

# MONTAGE

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

SUMMER 2017



# Poets, Cookies, Camgirls & Addicts

Stories and images from South Florida's diverse cyberspaces



Photo by Miami Montage staff

**MIAMI MONTAGE 2017:** (front row, from left) Sebastian Valdes-Denis, Emma Delamo, Ashley Acevedo, Ruhi Mansey, Alexandra Robertson, Helen Acevedo, (middle) Tamarah Wallace, Manuel Fernandez, Morgan Elmslie, Hilly Yehoshua, Sabine Brismeur, (back) Casey Chapter, Bianca Mangravite, Benjamin Estrada, Rayon Uddin, Franco Luis, Sabine Joseph, Tatyana Monnay, Alyssa Quinlan, Jack Cruz-Alvarez.

**University of Miami  
PEACE SULLIVAN/  
JAMES ANSIN HIGH  
SCHOOL WORKSHOP  
IN JOURNALISM AND  
NEW MEDIA**

Miami Montage is reported and produced by high school students attending the Peace Sullivan/James Ansin High School Workshop in Journalism and New Media, hosted by the School of Communication at the University of Miami.

**Major Support**

Peace Sullivan; Ansin Family Foundation (James Ansin)

**Contributors**

Jeanne Bellamy Scholarship in Print Journalism Fund at The Miami Foundation; John T. Bills Scholarship in Journalism Fund at The Miami Foundation; Mupalia Wakhisi Scholarship Fund

**Other Support**

Dow Jones News Fund; University of Miami School of Communication; Miami New Times

**Workshop Directors**

Fred Blevens, Florida International University (Editorial); Sam Terilli, University of Miami School of Communication (Administration)

**Workshop Administrator**

Steve Pierre, University of Miami

**Workshop Administrative Assistant**

Valory Greenman, University of Miami

**Faculty/Staff**

Arianna Anaya, city editor, educator and advocate, Austin, Texas; Allison Diaz,

photo editor, Miami freelance photographer; Shane Graber, city editor, University of Texas at Austin; Rebecca Fortes, chief counselor/city editor, University of Michigan; Luis Gonzalez, counselor/video instructor, University of Miami; Trevor Green, chief video editor, University of Miami; Sarah Harder, city editor, University of South Florida; Roberto Portal, photo/video editor, Miami freelance photographer/videographer; Brittney Starks, city editor, Miami entrepreneur and public relations practitioner; John Stoltenborg, video editor, University of Florida; Rafael Vela, city editor/video editor, assistant professor, Huston Tillotson University, Austin, Texas

**Presenters**

Fred Blevens; Allison Diaz; Ana François, University of

Miami; Shane Graber; Trevor Green; Sam Terilli; Sevika Singh; Brittney Starks.

**Special Thanks**

University of Miami; Gregory Shepherd, dean of the University of Miami School of Communication; Reiter and Associates, LLC, Robin Reiter-Faragalli, principal; Tomas Ortiz; Tonya Sautier; Austin Thaler; Randy Stano; Gabriel Brackman; Pedro Delgado; Jackie Corea; Tod Landess; Elena Fajardo, Patti and Allan Herbert Wellness Center; Frances Freire; Luis Herrera

**WSVN 7 News**

Lily Pardo, public service coordinator

**In Memoriam**

Miami Montage is published in perpetual memory of Mupalia Wakhisi



**ON THE COVER:** Many Miami musicians promote their shows and songs on social media platforms. Here, in a photo taken by Emma Delamo, an artist plays a show at Tea & Poets, a gathering place for performers in South Miami.



HOME

SOFT PLAY / BABY GYM

FAQs

AGREEMENT

CONTACT

o f i q



## ACTIVITIES FOR EVERY KIDS PARTY

Todo Kids is a Children's Party Service company serving South Florida.

We are specialized in creating fun and safe areas for kids parties where they can play and learn.

Our toddler areas with our soft play equipment is the best choice for a one year old and toddler parties.

We also have themed play areas activity stations available for kids 3 years and and up.



**CAUGHT IN A NET:** Some small businesses like the one in this screen shot (left) may get kicked into the slow internet lane if new rules are approved.

Screen grab by Miami Montage

# Neutralizing the net

## FCC proposal might dramatically affect net-only businesses

**BY ALLEY ROBERTSON**  
Fort Lauderdale High School

Carolina Magi is a small business owner in Miami whose work focuses on providing young children with safe spaces to play.

But these days, Magi is living in constant fear of losing both her business and her business's freedoms.

Her company, Todo Kids, which brings children's play equipment to birthday parties, non-profit events and play dates, uses an increasingly popular business model: it is run completely on the internet.

With no brick and mortar store, the success of Magi's business hinges on how quickly potential customers can find and access her company's website.

Enter Ajit Pai, the newly-appointed chairman of the Federal Communications Commission for the Trump administration who has recently proposed overturning a rule known as Title II, the doctrine that created the concept of net neutrality.

Net neutrality is the principle that internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications without favoring or blocking specific products or websites. Essentially, it means the internet is free and open to everyone. But without it, Magi's

business and many others may be facing impending doom.

To most people who know what net neutrality is, the ramifications of its dismantlement are clear: ISPs would be able to pick and choose what sites receive faster or slower service and what sites are blocked.

They can also force people to pay more money in order to be in the internet's "fast lane." Those who can't afford these "fast lane" rates would be left in the "slow lane," receiving such stagnant service that their sites would be practically inaccessible.

Internet service providers could also decide what sites should be blocked, specifically if those sites don't adhere to the ISP's political and moral values, or if the sites belong to that company's competitors. That brings additional peril to a company's First Amendment rights.

Hemang Subramanian, a professor of business analytics, electronic commerce and internet business application at Florida International University, said the dismantling of net neutrality will effectively kill the local start-up business ecosystem.

"The internet has remained neutral for a very long time, but that could very well change if net neutrality were overturned," Subramanian said. "The internet would be essentially run like a TV network where advertising and money determines what is or is not available to consumers on the internet."

There are additional implications related to democracy.

"We are living in what you could call a moneyocracy," said Zenita Fenton, a civil rights advocate and professor of law at the

University of Miami. "The suppression of information on the internet manifests the oppression of the people."

Since the court decision *Citizens United vs. FEC*, corporations have held First Amendment rights equal to those of individuals. A net neutrality rollback would push corporate speech rights into a preferred position. Fenton said that would be a complete misreading of the democratic ideals envisioned by the founders.

"What is truly rooted in the fundamentals of democracy is the free market of ideas," said Paula Arias, lecturer of law and the director of the International Moot Court Program at the University of Miami. "The internet is that tool to communicate the exchange of ideas that created and sustained democracy."

The disassembly of net neutrality prevents the free market of ideas by killing the startups that create them. It prevents the small businesses from speaking for themselves, and enables the large businesses to speak alone.

"We take our freedom to heart in this country," said Arias, "and our freedoms are something we fight to sustain."

Others believe net neutrality is essential to create a path to the so-called American Dream, often achieved with up-from-your-bootstraps effort.

"The American Dream is being entrepreneurial," said local business owner Edward James Marko Jr., owner of Whipkix, a company that makes custom license plate frames in Oakland Park.

"It's about being able to create businesses and make your own money instead of making money for someone else."

Marko's business, like Magi's, is run completely on the internet.

"Without net neutrality, my business wouldn't stand a chance."

**COOKIE CRAZE:**  
Justin Perdomo, a baker at Night Owl Cookie Co., pulls some Cinnamon Toast Crunch cookies for a customer. The store creates unique cookie types and announces them on Instagram.



Photo by Hilly Yehoshua

# When niches go viral

## Small local businesses blast cheap social media with big results

**BY MANUEL FERNANDEZ**

Belen Jesuit Preparatory School

A small shop with loud colors and the inviting scent of freshly baked cookies becomes more and more crowded as the night goes on. The success of this company is derived, in part, by an intangible social network.

“Every time we publish a new flavor or a big announcement on Instagram, the lines are out the door,” said Andrew Gonzalez, founder of Night Owl Cookie Co.

Social media have given South Floridians and Americans, in general, a chance to create new niched industries, and a company’s online presence can make or break any startup.

Social media give new businesses a relatively inexpensive marketing option, especially those needing to get exposure for more bizarre or exclusive product lines.

More important, it gives them a chance to grow.

Two examples of Miami-based small businesses illustrate how social media can cater to distinct clienteles.

In Gonzalez’s case, social media skyrocketed his idea of delivering freshly-baked cookies to your doorstep to satisfy that midnight sweet tooth.

What started as an online delivery service for students at Florida International

University and its surrounding community now has people from all over South Florida running to its brick-and-mortar location or ordering on applications like UberEATS and Postmates.

However, these cookies are more than just the conventional chocolate chip. Night Owl Cookie Co. features flavors like Birthday Cake and Couch Potato. Other flavors, such as the Ave Maria, cater specifically to Miami’s rich Latin culture by including ingredients like guava and Maria cookie crumbles.

Night Owl is most well-known for its active use of Instagram. The company’s page has pictures of rich and colorful cookies front and center, seemingly popping off the screen and igniting a craving for Night Owl’s eccentric varieties. These unusual treats became a citywide phenomenon that all started with an idea and an aggressive social media presence.

When posting pictures on Instagram, Gonzalez says that he can’t send anything out unless it’s picture-perfect, “Instagrammable” food.

Instagram also prominently features local clothing and accessory brands such as LYNK Studios, which is run by four full-time students at Florida International University.

This brand sells exclusively online. Their limited series consists of intricately designed hand-woven blankets and scarves along with four simple necklaces. Ludmilla Belle Canto, co-founder of LYNK Studio, says her brand really targets people like her who are looking for unique designs and are willing to spend a bit more on quality, hand-crafted products.

“When marketing our brand, Instagram is our number one outlet,” says Canto, the L

YNK. “We try to attract customers by keeping our content as original as possible and posting on a daily basis.”

The company uses the term and hashtag “metropical” to describe how they pay homage to the metropolitan tropical area that they call home. Their Instagram page, run by the founders themselves, clearly reflects the exclusivity and a uniquely elegant Miami feel.

The women of LYNK achieve this by staying true to their personal style. Photo shoots for the social media page always feature a tropical color scheme. The featured products themselves are often positioned in a more subtle manner to add more to the chic look.

Miami-based companies that do the majority of their business online are increasingly professionalizing digital operations to build and sustain their reputations. That, in turn, has created new positions for those seeking careers in the management of social media sites.

“Social media is basically free marketing that gives business owners content control in order to get their message across,” said Nasha Clark, a public relations manager who ran Impact ’17, an entrepreneurship conference in Miami.

“Growing [your business] on social media is definitely possible for just about anyone with the right passion for what they do and a drive to succeed.”

There are also a variety of ways for an entrepreneur to learn more about how to effectively manage their online accounts. One way is through a website called hootsuite.com, which can train and certify anyone in social media managing.

“I think every business could be successful through social media,” Gonzalez says. “As long as you market yourself right and use it to your advantage.”



Photo by Hilly Yehoshua

**HAPPILY UNPLUGGED:** Evan Chern, owner of Yesterday and Today Records, prefers word-of-mouth popularity over social media sales pitches.

