



SHOW LOVE ENTER THE HUSTLE

'WE MAKE HIP HOP LOOK PRETTY'

There was once a time when headz could drive around J-sec aimlessly, tryna find the place to be. You remember those weekends... Thanks to the emergence of innovative, business minded hip hop promoters, there is almost never a quiet weekend in the city of lights. Pioneering the concept of hosting hip hop lifestyle events at varying venues, SHOWLOVE has become the most powerful player in this field.

They say it takes one mind to change the face of the world. Well it took one mind to shift J-sec's hip hop scene from grimy to flashy. That mind is that of Tibz, the founder and owner of a little events company with a lot of muscle. Finding that he was not being catered for in the entertainment scene, Tibz decided to take action, and did so in 2006 under the name SHOWLOVE. And the rest — as they say — is the present.

What is the concept behind SHOWLOVE events?

We make hip hop look pretty. I was tired of always hearing house firstly, and was even more upset that the very few hip hop parties were in dingy joints. I wanted to give women a reason to get dressed up and still hear the music they want. I wanted to create a safe environment within the genre and change the image that hip hop headz were ignorant and had no class.

Take us through your first event.

Wow. It was Mo's Cafe on Grant Avenue in Norwood... it was packed. I didn't make much money because I wasn't experienced with regards to costs but I definitely made a statement that hip hop events can exist in the market. I think Muzi and Jason were on the decks. I remember the old school DJs at Mo's and how the amp bailed and I had to put a fan next to it so it could cool off. It was the beginning for a lot of people.

How many people do you pull per event?

Various venues have different capacity. We've been involved with events at The Palms with an average of 800 and we've done well over 1000 at Black Orchid. We recently did 700 at The Crazy 88 and did close to 800 at Seasons in Cape Town in December.

What is the average cover charge?

R80 to R100.

What are the expenses that go into putting a gig together?

Glad you asked this question. People think we just get to a place and play music, but there are costs involved: Venue, sound, lighting... the DJ and artist line-up... security, creation and printing of flyers, sending out databases, the door ladies and whatever breaks on the evening all costs money.

How competitive is this industry?

I don't think it's competitive enough. Often I'm asked if I'm competing with another promoter and I say no. They perceive this as arrogance but I'm trying to compete on a larger scale. I'm competing with the clubs who can rope in any brand without having to write any proposals. I'm competing with the companies that can bring out international artists without having to go through the red tape. Apart from Party People, we are the only consistent hip hop event. All these other dudes play house or claim to have two dance floors when they don't. There aren't enough dudes in my field and that's a shame.

Which has been your most successful event or series?

We have had plenty of successful events, but the most successful series has definitely been 'Old School vs New School'. We put some of the older headz in the game — like Kenzhero or C-live — up against the younger guns like Milkshake and Dimplez. It's an evening of nostalgia and a journey through the history of the genre we love. It unifies a lot of the heads within the genre... it's a joy to watch.

How does your company contribute to the Joburg entertainment scene?

SHOWLOVE is a platform for hustlers. Our hard work can be seen wherever you go. Look at all the Creative Recreation sneakers out there. The good people of

Tiltt.co.za knew who to come to when they came out with the label. We have done what we can to assist them.

We now manage six amazing hip hop DJs: Dimplez, Master M, ViGi Lante, Bo Black Biz and Milkshake, and I bet that the majority of parties in JHB with some sort of hip hop influence, has at least one of our DJs on the line-up.

Where would you value the company today?

I rate it very highly. Remember that the SHOWLOVE platform results in a lot of cheques for various people. The venues we work with, their staff, our DJs and our graphic designers earn and of course we earn... I would never divulge the exact amount. The value of SHOWLOVE is greater than cash. We are showcasing that people can earn a living from their talents if they are focused and determined. The growth of our business is proof of that.

Who do you work with under the company?

I do a lot of work with Glen21 but I do most things myself... currently looking through CVs for a PA.

What would you say to a corporate who said to you: hip hop headz don't have buying power?

I would suggest they go through their child's CDs and I bet hip hop and R&B are heavy in the collection. I would say pay attention to the language people use. I sit in a lot of brainstorming with brand managers and words like 'bling' or 'pimp' are synonymous with a lot of ad campaigns.

I would say take a look at America's new president... hip hop was a tool in his arsenal and the youth won his campaign for him. Hip hop is as cool as it gets. It makes sense whether you are a teenager or a parent... Hip hop IS the buying power! ☺