Removing Racism from Thingiverse

Nadav Goshen
President and CEO
MakerBot
One MetroTech Center, 21st Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
nadav.goshen@makerbot.com
pr@makerbot.com

Adafruit and its community are calling for Stratasys and its subsidiary, MakerBot (and Thingiverse), to enforce its existing rules and remove hatred, white supremacy, bigotry, racism, antisemitism, and violence from its platforms, specifically Thingiverse.

The community has asked for years for the racist content to be removed, only to be ignored by MakerBot, or to be told "it's free speech." MakerBot removes 3D printed guns, and sex toys, why not racist models on Thingiverse?

Racism, bigotry, and hatred are already prohibited by MakerBot's own terms of service
https://www.makerbot.com/legal/terms

3.3 Acceptable Use Policy. The following is the acceptable use policy which sets forth the restrictions Users must adhere to on use of the Sites or Services (“Acceptable Use Policy”):

(a) You agree not to use the Sites or Services to collect, upload, transmit, display, or distribute any User Content (i) that violates any third-party right, including any copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret, moral right, privacy right, right of publicity, or any other intellectual property or proprietary right; (ii) that is unlawful, harassing, abusive, tortious, threatening, harmful, invasive of another’s privacy, vulgar, defamatory, false, intentionally misleading, trade libelous, pornographic, sexually explicit, obscene, patently offensive, promotes racism, bigotry, hatred, or physical harm of any kind against any group or individual, promotes illegal activities or contributes to the creation of weapons, illegal materials, or is otherwise objectionable; (iii) that is harmful to minors in any way; or (iv) that is in violation of any law, regulation, or obligations or restrictions imposed by any third party.

However, Makerbot fails to remove models that violate these rules when they are reported:

https://www.thingiverse.com/search?q=Faggot&type=things&sort=relevant
March 16, 2017 - “THIS THING IS A RACIST SYMBOL! PLEASE TAKE IT DOWN” - Thingiverse commenter
https://www.adl.org/education/references/hate-symbols/pepe-the-frog

January 13, 2020 - “You guys are repugnant.” - Thingiverse commenter
https://www.adl.org/education/references/hate-symbols/okay-hand-gesture
July 12, 2017 - “This is a symbol used by the “alt-right”, a Symbol used as dogwhistle signaling to other white supremacists.” - Thingiverse commenter

https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2017/05/08/what-kek-explaining-alt-right-deity-behind-their-meme-magic

These are just a few examples that are easy to find, and public. There are many, many, more on Thingiverse.com

Actions for Stratasys / MakerBot / Thingiverse

1. Remove the content reported and follow up with clear actions to remove other reported content.
2. Create a moderation pipeline for users who report racism, antisemitism, and hate on Thingiverse.
3. Transparency: Release data from existing reporting, how many reports of hate, race, or religion based content did Thingiverse receive in 2019? In 2020? How many, and what kinds of actions were taken? Publish the report once a year.
4. Add a link to the Thingiverse content policy on the Thingiverse home page.
5. Public commitment to anti-racism.

Thank you,
Limor Fried & Phillip Torrone
Adafruit Industries
150 Varick Street
New York, NY 10013
646-248-7822
limor@adafruit.com & pt@adafruit.com