

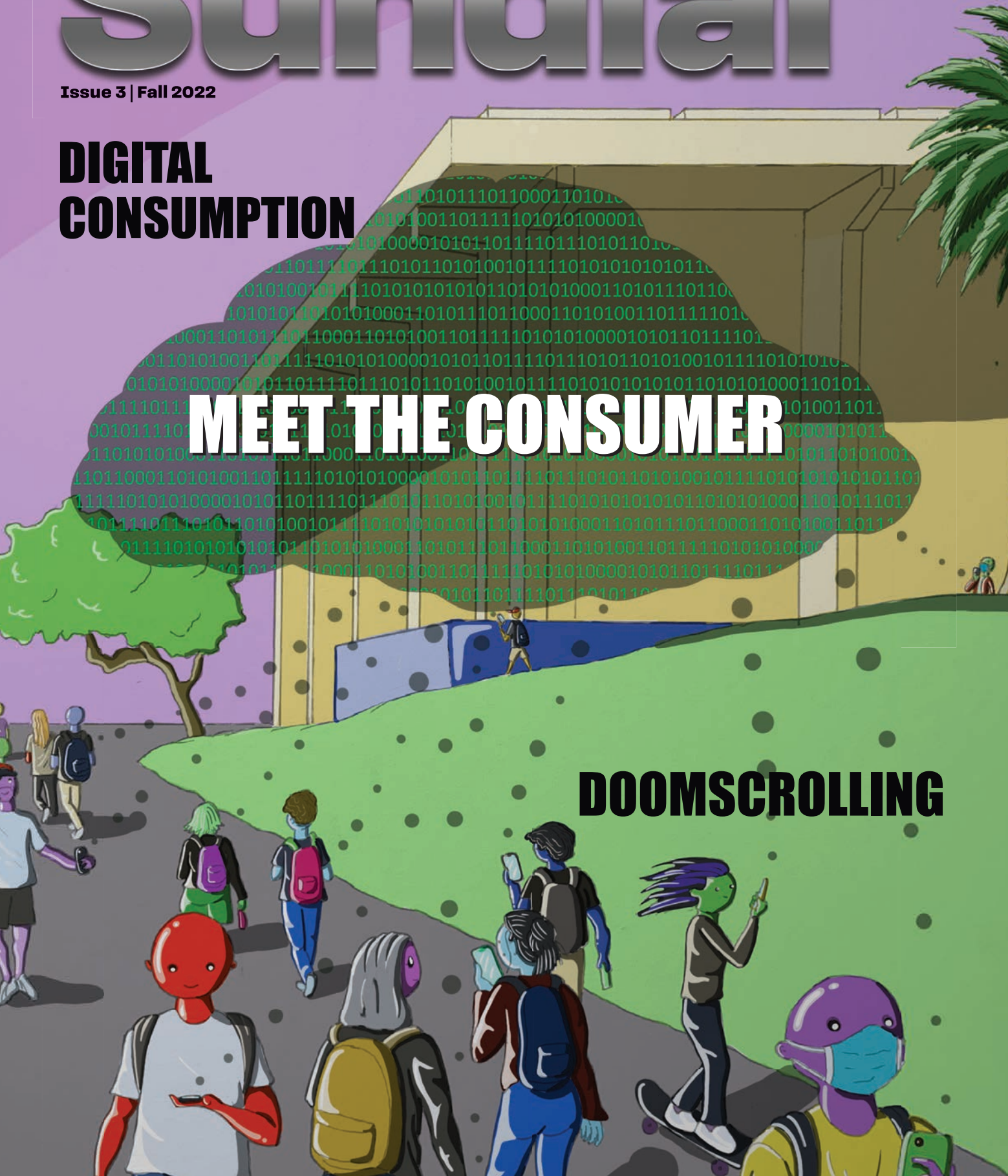
The Sundial

Issue 3 | Fall 2022

DIGITAL CONSUMPTION

MEET THE CONSUMER

DOOMSCROLLING



Letter from the *editor*



Welcome readers to the digital era. With just one click of a button, we are all connected through the power of technology.

