Meric: So we'll start off really easy. So who are you? Tell me about yourself. How would you describe yourself to someone?

Alex: Sure. So like name and everything? So, Alex Giles. 24 Caucasian male. That's a pretty good physical description. Umm, charismatic... i guess. I never used to think of myself that way but I guess I turned into a pretty charismatic guy. Person

able, I can usually relate to most people.

Meric: I can see that a lot of the time when I'm in the store. So why did you decide to start a business in Meadville?

Alex: In Meadville or in general? or both?

Meric: Both.

Alex: So in the jobs I've had, like didn't go to college, had a couple jobs in high school. Working for somebody else and having to grind up whatever latter was there always felt kind of meaningless. Like I always had the ambition to do more stuff and try and go as high as I could but at my last job when i did work at a game store, it just felt like it was kinda going no where and when it did hit that pinnacle of, "wow now i'm like managing this place and have full control over this place and do it how i wanna do it" it still felt like being capped on what i wanted to do with my creative and creative limits and stuff like that. Um, that was never something that i wanted to happen so eventually i got to this point where i was like if i could work for myself i could make all these decisions and i wouldn't have to deal with this guy, who was kinda wanting me to do everything the way *he* wanted to do it and uh and he was so detached and "why can't he be more attached to his customers and things like that. and it got to this point where I said if i wanted to do something i wanna do it myself and make sure i do it correctly and that's when i decided to move back here. Here specially because I went to high school here, I was 2007-2011 and as soon i graduated and moved away. But during those four years there was nothing like this (Purple Fox Games) around here. **It was always a travel to go somewhere and Meadville always felt like the town that was kinda left behind time. It's not as modern in a lot of ways other places in the world are, it's not as relevant. So i wanted to try and come back here to give kids that are my age the chance I never had to go to a game store and have that community sense and hobby and nerd fandom. So yeah, that's why I opened a business here.**

Meric: Very cool, looks like you already answered the next question too but you mentioned you already had worked at some gaming stores previously, how many had you worked at before?

Alex: Just one but it was a franchise. It was in southern NH and it was called Myriad Games. I got a job there in 2014, I think is when i started. April 2014. I stopped working there about January 2014, that's when he closed the doors on all his stores and let everyone go.

Meric: And so you started this store when?

Alex: I guess we got our EIN in Feb of 2016 so it's kinda like it became a trademark business name then but wasn't until the 7th of November in 2016 that the doors actually opened and we found a place.

Meric: So when I was speaking with Justin and Matt they had mentioned that they had always been part of the store even before the store existed in the sense that they would always come to your Creative Crust game nights. So how do those usually play out? What was the turn out? What was the environment like?

Alex: So originally it was my dad's idea. He was like "oh, there's this bakery downtown that's trying to do these game nights on Fridays; you should talk to her and tell her what you want to do". So I sat down with Vicky and we chatted about it and she said it'd be fine if my store, or my business idea, sponsored her game nights. It was a very small space like maybe 20 seats if we really all worked together to tuck around. I don't think there were more than that many chairs. It was usually just a very regular turnout of like 8 people and it took us a while to get there, to just get the word out. But once it was in full swing, there were like couple nights where people were having to switch out with other people just to sit down and play games and some people just like came in and looked and were really interested and they came back next week. So it has always been this kind of like "bring these games, entertain people, hope that they support the business" kind of ideal.

Meric: So the people that usually turned out there, what was the demographic like? What were the people like?

Alex: So probably like teens. Like mid-teens. 14 may have been the youngest and that was Glen and now he's like 15. So mid-teens to I guess Justin and Matt's age which is like around 40. A lot of families and stuff like that, people in their 20's with just nothing else to do that enjoy games and they want to meet other people so it really brings a real age range in there.

forefront that it's really hard for anywhere to start a video game based store and to be successful because you have the need to be very good with retro games and stuff like old Nintendo games and then you have to like market that to a very specific type person and that's kind of like what the internet is for at this point. The \_\_ can be made to board games but there's no GameStop of board games and I'm kind of thankful for that because I don't want there to be something like that and that's where we can kind of give people that experience they can't get at a video game based retail. Honestly, I also don't really like the customer that come from video games. Again, I find them very niche and if they're looking for something it's something very very specific and if you don't have that one copy of Ocarina of Time for the N-64 that they really really wanted or it's too much for their budget and they don't understand because it's such a hard-to find game then they get burned and turned away. So it's hard to make a consistent customer base over video games.

