

Abstract

Fabrication Laboratories, or Fab Labs, were started as a community outreach program by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology providing digital fabrication tools for rapid prototyping to the general public. The Museum of Science and Industry has partnered with IPRO to further develop the Fab Lab at their site. IPRO 333 has been rendered the task of working with the administration in the Fab lab of MSI to design methodologies for furthering the use of the laboratory and assisting in determining its end goals for both the museum and the community by working with the lab directors to broaden the possible uses of the lab, promoting membership at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, and involving the community in science and technology programs at the museum.

In order to accomplish our tasks we have broken into three main teams, each of which will focus on a different aspect of the lab. The first team will be responsible for creating events specific to the museum members, creating proposals for low-cost, high-profit activities for the lab, and possibly creating a website where users of the lab may sign up for time in the lab, reserve or order materials, and rent storage space for long term projects they wish to work on. The second team is responsible for integrating the Fab Lab into the current working exhibits as well as future exhibitions. The third team will be responsible for designing and creating new programs for users of the Fab Lab, such as the students enrolled in the Science Achievers program or museum members.