Because of streaming services available through smart phones, laptops, tablets, game consoles and dedicated streaming devices like the Roku and Amazon Fire TV, streaming video has never been more popular.

The idea is simple: Streaming websites provide access to shows, movies, sports and other content through multimedia platforms, allowing anyone with an Internet connection access to the content they want to watch.

But the reality is more complex. Sports and entertainment companies tend to keep a tight rein on original content. Not every series is available in the same place. And some simply see the technology as novel and confusing.

Ryan Downey says his website — The Streaming Advisor — aims to help consumers cut through the clutter without making them feel as if they’re reading a technical manual.

“It’s an educational and informative website,” says Downey, “that teaches people, helps people, and keep people entertained.”

In order to do that, The Streaming Advisor provides visitors with a multitude of news and how-to articles as well as reviews related to video streaming that help them stay informed about and connected to their platforms. And maybe also cut costs in the process.

“There are a lot of people who are looking to save money where they can and dropping cable is an easy target. The problem is that most people are woefully...
SOC graduate student travels to Africa for research

by Ali Capri

Graduate students are familiar with one particular requirement: the thesis. Some find it exciting, while others dread it. For Purity Kimaiyo, it was an opportunity to be involved in something she has always wanted to do.

Kimaiyo, a master’s degree student in the School of Communication at ECU, knew from a young age that she wanted to help educate girls about sexuality and reproductive health.

“Growing up in Kenya, I witnessed firsthand the reproductive health crisis among adolescent girls,” Kimaiyo said. She explained that there was very little education about the subject in school. Kimaiyo’s mother helped to counsel women and girls in reproductive health matters, which exposed her to the topic and led her to want to follow in her mother’s footsteps.

Kimaiyo attended Kapenda Girls High School in Kenya as a student just nine years ago. This past May, she was able to visit her high school in the rural area of Chepko-rio to help with a sexuality and reproductive health workshop for current students.

“My specific focus was I wanted to see just the attitudes that adolescents and girls were having in high school, [and] what they thought about reproductive health—meaning their attitudes about abortion, contraceptives, HIV and AIDS, [and other] sexually transmitted diseases.” Kimaiyo said.

Besides the lack of formal education, many girls do not learn about reproductive health at home either.

According to Kenya Human Rights Commission, an estimated 13,000 teenage girls drop out of school due to pregnancy each year. And, nearly 48 percent of the estimated 320,000 abortions per year in Kenya are done on females between the ages of 14 to 24. According to the Guttmacher Institute,
young women suffered disproportionately, as 45 percent aged 19 and younger who went to a health facility for postabortion care experienced severe complications.

Kimaiyo spent her week at the school doing workshops, focus groups, and in-depth interviews with a group of 17 young women who were selected by their peers to participate. Kimaiyo said the participants were selected in the hopes that they would be easily approachable by other students in order to pass on what they had learned.

One of the main methods of teaching and spreading awareness that Kimaiyo had the girls participate in is “activating theater.” This approach helped the students explore topics by improvising and acting out situations that they might face. The goal of the approach was to help the students become better prepared.

“Hopefully this activating theater will help girls talk about issues concerning reproductive health,” Kimaiyo said.

Dr. Deborah Thomson—a faculty member in the SOC and Kimaiyo’s thesis chair—explained the type of theatre being used is based in Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed, a type of theatre for social change.

Thomson knows how passionate Kimaiyo is about this project. “It’s serving not just as an academic hoop you have to jump through to get your master’s degree but, for her, it’s very much an intervention and a way to give back to her community.”

Kimaiyo hopes to complete her thesis and graduate from ECU this December. With the help of two crew members, she was able to film much of her trip and she says that she plans to turn it into a documentary.

While she considers her research a success, she says she doesn’t plan to stop there.

She feels strongly that the progress she made with girls at Kapkenda Girls High School can be passed on, and hopes that her contributions can help change the statistics for women in Kenya.

“Ideally, down the line, I would really hope that we can maybe even apply this to the school curriculum for girls in Kenya.”

Details of the workshop, additional photos, and video clips are available at the project webpage: www.purityjerop.wix.com/kapkenda-performance.

Save the Date!
April 11, 2015
ECU School of Communication’s CommCrew/School caps are now on sale! $15 to pick up in-person (Communication main office on campus—Joyner E. 102) or $25 to ship. For more info, call 252-328-4227.