In this issue, “Meet the Consumer,” readers will learn about the impact the digital world has on our society. How ads play a huge role in the way we make decisions and perceive information. How the internet stimulates our brains and develops our minds. It is crazy to think that the colorful moving pictures on a TV screen or the bright colored buttons on a video game controller can impact our lives. When we watch videos on YouTube or reels on Instagram we are captivated by the lights, colors and sounds. Our decisions are influenced by ads that persuade us by stimulating our emotions.

Being a Gen Z baby, I grew up in a tech-savvy generation influenced by online trends and fun aesthetics. My generation was one of the first to have unlimited access to the internet. We have made social media our new best friend by blindly trusting it with all of our information. With the coming of a new technological age, we need to understand how the digital world is impacting our society. We often rely on technology to do the simplest tasks like ordering food, checking on current news stories, navigating the roads and switching the power on and off in our houses. It is essential to know how the digital age has affected us and the way we live. I hope by reading this issue, readers are enriched with information on our digital society.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads 'Jasmine' with a small crown above the letter 'i'.

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Cover illustration by David Mesquita

TUNNEL VISION OF DOOMSCROLLING

WRITTEN BY RODRIGO HERNANDEZ

When it's three in the morning, and someone is caught in a never-ending doomscroll on TikTok, they may think of the famous Talking Heads line—"Well, how did I get here?"

Many have experienced it, but may not be aware of the term. Doomscrolling, or doomsurfing, refers to continuous scrolling through disheartening news, according to Merriam-Webster.

The usage of the words arose in 2020 around the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to an article on Business Today. Throughout this time, new sources were directly informing the public of the negative impacts of COVID-19.

"The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way we live and work dramatically — with individuals spending on average 4.2 hours per day on their smartphones," said Kelly McCain of the World Economic Forum.

The rapid advancement of technology has granted many people the accessibility to digital information at the click of a button.

The influx of disheartening media could possibly have serious effects on how we perceive such information. According to the University of South Australia, a public research institution, the brain stores new information by receiving it, recording it, molding it and storing it.

A series of experiments featured in a 2020 article from the National Library of Medicine show that those who are

heavy media multitaskers are more likely to be susceptible to outside influences or false representations in their memory systems. The evidence suggests that those who spent more time consuming media displayed impaired memory function, increased impulsivity, less empathy and a higher amount of anxiety. Certain data from the article also showed that multitasking while using digital media can have negative effects on academic performance.

Due to the digital era we are living in, this influx of media has caused our brains to create new ways to process and intake information.

Blocking out bad news and limiting the use of technology may seem daunting or impossible for many people. One of the best ways to prevent negative impacts of doomscrolling is by creating healthy digital consumption habits.

According to Insider, users should block out time for social media and set specific limits for the time they spend on it. In addition, seeking out positive stories can expose users to different kinds of news.



WHAT DO YOU MEME?

Visual Media Consumption Explained

WRITTEN BY MARISSA ROBERTS

In a world where consumers are constantly bombarded with visual content, it can be difficult to pinpoint what exactly makes a person stop and look at an image while mindlessly scrolling online.

There is a widely accepted hypothesis that the eyes are drawn to things that stand out, also known as visual salience, according to the American Psychological Association.

But a study from 2017 came to a different conclusion.

Researchers at the University of California, Davis, Center for Mind and Brain claim that the eyes are drawn to the parts of an image that give consumers meaning rather than the parts that are bright, colorful or different.

In other words, what consumers are drawn to visually could depend on who they are as people.

This could influence why social media companies have created algorithms tailoring content to individual users.

While social media feeds become more personalized, there are trends that sometimes break the boundaries of individual taste.

Memes are funny visuals or texts that become viral. These visuals are used in advertisements, to parody pop

culture moments or even to further a political point.

