

## MTV 25 TRANSCRIPT

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***The MTV Video Music Awards were the first of their kind, and continue to be one of the biggest fixtures of the musical calendar. How have you stayed on top?***

The VMAs have really grown. I would say by the mid-1990s they really started to become a cultural event. The VMAs really became a place for the core MTV team to celebrate their favorite videos and performers of the year. In the mid-1990s, it also became the place where the rest of the world could check in and see what was happening in pop culture. So, even if you weren't the kind of person who didn't watch MTV a lot during the year, you knew the one time to watch was the Video Music Awards.

***Did MTV ever think that the VMAs would become the massive international event they are today?***

Yes. The VMAs became a looking glass into the world of pop culture, and so you might not be up on who's the latest hard rock band, who's the latest rapper, comedian, etc., but by watching the pre-show and all the arrivals and the fashion and the show itself, and the post-show, in that block of time, you can really, really get up to speed with what is happening in pop culture. What happened, simultaneous with that, was that as the importance of the show grew, the audience was getting larger and the talent who were appearing on the show was getting larger.

***What are some of the challenges to producing an event of this magnitude?***

It did become a showcase for playing "I can top that." It really became a place, that if you were a band, you were going to try and give the best performance of the night because the buzz about your performance would transcend the fact that it was an award show. It would be as important as anything else in your career. It became the venue to show off to the world what you could possibly do. I think that the phase we've been in for the last few years is seeing the staging grow and the productions grow beyond expectations. You get some really unexpected moments.

***What are your favorite VMA moments over the years?***

The Madonna/Britney/Christina kiss. We decided we wanted to do something special, so a couple of us had this idea we would go ask Madonna if she'd do "Like A Virgin" again with the wedding cake to open the VMAs. We worked on it through the year and we said we'd look into having a couple of guests. But it was really up to her who would be those guests. It was about availability, too. There's been lots of great performances, Eminem, Snoop, 'N Sync, Backstreet Boys, Marilyn Manson. Puffy's performance in 2002 where it practically became a circus ... there was so much stuff. But we managed to fit it all in. Even the people with anti-gravity boots!

***How are you incorporating MTV's new platforms like MTV Overdrive and Urge into the viewers VMA experience?***

In 1990, we had pre- and post-show and everything changed, because as a viewer, you are much closer to what is happening, you can see behind the scenes footage live, as it's happening. You get all the interviews with all the performers and nominees and presenters as opposed to just seeing them on stage. And another big change was what we started last year. On *MTV Overdrive*, our broadband service, you can see behind the scenes footage live, as it's happening. You can see backstage highlights and interviews and red carpet fashion. You can see all that from the last 20 years on *Overdrive*, leading up to August 31, and then when the show is on the air, viewers can go back and watch any performances, watch their favorite star arrive.

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