Meric: So why specifically card games and board games and not video games?

Alex:So video games have this entrusting market around them where GameStop and Walmart and

Target and places like that have really pushed it into this mainstream media focus and you see that a lot with like ESports being streamed to TV and even showing up on ESPN at times like with a lot of the fighting games and things like Counter Strike. So video games have become so pushed into the forefront that it's really hard for anywhere to start a video game based store and to be successful because you have the need to be very good with retro games and stuff like old Nintendo games and then you have to like market that to a very specific type person and that's kind of like what the internet is for at this point. The \_\_ can be made to board games but there's no GameStop of board games and I'm kind of thankful for that because I don't want there to be something like that and that's where we can kind of give people that experience they can't get at a video game based retail. Honestly, I also don't really like the customer that come from video games. Again, I find them very niche and if they're looking for something it's something very very specific and if you don't have that one copy of Ocarina of Time for the N-64 that they really really wanted or it's too much for their budget and they don't understand because it's such a hard-to find game then they get burned and turned away. So it's hard to make a consistent customer base over video games.

Meric: So yeah, that makes a lot of sense, that's very logical. But, for you personally, do you play video games a lot? I know you mentioned Twitch. Even as someone who plays video games, I wasn't super familiar Twitch until actually this Summer. So. do you play video games and do you do online stuff?

Alex: Absolutely, yeah. I used to stream when I had time for it and then the rig I have right now kind of crashed recently so I haven't been able to do that in a couple of months, but that's okay. So streaming is really fun and I enjoy watching streams and things like that. As for video games, I've been doing it since like 11 or 12 like when the family got a modern computer and AOL was still a thing and Internet Explorer was the number one browser. I was doing stuff like that, playing Counter Strike, playing very free games, played World of Warcraft for a long time and it just kind of translated through growing up, was a single kid for the most part or like an only child. My brother is special needs, but a lot of the attention went on him so I kind of had to find ways to amuse myself. So instead of like going out and hanging out with other kids, I just kind of like introverted myself and played a lot of video games and that's translated into my life outside of here as well.

Meric: So, in addition to twitch, and including all kinds of gaming communities. What was your feel of those communities. Since they are online, they come with a negative stigma.

Alex: Sure, of course.

Meric: Did you get that same feeling of negativity or criticalness from your online gaming community; what was your experience?

Alex: When you're online it's really really easy to let emotions get the better of you for the most part. Like you see all these videos of people going into game stores and flipping tables and stuff like that and that like.. I've never seen that happen and It can happen because you know emotions run high and people have this competitive nature and desire to win. But when you have the safety and sanctity of a keyboard and monitor in front of you, it's really easy to just like go off on someone because you know you'll never have to meet them again. And it uh, fuels people to be much more emotional and much more erratic when they're in an online environment. So like take the worst gaming community like League of Legends or DOTA or something like that, like the worst, just garbage like toxic communities, I've never seen anything near something like that for board games. Because you imagine people are investing so much of their time and money into something physical they wanna get the most out of it so why be a jerk to other people.

Meric: So how long have you been living in Meadville?

Alex: So i moved here in the summer of 2007, my grandfather passed away and left his house. So instead of living in the apartment building we were in New Hampshire and going to school there. My dad was also out of a job and didn't really have the money for us to continue living there, so it kinda just worked out. Between 8th and 9th grade I moved here and went to high school in Meadville and then as soon as I graduated in 2011, like a month later I moved back to NH but then I came back to live here in 2016. So a year and half combined like 5.5 year.

Meric: So how would you compare your experience from NH to here?

Alex: Absolutely love NH, everything it has to offer, again going back to progressive areas, um it was really really awesome that people were really straightforward and genuine and I learned a lot more about myself and other people that I don't think I could have learned living in Meadville. This place is often very closed off to new ideals and very reluctant to change just in the people themselves and city itself, it doesn't really like new things springing up and happening without people being aware of it or knowing why or trying to dig their nose into things. But I've always known if I could, like if this store makes enough money, if I could open another store, I'd open it in NH. And I would leave this to somebody else because that's' where I'd love to be back to. But the dream really focused to moving here instead.

