

CONNECTING CREATIVE CONSUMERS WITH LOCAL FABRICATORS



RETAIL

Regular Springwise readers may remember [Ponoko](#), the company that turns consumers' creative ideas into real-world, manufactured goods. Some 30,000 products have been made a reality using Ponoko since its launch back in 2007, and now the company has kicked off yet another initiative: [100kGarages](#), a site that connects creative consumers with small-scale, local garages that can do the manufacturing for them. Soft-launched in May through a partnership between New Zealand-based Ponoko and North Carolina-based [ShopBot Tools](#), 100kGarages is a community of workshops distributed around the world that are equipped with the digital fabrication tools needed to precisely cut, machine, drill or sculpt the components of virtually any creative project. "Makers"—or those with ideas—can post jobs on the site for items they'd like to get manufactured, including their ideal purchase price and delivery deadline along with sketches and details about colours, materials, measurements and so on. The site is powered by Ponoko's online "click to make" system, and makers can search for a workshop by location as well. "Fabbers"—the small-scale workshops with the necessary tools—can then bid on those jobs with their offer to do the manufacturing. Makers negotiate directly with fabbers on the details of the transaction; once the maker sends payment, the fabber produces and delivers the product. After the work is done, makers can rate and review the fabber in question. Enabling anyone with an Internet connection to get almost anything custom-made and delivered from thousands of local digital manufacturers, 100kGarages aims to use "grassroots enterprise and ingenuity" to help "modernize school buildings and infrastructure, develop energy-saving alternatives, or simply produce great new products for our homes and businesses." One to put to work for *your* next big idea...?

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Email: info@100kgarages.com

Website: www.100kgarages.com