# Past meets present

## 2 businesses take different paths in the digital marketplace

**BY TAMARAH WALLACE**

Cooper City High School

The door chimes as the worn cash register clicks, blending seamlessly with the unfamiliar tunes that permeate the store. Evan Chern shuffles from behind his desk to carefully weave his way through stacks of plastic-covered music and eager vinyl hunters to explain to a newcomer the contents of a peculiarly labeled box.

Smiles grace the customers' faces in the room, even as they squeeze past others in the somewhat cramped space.

While most businesses are using the internet to their advantage and gaining headway by supersizing their online presence, Yesterday and Today Records in the heart of Miami stands as a dramatic exception.

"I don't do a lot of advertising these days. People just find us," said Chern, the 66-year-old owner. "We've built up a reputation so even people from outside of the United States come to find us."

Chern can attribute his store's prosperity not to colorful or witty internet posts or a website that could easily sell his content. To him, it's all about customer loyalty, quality of service and his extensive collection of unique music.

Some of his more eclectic sounds include obscure, incredibly difficult-to-obtain

psychedelic, progressive and garage bands from the 60s and 70s with titles like Reign Ghost and Robbie the Werewolf.

"I find... [vinyls] here that I can't find on the internet — not on Ebay or Amazon," said 22-year-old recording artist Luis Mesa. "But when I come here, I can find five of them new."

Most who visit Yesterday and Today have only heard of it by word of mouth and can speak to its unplugged status.

"I heard about this place from a friend of a friend," said Ben Arriola, a 17-year-old senior at Ransom Everglades High School.

While Chern seemed wary of the crowds and the clutter, customers spoke to the old world charm of the store, the depth of Chern's one-on-one consultations with new clients and the experience of rubbing shoulders with complete strangers, all rare occurrences in today's digitalized society.

It is with that communal character that Yesterday and Today Records has curated and cultivated a gathering center for today submerged in the culture of yesterday with almost no online aid.

However, despite the success of the Yesterday and Today Records business model, researchers at Time Warner Cable Business Class found that 66 percent of millennials (ages 18-35) said that they "view a business's website as a necessity."

Thirty percent of all subjects surveyed indicated that they might not purchase goods from a company that does not utilize social media.

"Social media kinda exploded in the last year or two for businesses," said Kelvin Li, the famed entrepreneur behind the Rolling

Loud music festival. "It's the number one way to market now. Before, we would just pass out flyers and it wasn't as effective."

From the vast reaches of online media to the ingenuity of digital delivery services to the humble confines of their own websites, businesses are using more and more technology to elevate their accessibility and widen their customer base.

"I don't know what we would have done without social media," said Veronica Menin, founder of Love Life Wellness Center & Café.

"We post a picture of our lentil soup on Instagram and we sell out of it that same day."

By utilizing online services such as Grubhub, Postmates, UberEats and Delivery Dudes, Love Life Wellness Center & Café continues to grow due to internet savvy.

"Forty to fifty percent of our customers come from delivery services," Menin said. "UberEats wins big time — they are amazing."

Although they rely heavily on digital delivery and social media, Love Life Wellness Center & Café does not approach their marketing in a mainstream manner.

"When you try to advertise or market too much, I think that drives people away," Menin said. "Instead, it's like you're giving them a gift — sharing beautiful food with them through social media."

Essentially, the success of both of these establishments raises a precarious question: can a small business, by only the excellence of its craft, survive the new age of technology and social media without adapting to the expectations of either?

For Love Life Wellness Center & Café, "It's finding the middle ground between what people are used to and introducing them to a cleaner version of it," Menin said.

"The walk-in traffic is enough," Chern said.

# A digital leap of faith

## Digital technologies challenge religious beliefs and traditions

**BY ALYSSA QUINLAN**

Coral Glades High School

Katie Troyer first used a refrigerator at the age of 32.

Growing up Amish in Ohio, Troyer’s teenage days were void of everything from kitchen appliances to cars.

“My family had no technology compared to what people have now,” Troyer said.

In her 30s, she left behind the only life she ever knew. Now a resident of South Florida, Troyer says that although she embraces technology, she recalls fondly her life in Ohio.

“I always think about the Amish way of life,” she said. “And I still treasure the Amish.”

While childhoods become increasingly saturated with iPhones, drones and everything in between, stories like Troyer’s are becoming uncommon as technology reshapes culture and religion. These changes ultimately call the future of religion into question, especially in the cultural melting pot of South Florida.

A whopping 87 percent of American adults claim they use the internet actively, according to a 2014 Pew Forum Internet Project report. With such a wide sphere of influence, internet usage has contributed to a 20 percent decrease in religious affiliation, according to a 2014 General Social Survey report.

From the Amish to Judaism to Islam, the Sunshine State is home to religious followers whose ways of life have been altered by today’s technological revolution.

### The Amish

The heart of the Florida Amish is the Pinecraft community of Sarasota with more than 3,000 permanent residents.

Devoted to a life disconnected from the general population, they lead simple lives characterized by plain dress, few politics and bare bones technology.

As Amish adolescents near the ages of 16 and 17, they engage in Rumspringa, a time when they temporarily leave the community. Created with the intention of exposing the youth to “crazy English life,” about 85 percent of them return after this ritual.

“Frankly, staying in the community may be a better alternative to retreating to the outside world,” said Donald Kraybill, author of “The Amish.” “Even without technology, the Amish way of life is the culture they grew up in. It’s the language they’ve learned.”

### Judaism

With more than 750,000 inhabitants, the South Florida Jewish community now boasts the third largest Jewish population in the country.

Those who identify as religious Jews follow



Photo by Tamarah Wallace

**SACRED STRUGGLES: UM Professor Henry Green explains tensions between technology and belief.**

several guidelines, including Shabbat, a weekly observance commemorating God’s day of rest. On this day, orthodox Jews strictly forbid the use of technology. Additionally, those with more fundamentalist orthodox views continue to regulate technology use throughout the week.

“There are two opposite demands in play,” said Henry Green, professor of religious studies at the University of Miami. “One is the preservation of the tradition, a value system of family, a continuity of what it means to be Jewish. On the other hand, the orthodox resistance to modernity – and with that technology – inhibits them in using those skills to accomplish their goals regarding preservation.”

Of course, not all Jews follow the same guidelines. Henchi Felling, director of Chabad at the University of Miami, said her family actually uses some technology on Shabbat.

“I’m very tech savvy, but unplugging every once in a while is so significant,” she said. “I have the best of both worlds.”

On the contrary, technology plays an instrumental role in heightening the convenience of Shabbat. To accommodate a 20 percent Jewish student body, the Hillel Jewish student center at the University of Miami implemented a technology called “Shabbat locks” that eliminate the carrying of keys, which are prohibited on the day of rest in some circumstances. Technologies similar to Shabbat locks, like Shabbat elevators, are further increasing convenience for the general Orthodox population.

### Islam

Although the Muslim population in South Florida is smaller than the Jewish community’s, Florida maintains the seventh

largest Muslim population in the country.

While those in the Islamic faith typically refrain from banning technology, some set strict standards for what is acceptable, and certain activities are prohibited. The central basis behind the Islamic disapproval of technology resides in the fear that it could lead to immorality, which could corrupt the community.

Others, however, believe that the internet is an essential tool for advancing religion. Apps such as Quran Majeed, which translates the Quran into various languages, make Islam accessible to anyone with a smartphone.

“Having an app telling you when to break your fast or which direction to face during prayer is very appealing,” said Muslim Chaplain Wilfredo Ruiz. “I personally use my Muslim apps daily. They’re especially appealing to the youth who will continue the tradition.”

### The Future

From self-driving cars to hoverboards, technological innovation continues to reengineer all aspects of life, pushing the population deeper into a digital society.

But as technology advances, stories like Troyer’s are also in danger of extinction along with the traditions of the religions they stem from. Although the future of religions may be unclear, one question they must confront is whether to adapt or be left behind.

“Some level of adaptation [to technology] is always going to be necessary,” said Paul McClure, a professor who studies the relationship between religion and technology at Baylor University. “But the landscape of religion and technology is constantly changing, so the future is hard to predict.”

# Plugging in for preservation

## How 2 organizations use social media to teach history, culture

BY SABINE JOSEPH

Miami Lakes Educational Center

Though much was speculated about the effect social media would have on society and culture before Facebook exploded onto the national scene, no one could have foreseen the monumental impact it would have on physical entities seemingly unrelated to digital media.

These unforeseen changes in our global culture are widely discussed and studied, but big changes are happening on the smaller scale of local communities as well.

Rather than falling victim to the ever-evolving social media culture, local communities are getting back to their cultural roots and using social media to spread the history and uniqueness of their individual corner of South Florida in a new way.

One such community center beginning its journey in discovering and promoting their community's history on social media is the Little Haiti Cultural Complex.

Established in 2006, the LHCC is the brainchild of former City of Miami Commissioner Arthur E. Teele. A decade later, his vision has been fulfilled and the LHCC has become "the mecca of the community," according to administrative assistant Kenta Joseph.

The center is a "hub for presenting and preserving Haitian and Afro-Caribbean culture," said manager Abraham Metellus, and it offers a cornucopia of events and activities — a seasonal art gallery, a marketplace, an after-school arts program, art and dance classes, concerts and more.

With so many events taking place, the LHCC developed a social media presence on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, overcoming the major challenge of operating without a media department.

"We do our best," Joseph said. Putting on events takes priority over crafting social media promotion, but everyone pitches in to post photos and videos on the LHCC's various platforms to get the word out.

In the future, the LHCC hopes to incorporate Little Haiti's history and social media more in its day-to-day operations.

Currently, the complex's most historically-driven activities are limited to Haitian Heritage Month in May. Otherwise, the LHCC promotes current Haitian culture, making Joseph believe that "more can be done to focus a little bit on the historical component."

Additionally, Joseph says that moving to other platforms could be beneficial but not possible without a media department.

"I would love to see the center grow to the point where there is a team dedicated to marketing, and that way, we can use more unique forms of social media like Snapchat,"



Photo by Manny Fernandez

**BATTLING BOREDOM:** Christine Alexis of HistoryMiami Museum is breathing life into the institution's promotion by using popular social media platforms.

Joseph said.

Just a little further south, the HistoryMiami Museum exemplifies using social media to draw people into the narrative of Miami's colorful history.

Unlike the LHCC, the museum has a public relations and social media manager, Christine Alexis, who uses today's most popular social media platforms to bring new life to an attraction that might generally be thought of as boring.

Alexis has seen floods of visitors drawn by its social media presence. Whether children or seniors, they all flocked to Florida's largest collection of artifacts after seeing one of Alexis' carefully crafted posts.

Carefully crafted is no understatement. To ensure that the museum gets optimal exposure, Alexis puts a lot of thought into who her audience is and what content will attract the most traffic.

This method of marketing by demographic leaves no one out. Despite their online presence being entirely in English, the museum still connects with potential patrons by having bilingual staffers available to address any nonnative speaker's concerns.

HistoryMiami's use of social media to promote their exhibits and community efforts

has garnered a large positive response and sparked community-wide connectivity and conversation.