Meric: So what expectations did you have when starting this business?

Alex: I expected it to fail because I'm very pessimistic when it comes to things like this. One of those people who are like, "man why is this good thing happening to me? Like I don't understand what's going on" I've kinda always thought that. That kinda thing. Like "why is this nice thing happening to me, what did I do to deserve this?" And it's worked out so incredibly well after all the effort.. that I didn't really believe it would last. "Like this is a joke right? This isn't gonna be forever, this isn't gonna be for more than a couple months" and after it was, it was more like "this isn't gonna last after 6 months" and now we're here. And now there's still a part of me that is like "we aren't gonna make a year", but I keep proving myself wrong so I'm gonna keep trying to do that.

Meric: I was gonna say, this place is pretty amazing, so you should be proud.

Alex: Thank you!

Meric: I guess you've already answered it but I was going to ask, your expectations versus your experience, and how they relate to each other, would you want to add anything to those experiences?

Alex: I guess with this pessimistic outlook and really hoping that things go so well for me really pushes me to do more and try more and to try and further the business to any means possible. So i'm kinda happy for it but at the same time it's not healthy. But I am happy for it because it is trying push me harder for the business, but yeah.

Meric: So typically what are your customers generally like, their personalities, and behaviors that stand out to you?

Alex: They're usually pretty happy with is good. I get to see the best side of people. And I'm super thankful for that. Like you go to Wal-mart and you see these people walking around and it's usually that last place they wanna be because they're shopping for something or something broke and they're just there to get it and they're just surrounded by all these other people and they're usually not at their best, you don't get to see the best side of them. Verses this where this is kinda like a treat for people. This is for some highschool kids, if you kept good grades, this is where you get to go at the end of the week. Or this is the "okay only two more days and we get to go play board games" stuff like that, it's where people go who in aren't just happy to see me or the store but the other people inside the store too. And they don't wanna bring negativity in here they don't wanna bring their outside lives or rough jobs into a place like this. They wanna keep it light hearted and mellow. So I get to see the best side of people and i'm happy about that.

Meric: So a lot of what you said and including conversations you've had with me outside the interview was you've really tried to make the store and environment a safe place for everyone, can you tell how you've broken down the days to cater to everyone's needs?

Alex: Sure, so, with a store like this in being both and event space and a retail space, it's often hard to encapsulate everything people wanna do and everything that people are passionate about. by breaking it down and having a day for each type of an event can sometimes keep the negative mindsets of somebody based on a stigma away from other people. to elaborate on that there might be - i'm not saying it's in my store but - like minis players might not like MAGIC the gathering players, they might think it's a dumb game and don't understand it, they would rather throw dice at each other all day and use tape measures, so by not co-mingling Minis people with MAGIC people, it keeps the focus of the store in one direction. so that a couple kids with backpacks don't come over and start asking a bunch of questions while the Mini's group is trying to focus and vice versa, dice doesn't fall under a MAGIC players foot and now you gotta interact with them. It's little interactions like that, but it's mostly about catering to everyone's need and making sure people can pick up the products here, take it home, play with and then come back here to experience it around other people who also enjoy it. So that's kinda why the games are ordered the way they are. they are segmented by day because that makes the most out of the space and keeps people happy.

Meric: I think the first day I was here you told me about how, having a gaming store like this in the community helps keep the youth that really didn't have anything to do or keep busy, can you talk a little bit about that?

Alex: Sure, so i'm going to high school here and getting to grow up from ages 14-18, and there not being a lot to do in town when you're not someone who's really big into sports and if you don't play those sport, really big into the sports teams, or really big into the after school clubs or any of the community based events, which is really a large percentage of kids when you really think about it. Because only so many kids can make the football team or play basketball. If you're not interested in any of those things or gifted athletically or theatrically, there are not a whole lot of other things to do. An all the places i've been to growing up, like in NH there was always something to do. **Go to the park, there were community based things all the time but at the same time I was a younger age. In Meadville it does seem like there are community based events for ages 6-12 like days at the MARC where you can go and swim or like the ice rink opens up and has a kids day but again for these high school kids there's not a whole lot. They find their interests in other way like video games like i did because there was no one else to really go out and socialize with. And sometimes they find their interests turn into more heinous things like drugs and alcohol. things you don't wanna see kids getting into because they don't feel like there's enough to do or they don't have enough accessible to them. so even if i get like half a dozen high school kids over the next few months over the summer of kids who come in and do this regularly, that's still more than there would be if i wasn't here, that's giving these people the experience i wish I would have had, and that's really what i want to do.**

