



Innovation

HUNTER

“Put in the time to get your foot in the door”

It's the early 1900s, and the phonograph is what's used to play recorded sound. The local phonograph parlour is the place to be to mingle and listen to music. In order to listen, you wind the crank and it releases sound from its large, brass horn. Now flash forward to present-day and the phonograph is now the modern-day turntable. It has evolved into hip-hop's foremost instrument and DJs have established themselves as the genre's foremost instrumentalist. It was the distinctive scratching noises of the turntable that first attracted Hunter Pearson and put him on the path he is on today.

Hipposonic Studios is where you can find Hunter Pearson's own recording studio – it's also his home away from home. If you're ever looking for him, chances are you'd find him here. His repertoire includes being an executive producer for the Vancouver based hip-hop show Pass Da Mic, currently having his own production company HYPE Productions as well hosting his radio show hunt.FM. For someone who just turned 25, Pearson has quite a bit under his belt.

Also known as DJ Hunt, Pearson is part of an industry that has been receiving an increasing amount of bad rap. For years, the media has fed us stereotypical images of the music industry. Consequently many tend to associate it with wealth, partying, flash, fame, glitz and glamour. These things could not be farther from what music inherently is. But when you look at today's industry, it's hard to see otherwise. You'd have to dig deep within the surface and look past what the tabloids and Entertainment Tonight is showing us. But many can't be bothered with doing that.

So as I was walking up the stairs that led to Pearson's studio, I didn't really know what to expect. What I didn't expect was to meet someone so down-to-earth. His studio immediately gave off a welcoming vibe as Pearson relaxed on his couch with his Mac on his lap and a hoodie and jeans on.

No flash. No glitz and glamour.

“It's hard to pull inspiration from the music industry these days,” Pearson said about working in an industry with a failing image. “I find myself getting motivated more when I look at people working in the tech industry”. Pearson believes that one of the key ingredients to his success is being able to utilize growing technology to his advantage; applying it to his work and love of music. With a strong technical background, Pearson was able to incorporate the rising technology of podcasts to his radio show, hunt.FM. Calling podcasts the ‘next-generation mixtape’, hunt.FM allows its audiences to listen, download to their personal computer, and/or transfer these podcast shows onto their portable mp3 players.

Pearson demonstrated his humble qualities when Reach asked him how he felt about setting standards in his field. “I don't think that I'm doing anything extremely innovative, but I'm doing something different. I admire tech people because they can start with something so small, and make it huge. Podcasts can seem

like something simple in itself. But when we use it to reach our audiences, it snowballs into something bigger. I think that's why hunt.FM stands out.”

Pearson came up with the idea of hunt.FM to counter the monotony of mainstream radio. He wanted people to be able to have access to brand-new releases, exclusive remixes, and unreleased songs of the hip-hop and R&B genre. “Here at hunt.FM, we never play the same song more than once,” Pearson said when outlining the differences between his show and mainstream radio. Another reason why Pearson wanted to start hunt.FM was due to the frustration of himself and all DJs throughout the city. “DJs want to play the freshest of the fresh in terms of music. But people only dance to music that they know. They only know what they hear on the airwaves, and these songs become – the ‘club-bangers’. Of course DJs want people to dance to their music, so we're restricted to what we can play.” In September 2007, he approached Jenno Chand, (his co-host on the show) with the idea and everything fell into place. “There were times when I thought it wasn't going to work, but I never got to the point of dropping the whole idea. So I got it done.”

Hunt.FM has developed a strong fan base, and Hunter credits his success to hunt.FM's loyal listeners. “We have a core audience that actively gets involved every week. Relationships are formed and it goes beyond the music. It's one of the main reasons I look forward to doing a show every week. We now have people logging in live during our recording sessions.” Its not hard to see that Hunter is always motivated. 70 shows (which also equals 70 weeks at point of interview) and they are still going strong.

When Pearson's not working on the show, he's creating music under his production company, Hype Productions. “I first started by doing work at home. I bought all the equipment and built my own set-up.” When asked how he ended up with his own recording studio, Pearson replied, “I started working for Hipposonic Studios. Not the most glamorous job, but it paid off in the end. After a lot of hard work and attempts of persuading the owner, I ended up getting my own space.” What advice does Pearson give to young hopefuls who want to have their own recording studio one day? “Put in the time to get your foot in the door. Sometimes you have to pay your dues, but it will be worth it.”

So what can we expect from Hunter Pearson in the near future? “I don't know if I want to disclose anything just yet! But I can say that it's the biggest thing I've ever worked on!” In addition to filling us with suspense and anticipation, he also leaves with some words of wisdom for those who want to chase a similar dream. “Don't do something just to make money. Don't sacrifice your passion for in order to make money; find a balance. If you persevere, your passion will eventually lead you to your wealth.”

You can find Hunter doing his thing every week @ www.hunt.fm