

Nts radio origin

NTS Radio,?&#183;(Femi Adeyemi)20114,""?NTS,?NTS ??

Michael Lawson traces the roots of NTS to celebrate 10 years of the gamechanging station

When Femi Adeyemi was made redundant in early 2011 he decided to try his hand at radio, using the little savings he had to turn his nascent Nuts To Soup music blog into an online station. "Honestly, there was nothing out there that highlighted the diversity of my music taste at that time," he reflects. "So I did my best to set up a station that I wanted to listen to myself." It's hard to imagine the North Londoner was anticipating the decade that followed.

Channelling the DIY energy of pirate radio while prioritising total musical freedom for show hosts and a desire to cover every genre imaginable across its sprawling, wildly diverse programme, NTS has revolutionised online radio - setting a blueprint that countless others have followed.

Epitomising the station's ethos is Charlie Bones and his flagship Do!! You!!! show, taking place every weekday morning from 9:AM until midday. The show's combination of interesting-yet-unpretentious musical selections, unscripted, often chaotic guest interviews and off-the-cuff banter with the ever-lively chat room has proved a welcome antidote to the sterility of mainstream radio.

Like most NTS shows, the freedom afforded to Do!! You!!! allows its presenter's personality to take centre stage - a trait that listeners have come to rely on during 12 month period devoid of meaningful social interaction.

10 years on, Adeyemi, now finds himself at the helm of a global tastemaker platform, boasting upwards of 500 residents, 2.6 million monthly listeners, regular broadcasts from Shanghai, and studios in Manchester and LA alongside the spiritual home of Gillett Square in East London.

To mark the occasion, we reflect on the last ten years of NTS broadcasting, with the help of the founders, programmers, show hosts and chat room diehards who have helped shape this cultural powerhouse.

I'd been trying to get onto the radio myself but couldn't quite make that leap happen. I decided to set up something on my own instead. I was obsessed with archival radio shows from American college stations like WFMU and KEXP, there was nothing like it at the time in London so I knew there was a gap to fill. I was already surrounded by amazing musicians and artists so I just asked people I knew to get involved and took it from there.

It was at a time where I felt like a lot of my girl friends were settling down and having babies. I was the last

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girl standing and NTS, Boiler Room and Plastic People helped me stay connected with the scene - they were safe spaces for me to go on my own. I'd known Femi and Benny Blanco and all that crew from Plastic. I think I got them to play at my night and then Femi told me about this radio station that he was starting and asked if I'd like a show.

The biggest draw of NTS was the freedom. I've been on and off radio since I was at college and was on a soul pirate at the time. If I veered off and played rare groove I was getting called up and getting in trouble - it's so restrictive on pirate. So when Femi asked me [to come to NTS] I said "of course". It was total freedom and what I'd been looking for the whole time - the freedom you have to go in any different way.

There was a test run a few days before but I was the first DJ to officially broadcast on NTS. I would cycle from Brixton up to Dalston with loads of records and a computer on my back. My first show was basically me playing all my 7 inches, which consisted of everything from Azymuth to my mum's reggae collection. I even played a Cliff Richard track and everyone was in the chat room like "noo!".

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