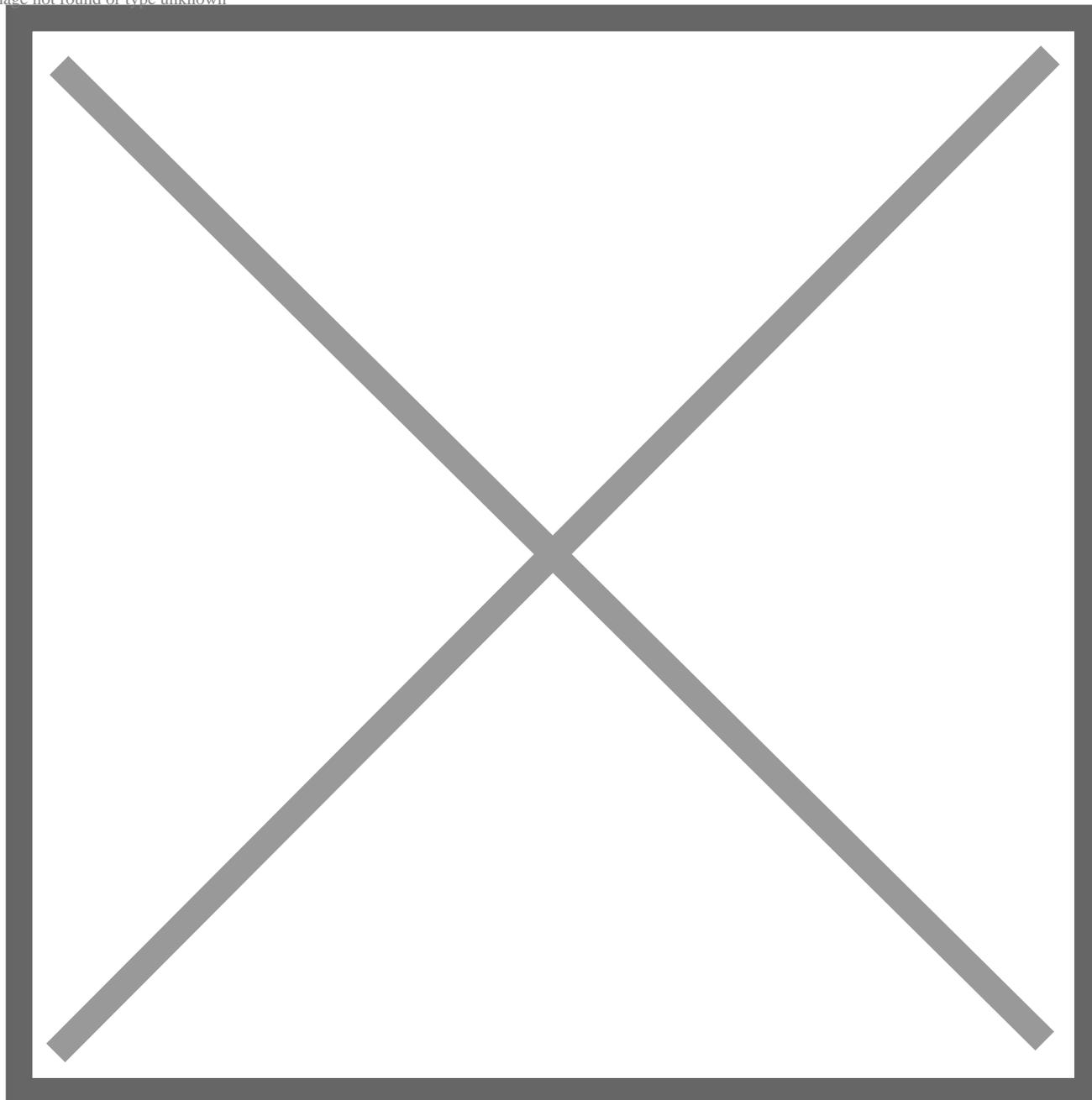


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Connection 2.0

WENDEL LIMA

Wendel Lima

Connection 2.0 is a quarterly periodical of the Brazil Publishing House (CPB) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Brazil. The magazine aims to be an educational resource to present biblical values that form the Adventist worldview to high school students in Adventist academies in Brazil.