A popular meme account, that goes by the name Saint Hoax, talked about why people from various backgrounds enjoy memes in an interview with The New York Times.

“Memes are basically editorial cartoons for the internet age,” Saint Hoax told the publication.

“The power of a meme lies in its transmissibility and unique knack for being cross-cultural.”

People are able to connect with each other and find meaning through humor using these viral images.

In other words, what consumers are drawn to visually could depend on who they are as people.

If it is true that the eyes are attracted to meaningful content, it would make sense that the consumer experience has become increasingly individualized, with few exceptions for trends that have the power to reach a wider audience.



ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID MESQUITA

App Tricks:

WRITTEN BY BRANDON SARMIENTO

One characteristic that social media apps have in common is that they are designed in a way that entices users to return. From notification alerts to content algorithms capable of curating a personalized feed, the basic features of social media work together to grab the attention of users. Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and Snapchat are a few examples of platforms that employ such features.

Push notifications are the first attention-grabbing feature that social media platforms utilize. Users can be alerted about relevant digital activity depending on their preferences. Whenever someone leaves a like or comment on a post or sends a direct message social media users will be notified instantly.

Red circular badges with a number signifying new and unopened messages can also be displayed on the corner of a social media app's icon. The badges may urge users to check their feed as often as they pick up their phone. A 2022 study published in PLOS One, on the effects of notification badges on user experiences, found that users clicked on apps that displayed badges more frequently than apps that did not.

Social media developers have gotten more creative in their notification

tactics, as evident with the rise of BeReal. Encouraging users to share photographic moments of their daily life, BeReal sends time-sensitive notifications once a day. From the moment the alert is sent out, each user and their friends have exactly two minutes to snap a picture of what they are currently doing as a way to authentically share one's day.

Notifications that encourage and demand immediate attention are not the only ways social media keeps users coming back for more.

According to Pew Research Center, 31% of U.S. adults also reported being online incessantly.

Each platform's algorithm curates a stream of content based on one's interests. It usually begins from the moment a new social media account is created, when users are prompted to pick a couple of topics or hashtags they would like to see on their feed.

The acts of liking and sharing posts, as well as following different accounts, help a social media algorithm create an individualized feed of content.

Instagram, for example, tracks user interaction across the main elements of their app: feed, stories, explore and Reels. The posts and accounts a user frequently likes and comments on, along with their general popularity, are considered in Instagram's feed curation.

Teenagers and young adults are two of the largest demographics affected by social media's grab for attention. More than 50 percent of U.S. teens aged 13-17 said it would be hard to quit social media, with 36% expressing that they use it too much, according to the Pew Research Center. While they have not researched social media addiction in adults, the research center found that 84% of adults aged 18-29 used social media.

Thirty-one percent of U.S. adults also reported being online "almost constantly," an increase from the 21% of adults who reported doing so in 2015, according to the Pew Research Center. With social media having become a staple in many people's lives, the amount of time spent staring at a screen may continue to rise as time goes on.