A Twitter party and Facebook Live stream for the museum's new Hurricane Andrew exhibit commemorating the storm's 25th anniversary sparked a discussion between Bryan Norcross, a Weather Channel meteorologist who reported on Andrew, NBC6 anchor Jackie Nespral and other locals.

One Instagram user, sflprgirl, posted her recollection of "Listening to Bryan Norcross on the radio in the stairwell of our house with my whole family."

Using the museum's hashtag #ISurvivedAndrew, which trended in Miami for two weeks, people were able to learn about the historical event either by being prompted to visit the exhibit or simply reading through the accounts of those participating in the documentation of history.

Cultural centers in the greater Miami area like the LHCC and HistoryMiami "are heavily engaged on social media platforms because [they] know that it is important to reach all folks," Metellus said.

Joseph agreed.

"The community knows we're here for them," she said.

# Secretly unsecure

## Why companies stay silent when hit with big-time cyberattacks

**BY SABRINE BRISMEUR**

Cooper City High School

A global cyberattack hit a company in Miami's main cargo port last month. Beyond that, the details begin to thin.

Microsoft accused a Ukrainian software firm of being the primary source behind the attack, but nothing is certain. The hacking tool might have belonged to the NSA, but the government hasn't issued a statement confirming it.

Perhaps the virus has a kill switch, but no one knows for sure. And if they do, they're not talking.

One of the businesses hit was South Florida Container Terminal.

"The company's systems had not been upgraded for a while before the attack, which is not unusual," said Don Wrinkle, a PortMiami representative. "Going forward, they will have to bring up the old system before being able to update their software. But the company is working on changes to improve their security now."

The affected company itself, however, was not so forthcoming with information concerning the attack. South Florida Container Terminal is a partner of APM Terminals and a subsidiary of A.P. Moller-Maersk out of Denmark. APM Terminals acknowledged – sort of – that its Florida partner was the victim of a cyberattack.

"It is still too early to determine the impact," said Thomas Boyd, APM director of external communications, in an email. "Right now we are focused on our terminal operations and keeping cargo moving."

Boyd did not respond to a request for a follow-up interview. South Florida Container Terminal likewise declined an interview request. And Miami Police. In fact, PortMiami's public-spirited response was an anomaly.

A pattern was developing. When it comes to cyberattacks, facts are hard to come by.

"A lot of information about cyberattacks is kept private and hidden from the general public," said Christopher Sanchez, cybersecurity consultant at Enterprise Risk Management in Coral Gables.

But considering that Florida is the third most vulnerable state to such infiltrations, a better understanding is becoming increasingly essential.

Florida is a hotspot for cyber crime because of its lack of state income tax, transient population and vulnerable senior citizen population, according to John Breyault, vice president of the Consumers League.

"We are somewhat responsible ourselves – our own behavior – for leaving ourselves open this way to cyberattacks," said Burton Rosenberg, a University of Miami computer



Photo by Alley Robertson

**HARBOR HACK: A container company in PortMiami is recovering after a devastating cyberattack.**

science professor.

"It's always people. In the end, it's always people."

But while individuals might be somewhat responsible for leaving themselves vulnerable to cyberattacks, companies certainly aren't helping them learn about better security measures.

Albert Caballero, director of information security at HBO Latin America, is under a typical non-disclosure agreement that prevents him from discussing specifics about his company's cybersecurity.

"I can certainly discuss the general types of technology we use," he said. "I can't give you product names, however."

Kerry Enfinger, an "ethical hacker" and the owner of White Hat Defenses in South Florida, specializes in vulnerability assessments. He said that by implementing policies that prevent employees from discussing cybersecurity, companies protect themselves and their image.

For the public, though, keeping quiet about attacks prevents people from learning more about their own vulnerabilities in cyberspace and, more important, how to protect themselves.

"The least amount of information you give – no information – is the best," Enfinger said.

But other cybersecurity experts don't always agree on the reasons for the secrecy.

"Don't let people tell you they're silent about cyberattacks because it keeps them safe," Caballero said. "They want to save face and they don't want people to know they've been hacked."

Ambiguity with the public also serves as a cover-up for outdated security systems and faulty software. For many, an attack could have been avoided by updating software immediately or by training employees to exercise caution when receiving emails with links or files, security experts say.

"Usually, if [companies] don't want to give out information, it means they're lax," Enfinger said. "And they don't want you to know how lax they are. I'm sure their policy states they can't give out that kind of information, too, but it's been proven over and over by the types of attacks that most companies are less than secure."

Rosenberg agreed.

"It's hard to get facts. An institution that has been hit by a cyberattack is not very anxious to talk about it in detail... It's very sensitive and difficult to get to the bottom of things."

For many South Floridians, company disclosure will remain far more obscure for the foreseeable future.

"You're never going to get that type of information out of companies," said Enfinger. "They just won't talk."



# Seeking the ad zeitgeist

## How ad agencies use social media to zero in on specific audiences

BY HELEN ACEVEDO

Miami Senior High School

The internet and numerous technological advances have drastically reshaped the ad industry since the appearance of the first internet banner ad almost 23 years ago.

Now, South Florida ad agencies use different marketing strategies tailored to the audience they hope to reach.

“Before, traditional models for advertising evolved over a long time,” said Troy Valls, the vice president of discovery and design at Zubi Advertisement in Miami. “Like ads for a television production that can easily take six months, from the time that you conceive an idea to the time that it’s actually locked. Digital [advertisement] blows that up, especially if you’re chasing relevant content. You need that, like, yesterday.”

More than print, digital advertising is dependent on trends and timing.

“It’s very critical that we send the right message to the right people at the right time,” said Alan Campbell, chief operating officer at Marca Miami. “We try to make sure that we do everything ahead of time because once the message is out there, it’s over. The hard work is getting it out before anyone else does.”

Valls agreed, saying, “The opportunity to be relevant is incredible. If you can have the right message at the right time and in front of the right person now, before anyone else can, then you have a better chance of catching that person’s attention.”

While advertising has always been about reaching a specific audience, Miami’s advertising agencies have found even more effective ways based on real-time analytics.

“Because of data, it’s very clear who is interacting in each platform, and we see whether it would be a good use of time and money or not,” said Isabella Sanchez, Zubi’s vice president of media integration.

Agencies use syndicated companies like Simmons and Mediamark Research and Intelligence programs that survey thousands of people and are able to identify trends in preference and opinion.

A digital advertisement agency in Miami called The Factory Interactive has gone one step further, creating its own social media intelligence platform called Raydr.com.

“Raydr pulls real-time activity from the most popular social outlets, blogs, news organizations, et cetera and allows us to filter that material by subject, author, key term, or hashtag,” said Joshua Hancik, The Factory Interactive’s chief technology officer, partner and co-founder.

“We are able to track our own campaign performances, but also be able to monitor public conversations about competitor activity, trending topics and influencer activity, which

may be beneficial to amplifying our efforts.”

The digital world has also granted consumers tons of commercial options and opportunities, which means advertisers have to contend with consumer time shifting. Consumers no longer have to wait for shows to air on cable television, or wait for a certain song to play on the radio. They can make individual decisions about when and where they stream media and subsequently when an advertiser reaches them.

“I would say that digital ads are complementing and enhancing traditional ads and making traditional media evolve and not remain still. They have to up their game, otherwise they’ll lose everybody,” said Zubi’s Sanchez.

“Not even that long ago you’d have to wait to watch what you want on TV, and you’d have to wait for a song to play on the radio. But now, nobody does that. Now, the consumer is in control. Technology has really changed the way we have to act in the market.”

In the past, it was up to traditional media to set trends. Now, advertisers have to consider what’s happening in real time and focus on what the world really looks like

rather than what it’s made to be. Trending topics occur in real time and become topics of reference and relevance over social platforms.

People from all over the world make up South Florida’s dynamic population. For that reason, Miami ad agencies have to make sure that they accurately represent different cultures; that they not only target, but accurately speak to the right people for the right product.

Miami ad agencies like Zubi have set a standard for their companies: when they put work out there, they try to remember that they are storytellers portraying real lives rather than interpretations of what they see.

For instance, when Apple released a taco emoji to represent the hispanic community in 2016, Zubi produced an ad and an app of emojis that represent Latinos and the variations in dialect of Latin Americans, erasing the stereotype that the public has created for them.

They have an array of emojis: Arepas, a popular Venezuelan cuisine; Celia Cruz, an iconic Cuban singer; and slang words like “dale” and “asere.”

The even have one depicting a quinceañera.



Photo by Emma Delamo

**PUSHING BUTTONS:** Isabella Sanchez at Zubi Advertising shows how her agency implements ads on social media platforms to market client products.

**MAKING MUSIC:**  
A local musician performs at Tea & Poets, a South Miami gathering place for artists who depend extensively on social media promotion.



Photo by  
Sabrine Brismeur

# Their cup of tea

## Artists draw crowds by establishing large followings on the web

**BY EMMA DELAMO**

Terra Environmental Research Institute

Anyone can get famous online.

No matter the approach, social media allows South Florida artists to expand beyond traditional limits of physical art, showcasing their work on digital platforms that open doors and push them to stardom.

The local art scene is a source of inspiration. It encourages artists to create work that speaks their minds and allows creativity to flow. Areas like Wynwood, where art is literally around every corner, have made Miami known for an emerging creative industry.

That industry includes the famous Art Basel, which attracts international clientele and millions of others through social media. Even so, competition is tough and artists must find a way to stand out. Social media give them the opportunity to market themselves in their own way.

“Spray painting is like trying to tame a dragon,” says visual artist Ivan Roque, 25. “You can’t control it, it takes years of experience.”

Roque is a South Florida native who has been creating art since he was a boy. At 18, he jumped into South Florida’s booming arts scene.

Roque has an online following of more

than 3,000 on Instagram alone; sharing his posts online has made him famous enough to travel throughout the southern United States, New York City and even across the world to South Korea to display his talents with street art, a nontraditional art form he has been practicing for almost a decade.

Roque is one of many artists in the street art genre, but it is his creativity and devotion to the form that has gained him a large online following.

“Artists have the freedom to represent themselves,” Roque said. “People can follow whatever they like.”

Online promotion can at times benefit more than just the artist. Joaquin Ortiz, 35, is the owner/partner of Tea & Poets, a new business in South Miami’s Sunset Place. Its focus is on poetry, a nice cup of tea and local artists.

The business standing alone would be a success; however, the symbiotic online relationship between the company and the local artists allows both to mutually prosper at a much faster rate, building a social media brand and a community of Tea & Poets artists.

Ortiz says that when booking performances, he wants to hire high-quality artists who know how to perform; once the artist is booked, Tea & Poets’ online page reaches a larger following because of the artists’ own personal promotion of their performance, luring customers into the shop to watch the show. In the end, all parties win.

Tea & Poets uses social media to help the local community; their brand gives artists the opportunity to display their talents reading poetry or performing a song to an established crowd while the artists’ social media pages

promote the venue.

Roque uses social media to promote his art as well, expanding on his medium by posting his newest “illegal” street art piece, taking credit for nontraditional art in a traditional way.

Roque, Ortiz and thousands of other artists use social media to promote their artistic communities and push the boundaries of their art forms.