Background

The initiative of the Adventist Church in Brazil on publishing a review for the youth comes from the 1930s. Under the direction of Pastor H. B. Lundquist, the then director of the Department of Volunteer Missionaries (current Youth Ministry) of the South American Division, a special release number of the magazine *Juventude* (Youth Paper) circulated in October 1935 with the objective of presenting the periodical and selling subscriptions during the Pro-Youth Week (October 27 to November 2).¹

Juventude had a two-week periodicity and targeted almost exclusively to the Adventist Church audience. It was the Adventist periodical dedicated to the youth who could read Portuguese. The review had articles, editorials, news, mission trip reports, a counseling section, and the Bible Study Guide for teenagers from 11 to 15 years.

Its reviews were signed by presidents of the division and of unions, the chief-editor of Brazil Publishing House, and the magazine's editor. Its main copywriter was Pastor Luiz Waldvogel,² and it was seen as a magazine that offered good advice for the formation of a noble character.³ Given that it was released along with the Spanish version, *Juventud*,⁴ it served as a guardian of the South American youth. Adventists were encouraged to subscribe and promote subscriptions among their acquaintances.⁵ There were annual goals of subscriptions for the administrative headquarters to achieve.⁶ The paper was published from 1936 to 1940. Until July 1938, the annual subscription cost \$8 Rs (\$3.92 USD today), later turning to \$10 Rs (\$4.89 USD today).

An issue of *Juventude* was published in January 1958,⁷ to mark 50 years of youth ministry, along with the release of *Youth Magazine*, costing 7 cruzeiros (\$4.92 USD today) for a single issue, and 80 cruzeiros (\$8.60 USD today) for an annual subscription. The initiative was that of Pastor Jairo Araújo, current leader of Adventist youth in South America. The plan was soon supported by the publishing department, which included the title as one of the products to be offered in elementary and high schools across the country.⁸ The initial print run of 65,400 copies of the magazine was surprising, maintaining a monthly average of 50,000. In 1987, in three different months, the magazine reached a print run of 101,000 copies. In 1990, it was estimated that 80 percent of subscribers were non-Adventists, which made the magazine an excellent missionary tool.⁹

Youth Magazine was intended to be "a compass of the Adventist youth" that would "uplift the young souls, support the faltering, be the mainstay of the wavering, and the magnetized needle of the ideals pointing unflinchingly to the absolute North of the noble aspirations."¹⁰ *Youth Magazine's* editors were Rafael Butler (1950s), Almir Fonseca (1960s), Ivo Cardoso (1970s), Paulo Kol and Paulo Pinheiro (1980s), and Marcos De Ben (1990s). Well-illustrated, the periodical contemplated themes such as religion, ecology, professions, relationships, sexuality, psychology, and drugs.¹² In 1988, as part of its 30th birthday, the periodical changed the editorial line, taking a more dynamic format focused on teenagers (13 to 19-year-olds). To dialogue with teachers and students, the emphasis became more pedagogical. The sections of the review were clustered in two big blocks: "Break" (educational pastimes) and "Academic Support" (resources for teachers and students). The idea was that the review would appeal both to youth and teenagers; however, due to the low print run¹³ (25,000 monthly issues), it was discontinued by July 1994 and replaced by *Super Friend Magazine*.

The trial edition of *Super Friend Magazine* circulated in the first semester of 1994 so that the publisher could test market receptivity. The objective was not to replace *Youth Magazine*, but to dialogue with a teen audience to offer an appealing title for readers of *Our Little Friend* who were leaving infancy. Perhaps for this reason the pastor and journalist Wilson Almeida, editor of *Our Little Friend*, worked as editor of *Super Friend Magazine* until January 1997. As the children's review, the periodical for teens also had a character (Sami) who interacted with readers.

The idea of a more modern periodical that would serve as educational material for teenagers had been discussed for a decade in the publishing house. Therefore, upon its release in July 1994, with 40,000 issues, the expectation in relation to *Super Friend Magazine* was that it could reach youth at the turn of the millennium.