HOW social media apps grab users' attention

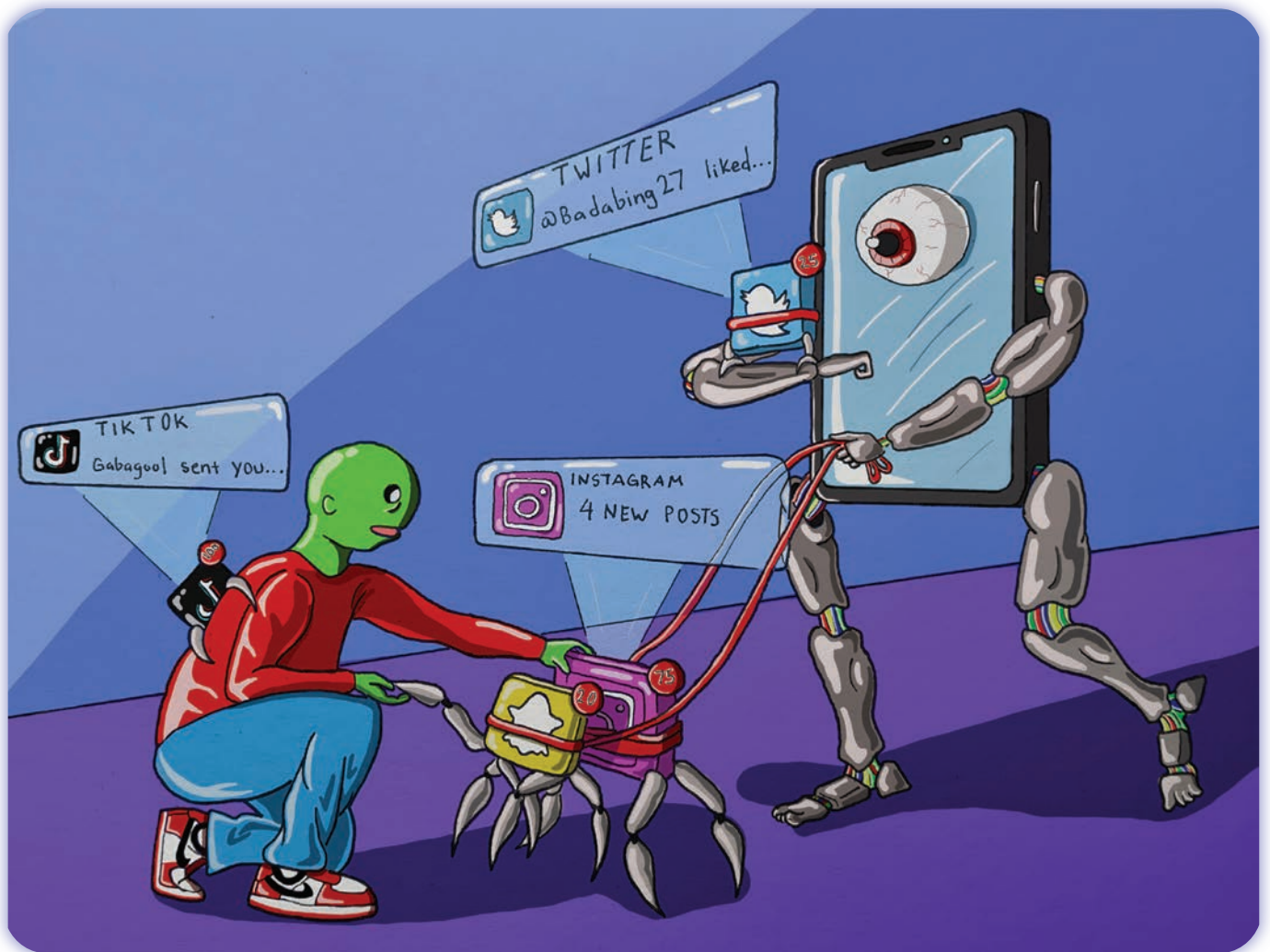


ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID MESQUITA

What CSUN students consume digitally

INTERVIEW BY KAMRYN MARTELL AND ARIEL GIL

Popular apps like Instagram, Twitter and TikTok offer endless entertainment for young students. All three platforms provide a free space to talk about certain topics someone would like to discuss, as well as invite open public commentary online. Social media consumerism has been an integral part of American culture since MySpace gained more popularity between the years 2005 and 2008. “In its heyday in 2006 and 2007, it was valued at \$12 billion ahead of a potential merger with Yahoo after becoming the most visited website in the U.S,” data journalist Florian Zandt wrote in an article for Statista, based on numbers from Bloomberg.