“There are so many talented people, and social media has given them all a platform,” says Christine Olivera, a 20-year-old freelance videographer. “You have to rebrand in order to stay relevant.”

Slightly more than half of Instagram’s users visit the application daily, and with the endless stream of posts available for viewing, it makes sense for emerging artists to create and sustain an image beyond a fad. Artists, using a tactic similar to the Tea & Poets approach, connect to other mediums to successfully and mutually rise to the top.

By posting her work online, Olivera can showcase her style anywhere in the world at any time.

Being an online videographer is no easy task, but the support of her followers keeps her motivated. Through this support, Olivera is able to get constant feedback from her online community.

“Opportunities can come and your page can show them what you have,” Olivera said.

While the art scene in Miami is a vital aspect and key characteristic that defines South Florida, these artists are shaping the local scene with spirited and aggressive digital messaging.

Online, these artists are inviting Miami into their world, recognizing that the industry thrives on the unity between artists and their fans. In the end, the industry is a business as much as a lifestyle.

“Business is alive,” Ortiz said. “Anything alive changes and adapts.”

# Naked and unafraid

## Cam girls cash in by broadcasting role play on digital platforms

BY **BIANCA MANGRAVITE**

The Lawrenceville School

Where pornography leads, technology follows.

No one knows that better than Ariana Marie, a professional “cam girl” in Tampa.

“I turn my computer on, put up my camera, and go onto the website,” Ariana said in a phone interview. “I tweet a picture of what I’m wearing with a notice that says like, ‘Hey, I’m going to be on soon, please come hang out with me.’”

“I will turn on the camera in my room and start filming, and then they just start talking through chats with me.”

Florida, a hub for the professional pornography industry for decades, has become a home for successful “cam girls,” like Marie, who broadcast themselves from their bedrooms using social media platforms.

Web-camming, or camming, has become a lucrative form of adult entertainment. Cam girls make money off of subscriptions and tips from viewers.

“I try to stay on cam for about four hours and I normally average between \$500 to \$700 a night. It is pretty consistent,” Marie said.

“[The] rooms that I have in my house are differently themed. They can get a little weird because some of the guys request fantasies like of the ‘step-daughter’ and other role-playing themes.”

Marie started camming after she was approached by a veteran webcam model at a club in Tampa. At the time, Marie was modeling part-time and serving at Buffalo Wild Wings. The cam model offered Marie guidance in the industry, setting her up with her own computer and cam room.

Since then, Marie has also starred in various adult films with professional studios. She prefers camming to professional pornography because of the convenience and benefits the newer technological platform offer.

“When you’re filming for companies, you don’t earn residual income. You only get paid once,” she said. “Camming is great because you can set your own hours, your own goals, and your own income.”

“Pornography of all genres has always embraced new technologies of distribution,” said Kevin Heffernan, a professor of media history and criticism at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. “Whenever there is a major shift in media distribution, pornography is right there.”

In many ways, porn has always influenced and propelled technology.

“People have been watching people have sex since cave people drew on cave walls,” Heffernan said. “The first images we have, cave paintings, are of a couple of animals, and pictures of people having sex. Porn has often



Photo by Bianca Mangravite

**TAKING IT OFF:** Ariana Marie, 24, role plays for viewers, earning tips of \$500 to \$700 a night.

been way ahead of mainstream media in its embrace of new technology.”

According to Business Insider, pornography helped drive the demand for greater bandwidth on computers, since it dominated the flow of images and video on the Internet.

With each new advancement in media, the porn industry finds new ways to connect with the content. Even camming, which provides a personal correspondence with the viewers, is evolving to be more of a personal experience and more portable in the form of social media.

Snapchat in particular is another platform that these cam girls use. Followers must pay to gain access to accounts using SnapCash, where cam girls can post videos and pictures from their phones. They can be individualized messages and videos, or broadcast on their personal Snapchat Stories.

“I personally like Snapchat Premium more because it’s super mobile and on-the-go. I can constantly check updates. With web-camming you can’t really broadcast away from your computer. With Snapchat, I can snap pics all day anywhere,” said Susan Covert, a 20-year-old cam girl in Miami.

Covert has been a cam girl for three years

on myfreecams.com, with an account that caters to a specific audience.

“My description is nerdy petite,” Covert said. “I play into the whole comic book nerd and anime girl thing. A lot of my personal fans and subscribers are Otaku (obsessed with computers), and video game type of people, so they get off on a girl talking about Star Wars.”

Covert has found that her experiences in Florida are unique.

“Florida, specifically South Florida, is pretty kinky. The people are pretty open-minded . . . I think South Florida has the best opportunities as far as adult work, specifically because Miami is a hotspot for porn and adult sexuality.”

Covert said this close relationship between social media technology and pornography will continue.

“Obviously they have the VR Oculus headsets that people already use for games, but they have these new extensions that you connect to emulate having sex with someone. It just bridges physical distance with a digital connection,” she said.

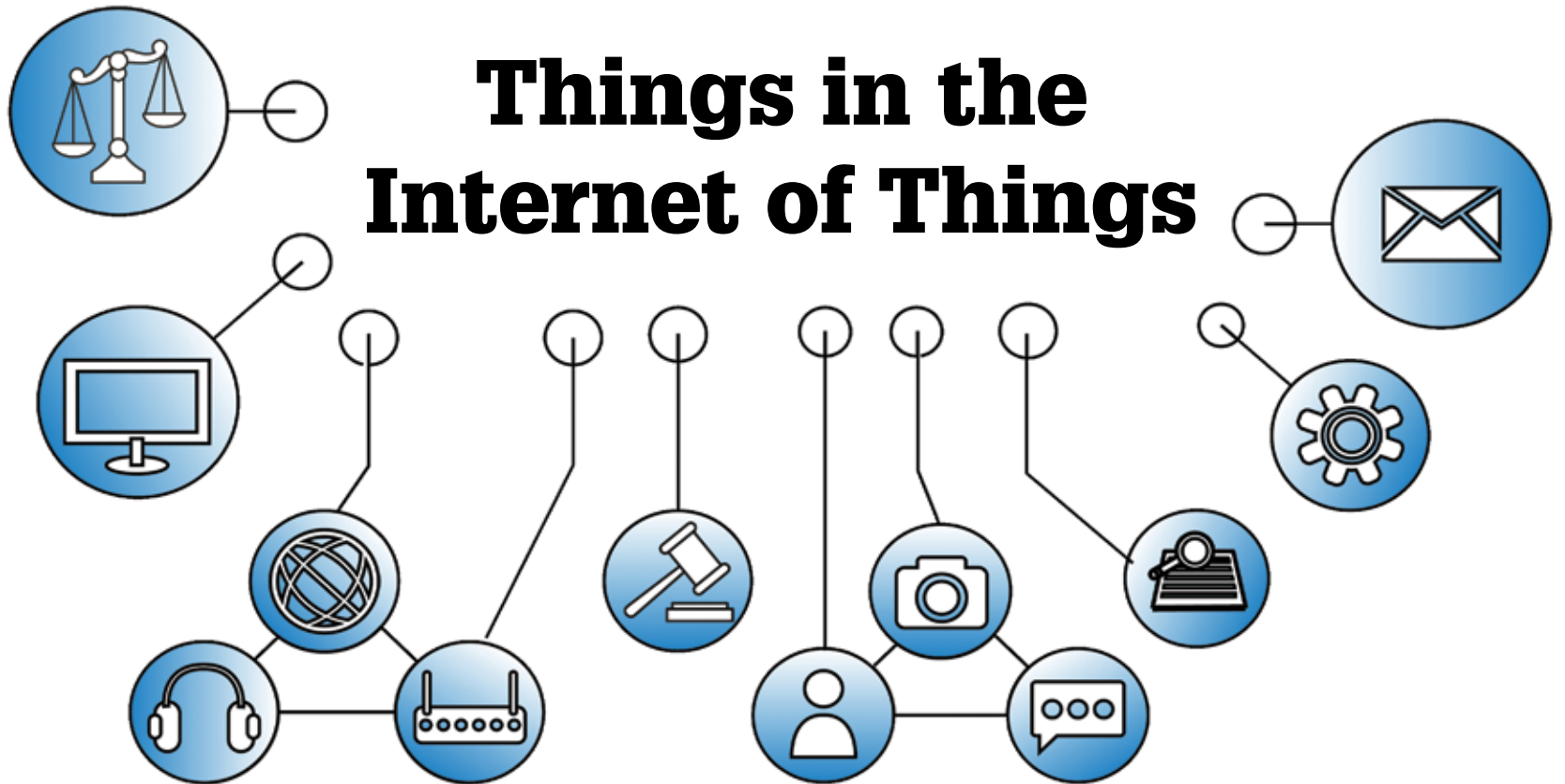


Photo Illustration by Bianca Mangravite

## New FIU program will study how devices link over the internet

**BY ASHLEY ACEVEDO**

John. A. Ferguson Senior High School

At Florida International University, Professor Kemal Akkaya and his colleagues are redefining the way we conceptualize technology.

FIU will be the first school in the nation to offer a new bachelor's degree next spring known as the "Internet of Things." It's a degree that combines electrical and computer engineering to recognize how smart devices connect with each other through the internet.

"In the future, machines will be more human-like and make decisions for us so that we don't have to," said Akkaya, the director of the internet of things program.

Internet of things will be applied in agriculture, transportation, medicine, smart homes and energy systems through the study of smart watches, drones, Smart Grid testbeds, smart thermostats and other technologies such as motion sensor lights, 3D and self-driving cars.

"The internet of things is going to connect anything together in our daily lives. People will be able to make timely decisions, and machines will adjust to human behavior and

responses," Akkaya said.

However, because these technologies are corruptible, they also present dangers to society. Students will subsequently learn by breaking the systems they create. By doing so, they will learn to recognize possible security threats and loopholes in technology.

"You have to be creative. You have to be interested and think of new things constantly. It's crazy how technology advances compared to the past, and now we can do things we never knew we could do," said Esteban Leon, a high school student from Terra Research Institute who plans to enroll in the program.

Students will master the four skills — hardware, cyber security, software and communication — that are usually taught separately in contemporary programs. Subsequently, businesses can save money by hiring one broadly skilled person instead of hiring many to do the same jobs.

"It will be an amazing asset for small businesses. It is something any company leader can afford. The more knowledgeable, efficient and advanced they are, the faster the economy will grow," said David Ramirez, manager of the Sprint smartphone store in West Kendall.

FIU students will learn in a hybrid environment, learning online and in the classroom. The program will also be fully online to accommodate students who cannot attend in person.

"The advantage of the program being

online is that it is accessible anywhere, in places like South America and the Caribbean," Akkaya said.

The program has an opening enrollment of about 30 students. However, program directors expect numbers to grow rapidly.

"I would definitely apply for this course," said Anthony Martinez, a rising freshman at FIU. "Not only will the job be in demand, but it will help people understand technology and put it into one seamless experience."

Akkaya and other FIU faculty predict that by 2020, there will be 1,000 internet of things jobs in 1,000 in Florida alone.

"I think it's growing very quickly and creating a renaissance of smart devices," said Tom Morton, a programmer and app developer for Esto Vir Youth Group. "The market is on fire and it's great. FIU is the first university to do this and creating a foundation for the rest of the nation, and that to me creates more job opportunities."