Special thanks to:
Fall 2014 COMM 3310 Copy Editing and Design students for their contributions to this newsletter.
unaware of their options,” Downey notes, adding that consumers may only know of one popular option but not any others. Further, many don’t necessarily realize they can also do the reverse – i.e. watch Internet content on the television.

Among over 400 published stories on the site, Downey has penned articles that teach users how to use Youtube for more than cat videos and publishes a weekly review of new options available for the Roku, a popular streaming device family that was recently recognized as the highest selling streaming brand of 2014 by Parks Associates.

In addition, The Streaming Advisor contains links to TV sites with content that can be viewed anytime for free, and frequently asked questions—addressing a range from the basic to the complex—to help visitors get a handle on streaming.

The site also points visitors to streaming sports links.

“As the new multibillion-dollar deal between ESPN and the NBA shows us, sports is something that drives the media business,” Downey states, regarding why the sports section of the site was added. “It provides links to major pro and college sports options that people can view online. In some cases the services are paired with pay TV providers but in other cases they are simply Internet-based subscription services. For instance, local fans can watch ACC sports every weekend online without any cable service.”

He notes that the NBA and MLB both have “very well-regarded online offerings” independent from ESPN, or their network partners.

“The Internet is developing into an all-you-can-eat sports buffet,” he says.

Downey is the writer and editor for the site but is looking for contributing writers, and hopes to expand to hiring writing and video staff once ad revenue makes that possible.

According to Downey, websites that existed before the creation of thestreamingadvisor.com never really got past informing users about streaming websites or teaching users tricks for cutting down on cable bills by using questionable sources. Or, instead of specializing in it, they provided information about streaming along with a plethora of other unrelated topics.

Downey says he aimed to provide something better. Through his previous connections in the media, he went to work cultivating a well-connected network. His background experience includes working for ECU News Bureau and Media Relations during graduate school, freelance writing for the News & Observer, serving as communications director for the Newman Catholic Student Center at ECU, and working for HR Directions in Raleigh in educational research.

Apparently, Downey’s instincts about the need for streaming video news have been on target. In September of this year, the site received 79,000 unique visits.

“The traffic seems to pick up a little more each month,” Downey relates, adding that he expects it will grab close to a million unique visitors and well over 3 million web views by September 2015. “And that is if things only stay where they are. We are hoping to grow.”

Journalism history now offered

Dr. Glenn Hubbard is teaching Development of American Journalism this semester.

Offered for the first time, it’s the newest journalism course added to East Carolina University’s School of Communication.

The course gives students a new look at journalism. Students taking the course learn about the development of U.S. journalists from the early 1700s to today and their roles within society.

“It’s important to understand the why behind what we do,” said Hubbard.
Students from East Carolina University’s School of Communication had the opportunity to fly thousands of miles across “the pond” and indulge in what could be considered a communication major’s dream. Enrolled in courses taught by Dr. Cindy Elmore and Barbara Bullington, 20 ECU students spent two weeks exploring much of what London had to offer.


“Meeting with Ari Shapiro was one of the highlights of my trip,” said ECU senior Kent Pittman. “It was really easy to connect with him and hear his point of view on the world of communication.”

Another study abroad trip is planned for summer 2015. Communication and English students will visit three Central European Cities: Krosno, Krakow and Prague, studying intercultural communication and English as a global language.

More photos of the London trip are at www.flickr.com/schoolofcommunication

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School of Communication announces Certificate in Health Communication

Available to students enrolled in graduate degree programs and nondegree applicants who hold a baccalaureate degree. (Students currently enrolled in the MA in communication are not eligible to earn the certificate.)

The program requires 12 s.h. of health communication coursework with a minimum grade of B from courses related to:

- Media and Health Communication
- Interpersonal Health Communication
- Intercultural Communication in Health Contexts
- Communication and Health Organizations
- Communication Approaches to Health Advocacy
- Introduction to Health Communication
- Special Topics in Health Communication

For full details, visit www.ecu.edu/cs-cfac/comm/graduate/certificate.cfm

Or contact Dr. Laura Prividera, Associate Director, School of Communication, 252-328-5304, privideral@ecu.edu.
You can help the School of Communication continue to grow by: **joining CommCrew**

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