After more than 18 years of social media, it is here to stay. Twitter is leaning toward being a social platform where politics and personal feelings are freely spoken. Users have the access to speak and say what they want, when they want to. Apps like Instagram and TikTok are visual apps that allow room for having opinions on every topic out there. However, apps have the ability to distort reality by distracting people from the world that is around them.

A 2021 study conducted by Audrey Mekler at Bridgewater State University showed that students between the ages of 18 and 28 showed that “the more time participants spent on TikTok each day, the more they became distracted on TikTok when they were trying to pay attention in class and complete schoolwork.”

College students make connections over social media and post their day-to-day lives. It has become more accessible for the majority to consume media via these applications. Social issues like the #SayHerName movement, which helped spread knowledge and awareness about cisgender and transgender Black women victims of violence, were widespread over Twitter, according to writers Melissa Brown, Rashawn Ray, Ed Summers and Neil Fraistat in a case study. An analysis of

over 400,000 users were used when they tweeted about the hashtag and attached their stories and experiences.

Social media promotes many forms of activism, one major one being protests. Word gets around fast with the simple click of a button by liking, commenting and sharing those posts to other people. Take the ice bucket challenge, which raised \$115 million in donations and raised awareness of Lou Gehrig’s disease. This was a simple challenge that had social media users dump a bucket of ice on their heads and then call out a few friends afterward, daring them to do the same if they would not donate to the charity, according to an article by Online Maryville.

“There are lots of possible reasons for students’ social media usage — to stay in touch with friends, share a funny video, keep up with news, build professional contacts and just generally feel ‘in the loop,’” according to the results from a global survey from graduate students and an article written by Laura Bridgestock.

Since social media has had an impact on young students for a long time, it has increasingly become a larger part of their lives. A study done at University of California, Los Angeles found that “27.2% of college students spend more than six hours on social media a week,” according to Jason Dossett.

Most people cannot go a day without checking their social media accounts, let alone their phones — it’s become a part of their daily lives.

This year alone, “the average daily social media usage of internet users worldwide amounted to 147 minutes per day, up from 145 minutes in the previous year,” according to Statista. From being able to send emails for a job to using Instagram and TikTok for entertainment, people can spend the whole day on their phones if they want to.

Jenilee Borek, broadcast journalism.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, NFL, MLB, NBA, NHL.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
Los Angeles news.

Where do you get your news from?
Local channels on DirecTV, CNN, Instagram,
Twitter, Los Angeles Times, The New York Times.

Jose Sanchez, communications.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, BeReal.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
Politics, entertainment.

Where do you get your news from?
Twitter, TikTok.

Missael Soto, journalism.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
NPR and Twitter.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
Sports, history, local stories.

Where do you get your news from?
Los Angeles Times, Spectrum, NPR.

Abdel Nassar, English literature.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
None.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
I engage mostly with the local news.

Where do you get your news from?
Both in television, YouTube and newspaper.

Tiffany Pereshirem, sociology.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
TikTok, Facebook, Google.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
Many different things.

Where do you get your news from?
ABC 7.

Aline Rojas, sociology.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
TikTok.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
Drama.

Where do you get your news from?
Google.

Juliana Guzman, sociology.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
TikTok.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
Drama.

Where do you get your news from?
Google.

Fernanda Bobadilla, psychology.

What apps do you use for consuming media?
Instagram, TikTok.

What kind of information do you engage with most?
Psychological facts.

Where do you get your news from?
Newspaper.

THE GROWTH OF ONLINE ADVERTISING

WRITTEN BY RANDY FLORES



SEARCH AD VS. DISPLAY AD:

Advertisers often use two ad formats: search ads and display ads. The first is used when an individual searches for a product or service. The second is when the consumer is a target audience.

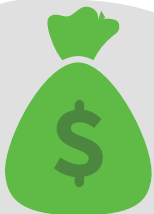
Source: Harvard Business Review



AMERICAN DAILY AD EXPOSURE:

Digital marketing experts say that Americans are exposed to an average of 4,000-10,000 ads everyday.