Meric: I think that's fantastic, and it's something i didn't even consider before. Do you think the community understands that and did you feel welcomed by them when you first got here and started a business here?

Alex: I feel like I was. For sure. **There were a lot of questions and a whole lot of the "board games? I don't understand why you gonna sell board games? is that all you're gonna do?" No, i'm gonna do events as well. -"Well why would anyone wanna sit around and play board games?" it's like that kind of- uh again going back to the closed minded ideal of a place like this. its real tough to show people an experience and be like "no no no, i was in a place where this worked incredibly well, I promise this is a thing, you just have to let it be!" but that's only a small percentage of people, maybe 1/20 people i'd talk to may have been that way. But everybody else was incredibly excited. The GoFundMe that i started kinda showed that, in the number of donations that we got in a short amount of time and even just the comments that were left in support,, like "oh my god, we've been waiting for something like this for so long!" and even after i've opened the number of people that have been like, "this is so exciting" and "I can't believe you did this!", so again the support i've received has been unreal, again going back to that whole "Why is this happening" thing, i cannot believe the amount of positive support we've had.**

Meric: I didn't even know you guys started off a GoFundMe. How long did it take you to reach your goal and what was your goal?

Alex: The goal when I first got here was 20K and i broke that all down into a business plan and everything and then it was able to slim off into 15K just cut out the need for another employee and kinda lowered my ideal space, that kinda thing. **And then it kinda came down to 10K, during this time i was selling MAGIC cards online from my personal collection, I was just doing odd jobs to kind of put money aside for the business itself and even with all that money, it only came out to be about $2,500 so i was looking for loans and as much money as i could for a 24 year old kid that really wanted to start his own business. It was really really tough, i got turned down by i think half a dozen different banks, one of them doing the whole 2 months string along "we're doing this meeting, talking to this person, trying to get you this money, oh it really doesn't fit into this grant so we'll try and move over to this grant" so the money was looking like it would never really come, so around halfway through the summer i was like okay if i really want this to open up then i'm really gonna have to start asking other people for the money cause you known $2,000 wasn't gonna cut it. so i started a GoFundMe and it went, i think incredibly well. I think in the first month and a half we raised about $2000, out of a $5000 goal. And hoping that after actually looking at this space, okay with about $7,000 we could probably open up and at least go for it. The GoFundMe ended with i think $2,250. It ended because i met with somebody that was a private backer and loaned the store $7,000 or i guess donated $7,000 to the store.** And in combination with the money that i had we were able to open up and do it a little bigger and better than i would have been able to with just a $5,000 budget.

Meric: That's really cool, so you are the only one that works here and runs everything, so this is your baby basically?

Alex: **Yes, yes it is. I have a couple volunteers that help out if i ever get sick or leave early for something, they're wonderful and they come in the store and they know how everything works, and how to run the register and things like that and have been able to volunteer for me.**

Meric: Very cool, in comparing the younger and older demographic in the store, what have you noticed that is sort of age specific in behavior if there is anything?

Alex: Oh yeah, for sure. As you go up in age there's usually more beards that come in here.

(Both laugh)

Alex: I don't wanna say immaturity because that's not a fair term and we have two of the most mature level headed high schoolers i have ever met in my life, but there have been groups of high school age kids that will come in here and buy like cards against humanity and they'll sit around and try and whisper their very lewd jokes to each other which just makes everything really uncomfortable for everyone. So I guess theres whats to be expected. You expect to get maturity around the adults here and you usually get that for most of the people. and you expect more lack of experience and childishness from the younger crowd and you get that too. But for the most part they mesh really really well.