Programs like this already exist in China, Australia and Ireland. The internet of things degree program will help American universities keep pace in this vital 21st century field.

"This is the technology of the future," Akkaya said. "If students in this field start early, they will have an advantage over everyone else that joins later. We can create new technology, teach and educate ourselves in things we never knew about. I'm very excited."



Photo by Sabine Joseph

**NET NECESSITY:** David Alas already has high-speed internet but looks forward to everyone getting it in Liberty Square. He uses his service to post his musical compositions.

# A real digital divide

## Liberty Square project will get residents free and fast Wi-Fi access

**BY BENJAMIN ESTRADA**  
Coral Gables Senior High School

Composing homemade beats and writing rap rhymes on his laptop is a labor of love for 22-year-old David Alas, a two-year resident of Liberty Square. With musical notes inked on his left forearm and a cigar in his right hand, Alas describes how internet access creates new possibilities.

“I think a lot of people are going to be happy. Having access to the internet opens up so many opportunities,” Alas said.

As one of the few community residents with Wi-Fi in his home, Alas uses the internet to share his work on YouTube, apply for jobs and access other important resources. He views his access as a necessity, and fears his neighbors without Wi-Fi are falling behind in the digital economy.

Liberty Square, the southeastern United States’ oldest public housing project, is implementing a program that will provide Wi-Fi to all of its residents free of charge. The demand for such an amenity is dire in the community, where about 90 percent of residents live without web access.

While the Liberty Square Wi-Fi community initiative is currently confined to the Liberty Square Community Center, it

will eventually expand to the whole housing project.

“[Free Wi-Fi] gives [residents] benefits as far as re-certifying food stamps, job searching and unemployment applications. For the kids, it benefits them with education and school projects,” said Crystal Corner, president of the Liberty Square Resident Council.

Moses Shumow, an associate professor of journalism and digital media at Florida International University, leads the initiative. He is concerned that Miami’s digital divide is worsening.

Shumow cites the neighborhood’s designation as a public housing project as one of the main obstacles for the initiative’s advancement. Because Liberty Square

is owned by the federal government and managed by Miami-Dade County, regulations prevent Wi-Fi hardware from being installed on a unit-by-unit basis.

Social biases towards public housing also affect the initiative’s roll out.

“There’s an attitude toward people who live in public housing...that they’re living off the government and ‘why should we make things comfortable for them?’” Shumow said. “You’re not just dealing with infrastructure and economics but also this attitude . . . about what they [poor people] deserve, what they should have access to. To me, access to the internet is one of the key civil rights issues of our day.”

The absence of internet access in communities across Florida can be just as detrimental to students as it is to adults, according to Casey De La Torre, an FIU graduate who worked with Shumow on the Liberty Square Wi-Fi community initiative.

“As the world progresses digitally... everything is done online and so, with limited access and limited resources, you can’t expect someone to know something that they’ve never experienced before,” De La Torre said.

“There’s no way of knowing unless it’s via word of mouth or an outside source, not having that internally really puts [students] at a disadvantage.”

While the remainder of the Wi-Fi hotspots are scheduled to be installed this fall, another major development is under way in Liberty Square. In May, Miami-Dade County began an extensive \$307 million redevelopment project in Liberty Square to modernize the community.

The redevelopment includes gradually demolishing the current housing units, leading some to question why a community Wi-Fi initiative is even necessary. Shumow argues that installing Wi-Fi now would allow for collection of data to improve future projects.

Shumow hopes that his initiative will create a domino effect in easily accessible internet throughout Miami, making free Wi-Fi a standard that city developers will uphold.

“My hope is that if the folks who run the public housing in Miami-Dade can get on board with this idea that everyone should have [internet] access that should be fast and reliable, then there’s a chance to have a much broader impact,” Shumow said.



**LEADING THE WAY:** Crystal Corner is the Liberty Square Resident Council president who is helping bring the project to fruition.

Photo by Sabine Joseph

# Technology gets STEAMy

## Wynwood camp takes creative approach to digital education

**BY JACK CRUZ-ALVAREZ**

Miami Palmetto Senior High School

At 15, Nelson Milian first entered the tech world fixing computers in Miami International Airport's IT Department.

Now he's helping kids get their own start. But instead of fixing computers, they're tearing them apart.

"Getting people to look at different elements and say, 'You know what, I can take this, this and this and make something new,' I think that really helps ground an idea," Milian said. "If I have a problem to solve, do I have the necessary parts in place? Can I use that stuff to solve my problem?"

His kids are working at Smart Bites, an organic restaurant in Wynwood, converting old computers into planting boxes as a part of Wynwood Maker Camp, which Milian, along with business partner Willie Avendano, founded in 2014. The camp operates through their technology education company 01 and works to enhance students' confidence in the use of technology.

Other camp projects include making music digitally and creating a city to explore with virtual reality. The camp also features an Urban Hacking session that focuses on sustainable building practices — such as the computer planting box project — and designing functional urban spaces.

Wynwood Maker Camp's artistic projects teach a STEAM curriculum. The term STEAM arose from STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), adding an A for Arts. The camp works with Moonlighter, a Wynwood coworking space for artists. At Moonlighter, artists work with engineers, programmers and other designers using new technologies like 3D printers, laser cutters and circuit labs.



Photo by Sebastian Valdes-Denis

**MOTHERBOARD MADNESS:** Wynwood Maker Camp kids learn how to convert older technology to new and artsy uses. They use power tools to tear apart computers.

"I think knowing how to communicate and how to collaborate with designers and artists is a more refined and crucial part of education," Milian said. "[The Moonlighter staff members] are architects and they really focus more on the design side. But we still come together to work on projects and design things."

STEAM arose out of a concern that students were losing their creative ability.

Kyung Hee Kim, a professor at the College of William and Mary, conducted a study using the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking in 2011 that revealed declining creativity in children since the 1980s.

As a result, some educators began promoting greater artistic emphasis in school curricula. Miami-Dade County Public Schools, for instance, implemented the STEAM School Designation program two years ago.

Schools can receive recognition of their commitment to STEAM by following guidelines outlining curricula and activities the school must offer. In the 2016-2017 school year, 110 schools completed the program, up from 77 in the previous year.

"[STEAM] is the best method of giving students a well-rounded education," said Cristian Carranza, administrative director of the Division of Academics, Accountability and School Improvement in STEAM for MDCPS.

STEAM advocates argue that enhanced creative thinking from art education can benefit a student's learning experience by cultivating problem-solving and innovation skills that are applicable in many fields.

Those involved in the Miami tech industry, including Maria Derchi, executive director of Refresh Miami, agree that creative and innovative thinking is crucial. Refresh Miami aims to educate, inspire and grow the Miami

**VIRTUAL REALITY:**  
Campers play VR games in their free time.



Photo by Emma Delamo



Photo by Emma Delamo

**QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS:** Kids get into some deep and intense instruction in classroom spaces at the Wynwood Maker Camp.

tech industry through community events and workshops that teach tech entrepreneurs.

“You’re gonna have a lot of hurdles to get over,” Derchi said. “It’s those people [creative and innovative thinkers] that can see a roadblock and find a way to get around it.”

Tech professionals also have to consider design to ensure consumers make effective use of their products.

“Learning how to design for people is very important when you’re actually making technology that is for people,” Milian said. “Incorporating the arts and design into science and mathematics really helps bring it all together and make it more human.”

According to the 2017 Kauffman Index on Startup Activity, Miami is the top city in the country for entrepreneurs creating their own businesses. The tech industry is taking advantage of this favorable environment; Refresh Miami says their community membership grew from 2,500 to 10,000 in the last five years.

“People are excited to build in Miami,” Derchi said. “We’ve seen an increase in Miami pride.”

An education that can help students take advantage of the business potential in their own backyard with their own creative ability could be tremendously valuable. Wynwood Maker Camp tries to provide this education.

“Kids don’t feel like they can have an impact on anything,” said Tom Pupo, co-founder of Moonlighter. “They just feel like all the systems and all the technologies in the world are just this massive thing looming over them that they can’t affect. By doing projects like these [the one at Smart Bites] they can see that they can actually make an impact on their own communities.”



Photo by Sebastian Valdes-Denis

**INSIDE OUT:** Campers and a volunteer team up to turn a computer case into a planter box.

# Making the city smart

## Miami seeking to fix its troubled transit with new technology

**BY MORGAN ELMSLIE**

Miami Palmetto Senior High School

Self-driving buses and the extinction of the Metrorail may seem far-fetched for Miami-Dade Transit, but the future could arrive sooner than expected.

“Buses will have their own dedicated lanes, meaning less traffic, and with limited stops,” said Alice Bravo, director of the of Miami-Dade’s Department of Transportation and Public Works. “They’ll have smart sensors that change traffic lights and ‘speak’ to other transit, all for less money than rails.”

The buses are just one aspect of CIVIQ Smartscapes, Miami-Dade’s attempt to transform Miami into a smart city, an initiative that dates to 2014, when a proposed partnership between the county and CIVIQ Smartscapes began.

The \$20 million proposed plan came to life without funding from taxpayers’ wallets. Rather, the plan credits digital advertisements that’ll appear on hundreds of kiosks as the money makers.

The system is known as “a self-sustained advertising model,” according to a Miami-Dade County memorandum released in January. The kiosks — between 150 and 300 of them — are set to appear throughout the county, bringing a digital platform with the latest bells and whistles.

In the past, the systematic chaos within the public transit schedule was alleviated by county traffic apps that aimed to update information faster than terminal monitors.

“[The apps for the trains] work well because they tell you when exactly the trains are going to be leaving and coming. It makes it easy to plan your day around that,” Aaron Maxwell, a regular commuter, said. “The bus tracker apps aren’t as helpful because the buses arrive 10 minutes late and 10 minutes early.”

The new weatherproof kiosks are equipped with Wi-Fi devices, cameras to capture parking, pedestrian and automated traffic data, as well as smart sensors to test air quality and detect violence such as the sound of gunshots. They can help direct individuals to restaurants and provide safety features, like calling 911.

According to a SmartAsset study, Miami currently ranks as all-around best among major Florida cities for its public transportation. However, it also found that Miami car commuters spend 25.4 minutes commuting, compared with the 50.6 minutes spent by transit commuters.

“We want to become a car-optional city,” Bravo said. Cities that are “bigger than ours, with more funding” have the means to finance an at-large transit rail system. But the county has to provide “rapid transit to six



Photo by Manny Fernandez

**FAMILY CONNECTION:** Manuel Garcia, 86, rides the Metro four days a week to visit his daughter. Garcia, who has failing eyesight, says digital monitors allow him to better see train schedules.

corridors” and needs to “be practical.”

While Miami transforms itself into a smart city, some citizens prefer the so-called old school style: verbal communication.

“I like live connections, person to person. Technology is very impersonal,” Maltide Zayas, a regular commuter, said. She verbally confirms with on-site supervisors as to what time the trains are coming.

Because of the expensive nature of expanding the rail system the county prefers enhancing the bus system.

