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Unique Monthly Visitors: 8,766,589

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These giant touch screens are popping up in Miami. What are they? Do they call 911?



Have you noticed dozens of vertical touch screens popping up on Miami sidewalks?

They look like human-size billboards or oversized TVs.

More than 70 of them have been installed in downtown Miami, Brickell, Wynwood, Coconut Grove, Overtown, Edgewater, Allapattah and the Design District.

But what are they for? Here what to know:

WHAT ARE THE SCREENS ON MIAMI STREETS?

The devices popping up on Miami streets are called IKE. That stands for Interactive Kiosk Experience. They're dual-sided digital touchscreens that display information based on nearby businesses, services and events.

"Each kiosk serves as a free Wi-Fi hotspot and is geolocated, displaying informational listings based on what's in the immediate proximity to the kiosk," Anna Baerman, senior development director at Orange Barrel Media, a company behind IKE Smart City, said in a statement

These kiosks, coordinated by Miami's Downtown Development Authority, can also be found in other big cities including Tampa, Atlanta, Detroit Cincinnati, Houston, San Antonio, Berkeley, Denver, Cleveland and Phoenix.

HOW DO THE KIOSKS WORK?

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IKE works two ways — passive and interactive. When a pedestrian isn't engaging with IKE, the screen displays a loop of city, community, art and commercial information. When a pedestrian touches the screen, an interactive dashboard appears.

WHAT ARE THE KIOSKS FOR?

The IKE kiosks can help you find information you may need, like what to do in Brickell on a weeknight and finding the best bus route to Overtown.

Here are nine ways they can be useful:

- **Public transportation:** If you want to save money and not use Uber and Lyft, select the “get around” option and enter your destination for public transit options.
- **Restaurants and bars:** Are you feeling hungry or do you want to have a cold one after a hard day at work? Select the “eat + drink” option to find nearby spots.
- **Events:** Are you bored and looking for something to do? Select the “events” option to know what's happening in your area, from flying trapeze classes to community workouts.
- **Arts and Culture:** If you're seeking info about Miami culture — museums, art galleries, concerts, theater, — select the “arts + culture” option.
- **Activities:** Feeling outdoorsy? Select the “activities” option to start planning your next adventure.
- **Shop:** Do you like hanging out in stores and doing some retail therapy? The kiosks can direct you to the best places to shop in your area when you select “shop.”
- **Community services:** To find the nearest emergency shelter, select “Shelter.” If you need other related services, choose the “Homeless” option. Do you need to find an addiction recovery clinic or a community center? Then, select “social services.”
- **Jobs:** Are you looking for work? Select the “job board” option and scroll through employment opportunities in your area.
- **Selfies and games:** Not everything has to be serious. Are you feeling playful? Play an interactive game or take a selfie. Then enter your cellphone number if you want the information or selfie to be texted to you.

CAN YOU USE THE KIOSKS TO CALL 911?

Users can find an emergency button on the side of each kiosk. When pressed, IKE dials 911 and notifies the dispatcher of the kiosk location, enables two-way communication between the caller and dispatcher, and records video of the user and surrounding area.

But don't play around with it if you don't have an emergency.

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“Pressing the emergency call button on IKE if there is not an emergency is illegal, as is making a false 911 call from your personal phone,” Baerman said.

ARE MORE KIOSKS COMING?

IKE Smart City pays for the program, including routine cleaning and maintenance, because it’s a “self-sustaining business model” supported by advertising, according to the company.

On average, the company said, each IKE kiosk installed in Miami receives over 300 uses per month.

“We plan to have 150 kiosks installed by the end of next year, and will continue to expand in commercial, pedestrian-oriented areas in the city of Miami,” the company said.