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The new Miami economy is here

JORGE LUIS LOPEZ, Jorgeluis@lopezgovlaw.com

We are witnessing technology give rise to a **new economy** and push prosperity to **new** heights. This **new economy** is based on creativity, **new** platforms, and open data - unlike the old **economy** of scale - based on an industrial and concrete system.

New technologies are making way for collaborative consumption and a true sharing **economy**. This peer-to-peer industry **is** valued at more than \$26 billion a year - with the added value of a **new** trusting and cooperative community. **Miami**, through events like the May 1-7 Emerge Americas Tech Conference and IBM's Made with IBM initiatives, **is** working to jump-start this opportunity.

The new economy's platforms are "people-to-people" networks. They are based on creative innovations that simplify life and push commerce forward. Early innovators - EBay, Amazon, Craigslist, Car2Go - have exceeded all expectations, showing that the future of a sharing **economy** will be bright.

New platforms like Air B&B, a travel app that offers lodging at a smaller scale than hotels, helps you find the most convenient and affordable ones available. Others, like Lyft, arrange carpool-like services between a car owner with free space in their car and someone who needs a ride. Then there's Uber, a car service that functions off of an on-demand smartphone application. These **new** platforms rival traditional services by being more efficient and functioning on a person-to-person scale.

So, how do we move into this **new** sharing **economy**? County Mayor Carlos Gimenez **is** working with IBM to implement innovative citizen participation on a social scale, creating what he calls "2.5 million Co-Mayors". **The** Made with IBM initiative can also be seen in Sun Life Stadium, where a **new** operations system functions on a cloud and offers consolidated views of all operations within the stadium.

Luckily, the Knight Foundation has been working tirelessly with startups and innovators to create a true #TechBeach in **Miami**.

What else must be done? Legislation and regulations must be in harmony with these innovations. **The** county **is** already investing in infrastructure - why not also invest in human capital by attracting the likes of Tesla and Google, pushing closer to the **new economy**? Create tech shops (hardware gyms), which will serve as hubs for those who are creative and seek to maximize use of collaborative platforms.

Published open data - on a real-time basis - would merge government info and the **new** platforms. For example, with transit, we could access tracking information for traffic, buses, trolleys, metrorails and movers. This wealth of information can be accessed via the **new** platforms to increase productivity and allow us to use the **new** system to our advantage. Consumers could check the status of their chosen mode of transit and opt in or out of alternatives accordingly.

But **is** technology enough? We must also push to be a hub for education and eliminate South Florida's "brain drain." We can collaborate with powerhouses such as MIT and Stanford - with hubs as far as Shanghai - to ensure that **Miami is** a viable home for future innovators.

We need to exploit all available opportunities - like Code for America, a nonpartisan organization that grants fellowships to connect web professionals with local municipalities in need of a tech overhaul in order to increase openness, efficiency and local participation.

I can remember marveling at one of the first personal computers at the Westland Mall Radio Shack as a teen. I couldn't afford to buy one, but ultimately taught myself to program some of the highest powered computers of the time designing applications for Anthony Abraham Chevrolet (a true innovator of his time).

Promotion, investment and support of **new** platforms will ensure that **Miami** benefits from the **new** sharing **economy**. Moreover, it will ensure that **Miami** becomes a viable home for start-ups, innovation, education and collaboration. We can embrace the future by requiring our leaders to move forward - ensuring that **Miami** thrives on collaborative platforms and the **new economy**.

After all, the **new economy is** coming. It's best we not stagger behind.

Jorge Luis Lopez **is** a **Miami**-based government-affairs attorney. He represents numerous tech companies, including IBM and Lyft.

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