QUESTION EVERYTHING TRUST NOTHING BELIEVE IN YOUR INTUITION

## Firehorse Publications

submissions　advertising　contact firehorse　web creation

latest features　regular columns　literary outlaws　homepage

### LUCID STREAMING
### Two turntables and a cable modem

A small flat in suburban Auchenflower is the last place you would expect to find one of Australia's growing band of Internet Radio DJs pumping out the grooves. But here I am, surrounded by two PC's, a laptop, assorted Brisbane dance music paraphenalia/propaganda, cables and leads of all varieties, and of course, the ubiqitous Technics SL-1200 turntables and mixer.

AliaK, host of Pulse Radio's regular *briz:b:e:a:t:s* program (Sunday, 12-4pm AEST), is frantically making some last minute preparations, hooking up CD players to her Behringer mixing desk, teeing up changeover times via IRC, yet still finding time to get her guest a drink of water.

"Just bear with me and I'll be with you in a second....."

Welcome to the brave new world of Internet Radio, where the DJ also handles production, tech support, audience feedback, guest booking, playlists and receptionist duties. This relatively new medium is currently experiencing exponential growth, with thousands of stations worldwide broadcasting exclusively to the Net and mainstream networks such as Brisbane's B105 also jumping on the bandwagon.

However some of the new players in Australia have learnt the hard way that the old adage of throwing a lot of money at something and hoping that some of it sticks doesn't necessarily apply in the online world. K-Grind are a case in point - last month the youth broadband site folded after spending an estimated US$10 million in just 10 months, and K-Grind figurehead Jon Peters estimated that it would take another US$17 million just to keep the company afloat.

Another player recently entering the market is bigfatradio.com who are banking their bikkies on listeners warming to their more interactive format, with each program featuring cool websites under the bigfatradio.com banner and refreshing every couple of minutes. Not to mention their stable of presenters, which harks back to the Golden Age of Australia's youth network Triple J. Investors are hoping that names like Helen Razer, Michael Tunn, Andy Glitre, Debbie Spillane and Ian Rogerson will be enough to lure punters away from their archaic wirelesses and into the realm of netcasting.

But it is the niche programmers like AliaK and Pulse Radio which serve to benefit most from the possibilities of the Net, which allows anyone with the right hardware and software to broadcast from the comfort of their loungeroom/bedroom/garage - in AliaK's case a Pentium II/300, 128Mb RAM, 6Gb HD laptop to stream, a PC with the same specs to play MP3's and Pulse Radio promos, a 56k modem and Winamp along with the Shoutcast plugin to stream to the Shoutcast server, as well as the afore-mentioned turntables, mixers etc.

And her motives are far more pure than the Superstar DJ mentality which is currently sweeping the world (to the extent that even one of the *Neighbours* youngsters has recently bought some decks, and naturally scored a residency within a week!)

"Internet Radio gives me the best opportunity within my means to help some of the local talented DJs/producers get a bit of extra airplay and promotion," AliaK explains.

"I think the Brisbane scene is in another growth stage and a state of flux, and the scene is very healthy. There are so many people here in Brisbane and Australia producing excellent music and owning/playing it, and most importantly, having a great passion for it."

"But many of them don't seem to play to the public very often, and many of the creative types I know or know of aren't interested in promotion, they just want to play/write music."

"I think any little help counts and if they can reach other people or have the opportunity to share their skills with others, then everyone will benefit, both the artist and the listener."

Pulse Radio started in early 1999 and was broadcasting on an inconsistent basis throughout that year. In February 2000 the company was formerly incorporated in Perth and since then its members have been committed to broadcasting music 7 days a week on a regular basis. Pulse Radio is currently based in Sydney, Australia and is quickly establishing itself as a leading Australian internet radio site dedicated to dance music.

Since its inception Pulse Radio has been increasing its traffic by at least 20% a month (averaging 2,800 hits a week and 7,500 listeners in total in June), and this is sure to increase as it gains more more alliances, DJ's and producers from around the world.

AliaK also has grand plans for *briz:b:e:a:t:s* and her own DJing career. Since the show began in April this year, she has already featured a number of Brisbane's finest DJ's and artists, and the popularity of her show has seen it increase from 2 hours initially to it's current 4 hour incarnation.

"I've played at a few events, but at this stage I'm happy to just play a few of my tunes at the start of each show and let the guests do the rest," said AliaK.

"I was thinking of holding a *briz:b:e:a:t:s* party in the future after a few ideas from some of the regular guest DJs (axel, Chris Tisdell, Cosmo Cater, DJ Damage, Synetik & Mode), so I'd probably play at that if it happens. And there's another unconfirmed gig in the next couple of months, so we'll see how things pan out."

AliaK and Pulse Radio are perfectly positioned to exploit the Internet Radio boom, and with a focus on quality tunes and local talent rather than rampant egos, they are well on their way to succeeding where the big guns have failed. With their credibility still intact, they are clearly in it for the long haul, not the money.

Kris Swales

To find out more about *briz:b:e:a:t:s* and Pulse Radio, click on the link below

submissions　latest features　regular columns　contact firehorse　homepage

QUESTION EVERYTHING TRUST NOTHING BELIEVE IN YOUR INTUITION