Because it gives the older folks a chance to lighten up and not take things so seriously because they see kids in here and kids, i apologize, 15-16 year old teenagers, and it gives them incent on how to be more mature and how to act like an adult because they're interacting with older folks.

Meric: So how often do you find college students from Allegheny or any university in the area in the store and what are those interactions like? Are they different?

Alex: I'd say noticeable college students, not just college aged but actual students that are participating in university or higher education are very infrequent. Something that i don't' see very often. I think the last memorable one before you was an Allegheny student who was graduating 2-3 weeks ago and she was in here with her parents and she made a very good point to tell me that she'd never heard of me before. and i said "okay, i'm sorry to hear that, i'm trying to advertise at the college." and she goes "Yeah. I've never heard about you. Are you with ARGO?" and I said "Yeah, i sold a bunch of board games to ARGO, so definitely." But then she goes, "but yeah, still never heard of you..." and i was kinda just like okay... So yeah some college kids come in, for sure, not very many. And the ones that Professor Wiebel or his wife Vesta have sent here or have pointed out have been maybe a dozen in the past six months, the actual memorable faces. Otherwise if they do come into its hard to tell if they're just a college aged person or pursuing a degree.

Meric: So taking a turn to the more media based observations. What is it like when you observe customers? Are they on their phones often? What are the more media based, i guess behaviors or patterns have you noticed if there are any?

Alex: Well, definitely people on their phones, which i guess is normal for this day and age. because everything is so technology centered, which is perfectly fine. For a while we did have a television in here and for a while we were streaming things, so i guess that a portion of media as well. Mostly the MAGIC tournaments on the weekends. But yeah, i guess people are on phones and tablets pretty often. Some of them use them for Mini's games because they have rule books in their tablets, others are waiting in between MAGIC rounds and are just texting each other stuff like that. So as far as media goes i guess Facebook would be the big one for us. and what we use as a business. because it just reaches out to like everybody and something that people can check easily.

Meric: So why did the TV go away?

Alex: I moved into a new apartment and I really wanted it. (Both laugh)

Meric: Fair enough!

Alex: If I had a second one it would totally be in here, it was something we used somewhat infrequently. During boardgame nights and stuff we would do Wil Wheatons Table Topped which was a YouTube series about boardgames, and I would put that on during those nights. But for the rest of the time it sort of just sat there and played google chrome's picture slideshow. It was a cool part of the store but not a necessity.

Meric: Yeah, that makes sense. So forgive me for eavesdropping. But a couple days ago there was a man in here, in a blue button down and a lanyard and he was talking to you by the counter, and I overheard him talking about connecting you to a bigger network and something like that, do you mind talking about that?

Alex: Oh sure! So thats a buddy of mine from a long time ago, his name is Mathew M. and hes a really awesome awesome dude. He works for Hagen industries which is a company that specializes in networking and i guess software development for larger companies. And managing their IT from a centralized location. So what he was showing off to me his abilities as an IT person, in a way i had never seen before. I had mentioned to him how cool of a field it was and how diverse. I had said "I'd never seen two people that work in IT that do the same exact thing before" and then he was like "can i show you something" and that's why he was kinda behind the counter. He was moreso telling me about what he does rather than trying to hook me up.

Meric: So i had already somewhat mentioned the larger communities in terms of online and cards in general. So MAGIC is really big community, do you see a lot of your customers participating online? Including like playing online activity? or is it more of a localized, in store experience for them?

Alex: It seems localized for the most part. Um, I know that a few people do read some articles that are put out by certain MAGIC The Gathering teams, things like that and that is a very big part of the community. So these professional players write articles and make videos of them playing MAGIC The Gathering online or playing in person with each other from like top down cameras and talking about the game itself. And the players themselves if you enjoyed them you can follow them on twitter, follow them on Facebook and see their updates and stuff like that to get an inside on their lives. So the MAGIC community is very much media-centric. it's huge, whenever new announcements come out it's all over the different pages and different parts of the internet. if there was a banning or un-banning of something it always seems to be very massive altogether.

Meric: So you kind of already answered it as the owner of the store but as an individual, what are some of your media and technology habits?