“You can have three buses run together that will act and run like a train,” Bravo said, but for a fraction of the price. “Roadways and asphalt are inexpensive. And you can get parts for a bus anywhere. Train parts have to be ordered months in advance, so, if a train breaks down, it’s complex to fix.”

Despite these changes, the transit system still faces difficulties.

“I know it’s difficult for tourism. You come out of Miami International Airport and it takes a while to get to South Beach,” Jaymes Gardzinski, a University of Miami student,

said. “If you’re willing to UberPool, it’s hard to compete. I got from Brickell to 20th and Collins for \$1.40 last night. The bus is \$2.25.”

But when it comes to traffic, “The trains are actually faster than driving,” Maxwell said. “The buses could use a lot of fixing and more routes to more popular places, like the beach.”

Destini Jones, an Atlanta native, takes the Metrorail to her labs at the UM Medical Campus. The unfamiliar streets challenge her commute, but the Miami-Dade transit apps alleviate some of the stresses of navigating.

“[The kiosks] are definitely going to have a positive impact, especially since we are a city full of tourists. And for new residents. We just moved here and have Wi-Fi so we can use our phones to help us maneuver the city,” Jones said.

County leaders believe Miami’s conversion to a smart city will follow the tracks of mega cities like Chicago and New York City.

“We will be like them someday,” Bravo said, “and when we are, we want to be ready.”



# A hiatus from social media

## Why people disengage from social media, and how it affects living

BY TATYANA MONNAY

Fort Lauderdale High School

Mildred Collier watches the same TV show, day in and day out. She has no choice really.

Collier, 59, lives in Liberty Square, a Miami-Dade public housing complex in the Miami neighborhood of Liberty City. Paying her electricity bill on time can be a challenge, so cable and internet service are out of the question.

“I don’t like to talk about it too much because then I start to cry,” Collier said. “I’m really in a depressed state.”

Typically, for people of lower socioeconomic status, disconnecting from technology is not a choice – their wallets make that decision. Meanwhile, others have more options. They can be completely plugged in or choose to log off when they want. This digital divide, whether by choice or circumstance, can either hurt or help, depending on what side you are on.

There are different degrees on the unplugged spectrum. Some who consider themselves unplugged might rarely use Instagram but FaceTime friends every night. For others, it means having a flip phone and not being active on any social media sites whatsoever.

Emily Espinosa, 17, a rising senior at the School for Advanced Studies, considers herself relatively unplugged.

“I have had Snapchat for about four years just so that I can talk to my friends,” Espinosa said. “I probably spend about an hour per day on it, tops.”

For those who cannot find even 30 minutes of free time to make dinner, spending an hour on a social medium may feel like an eternity. For many millennials, that is nothing. Espinosa worries about those who spend so much time on their electronic devices.

“It’s not healthy to be on your phones for 10 hours a day. I would rather see my friends in person and not be on my phone the whole time,” she said.

Monica Bodenstab, a recent University of Miami graduate, has cut back on social media. She used to be on Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram but now only uses the latter two.

“Taking a picture to preserve a memory is one thing,” Bodenstab said. “But I get annoyed when I’m out with friends and they are taking the same picture 40 times for social media.”

On the other side of the disconnected spectrum, many people are unplugged by circumstance. Various digital deserts in Miami, where there is limited or no internet service, affect almost half of Miami-Dade residents.

“I’ve been really miserable without Wi-Fi,”



Photo by Ashley Acevedo

**SCHOLAR UNPLUGGED:** Monica Bodenstab, 21, chooses to disconnect periodically from technology. She recently graduated Phi Beta Kappa in psychology from the University of Miami.

Collier said. “I used to have a cell phone but it depends on whether my niece pays the bill. And she has six kids, so I can’t ask her to help me out all the time.”

In 2015, a Florida International University study ranked Miami the second worst connected city in the United States, with almost 42 percent of Miami-Dade residents lacking home internet service. The year before, it was ranked No. 7.

“There is a huge portion of communities that do not have internet connection,” said Jim Osteen, executive director of South Florida Digital Alliance.

The areas in Miami with the lowest percentages of internet service are Opa Locka, Hialeah, Coconut Grove, Little Haiti and Liberty City.

According to BroadbandNow, in Hialeah, 36 percent of households do not have internet access. In Miami, 34 percent of households go without.

“It’s 100 percent economics,” said Don Slesnick III, SFDA’s deputy director. “If you have a low-income household and they have to choose between rent, groceries and internet service, they are going to choose rent and groceries.”

Improved internet access would mean that more South Florida residents could

gain needed technology skills, an attractive dimension for industries looking to relocate to the region, Osteen said.

“There is a whole community that wants to have it,” he said. “But they just can’t afford it.”

SFDA has partnered with Memorial Healthcare System, which donates computers and other equipment.

“Every month we get rid of about 25 to 30 computers,” said Tim Curtin, administrative director of community services at Memorial Healthcare System. “The computers get so much use when we put them out into communities.”

Other area initiatives have worked to expand internet access in South Florida. The Miami-Dade Public Library System introduced a “technobus,” a traveling technology laboratory that attempts to bridge the divide between the haves and have nots.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development also extended a program with Comcast that brought internet service to all residents of Miami-Dade public housing for \$9.95 a month.

“Connection is the key word,” Osteen said. “Talk of the internet and technology isn’t sexy, but I think there is a call to action or at least to raise awareness.”

# Just can't put it down

## Cellphone dependence becomes increasingly dangerous for youth

**BY RAYON UDDIN**

Coral Glades High School

After his SAT scores were invalidated because his phone was out during testing, James Young faced a hard truth: he was addicted to his smartphone.

"I have such a strong reliance towards my phone, and it often interferes with my daily responsibilities like my school work and family," he said.

Excessive social media use is among the leading causes of technological addiction. A poll conducted by TechTimes, a digital media news source, reported that 50 percent of teens feel addicted to their devices, while 59 percent of parents are aware of this addiction.

"The cellphone can be both beneficial and positively impactful if one uses it appropriately, but can also impede one's progress if used incorrectly," said Dan Sarfati, a neuro-linguistic programmer and recovery coach based in Miami. "To rely simply on an electronic device defeats the whole purpose of having a brain."

Currently, Young is a rising freshman at the University of Central Florida in Orlando, the same city where his addictive behavior began.

"My addiction started at Universal Studios in Orlando, when I was a freshman in high school," Young said. "I was getting off of a ride and saw a sign with the theme park's Instagram profile. My parents told me not to download it, but obviously, like a normal teen I didn't listen."

According to Sarfati, James' reaction fit the typical addicts' profile.

"Apps are designed in such a manner to mold a person into becoming more egocentric," he said. "We get addicted to competition. That layer of egocentricity is how we go ahead and convey our image to third parties, and how they'll take what's on social media and use that to augment or mold what their images are."

**"Much of the addictive component has to do with parenting**

..."

**Monika Kreinberg**  
Mental health therapist



Photo by Franco Luis

**DIALING IT DOWN:** Dan Sarfati, a neurolinguistic programmer and recovery coach, says digitized social media consumption can hinder a person's ability to progress in the real world.

Sarfati notes that other effects of addiction include irritability, low threshold of tolerance and withdrawing socially. Addicts can rarely recognize the changes on their own.

Young had previously justified his heavy dependence to his phone as being a "generational thing," but when his classmates confronted him about their concern for his excessive cellphone use, he eventually heard the message.

"Over-consumption of it [technology] can really affect your character composition and personality," said Monika Kreinberg, a mental health therapist.

Kreinberg believes that this issue has to do with the general upbringing of today's youth and their greater access to technology compared with past generations.

"Due to the fact this younger generation is so used to these apps, there's no way not to be attached to them," Kreinberg said. "Much of the addictive component has to do with parenting and the boundaries in place specific to each child."

Young now views himself as a recovering addict, and has worked with his school

counselor on a program to minimize phone time. Where he once photographed his lessons off of whiteboards, he now writes them down in his planner. He now uses an alarm clock in place of the alarm on his phone. Because his parents have forbidden him from bringing his device to the kitchen table, he no longer reads his phone during meals.

Despite these steps, Young's progress has been erratic. He still gives in to his desire to use the phone, but he remains persistent.

"I'm recovering from my addiction at the moment, and it hasn't gone as planned, but I am working through it," Young said.

This persistence is key to success, according to Sarfati.

"There's nothing wrong with being an addict," he said. "There's something wrong with being an addict and not addressing it."

Young agrees.

"It's discouraging to work so hard towards a goal and then come up short," he said. "I know my efforts aren't going to be rewarded overnight, and that's why I keep at it everyday. I just hope I can one day break out of this addiction completely."



Photo by Morgan Elmslie

**CELLPHONE POLICE:** UM officers Benjamin Hedrick (left) and Trevor Shinn say excessive use of cellphones has become a hazard to public safety.

# OMG, I crasht

## Smartphone use can bring danger and safety to communities

**BY CASEY CHAPTER**

Cooper City High School

After months of scrolling, liking and sharing on social media, Noah Milian logged off, put his phone down, and felt relieved.

“I thought to myself, ‘Is this something beneficial to my life?’ And I just kind of came to the conclusion that there are better ways to have more personal connections with people and not put your life on a stage,” the 17-year-old Milian said.

However, Milian’s concerns are not the only matter. In today’s world, there are serious safety issues associated with technology.

“I think technology is a double-edged sword,” said Lt. Trevor Shinn of the University of Miami Police Department. “While it can be helpful, we’ve also seen it cause devastation.”

Social media’s proliferation is often seen in a positive light, especially with the recent surge of app startups in Miami. But not everybody utilizes these technologies, and with the rate of public incidents rising, a life with limited technology may be a safer one.

“We have seen an increase in accidents

due to texting and driving,” UM Patrol Lt. Benjamin Hedrick said. “So, while it can be a convenience, it can be a danger as well.”

And the impact of technology can often reach beyond roads. With apps such as Snapchat now allowing others to see one’s location at any time, caution is becoming more necessary.

“I think that that is inherently unsafe,” Milian said. “It’s not a smart thing to leave on and then forget about... You want to make sure you have control over those things.”

The risks are often overlooked. According to the Pew Research Center, one-fifth of Americans report going online “almost constantly,” while 42 percent do so several times a day.

“Technology – and especially social media – they’re addictive,” Milian said. “So getting a hit on Instagram, that’s dopamine going into your brain. It causes your reward system to say, ‘Oh, we like that.’ That’s addictive, and you’re gonna want to do that again and again.”

While these dangers are apparent, Hedrick also emphasized technologies that can make communities safer.

“We have mobile speed trailers on the sides of the road. People can see what their speed is as they drive, which has definitely contributed to safety,” Hedrick said.

“We also have traffic intersection cameras that monitor the areas,” Shinn added. “People

may perceive it as a bad thing at first, because they get a ticket in the mail. But then we start to see a change in the behavior of [drivers at] that intersection.”

Other technologies offer a more social benefit. The Swarmer app, recently launched in the city of Miami, allows users to connect with one another at entertainment events and split attendance costs.

“We’re in 2017 now... I think that if you’re not using a smartphone, you’re definitely living an archaic life,” Swarmer CEO Derrick Abellard said. “These apps make life much, much easier.”