Source: Forbes



DIGITAL ADVERTISING REVENUE:

An estimated \$566 billion was spent on digital advertising in 2022.

Google alone generated \$14.2 billion in ad sales in the first half of 2022.

Source: Statista, Reuters



THE COST-PER-CLICK SYSTEM:

The cost-per-click system, used by Google, is when someone searches for a keyword and an ad for a similar product or service comes up.

CPC is used to improve a site's traffic.

Joe Balestrino, a digital marketing specialist, claims that a typical house cleaning service would pay Google about \$7 per click.

Source: CNBC

Digi-Facts:

Digital facts you didn't already know

Written by Isabella Vodos

- 1 Digital marketing experts at Red Crow Marketing declared that people encounter 4,000-10,000 advertisements every day.
- 2 Today, 97% of teens use the internet about once a day, compared to 92% in 2014-2015, according to a report by the Pew Research Center. YouTube stands as the number one platform used by teens, with 95% of teens saying they use the platform. TikTok ranks second with 67% of teens reporting use, followed by Instagram, 62%, Snapchat, 59%, and Facebook, 32%.
- 3 As stated in Business Insider, the average salary of a YouTube content creator is \$2 to \$12 per 1,000 views. Once YouTubers reach 4,000 watch hours and 1,000 subscribers within a year, they can earn money through YouTube's Partner Program. This allows creators to place monetized ads on their videos.
- 4 When looking at the social media platforms U.S. adults use to get their news, 31% regularly get it from Facebook. Twenty-five percent prefer YouTube, 14% prefer Twitter, 13% prefer Instagram, 10% prefer TikTok and 8% prefer Reddit. Fewer Americans regularly get news from LinkedIn, 4%, Snapchat, 4%, Nextdoor, 4%, WhatsApp, 3%, or Twitch, 1%, according to the Pew Research Center.
- 5 There are 3.96 billion active social media users worldwide, according to Hootsuite.
- 6 There are 560,000 new pieces of malware detected in computers and websites every day, according to DataProt. Malware is a type of virus that links to an app or program and takes control of that computer program. With malware intact, it can hijack a person's data and delete it while also causing the device to wreck itself.
- 7 Google receives 8.5 billion searches per day, according to The Small Business Blog.
- 8 A total of 85% of adults in America own a smartphone as of 2021, according to the Pew Research Center.
- 9 In 1971, the first ever computer virus was created. Named "Creeper system," it was built as an experiment to see how it spread between computers, according to Sentrion.
- 10 There are 320 billion spam emails sent every day, according to Forbes.

(OPINION)

Our world and media consumption

WRITTEN BY PAMELA GARCIA

ILLUSTRATION BY ZASHA HAYES

Online media is an endless source of information regarding all kinds of breaking news happening at any given time. Whether it's politics or celebrity drama, a simple surf on any social platform can help an individual form and voice one's opinion openly. There's no limit to one's daily consumption of the media, which is typically for the worse rather than the better.

While there are a multitude of credible sources and people with valid and insightful opinions in the media, one may still fall victim to fake news or bias on social media or in certain news outlets. Most notably, bias and misinformation are found within relevant political issues surrounding minority groups. Relaying this version of information puts them directly at risk if there is a misinterpretation of what the group is fighting for or against.

For example, in 2020 many biased right-wing news outlets such as Fox News and One America News, falsely reported on the Black Lives Matter protests, calling them "dangerous riots" and accusing protestors of vandalism and looting. It was later found that not all the people who were setting buildings on fire

and looting were advocates for the Black Lives Matter movement.

However, because these stories continued to be run, they painted the community in a bad light and people like Kyle Rittenhouse brought guns to protests, shooting people fatally in an effort to "protect the city." He was acquitted by a jury because he was white.

