whether we want to collaborate fairly with another design's license, which takes some time sorting that out and accomodating restrictions.

..or whether we want to wait to work longer at building and marketing our own ideas.

I think the first is really really attractive ... popular culture icons are hot in the marketplace right now - plus - a lot of folks who are doing this as a hobby want that fast instant gratification. But I think the last two give a more self sustaining, self respecting outcome.

I am just hoping that companies like Shapeways can lighten up their grey area quickly and steer clear of the dark end where the hammer will fall. I would hate for those looking for a "live fast die young" approach don't ruin it for us all.

-Whystler

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [stop4stuff](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 18:09:30 GMT
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This one made me chuckle - <http://shpws.me/lSsy>
It is not for sale, has no resemblance to LEGO, and as far as I know is not a LEGO product.

But hey, obviously, it must be ok as it still exists

I have asked a LEGO Group representative if they can contribute to this thread - sorry if that pisses anyone off,

Paul

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Whystler](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 18:52:06 GMT
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My advice to anyone who wants to clone the LEGO process:

- 1) don't
- 2) make a portfolio of 3d designs using the LEGO process, and make a proposal to the LEGO company.
- 3) - my personal favourite - encourage a group of designers to brainstorm a modular construction system (via a contest?), research research research to make sure you aren't stepping on any patents, and then, make it open source, since this is what you believe in.

My advice to LEGO:

Partner with SHAPEWAYS to create a developer program that allows designers to create new

components using the LEGO system, and then sell these components (3d printed on demand) via a LEGO-Shapeways website, where the developer-designer, LEGO and Shapeways benefit from profit. This way, you avoid the above #3, which creates competition.

-Whystler

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [vivalaevolucion](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 19:42:03 GMT
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When I said "Lego Style Snap Together Piece" per title of this post, I was envisioning making life size furniture, like coffee tables or tv stands, out of 3d printed pieces that would not resemble LEGOs in the slightest. I simply said "Lego Style" so that people would know that I meant that the table is not being 3D printed in one piece, but rather would need to be "snapped together" or assembled from multiple pieces. These pieces would obviously need to have more heavy duty connectors than regular legos since being used for life-size functional furniture. Per Whystler excellent suggestion, I would like to make a contest, in which I will pay winner , lets say \$500 for best life-size coffee table 3D print design. Does anyone have any suggestions on how I would get the word out about the contest. By the way, I sell furniture for a living on my website. <http://www.fastfurnishings.com> , which is the reason I am interested in 3d printed furniture.

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Whystler](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 20:12:54 GMT
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vivalaevolucion wrote on Fri, 25 January 2013 19:42 When I said "Lego Style Snap Together Piece" per title of this post, I was envisioning making life size furniture, like coffee tables or tv stands, out of 3d printed pieces that would not resemble LEGOs in the slightest.

Haha, well I guess we jumped down your throat too fast I think that just shows how hot and important the intellectual property topic is right now.

You might want to contact Shapeways about a contest. Since 3D printing is their interest, and since furniture is yours, I think it would make a great partnership. They would be able to add promo and hype to the contest, and also perhaps some prize winnings.

Be really clear about who owns the property of the winning design. You will find more people interested in entering the contest if the winning design is the property of the designer, or if the winning design produces an open source solution. If open source, you might also interest

Thingiverse/Makerbot in partnering with the contest.

I'll be interested to see the terms of the contest - cool idea.

-Whystler

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Whystler](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 20:50:05 GMT
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With respect to the spawned discussion, I found this on wikipedia:

The Lego Group began in the workshop of Ole Kirk Christiansen (born 7 April 1891), a carpenter from Billund, Denmark, who began making wooden toys in 1932.[1] In 1934, his company came to be called "Lego", from the Danish phrase leg godt, which means "play well".

