Every fifty seconds a new advertisement for sexual services in New York City appears on the internet. These ads speak to sex work’s new reality in the city: pushed by police street sweeps in the 1990s and enabled by emerging technologies, sex work has moved indoors—repeating a pattern established by illegal drug markets. And so digital solicitation is now both everywhere and nowhere.

Hoping to take the measure of this new sex work entrepôt, students in Professors Ric Curtis’, Anthony Marcus’, and Fritz Umbach’s first-year experience courses gathered and analyzed data from a representative 24-hour snapshot of advertisements found on the two of the largest sexual services sites: backpage.com (catering largely but not exclusively to men seeking encounters with female sex workers) and rentboy.com (catering largely but not exclusively to men seeking encounters with male sex workers).

The students’ often surprising findings, representing a NYC workplace of an estimated 7500 individuals advertising on the internet, are presented here.