In 1995, the average monthly print run was 33,000 issues. The audience was primarily composed of non-Adventists because most of the subscriptions were made by representatives of the publishing house (canvassers). The slogan was "a review that speaks your language." The magazine included adventures, tours, calendars, tips about dating, relating to parents and siblings, career choice, school routine, and numerous tests.

The last issue of the review came out in July 1998, under the direction of pastor and journalist Francisco Lemos. Due to the poor print run (5,000 monthly issues) for self-sustainability, *Super Friend Magazine* only lasted four years. The canvassing reviews could be considered "pioneers of the printed page,"¹⁴ which had to make room for other books. Unfortunately, periodicals for the youth sold by canvassers were discontinued.

Founding

Eight years after discontinuing the *Super Friend Magazine* (1998) certain leaders of the Brazilian Youth Ministry proposed to resume the publishing of a periodical for the youth.¹⁵ This new magazine would serve as a communication channel between the institution and the youth, besides being a source of significant and appealing content. That's when Pastor Erton Köhler, leader of the South American Adventist youth at the time suggested to the Brazil Publishing House to create a new review for this age group. Leaders of the Youth Ministry, administrators, and editors of the Brazil Publishing House worked together to release the *Youth Connection*.

At the end of 2006, 10,000 issues were released to introduce the material to the youth and to motivate them to subscribe to the periodical. The name of the review summarized the purpose of the publication: "to aid the youth in their vital connection with the Creator and with the good side that there still is in the world."¹⁶ In other words, the review's mission was to contribute to forming a biblical worldview in Adventist youth from 18 to 25-years of age, especially undergraduates. The cognitive emphasis and incentive for reflection was also indicated by the journal slogan: "the review of thinking youth."

At the time, the first review team was composed of journalists Michelson Borges (editor), Sueli Ferreira de Oliveira, and Fernando Torres (associate editors). The first graphic designer was Marcos Santos, who was also responsible for the visual project of the review. From the head office of the Brazil Publishing House in the city of Tatuí (SP), 140 km from São Paulo, the periodical was distributed nationwide via the administrative headquarters of the Church (conferences and unions) through a quota policy; later it came to be marketed directly with the audience on the annual subscription type (\$4.10 USD) and single issue (\$1.55 USD).

History

The scratch edition¹⁷ of the review *Youth Connection* had as its cover story instructions about balanced usage of the internet. It also provided testimonies, news about programs and denominational activities for youth, interviews with youth, health tips, job market and reading, pastoral consultancy, reports about experiences with extreme sports, and behavior and opinions regarding disclosed themes on media. The proposal was to balance religious and secular matters, bringing the review closer to the everyday challenges of youth.

The team aimed to reach the undergraduate audience, youth from 18 to 25-years of age. The editors believed that young adults would be interested in a thematic approach to important issues. They looked for resources in other periodicals, especially *Insight*, the youth periodical published by the Adventist Church in the United States since 1970. The initial response of the youth was positive. In the section of the review directed to readers, they punctuated that the periodical was useful for their academic and professional life, as well as a useful tool for youth meetings; it also served to consolidate their Adventist identity and to discuss themes that were not always addressed in the church or at home.

This editorial line remained until the end of the management of Michelson Borges, in mid-2010. During this period themes about science and religion, apologetics, and media were featured. Borges also supported church initiatives, such as the project *Impacto Esperança* [Hope Impact] (massive distribution of missionary books), the campaign *Vidas por Vidas* [Life for Lives] (blood donation), and the South American contest *Bom de Bíblia* [Good at the Bible]. Despite its interest in better positioning the review on the Internet, there was no investment by the publisher in this direction, although the journalist managed to maintain a review blog (conexaoja.com).

Under the management of Pastor and journalist Wendel Lima, more space was given to behavioral issues and themes about the relations of the Church with culture. During that period, there was a greater emphasis on guidelines about volunteering, transcultural missionary projects, and articles that explained biblical concepts and books.