Alex: Um.. Well... When i got out of high school I had one of those side kicks phones where you slide it and a keyboard appears all of a sudden. And i had always wanted, I really saw all the kids in school starting to mess around with the itouches and iphones and stuff like that. And those were really becoming a big piece of technology. So not wanting to feel like I was falling behind, i definitely pushed myself to try and have a smart phone at all times. It kind of turned into a crutch for social situations and anxiety. Like "aw man, im standing in line at this post office, I don't wanna look really weird and awkward, im gonna take out my phone and browse through Facebook" because that's what i see other people doing. Things like that. as far as my media habits go, I play a lot of online games and do a lot of twitch streaming at home. It's like playing something with a group of people and using DisCord as a chat app and watching something on the Playstation that's hooked up to the television. SO there's a lot of technology that's always there. It may not always be media, i'm not as deep into following people as friends of mine are but technology is definitely something i've surrounded myself with, it's something that's very important to my job and life outside of here.

Meric: So i noticed you had a computer up at the register, what do you typically use that for?

Alex: A lot of checking card prices and making sure I can do all my bookkeeping the day it's here and having it backed up online, just in case anything were to happen to it, or if i to loose it, versus if i was writing it down and it were to catch on fire for some unknown reason. I've always been very... like.. used to using Google tools and I was pretty used to using them at the store I was at before. So it translated into this business here and it was really important I have a computer here. The last business I was at, our point of sale system was through a website called Merchant OS and I got very used to using a computer for everyday things. Checking card prices checking releases, if a customer has a question about the availability of a product I can just look it up directly right there and don't necessarily need a phone for that, it's just so much easier with a computer.

Meric: How often do you get to hang out with people, just your age, or in general, outside of the store? Do you get a lot of opportunities?

Alex: Some, maybe once or twice a week kinda thing. There's just a few people that come here consistently that I hangout with outside of here. Sometimes it nice to detach from the store,and sometimes i find myself only getting along with someone because of the similar hobby we have. The MAGIC community is a wonderful community and i've been a part of it for a really long time. And i've really enjoyed it. But a lot of the times, you connect with other people over this game and when you start to talk about your outside lives you find out how actually different the both of you are. Uh, sometimes that kinda really stinks because sometimes you're just like "man I really have these great friends but the only time I can talk to them is when its MAGIC related." That kinda stinks because sometimes you could really just use some life advice. but that doesn't really happen. So when it comes to friends and such outside of here, there are a few times, like dinners and breakfasts and stuff like that. Not really like catching a movie kinda friends, but at least getting to talk to them. and a lot of my friends are also online and in different states so getting to get online and play games with them, I would say everyday, however people that actually come to the store actively, maybe once a week.

Meric: So you already mentioned briefly, that if you had the opportunity, you'd expand the store and make a branch in NH.

Alex: Yes.

Meric: Before that, are there any directions that you want to take the store in the near future? Here specifically? Like would you add to your inventory, or maybe get another TV? What are some of the ideas you have for the store?

Alex: More space. That is the number one thing i know the customers notice when they come in. How small the location is as compared to other game stores. And being able to have more tables and bigger inventory would be really big for the business itself. I'm not sure if the size we are at right now is bottle necking any other opportunities we have but it's definitely something i that worry about more than anything else. Customers being dissatisfied for being so tightly packed together. for the most part everyone, or at least everyone tells me they're okay with it. But part of me also thinks they're just putting up with it because it is the only game store in the area and if this is how it is, "we just gotta deal with it for a little while". so again more space, right now we are at about 750 Square feet and I'd like to expand into 2000 Square feet which would require getting an employee and things like that. taking positive steps with the business to grow and expand and hopefully reach out to more people and have bigger events better things. More inventory for sure, being able to expand on what we currently have, again I think we are currently at something like 130+ titles but being to expand on those with expansions or more board games and things people are very much interested in is the direction i'd like to go. Still staying away from electronics like video games and systems and things like that.

Meric: So forgive me for my questions being all over the place, you're doing a great job answering all the questions with a ton of information and everything.

Alex: Thank you! You’re doing great too!

Meric: Thank you! It's looking really great. So you've already talked and insinuated that technology has helped you with the GoFundMe and stuff and it's been a great resource. Do you see any potential drawbacks that have happened or have happened or may happen in the future because of technology?