Milian believes social media apps such as Swarmer can lead to a sedentary lifestyle.

“I would agree that it makes people more lazy. I think social media in general is kind of just loads of information force-fed through whatever platforms you use,” Milian said.

“So you never go out and search for more information, you just see it on Facebook and think that you don’t need anything else.”

As technology advances daily, citizens’ lives have been made simpler and more efficient. But it is still questionable whether accessibility is worth the risk to public safety.

“There are services that are definitely aimed at providing safety, and that’s a good thing,” Milian said. “But the services that aren’t, like Snapchat tracking your location... it can get dangerous and out of hand really fast.”

**CODE SCHOOL:**  
Teen girls learn computer coding at Miami Dade College's Idea Center.



Photo by Ruhi Mansey

# Hatching a plan

## College programs turn young ideas into real business enterprises

**BY HILLY YEHOSSUA**

Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High School

Business owners are flying into Miami from Silicon Valley, and not just for the beautiful beaches and vibrant night life.

“Entrepreneurship today is totally different than when I was young,” said Orion Nevel, founder of Orion Herbs in Miami. “It’s definitely more glorified and noble. Millennials see it as something they can do for a living. It’s growing in popularity.”

In South Florida, startup incubators such as The Launch Pad and The Idea Center are helping people convert their dreams into realities. Such programs have thrust the region into the forefront of entrepreneurship. In fact, Miami ranks No. 1 in startup activity, according to the Kauffman Foundation’s 2017 Index of Startup Activity.

In 2008, William Scott Green, the University of Miami’s senior vice provost and dean of undergraduate education, was speaking to deans of area universities about a future career center in South Florida. Many expressed concerns that students didn’t have the means to create their own jobs.

“They didn’t really know how to help those people who didn’t necessarily want to get a job working for other people,” said William Silverman, director of The Launch Pad at the University of Miami. “The Launch Pad was

thus born as a place for people that wanted to strike out on their own.”

Since opening, The Launch Pad has successfully led over 460 students and alumni through the path of creating a company. The career-service organization began with the goal of promoting entrepreneurship as a legitimate career path. Today, students all across campus are familiar with the program.

The Launch Pad is free to University of Miami students and alumni, and uses indirect methods such as questioning and critical thinking to help its mentees identify the problems that their businesses are trying to solve.

Students who approach The Launch Pad are mentored by trained undergraduate and graduate students in their early ventures, and eventually by successful entrepreneurs in the South Florida community.

Although thousands enter The Launch Pad’s doors, only 15 percent follow through with the creation of a company. The entrepreneurs’ success isn’t credited only to the Launch Pad, but to their passion and work ethic.

“Business is a lot of passion, but it comes down to putting it on paper,” said Nevel, whose company, mentored by The Launch Pad, creates medicinal products for pharmaceutical use. Nevel’s father was an herbal medicine acupuncturist and his mother was a massage therapist, so it was a natural passion.

Nevel approached the Launch Pad in 2012 to turn that passion into a functioning company.

“They introduced the dynamics of opening

a young business operation,” Nevel said. “They taught me how to use higher-level tools in financial modeling, how to understand business proposals.”

Entrepreneurs like Nevel face dilemmas such as adapting to the market, believing in themselves and marketing their product. When they encounter problems, startup incubators are significant resources that offer customized solutions.

While The Launch Pad serves alumni and students, other programs are available to cater to the larger South Florida community. The Idea Center opened at Miami Dade College in 2014 through the collaboration of Leandro Finol and the James L. Knight Foundation. It serves more than 5,000 people each year, the majority of whom are from low-income neighborhoods.

Damian Thurman, vice president and chief innovation officer of The Idea Center, says that his students are eager to solve the problems that they face each day.

“Most of our students are underserved,” Thurman said. “In fact, over 50 percent are in poverty. They are driven by the mission to serve and provide an opportunity.”

In addition to personal entrepreneurial services, The Idea Center also has innovation workshops that provide courses and degrees on digital marketing, programming, how to use drones and more. These cutting-edge programs equip students with the skillset to take advantage of the future.

“Our focus on career services really isn’t going to change,” Silverman said. “We plan to get more intimately integrated into other departments across the college.”

Going forward, observers believe the demand for innovation and entrepreneurship in South Florida will ensure a continued influx of business owners, aspiring entrepreneurs and students in South Florida.

# A hearty helping hand

## Assistive technology boosts learning for kids with disabilities

BY RUHI MANSEY

American Heritage School

While some students scribble physics notes in their notebooks, Charlie Boyd just stares at his teacher. It's his way of keeping up; diagnosed with cerebral palsy, Boyd is recording the lecture, which he will later transcribe on his iPad.

"[Technology] has changed significantly and only bettered Charlie with his ability to do work and carry out assignments," said his mother, Ileana Boyd.

His school, Christopher Columbus High School, allows him to bring an aide to school, where he is placed in a normal classroom setting.

Many disabled students are unable to keep up with the typical learning pace of their peers, feeling excluded regardless of inclusion in a normal classroom setting.

In recent years, however, assistive technology has been implemented to provide a unique experience for students with learning disabilities. This technology — any hardware, software, or product that improves the basic capabilities of students with disabilities — helps these students develop pacing, learning and communication skills.

Several learning types include visual, verbal and aural. Assistive technology is tailored to each type of learning for each student.

"It's allowing them access to a curriculum that they could be excluded from due to their disability if they weren't supported by the technology," said Sheila Miguel, director of assistive technology for Exceptional Student Education programs across Miami-Dade County public schools.

Since the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act was mandated in 1975, all public schools are required to provide a free and appropriate education for all eligible children. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, more than six million children between the ages of 3 and 21 are served under the IDEA Act.

**"[Technology] has changed significantly and only bettered Charlie . . ."**

**Ileana Boyd**  
parent of disabled student



Photo by Alley Robertson

**ENABLING THE DISABLED:** Sheila Miguel directs assistive technology at Miami-Dade County public schools. Her job involves leveling the playing field for students with disabilities.

Eric Revell is one such student. He falls on the autism spectrum with a hypersensitivity to sounds. Even though he is able to learn in a normal classroom setting among his peers, his hypersensitivity still challenges him.

"Some people with autism are sensitive to light, touch, or anything like that so [one] could get easily distracted when trying to concentrate in class," said his mother, Kathy Revell.

Revell attended Bob Graham Education Center from kindergarten through eighth grade, where he had a full-time aide who coached him until he reached high school. During these years, he fostered a passion for science and believes that "as humanity learns more stuff, [it] has a better chance of surviving for much longer."

Eric is now a part of the computer science track at his high school, utilizing technology to develop his interests.

His mother believes that Eric focuses better because he enjoys working with technology.

"The use of iPads has definitely evolved and more apps have come out that you could use and implement in the classroom," said

Gaby Martinez, a special education teacher at Kingdom Academy.

Technology in education is most effective when accommodated to individual needs and learning styles.

Miguel said there is a policy in Florida schools that allows the school official most comfortable with the student to lead the assessment. The ESE department released assessment forms to guide the leader through the multiple trial process.

"We don't just place a device with a student, we look at the whole classroom and school factors that are going to support the student using it," Miguel said.

At every Miami-Dade County public school there is a designated assistive technology specialist who attends workshops and serves as a liaison between the school and ESE department. This ensures each student receives adequate tools to pave the path of their education.

"We want to make sure that our students with disabilities have the same opportunities for graduation, access to college in the future, and access to society," Miguel said.

**DIGITAL DISRUPTION:** The Univision newsroom in Doral reflects the TV news industry's push toward digital and mobile platforms.



Photo by Ashley Acevedo

# TV news in trouble

## Stations and networks facing new challenges in digital fast lane

**BY FRANCO LUIS**

Christopher Columbus High School

Millennials are presenting news organizations with an ultimatum of sorts: adapt to our concerns or lose us for good.

Over the past few years, a digital revolution has changed the way many Americans receive news. The consensus seems to be that if traditional TV can't keep up with the access demands of the current generation, news outlets will alienate their audience.

"Public media has a mandate to engage with the community," said Teresa Frontado, digital director of WLRN, South Florida's affiliate of National Public Radio.

News is becoming more accessible, which could benefit those who would rather search mobile devices than sit on their couches waiting for news.

Americans might want to kill their television — but not the news they've come to rely on.

Frontado said WLRN's TV and radio stations have witnessed a 35 percent increase in their digital audience since last year. WSVN, a local television news operation, also connects with millennials through social media.

Some stations are losing audience members to this digital trend. Univision, the Spanish language television network, lost \$30 million

in its 2016 third quarter report, the Los Angeles Times reported. Millennials have been turned off by Univision's traditional novelas and have instead tuned to other streaming programs displaying stories that appeal to Latin Americans.

So Univision plans on spending about \$100 million to hire young writers and producers. Univision also began televising events such as the Latin soccer cup "La Copa de Oro," and continues to host the highly rated Hispanic award show "Los Premios de la Juventud."

Jose Zamora, Univision's senior vice president of strategic communications, noted that 75 percent of their audience uses cellphones, and 80 percent uses social media. About 90 percent of U.S. Hispanic households use Univision as a news source.

Meanwhile, WLRN continues to strive for more interaction with their audience. The station uses the Hearken Process, which is designed to help news organizations listen to the public, as a story develops, from pitch through publication. Hearken engages viewers by allowing them to ask questions, vote on preferred stories and share stories.

Another tactic news organizations and local TV stations use to grow digital audiences is to develop their own apps. WSVN allows listeners to follow their stories online and on their app, which offers people notifications about local events.

WSVN hired a full-time social media producer, according to WSVN's web executive producer Steven Cejas, who finds content to post on the app and reviews WSVN's social media demographics.

Some news organizations have formed "strategic alliances," said Zamora. Univision

has combined with Netflix to begin streaming their news programs. WSVN has also signed an agreement with Hulu Live to stream their daily news programs.

Frontado's largest challenge has been to make WLRN's stories more widely heard. According to a Pew Research poll conducted in 2013, 54 percent of people receive their news from their mobile device. In 2016, the number increased by 18 percent.

Vince Filak, associate professor of journalism at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, said that online media are favored by many audience members because of their on-demand content.

"The minute a baseball game ends, I can get the score and find out what led to that score. I don't have to wait until 10 p.m. and watch an hour of SportsCenter to find out what happened," Filak said.

Television is expected to simplify by allowing consumers to choose their own "skinny" bundles. A skinny bundle allows the consumer to choose fewer channels rather than the traditional 100-channel bundle.

Some historians believe this shift will die out soon and Americans will return to print news. Accurate reporting will draw viewers back to traditional media norms, said Myron Belkind, a lecturer in George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs.

Print journalism may be losing money now, but it will bounce back once readers begin searching for honest news, Belkind said.

Either way, experts believe that the news business will continue to try and adapt to its audiences, whether through old-fashioned reporting, new technology or everything in between.

"Journalism is constantly evolving," said Gilbert Klein, an American University senior lecturer in journalism. "And it will change how we see the world."

# When gamers turn pro



**GAME ON:** Aniya Hope enjoys a video game on her 15th birthday at Play Live Nation in The Falls shopping center in Kendall.