It expanded to producing plastic toys in 1947.[1] In 1949 Lego began producing, among other new products, an early version of the now famous interlocking bricks, calling them "Automatic Binding Bricks". These bricks were based in part on the Kiddicraft Self-Locking Bricks, which were patented in the United Kingdom in 1939[2] and then there released in 1947. Lego modified the design of the Kiddicraft brick after examining a sample given to it by the British supplier of an injection-molding machine that the company had purchased.[3] The bricks, originally manufactured from cellulose acetate,[3] were a development of traditional stackable wooden blocks that locked together by means of several round studs on top and a hollow rectangular bottom. The blocks snapped together, but not so tightly that they required extraordinary effort to be separated.

... ..

The definitive shape of the Lego bricks, with the inner tubes, was patented by the Lego Group in 1958. Several competitors have attempted to take advantage of Lego's popularity by producing blocks of similar dimensions, and advertising them as being compatible with Lego bricks.

In 2002, Lego sued the CoCo Toy Company in Beijing for copyright infringement over its "Coko bricks" product. CoCo was ordered to cease manufacture of the products, publish a formal apology and pay damages.[23]

The English company Best-Lock Construction Toys was sued by Lego in German courts in 2004,[24] and 2009.[25] but the Federal Patent Court of Germany denied Lego trademark protection for the shape of its bricks. [26] The Canadian company Mega Bloks were sued by Lego in 2005 for trademark violation, but the Supreme Court of Canada upheld Mega Bloks rights to sell

their product.[27] In 2010, the European Court of Justice ruled that the eight-peg design of the original Lego brick "merely performs a technical function [and] cannot be registered as a trademark." [28]

(full article, with references here: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lego>)

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Whystler](#) on Fri, 25 Jan 2013 21:00:57 GMT
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More wikipedia info re: lego clones that have a right t produce:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lego_clone

It seems that the design used for lego bricks is less intellectual property than we may think. It is more the LEGO brand name that really comes into play as a problem when marketing building blocks. If you say, my blocks can be used with any LEGO system, then you run into problems, and this is where folks try to take the easy ride on the coattails of the LEGO company.

"The Lego Group has filed law suits ... in courts around the world on the grounds that [the] use of the "studs and tubes" interlocking brick system is a violation of trademarks held by Lego. Generally such law suits have been unsuccessful, chiefly because the functional design of the basic brick is considered a matter of patent rather than trademark law, and all relevant Lego patents have expired."

-Whystler

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [stop4stuff](#) on Sat, 26 Jan 2013 00:38:38 GMT
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pretty much what I've been saying all along - LEGO = trademark (no matter what the case of the lettering or the addition of the extra 's' that some folks seem to favour)

And fwiw. I have some original LEGO 1950's vehicles here, and none of them resemble any LEGO brick, but they're still marked LEGO and as much as I would like to make replicas, I shall not because I respect the brand (oh so very much!)

Paul

(3D building since 1971)

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [tivnanr](#) on Sat, 26 Jan 2013 03:17:41 GMT
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Some of my designs are "snap together pieces" but they do not resemble Lego pieces, unless you include the c-shaped lego hands

<http://www.shapeways.com/model/879691/kineticclip-frame.html?li=my-models>.

<http://www.shapeways.com/model/879733/kineticclip-frame-array.html?li=my-models&key=74f2b04da28411058f022dcf904abe7c>

File Attachments

1) [Kineticclip frame.png](#), downloaded 232 times

Subject: Re: Lego Style Snap Together Pieces
Posted by [Bathsheba](#) on Sat, 26 Jan 2013 05:31:33 GMT
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Cool idea funky monkey! Maybe think in terms of connecting standard components (two-by-fours, watermelons etc.), with 3DP fittings, rather than making the whole thing out of 3DP? The material costs are still kind of sad for big objects.

I'm with Whystler, I won't enter a contest if designs become property of the contest admins. That feels disingenuous to me...if you want to use my design make me an offer; I'll listen to anything reasonable, but "you take ownership of my design and I consider that an honor and a privilege" isn't it.