Wendel Lima was to make the editorial and graphic change in July 2012, when the review also changed its name to *Connection 2.0*. Pastor and journalist Diogo Cavalcanti (associate editor) and graphic designers Marcos Santos and Éfeso Granieri were also part of this project. These significant amendments occurred because the review failed to receive the support of the Youth Ministry and was considered to be educational material for the high school of the South American Adventist Educational Center. Thereby, the print run went from 10,000 to around 30,000 issues per quarter.

Faced with this change, which placed the review in the hands of a mostly non-Adventist audience, the editorial team understood that an upgrade of the graphic project of the review was necessary, as well as the redirecting of its editorial proposal. Having the most popular reviews for youth at the time as reference, they wiped the volume of text, modernized the typography, invested more in illustrations and info graphics, and adapted the editorial proposal to make it more pedagogical and with less denominational speech.

Under the slogan "get it, try it, change it," the editors set to work to improve the spirituality of its readers, thus contemplating the cognitive, experiential, and practical aspects of religion. "Through these lenses we wish to help you to understand reality, to experience what is worth it, and to change your community and yourself," explained the first editorial of this new phase.¹⁸

The three blocks of the editorial tripod of the review were: inform, explain, and inspire. The first part of the periodical featured a panel about cultural trends, curiosities, and tips, with a section for interviews and info graphics. The second part included longer subjects, reports, a space for questions about doctrine and behavior, and the section "Imagine," which introduced a different society from the existing one. The third and last block included stories meant to inspire action. There was a section about volunteer projects, another about life testimonies, and one that offered

tips for the development of some ability. In January 2018, replacing two advertisement pages, two sections were added to this last part of the periodical: a guide of professions, and a space for book reviews and reading tips. The 2019 review won two more pages, having a total of 36 pages and a cover with higher quality paper, which added value to the product. On these four additional pages was published the section “Text and Context,” which dealt with the relation between form and content as a key to understanding the Bible.

The change in mid-2012 also involved the name of the review. The idea was to suppress the term “Adventist Youth,” a denominational expression, and replace it with “2.0,” suggesting the concept of update and a larger emphasis on interactivity. In this new phase a website of the review was released (conexao20.com.br), making it possible to access the entire collection of the review. Profiles and specific content were also created on social media to guide teachers in the use of the material. However, without a clear digital strategy, the review had little progress on the web, a performance that requires reevaluation.

Connection 2.0 is the fifth generation of reviews for youth published by Brazil Publishing House. It was preceded by the following periodicals: (1) *Juventude* (Youth Paper) (1936-1940), fortnightly, with eight pages, it was focused on Adventist youth; (2) *Youth's Magazine* (1958 - June 1994), monthly, with 40 pages, with a print run of 101,000 issues and marketed for an outside audience through canvassing; (3) *Super Friend Magazine* (July 1994-June 1998), monthly, focusing on teens, with an educational emphasis and a print run that varied from 25,000 to 40,000 issues; (4) *Youth Connection* (April 2007-June 2012), quarterly, 10,000 issues, targeting youth of undergraduate age (18 to 25-years of age).

From its opening, in 2007, the periodicity of *Connection* had been quarterly, with 32 colored pages (21 x 27 cm) and four issues throughout the year. Nevertheless, in 2019, the review started circulating with 36 pages. A similar review is published in Spanish by the South American Spanish Publishing House (ACES) in Argentina, entitled *Conexión 2.0* [Connection 2.0]. For a few years the Spanish review published a good deal of the material produced in Brazil; however, since 2012, it has valued its unpublished local content more.¹⁹

Perspective

In Brazil and worldwide, the review media is facing hard times. Due to high consumption and free availability of information, a business model is needed that can guarantee the financial viability of paper communication, and its respective digital platforms. In the Adventist context, the situation is no different. Reviews have been supported by the publisher and/or denomination or through corporate purchases, as is the case of *Connection 2.0*.