Photo by  
Tatyana Monnay

## eSports will expand its global presence with a team in Florida

**BY SEBASTIAN VALDES-DENIS**

Christopher Columbus High School

In the late 1990s, Michael Kuhns was more interested in finishing middle school than playing computer games.

By the time he started high school, though, an increasingly popular game had arrived on the scene.

"I have not always been into sports, but when I got into computer gaming, I was addicted," Kuhns said. "Especially Overwatch. When I saw it was coming out, I was determined to be great at it."

Kuhns is now one of more than 30 million players who play Overwatch, a first-person shooter game and one of the top five most played video games on PC or console, according to Gametrics.com. The game has become so popular that a worldwide professional league is forming with a team in the Miami-Orlando area set to begin play later this year.

"Overwatch is still relatively new but already has the chance to become a franchise with this league," said Ricky Gomez, an amateur eSports player in Miami. "They are taking a different path adding their own rules and involving teams from all around the world to play."

More people watch eSports, which are

videogame competitions featuring titles such as Overwatch, than they do major professional sports such as football, baseball, basketball or hockey, according to an article in Barron's magazine.

The global league will feature five North American teams and two international teams. Major sports teams such as the New York Mets and the New England Patriots have invested in eSports.

The NBA's Miami Heat is partly financing the Miami-Orlando Overwatch team, which is being brought into the league by The Misfits, an eSports team based in Europe. Ben Spoont and Syfy Channel founders Laurie Silvers and Mitch Rubenstein founded The Misfits last year.

"Miami is already a successful city across many sports," said Joe El Ouassi, general manager of the Misfits, adding that the new team and league will bring new jobs and revenue to South Florida.

One day, he said, he envisions filling American Airlines Arena with eSports spectators.

"It's more a question of when rather than if we are going to."

eSports is a growing phenomenon that is getting stronger by the year. According to a study by Newzoo and published in a 2017 Business Insider article, last year's revenue of eSports was upwards of \$490 million with a total audience of 323 million. This year, the revenue is expected to jump \$200 million with an audience increase of more than 60 million.

Much of the popularity can be attributed to Overwatch. As soon as the game was released, Kuhns created a team that practiced

12 hours a day. Eventually, he accomplished his dream of becoming a professional eSports player. In seven tournaments in 2017, he finished in first place twice and second place three times. He plans to continue playing.

"Having already put so much time into the game, and performing at the level I am, I would be crazy to give up that opportunity right now," Kuhns said.

Many eSports players hone their skills in gaming centers. Located in The Falls shopping center in Miami, Play Live Nation is about the size of a standard classroom. It is cool and dark except for the bluish lights from about 20 40-inch TV screens. The place smells like Lysol.

Play Live Nation manager Troy Cotto believes the eSports community has the potential to become a driving force in the South Florida economy thanks to the merchandise associated with the gaming, as well as the jobs that could be created.

Cotto's pay-to-play gaming center has already hosted live streaming broadcasts of League of Legends and Super Smash Bros. tournaments.

"And they have gotten pretty packed," he said.

The popularity, he said, is only beginning. "I see gaming stores being the new sports bar scene hosting live streaming events."

El Ouassi, of The Misfits, is eager to cater to local fan bases as eSports leagues expand.

"There is a demographic of young people in Miami who do not have the interest in traditional sports," he said, "and we are looking forward to being the team that local people can connect with."



**Ashley Acevedo**, 17, will be a senior at John A. Ferguson Senior High School this fall. She enjoys athletics such as running, soccer, and flag football. She is the vice president of TV club and likes to be in front of the camera. New York University is her dream school for broadcast journalism.

**Helen Acevedo**, 17, will be a senior at Miami Senior High School. She is the senior class secretary, a member of the National Beta Club and is heavily involved in the journalism program. She hopes to study multimedia journalism and share her passion for communicating with others.



**Sabrine Brismeur**, 17, will be a senior at Cooper City High School this fall. She is the managing editor of the school newspaper, The Lariat, and vice president of the National English Honor Society. She is still deciding where she wants to go to college.

**Casey Chapter**, 17, will be a senior at Cooper City High School, a soon-to-be staff writer for The Lariat and a lover of dogs. She is also the President of CTV, Cooper's broadcast journalism program. She hopes to study English and communications in college.



**Jack Cruz-Alvarez**, 17, will be a senior at Miami Palmetto Senior High School this fall. He is a public relations chairman for his school's student council senate and the online managing editor of his school's newspaper, The Panther. He hopes to study journalism and media production in college.

**Emma Delamo**, 17, will be a senior at TERRA Environmental Research Institute this fall. She is an officer for her school's National English Honor Society and Interact club, as well as a member of her school's yearbook staff. She hopes to major in broadcast journalism and communications.



**Morgan Elmslie**, 17, will be a senior at Miami Palmetto Senior High School this fall. She is the senior copy editor for her school newspaper, secretary of English Honor Society and member of National Honor Society. Morgan is looking forward to enrolling in college and studying abroad.

**Benjamin Estrada**, 16, will be a senior at Coral Gables Senior High School this fall. He is the opinion editor of his school's news magazine, highlights. He intends to major in journalism at the University of Miami.



**Manuel Fernandez**, 16, will be a senior at Belen Jesuit Preparatory School this fall. He is editor in chief of Vincam, his school's newspaper, and vice president of his youth group, the Esto Vir Group. He hopes to attend university and study communications while taking pre-law courses.

**Sabine Joseph**, 16, is a rising junior at Miami Lakes Educational Center. She is the managing editor and layout design editor of her newspaper, The Harbinger, and a staff writer and photographer for her yearbook, Alpha & Omega. She hopes to continue writing after she graduates.







**Franco Luis**, 17, will be a senior at Christopher Columbus High School this fall. He enjoys serving the community he loves so much. He is a political writer for CCNN Live. He plans on going to law school.

**Bianca Mangravite**, 18, will be a senior at The Lawrenceville School, a boarding school in New Jersey, this fall. She is the features and humor editor of her school's weekly newspaper, The Lawrence. She hopes to study film and television and business in college.



**Ruhi Mansey**, 16, will be a senior at American Heritage School this fall. She is the co-executive producer of WAHS News and president of the Student Television Network Honor Society. She hopes to study film and television production in college.

**Tatyana Monnay**, 18, will be a freshman at The University of Missouri - Columbia this fall. She is a red belt in mixed martial arts and was the editor in chief of her high school newspaper, The Navigator. She hopes to continue her MMA training and pursue a career in journalism.



**Alyssa Quinlan**, 17, will be a senior at Coral Glades High School this fall. She is the news editor of her school newspaper, The Prowl, as well as the president of both DECA and Chemistry Club. She enjoys reading, writing, and painting and hopes to study biology in college.

**Alley Robertson**, 17, will be a senior at Fort Lauderdale High School. She is the owner and founder of AR Media Marketing & Management, a social media management and internet marketing company. She is the editor of her school's yearbook and a member of the Quill and Scroll Journalism Honor Society.



**Rayon Uddin**, 16, will be a senior at Coral Glades High School this fall. He is the opinion editor on his school's newspaper, The Prowl, and enjoys playing sports in his leisure time. He hopes to double major in biology and journalism in college.

**Sebastian Valdes-Denis**, 16, will be a junior at Christopher Columbus High School. He is a sports anchor on CCNN Live with two sports writing internships and his own website. He hopes to study broadcast journalism when he is older.



**Hilly Yehoshua**, 15, will be a junior at Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School. She is the vice president of the American sign language club and the spread editor at her school's newspaper, The Lightning Strike. She spends her free time swimming competitively, drawing and scuba diving.

**Tamarah Wallace**, 17, will be a senior at Cooper City High School, where she enjoys editing for two publications, The Lariat, her school's newspaper, and the Polyphony H.S., an international literary magazine. She hopes to pursue a career in international law.



# Learning a lesson

## High school students dive into the deep waters of social media

**BY CASEY CHAPTER**

Cooper City High School

The sounds of keyboards clicking and phones being answered reverberate throughout the room, but this is more than an everyday office job.

These 20 young journalists at work were selected to take part in the Peace Sullivan/James Ansin High School Workshop in Journalism and New Media for the summer of 2017. Throughout the month of July, the high schoolers were introduced to the different skills associated with print, broadcast and photographic journalism.

“I like working here because I get to witness a tremendous amount of growth in young teenagers in a short amount of time,” said Rebecca Fortes, chief counselor and writing coach.

“The coolest thing about Montage is, I guess, the different kinds of journalism it exposes people to,” said workshop participant Benjamin Estrada, a rising senior attending Coral Gables Senior High School.

“Obviously everyone here has a different background in journalism... and this workshop gives people a chance to try things they haven’t tried before and prepares them for the future.”

Sam Terilli, chair of the Department of Journalism and Media Management at the University of Miami and co-director of the Montage program, agrees.

“The students who go through this program do wonderfully in college,” Terilli said. “They learn so much about writing, reporting, evaluating information, how to tell a story... These are fundamental skills in journalism.”

Since its creation in 1984, the workshop has given students an array of knowledge



Photo by Montage staff

**GETTING THE FACTS:** Benjamin Estrada (center) takes copious notes during an interview.

related to the journalism field while also giving them an experience on a college campus.

“I want them to gain familiarity with how news is gathered and how reporting works,” said Tsitsi Wakhisi, a previous program director. “It allows them to become familiar with the university campus and become familiar with being away from home while exposing them to college life.”

Miami Montage is sponsored by Peace Sullivan, a retired journalist, James Ansin, WSVN-Channel 7 general manager, the Dow Jones News Fund and the Miami Foundation. Martin Bruce Garrison, the founder of the Miami Montage program and University of Miami faculty member, shares his inspiration for creating the workshop.

“The goal was always to encourage top

minority high school students to move into careers in newspaper journalism,” Garrison said. “We have large communities of Hispanics and African-Americans in South Florida and this program was started to attract the best high school students to explore journalism more deeply.”

“If you got selected for this program, you were doing pretty well in high school,” Terilli said. “It’s a pretty competitive process.”

Every year, the students and staff of Montage choose a theme for their stories. This year, that was technology and how it affects South Florida. With topics ranging from commerce to camgirls, the newspaper produced a diverse collection of stories that stayed relevant to the theme.

“I feel like the social media topic is very interesting for us, because it’s something we can relate to, especially with all these new technologies being created,” said Ashley Acevedo, a rising senior at John A. Ferguson Senior High School. “I feel like it’s taken a really big toll on everyone’s lives, especially the 21st century teenager with social media.”

The benefits of reporting for Miami Montage go beyond the workshop itself, allowing students to use in their futures what they have learned.

“Workshop participants can take what they learn back to their high school news media and share with their staff,” Garrison said. “And, we hope, they will decide to study journalism at a university and begin a career in the news business.”

Terilli shared similar sentiments.

“What I’m really hoping for for the students is that they get a jump on developing these skills, and they enter college, whether they realize it or not, ahead of the rest of the pack.”

**METRO INQUISITION:**

Morgan Elmslie (left) quizzes a Metro rider for her story on a Miami transit project.



Photo by Montage staff



Photos by Miami Montage students and staff

**MAKING NEWS:** Workshop students learn the routines of real journalism in the field and in UM's media labs.