Alex: Becuase of technology, yes. I was, i wanna say like 3 months ago, it's actually how i became such good friends with the police officer that comes in here. I was blackmailed by somebody i had been talking to outside of the business. At the time I was talking to them, we had been chatting back and forth, he was from Canada and he was asking what i did for work so i told him that i owned a business, told him the name of it, and at the time he seemed like a very trustworthy person. But a lot of the relationships and friendships you make online, there's often not all the information there and you can't really get to know someone in a sense like that. So they went alittle crazy one day and kinda went off the deep end. We got into an argument and stopped talking for awhile. It happens, it's whatever, some people aren't meant to talk to each other. Couple weeks later I got a very malicious email saying pictures of me and my interests would be exposed if i didn't talk back to this person. So in a way technology and media almost destroyed my business, in that very specific instance. Nothing ever came of it. I never heard from this person ever again and I just beefed up the security on my facebook page to make sure no one could post without me clearing it first and that was that. It was kinda an open and shut case. But during that time, again that's how i made friends with Mr. Kip, i ended up messaging him for an entire day and he looked into some legal things for me to make sure that business was legally sound if anything like that were to happen. Again media in that sense isn't very good but otherwise it's been really great. I can say that if it wasn't here it would be very difficult to convey important information to customers like the fact we are open today, things like that.

Meric: So you've already talked about how you rarely use the following aspect of instagram and the social media following of stuff. So what kind of media do you use? Music, art, youtube?

Alex: So again Twitch TV has been really really big for a lot of their tournaments so i guess that counts. as for the business directly facebook and google I suppose are the bigs ones. With everyone having access to such big technologies, being able to push a button on your phone and out loud being able to say "call Purple Fox Games" or "direct me to Purple Fox Games" is very very easy to do. Or how long is this place open. So the direct questions like that have been really really great. facebook and everyone ability to follow it as well as my ability to boost specific post and use it as a form of advertising have been wonderful as well. I am not as familiar with instagram or snapchat or things like that so i try to stay away from them because i would rather do something correctly than give a half natured attempt at something i don't know.

Meric:From your experience do you think a lot of your customers use their media in the same way? Obviously it's a hard question to answer, but do you see them using it a certain way or incorporating it more into their lives in comparison to your experience?

Alex: I would say that all of the 20 somethings that come in here all use media mostly the same way. And music we listen to in the spotify playlist that i have that plays here, just in the moment of like "oh nothing's going on, i'm just gonna pull out my phone" like things like that the daily posts and reblogs all that kinda thing.

Meric: Closing up now, would there be anything you'd want to add about your experience with media or technology? Not even just with your business but you in your life in general, or the population in general, have you noticed anything you'd like to mention?

Alex: I'm thankful for it because it does a lot of positive things. I understand people's concern about it, people scroll through facebook all the time and people talk and you see those pictures of like 17 teenagers at a musinem and they're all staring at their phones. Things like that happen, however i think with the right spin and the right uh, view point as to what technology does for us and social media does for us and connects people together. Its helped immeasurably, i've been able to stay in contact with people that i've lost or haven't spoken to in a really long time from moving from place to place. and just getting to meet all sorts of people. OIt helps me run my business more efficiently and more effectively if someone can just facebook message me while i'm at home like "hey did you see this crazy thing that Wizards of the Coast is coming out with, can you throw one of those on my orders?" having that kind of personal connection, I truly believe helps my sales and helps me be successful as a business, so i'm very thankful for it.

Meric: In a typical day, can you tell me about what types of technology you use?

Alex: Security cameras, stuff like that, videogame systems, personal computer, but no other real impressive technology.

Meric: So you already talked about how some of the pitfalls of technology and how it can lead to desocializing, do you set limitations for yourself or do you find you operate in a good balance?

Alex: I think i operate with a good balance kinda thing, like i don't think i've ever been... what's the term for it, rude? I've never been rude in the sense someone is talking to me and I go "yeah definitely" while i look down at my phone as to not pay attention to them. I think with that kind of, like with the proper teaching and the morals that go along with owning a piece of technology like this that is so sophisticated and connects you to so many other people, then there's nothing really to worry about and everything should be fine.

Meric: Is there anything final things you want to mention about anything at all?

Alex: Just absolutely loved the experience of making this store and i'd do it again!