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Rag sets the wheels In: Motion

So Mr. Satguru, how did Motion & InMotion come to be?

It's a long story but I met this guy called Amos [Nelson], and we both wanted to do parties that were a little bit different. We used cool hidden places like the cellar of a pub in the middle of town but then Amos showed me this café and terrace where people would hang out during

'...the greatest thing I've ever seen in a club'

skate or bmx events (The Tunnel). We decided that we wanted to do a party on the terrace and in the tunnel around April 2006, this would be the first night at Motion. Seeing as it was a cool new venue we decided that we would sell tickets without even telling people where it was, we sold 250 tickets at £6 apiece and told everyone to meet near Thekla where we'd organised for boats to pull up and take people over. There were no headline DJs and we just had it outside and in the tunnel, 100 others turned up and paid on the door as well so we decided that we could do another 3 parties there over the summer.

August 2006 was when we had headline acts like Tom Neville of Retro/Grade and Gavin Herlihy but by this point we weren't the only ones doing parties there and Motion was shut down for illegal raves. By the time the illegal rave talk died down in early 2007, the guy who owned the BMX park next door (2nd Warehouse + Main Room) had bought



the property we were raving on. He took us up to the viewing platform above what is now the Main Room and said 'if you want you can do the party in here?'

There was a 9ft vert ramp in there amongst other stuff but we figured that we could still fit about 600 people in there along with 400 in the tunnel and garden. We weren't really sure whether we'd bitten off more than we could chew, could we really sell 1000 tickets? Considering that the venue only had 3 toilets and a urinal at this point, we knew it would be a struggle.

We started planning for what would be a massive night so we approached Blowpop who were doing really big things for music in Bristol at the time. In June 2007 we finally had Blowpop vs Just Jack, (Just Jack being my label) and because the event was a massive hit we started doing them monthly which was as often as we could because of the licensing restrictions in place. We may have been naughty and done a few extra from time to time as well though.

When did the Skate ramps get taken out?

The skate ramps were taken out bit-by-bit and although it was a shame that people weren't able to rave at such funny angles any more, the last half pipe came out in the summer of 2008. This was when the stage was still lengthways across the main room and we played host to Deadmau5 and Jamie Jones which was amazing. We booked them back then for around 1/20th of what they would cost to book today, sometimes we just got it so right booking-wise.

We had the full license around the end of summer 2008 so we brought in a venue manager, little Tom, to work with big Tom who owned the venue. Their aim was to make Motion ready for really big nights. I think people liked that we just wanted to put on really cool parties and to keep pushing the boat out, we never really did it for the money.

The first weekend that students were back in October 2008 was when we were first allowed to put 1500 people in the venue for the first time. We got names like Stanton Warriors, Benga, Brodinsky, Claude Von Stroke and others as we started doing bigger nights more frequently. We even managed to convince Shit the Bed to move from Lakota to Motion even though they'd been there for ages. That's one awesome thing about Bristol, it's such a promoter village, everyone knows everyone and that makes it so easy to get talking to other promoters.



By the beginning of 2009 we had Run, Shit the Bed, Just Jack, Motion and Blowpop running events and we had, amongst others, Digitalism, Diplo, Penguin Dance and Beardyman.

I'd been really trying to get The Warehouse Project to get nights sorted with us but they kept just saying they were interested but too busy to commit. We kept trying throughout 2008 and 2009 but we ended up deciding that we should try and do our own 3-month run of shows instead, In: Motion. We'd managed to build up a brand and people trusted us to put on a good night so we decided to set the wheels in motion.

I borrowed £10,000 from my mother, someone even borrowed from their Grandma, after doors got knocked through and the venue got rehashed, we finally had a viable venue. Rob (Shit the Bed) and I started booking DJs for every weekend from October to Christmas Eve, we printed 20,000 flyers at first, then another 20,000 and another 15,000. We were constantly chasing our own tails over it which was made more stressful by the fact that we ran other nights throughout the week as well. Things were so hectic that I kept a bed in my office which wasn't great, but it was necessary.



New Years Eve 2009/10 was a real benchmark event for us and for Motion because all the promoters came together for the first time. We had a massive night with Drum and Bass, Electro & Techno, we opened up the whole venue for the first time and we even had the Afterburner from Arcadia [google it, seriously]. It was the first time that people spent £25 on a ticket to Motion and we had Seth Troxler, Red Light and Andy C amongst others, Julio Bashmore was even doing the warm up. The whole thing was sentimental because it was a big team effort and it had this amazing festival vibe. Secret Garden Party even took over the car park with a marching band, hot tub and loads of other cool shit, it was amazing.

We called it 'The Greatest Show on Earth' and even though we made £55,000 selling 2200 tickets for £25 each, we still ended up losing money because we had just kept pushing the boundaries. It was the greatest thing I've ever seen in a nightclub.



2011 was when we really changed from doing it all ourselves and we decided to run it properly, without letting it lose its soul. We invested all of our money into it and hired the girl who marketed Global Gathering, we printed 100,000 flyers from the off and we finally fully licensed the 2nd warehouse. With the help of 4 interns and other members of staff we started a full-run of programming from October to January by starting our bookings in April. I loved doing it all and watching it grow but Just Jack 6th Birthday (Feb 4th) was my last night.

Love Saves the Day June 3rd

What's Love Saves The Day?

All the money we've made, and everything I've ever earned, is going to go into this new festival called Love Saves The Day in Bristol on June 3rd. It's on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee which means that the Monday and Tuesday are both bank holidays. It's at Castle Park, it's less than £30 and we sold over 1000 tickets in the first 3 days. Annie Mac, Maya Jane Coles, Joy Orbison, Bonobo, Mr Scruff and that's only scratching the surface. It's actually going to be insane. **'Like' Epigram on Facebook for a chance to win one of 10 tickets to LSTD!**



Although you're going on to artist management now, do you have any lessons from your promoting days?

My biggest regret was doing too much stuff, I once managed to promote 77 nights in 12 weeks until I finally said to myself 'this is ridiculous'. I could sell out 10 events in a row and then get set back by one that lost £10,000. I learned that doing less is more but no matter what I say, no promoter will be able to adhere to that. It's good to build your brand but don't just do nights for the sake of it, if you get the balance wrong it can be really stressful.

The single most important thing is to have loads of mates, people don't always go because of what's on, they go because of who's going. Now that Facebook plays the role of word-of-mouth online, potential socialites instantly know who's going out and they'll make their decision based on that.

The next thing to remember is that a big-name DJ plays up and down the country, but you want people to travel to your night, to you, not just for an expensive name. You want people to be say 'Are you going to Just Jack?' rather than 'Are you going to Seth Troxler?'

If this ends up happening then people will leave without developing any brand association. You need to develop a brand before getting big names so get some decent up and coming DJs in so that people enjoy it and say 'I was at Zulu Nation', or 'I went to BED'.

Also, if your night takes off then the DJs you do book should be loyal to you. Shit the Bed have been booking Jack Beats and Skream since they started and when Just Jack puts on Jamie and Seth, it's like putting on your mates.

Alex Denne