

# Nolan Baynes...Director of Marketing MTV2

By: Stefane Hernandez

Before I entered the MTV Building which stands in the heart of Times Square, I envisioned flat screen TV's playing MTV and MTV2, celebrity autographed items coloring the walls, similar to how the TRL studios looks on TV. But what I got was a bland building with tight security. I also expected Nolan Baynes, Director of Music Marketing for MTV2, to greet me in his office with a suit and tie. Instead, he was a welcoming and laid back Nolan who played videogames with a co-worker. My first thoughts were, "Wow, if I could get paid for chilling in my office and playing video games I want to work here, too." But, later I found out that it was all for the job: They were selecting video games to market to their audiences.

Guyanese-born and Brooklyn-raised Nolan Baynes is a thirty-something year old hip-hop lover, former rapper, a family and businessman. His office is filled with photographs of his family, friends, and one huge beautiful signed poster of India Arie. Inspired by his multi-cultured Flatbush, Brooklyn neighborhood, music was always a part of Nolan's life. His dad owned a record store in addition to two turntables at home.

"I loved the whole concept of writing and creating. Music and all of the creative stuff attracted me," he explains about venturing into the entertainment industry. At 17, Nolan was accidentally placed in a television program during his junior year in high school; he transformed that opportunity into an internship at Sleeping Bag Records leading to a career in entertainment. Read on and find out more about this MTV shot caller.

**On the job:** "My job is to make sure that MTV is still connected to music, off channel. If you are consuming music in record stores or at live shows I have to make sure that MTV is still there in some way, shape, or form. If tomorrow, the music trend changes and the new place to hear hot music is on the subway - I will be there and I will have some kind of MTV subway going on, I organize music tours, concerts, and festivals such as The Two Dollar Bill Concert Series, Pimp My Ride Tour, Sisters for Hip-Hop and Soul, TRL Tour."

**On a typical work day:** "I may meet with a representative from a record label saying,

'hey we have a new Fat Joe project, it's off the hook, if your doing anything four wise we want you to think of Joe.'

**School Vs. The Real World:** "In high school, I was exposed to the creative process. We were writing shows and shooting. I had no idea on how complex and intense the business of TV was. For me, television business was a cameraman or an editor. When I got to MTV though as a production assistant, that's when I really saw how intense the business of it is."

**Behind The Scenes:** "You don't necessarily have to be Carson Daly to work in TV; there are so many more important positions for getting the actual show done. From producers, writers, advertising sales, and distribution to production, there are people on every single level making that machine roll."

**Showing Responsibility:** "If I see a video that's bananas, I have the right to go to the programming department and say, this is really wack, yall really gotta' check that, it may not be in my job specs, but that's my duty."

**Pro's and Con's of the Gig:** "The best part is that MTV is a non-traditional corporate environment. I can just come in rocking a t-shirt and jeans if I wanted to. It's a creative environment so they allow you to act as such. I can come up with the craziest concept and have the freedom to make it work. The worst part about it is that it's not mine, I don't own it regardless of all the sweat and pressure and the creative ideas that I come up with on a daily basis. But, this gives me the fuel to one day, work towards owning my own MTV. I don't really have anything to complain about. I'm on the pinnacle of my business; for music TV it doesn't get any bigger from where I am. It's like playing basketball, and I'm on the Heat right now."

**Get an Internship:** "They expose you to the inner workings of a company and convince you to investigate an area that you never thought about."

**Advice to Teens:** "Take advantage of high school and college. Read books, explore, think outside of your surroundings."