These same outlets were the ones who called the raiding of the U.S. Capitol a protest rather than what it really was — a riot sent by President Donald Trump. Our perception of a situation can be extremely warped by the kind of media that we consume on a daily basis. Being mindful of what impactful role media can play in our lives and in society as a collective is incredibly important. It gives us a platform to speak on whatever we believe in, but also an opportunity to curate and see things that align with our own biases.

It's easy to push away heavy topics in the media that we don't want to see, but taking the time to educate ourselves by consumption of factual media through multiple sources and biases is one solution to cutting back on the spread of misinformation.

Yurthaa lah.
Kam nu
Mureibun.

Facts over
feelings,
my ass.

Aye
man!
Look!

Nahn
Huna!

i Oi, estúpido!
¡Mira allá!
¿Estas ciego?

How's
about
getting
facts from
the
source?

Minorities will be the
downfall of America.
They plan to over-
turn and over-
take us
white, christ-
ian Americans
with their
ideologies.

FOX
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TUCKER
CARLSON

There's
no reason
such a reliable
news source
would lie
to us.

תסתכל
בבוקר.

Not so long distance: How a **CSUN** student and alumni maintain relationships in the virtual world

WRITTEN BY KAITLYN LAVO

PHOTO COURTESY BY JASMIN BOND AND RAE H



“Meet You in Europe”

Jasmin Bond
Sociology major, class of 2013

Imagine meeting one of your closest friends because you were stranded in Canada while waiting for a flight to Europe. This is something Jasmin Bond lived for herself. She uses the virtual world to stay in touch with her travel friends scattered throughout the country.

“What bonded us together is we were all kind of near the same age, where we had just finished school, we all loved to travel, and we all liked to have fun and play sports,” Bond said.

While Bond still resides in California, the friends she made are scattered throughout the East Coast.

“One is in Boston, Washington D.C., Norfolk, Virginia, Nashville, and one just moved to Colorado,” Bond explained.

Serendipity brought the travel group together. While Bond was stranded at the Toronto airport in Canada for 36 hours, she met one of her soon-to-be lifelong friends. After this chance en-

counter, the friend group continued to grow virtually.

“Once we got to Europe he became friends with the boys and because we were friends I became friends with the rest of them,” said Bond.

Two months before Bond’s 25-day trip to Europe, Bond and her new virtual friends created a private Facebook group to get to know each other before finally meeting up in May 2015. Their friendship continued for the next seven years.

“We try to see each other once a year, but mostly keep in contact through online social platforms,” said Bond.

Bond and her virtual friends are already planning their next in-person meetup at the end of 2022.

“If online communications didn’t exist, a lot of my relationships and how I communicate would be so different,” said Bond. “I probably wouldn’t have as many friends in my life or keep in contact with as many people as I do now.”

The virtual world has opened up many opportunities for Bond, but having people to travel with has been among the highlights.

“Watch Parties Down Under”

Nicole Quiterio
Public relations major, currently enrolled

Nicole Quiterio joins her family in singing “Happy Birthday” to her brother, only she is doing it through FaceTime while in Australia. Quiterio is studying abroad this semester.

“It was nice to feel like I was actually there,” Quiterio said.

The relationships she shares with her friends and family here in California are very strong and if it was not for digital communication, Quiterio could not picture herself taking the opportunity to study overseas.

“I honestly don’t think I would have studied abroad if I didn’t have the amount of communication options I have,” Quiterio explained. “If I didn’t have the level of communication I have with them I think it would be so much more isolating.”

Quiterio uses a variety of platforms to feel connected with her friends and family back home, such as WhatsApp and social media apps. Though she has an Australian number to text, Quiterio says that WhatsApp is the most organized way to keep track of messages.

She especially loves doing virtual watch parties on different streaming services. This is a feature recently added to movie streaming platforms so multiple people can watch the same movie from different locations. This feature is a result of the 2020 lockdown, but works for people like Quiterio to participate in long-distance social events.

She mainly uses apps to stay in touch with her loved ones, such as Instagram and Snapchat. They allow Quiterio to keep the people she cares about up to date on her life in Australia in a simple way.

