

# THE FUTURE OF TV

Presenter @Georgia\_la explains how she and some friends decided to make their own TV show!

**B**ack in the day, I used to sit on the sofa waiting for the next episode of *Friends*, only exercising my bladder in the precious ad breaks. Now, I watch what I want, when I want, on my laptop. All. The. Time. And, while I'm watching, I tweet friends about it, inventing silly hashtags about soggy bottoms during *The Great British*



*Bake Off*. Welcome to the future of TV - I call it YouTube, Vivo, Vimeo, and so on...

You see, I know a thing or two about this, as it was on Twitter that I got my presenting job at music YouTube channel SB.TV. It's there that I cut my teeth interviewing everyone from Branson to Bieber. And, it was online that my mates and I came up with a hair-brained plan to produce and present our very own TV show on a Google+ Hangout... Welcome to *The Fox Problem!*

## rewind to the start

I'd met the hilarious *T4* presenter Georgie Okell on a job - we'd often end up at the same press days interviewing, although she was generally rolling with a huge TV crew and I'd have cello tape in my bag to stick any last-min questions onto my cards!

Together, we'd moan about the lack of young women we could relate to on the box, imagining what it would be like if we made and produced a show we wanted to watch. All on our own terms. A show that was both girly and geeky. Thought-provoking enough to talk about dinosaurs or fancying girls, and cool enough to discuss my obsession with the tech revolutions I read about in *Wired*.

We needed a third legend to unite the tripod, and somehow we persuaded *Company* music ed @gemcairn to join us. The crew was complete, and together we went on a ridiculous mission to create our dream show. With a little bit of help from *MIC*'s Ollie Locke, who became the show's resident barman.

## taking a risk

Knocking on traditional TV doors, armed with a document listing our show's outlined features - 'Instagram vs real life' and 'pop stars interviewing politicians' - they thought we were

crazy. We realised they'd never let us make the show we wanted. We'd have to go off-piste.

Our knight in shining armour was James Emtage, from TV production company Telegraph Hill. He agreed we were slightly unhinged, but so was he, and he took a risk on the project.

Once we committed to doing the show online, things got really exciting and our possibilities became limitless. By choosing the format of making a TV show via a Google+ Hangout we could broadcast live from a pub in east London and bring in contributors from all over the world - all they needed were their laptops. And all at a fraction of the cost of regular TV.

## live on air

Over the six weeks of shows, loads of things happened: an ex-porn film director in our studio (pub!) debated with a campaigner in New York. Beauty vloggers created new make-up looks live. And we majorly stalked Lena Dunham - in every single episode, trying to get her as a guest!

Contributors in Australia got up at 5am to be part of the first ever-global air kiss. And when we saw that an astronaut Commander Hadfield was using Google hangouts to broadcast live from his space station, we emailed NASA to get him on the show. Apparently he was very busy up there though. Whatever.

We had to pull out all the stops to get people turning in live. We knew we wouldn't be listed in TV guides, so encouraged the audience in the studio to get their phones out, and with tweets we could pull in people to watch. Twitter would even direct whole parts of the show - our resident piano man wasn't allowed to talk and could only sing out 140 character messages, and the number of hashtags each presenter got each week would decide who would be saved from the dare section of the show.

## this is the future

It worked, *The Fox Problem* reached around seven million people over the first series. In January 2013, an analyst from Morgan



Stanley produced charts showing there'd been a 50 per cent collapse in broadcast TV audience ratings. While online content - like ours - can be made cheaper than old-school TV, and with fewer restrictions.

The *Fox Problem* was Google's first live entertainment show to be broadcast, and you could watch the whole thing in a tweet. We called in every favour possible, worked our arses off and had loads of fun creating a show that wouldn't have been a reality a few years ago. By show six, the place was rammed and

## “Once we committed to doing the show online, things got really exciting”

faces such as Caroline Flack and Rizzle Kicks beamed from the audience.

Since then, we've covered *Bestival* exclusively on social-media platforms like Vine and have done 'Insta-views' with singer Jessie Ware. I don't know what technology will let us do next, but it's easier than ever to find cool things and make them work for you (and your TV show). We're making another series of the *The Fox Problem* in 2014, so watch this space...

TheFoxProblem @Georgia\_la