Adopted in 2012 by the Adventist Educational Center as an educational resource for religious teaching classes and high-school missionary activities, by 2019 the review is expected to be more in line with the Master Plan of Spiritual Development (PMDE), a program implemented in 2017 at the South-American level, which aims to promote the teaching and experimentation of spiritual values. To support the local actions of PMDE actions in the colleges and to gain more continuity in their content, *Connection's 2.0* issues will become thematic. The current value of the subscription is \$6.83 (USD) and a single issue is \$2.15 (USD).

Titles

Juventude (Youth Paper) (1936-1940); *Youth Magazine* (1958-1994); *Super Friend Magazine* (1994-1998); *Youth Connection* (2007-2012); *Connection 2.0* (2012-).

Editors

Berger Johnson (1936-Feb./1937); Luiz Waldvogel (Feb./1937-1940); Raphael de Azambuja Butler (1958-Sept./1961; Jan./1963-Mar./1963); Arnaldo B. Cristianini (Oct./1961-Dec./1962); Almir A. da Fonseca (Apr./1963-Nov./1972; Jul./1977-Dec./1977); Carlos A. Trezza (Dec./1972-Apr./1973); Ivo Santos Cardoso (May./1973-Jun./1977; Jun./1980-Jan./1984); Azenilto G. Brito (1978-May/1980); Ivacy Oliveira (Feb./1984-Dec./1985); Paulo Pinheiro (1986-Nov./1990; Nov./1993-Jun./1994); Marcos De Benedicto (Dec./1990-Oct./1993); Wilson de Almeida (1994-Jan./1997); Francisco Lemos (Feb./1997-1998); Michelson Borges (2007-2010); Wendel Lima (2010-today).

Associate Editors

H. B. Lundquist (1936-Feb./1937); Germano Ritter (Feb./1937-1940); J. M. Howell (May/1937-Nov./1939); N. W. Dunn (Dec./1939-1940); Ivo Santos Cardoso (1979-May/1980); Wilson de Almeida (Jun./1988-Sept./1989); Marcos De Benedicto (Jun./1989-Dec./1990); Robson Marinho (Jan./1990-May/1991); Sérgio Antoniazzi (Jun./1991-Apr./1993); Sueli Nunes Ferreira (1991-Jun./1994); Marcos De Benedicto (1994-Jun./1995; Aug.-Dec./1996); Paulo Pinheiro (1994-Jun./1995); Rubens Lessa (1994-Jun./1995); Elizeu Lira (1994-Aug./1996); Sueli Ferreira de Oliveira (1994-1998); Wilson de Almeida (Feb.-Mar/1997); Sueli Ferreira de Oliveira e Fernando Torres (2007-2009); Wendel Lima (2009-2010), Diogo Cavalcanti (2010-2012), Matheus Cardoso (2010-2012); Eduardo Rueda (2013-2016), Wellington Barbosa (2014-2015), Fernando Dias (2016-2018), André Vasconcelos (2018-today); Márcio Tonetti (2019-today).

Designers

Marcos Santos (2007-2014) and Renan Martin (2015-today).

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Borges, Michelson. "Vida de Conexão" ["Life of Connection"]. *Conexão Jovem [Youth Connection]*, year 1, (special number of 2006): 2.

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2. Elias Brenha, "Produção de Materiais para o Ministério Jovem no Brasil" ["Production of Materials for the Brazilian Youth Ministry"] (Monograph presented in the 5th Symposium of the Adventist Memory, Unasp - Engenheiro Coelho, São Paulo, August 28, 2002).?
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 9. Paulo Pinheiro, "Uma Opção Para os Adolescentes" ["An Alternative For the Teenagers"], *Revista Adventista [Adventist Review]*, nº 7 (July 1990): 37.?
 10. Raphael Butler, "Um rumo, uma meta, um destino" ["A course, a goal, a destination"], *Revista Mocidade [Youth's Magazine]*, (January 1958): 2.?
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 16. Michelson Borges, "Vida de Conexão" ["Life of Connection"], *Conexão Jovem [Youth Connection]*, year 1, (special number of 2006): 2.?
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 19. Check the *Connection's* review collection on the website <http://conexion20.editorialaces.com/>.?

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