"I literally post the tiniest moments of my day, but everyone is able to see rather than me texting people individually," Quiterio said.

As much as she enjoys using social media to stay connected, Quiterio reminds herself to remember to live in the moment.

"I find myself trying to balance between taking photos and recording videos, and just simply living in the moment," Quiterio continued. "However, the digital experience has let me speak to friends and family instantaneously, and it's so helpful in times of homesickness."

Studying abroad has forced Quiterio to find new and creative ways of communicating since, but she is grateful to live in a time where digital communication is an option.

"I think moving away from home to any part of the world is really daunting," Quiterio said. "Really the only way for me to maintain these relationships is digitally, and I'm really lucky to have so many options."

"Poly-States"

Rae H.

Public health major, class of 2019

A boyfriend in Los Angeles, a girlfriend in Long Island, all while beginning a new life in Salem.

Rae H. has created love that breaks the walls of convention.

Rae and her boyfriend Ari D., whose last names are being withheld for job-related reasons, began dating in 2018, but after a two-year separation they began to rebuild a friendship in 2020. As of January of this year they began dating again, only this time they are over 960 miles apart. They are polyamorous and have partners in other states.

"Our other partners are scattered across the country, so virtual dalliances are a core component of our relationships. We live in the future now; it's amazing," Rae said.

Rae and her boyfriend spent the summer in Long Island with his family and their girlfriend. When they can't make in-person trips, they will watch movies together virtually. Recently, they began a morning routine of sending their dreams to each other in a voice memo.

"It's an exercise to improve memory and creativity, and it's a great way to get each other to smile upon waking," Rae explained.

The number of adults in America that identify as non-monogamous is 23% according to YouGov. Around 31% of millennials say their relationship is non-monogamous, but only 8% define their relationship as completely non-monogamous.

With a small population, many misconceptions are made around the polyamorous community. Rae had to discover for herself and debunk a lot of misconceptions surrounding non-monogamy.

"Being poly, open, and long distance has been far less of a challenge than I

thought it would be. It is so easy to love and let myself be loved. Honest communication really is the secret sauce that makes a non-monogamous relationship so delicious," Rae expressed. "Open dating is thrilling, and having the freedom to see anyone I like has actually strengthened our bond."

Polyamory and long-distance relationships are two of the rarest forms of dating. Only 11% of partners who have been together for less than 10 years met online according to the Pew Research Center.

"Long-distance love has allowed me to focus on my own work, and makes the brief moments we get together that



much more special. The possessiveness and social obligations that are baked into heteronormative monogamy have become so clearly unnecessary," Rae said. "I am so happy to be entirely myself in this relationship, and to feel no guilt for my needs."

Though they are hundreds to thousands of miles apart, the three experience happiness for each other and their experiences outside of the triad.

"It is extraordinarily fun to gossip with my partner about crushes that I have, and to get pictures from him when he's hanging out with his sweethearts," Rae said. "Sharing joy has never felt so easy."

Media Abyss



ILLUSTRATION BY ZASHA HAYES

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Events subject to change



FEATURED EVENTS



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 Free guided meditations available online
 📍 insig.ht/4B9Wipxwinb



SRC: Neon Fitness Frenzy
 Monday, Oct. 24 – Friday, Oct. 28
 📍 Student Recreation Center



Tech Tips: Adobe Illustrator
 Wednesday, Oct. 26
 🕒 1 – 2 p.m. 📍 Computer Lab



Mystic Evening
 Friday, Oct. 28
 🕒 6 – 9 p.m. 📍 University Student Union



Pride Center: Dia de los Muertos
 Tuesday, Nov. 1 – Thursday, Nov. 3
 📍 University Student Union



VRC: Monday Night Football Watch Party
 Monday, Oct. 31
 🕒 5 – 8:30 p.m. 📍 Veterans Resource Center