

**MTV 25  
TRANSCRIPT****Brian Graden**

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*People used to think of MTV as 'just' music videos. But in the 90s, particularly, a number of amazing programming content appeared like Real World and Road Rules. How do you make decisions on the type of entertainment shows you create? And, how is music still an integral part of these shows?*

There's planning and experimentation all the time. When you experiment, the process can take two years. Right now, we're working on shows for 2008. These shows come about because the audience demands it. Music videos are still our core. We never really decided to move away from music videos *per se*. Still some giant proportion of our schedule is video, but once you realize that MTV has placed itself pretty squarely in front of youth culture, in order to be multi-dimensional and cater to all interests, we had to do other things as well. We really are about the whole generation.

*MTV is famed for creating new TV genres, one example being that Real World was the first reality show. Was this by accident or design, and what genres can we expect in the future?*

*The Real World* is a show that is self-renewing by definition. It really represented a new kind of reality TV. And we continue to do things that are increasingly further afield and redefine reality.

*With the launch of Urge, MTV Overdrive and mobile TV lending itself to short program snippets, how do you develop programs in a multi-platform world?*

We began life as a short form organization. We began as a channel that played short promos, so this area feels pretty natural for us. We have just green lit our first series for mobile TV. Our mobile content will be as short as 30 seconds and as long as four or five minutes, and, who knows? In the future, I'm sure other things will present themselves for this medium. We're used to dealing with people with short attention spans!

***People like Jessica Simpson and Kelly & Jack Osbourne started at MTV, and then went on to become household names. Is this part of MTV's remit, to break new talent?***

We used to have a lot of VJs who would be here, and then they would go away and we wouldn't necessarily see them again. Then there was a shift, with people like Carson Daly. Ashton Kutcher was famous before he came to us and did *Punk'd*. That's fairly typical of what happens now. *The Real World*, that's by definition seven unknown people. We're not looking for a great actor or a great host. Then we started doing more star based television. Carson was more than a VJ because we made him the actual star of the show. *TRL* was one show that showcased personalities in the way they were meant to be showcased. I think what's interesting is that with a lot of these new shows, across MTV Overdrive and across other media, there'll be a new list of names that people will know. You look for people and you have to also look for the right idea at the same time, I think we used to look for good creative people for VJs but now, with Nick and Jessica for *The Newlyweds*, it was tremendously good for them. They became part of culture. There's no shortage now of who will reveal all on reality TV. I think the truth is, anybody in culture now, or even a few years ago, if you sign up for a show like that you pretty much know what you're getting. There's no mystery about it - the first season *The Real World* cast were perhaps a little bit thrown, some of them, by some of the things, but that was new then. We're 15 years down. By definition, a celebrity usually desires to be a celebrity.

***What is your proudest MTV moment?***

My proudest moment at MTV occurred in 2001, when in honor of our national diversity campaign *Fight For Your Rights*, MTV literally shut down the channel for an entire day and ran the names of hate crime victims and the crimes perpetrated against them. The move was made entirely from a place of heart and soul, and yet garnered national attention and praise. Plus, more importantly, it raised consciousness among a generation, underscoring the fact that hate kills. In television terms, and human terms, it was historic.

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