

"HUGE" is Music, Models, and NYC on a Budget as Bib as the Name

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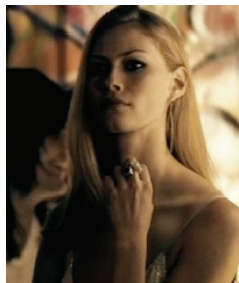
At 5'11," with a figure made for runways and cheekbones that go up as high as her legs, Izzy is blond, striking, and beautiful. At 30 years young, she's also over the hill. It's a tough truth for a girl to accept, but it's not easy to book modeling gigs when you're a decade older than your competition, and it's near impossible when you refuse to sleep with high-powered men of the fashion world.

Always the object of Terry's (played by Jordan Mahome) affection but never the girl who stays for breakfast, Izzy (played by Australian supermodel [Alyssa Sutherland](#)) is looking for a career change. In a novel twist on the [interconnected lives of models and musicians](#), she finds a gritty band with a good sound, but no direction that's in need of a manager who knows her way around town.

Such is the beginning of *Huge* - an online series that weaves the lifestyles of rockers, models, fashionistas, and downtown Manhattanites into a "postcard for the city," showing what it's like to be a New Yorker caught up in the New York scene every boy and girl dreams of (at some point, even if you don't want to admit it).

The only thing better looking than the actors is the production. There's a reason. The 22-minute pilot cost over \$200,000.

Under the banner of [JamStar Media](#), brothers Rj and Ranjit Grewal pooled their resources to create a visually stunning pilot episode to pitch to investors. To attract dollars, they felt the need to create something that doesn't just look "as good" as shows on television, but better.



Having once been an assistant to famed fashion photographer [Steven Klein](#), Ranjit, a [world-renowned photographer](#) in his own right, wanted to incorporate his four decades of "raw, real-life, and true perspectives" on the industry into a compelling and lucrative story.

By investing serious money (or, serious money for a web show), and with strong ties to the fashion industry, Ranjit has a vision of creating the first must-see online series, and will make it profitable by selling (in addition to foreign rights to the series and your regular ads and product placements) exclusive designer wares on the sidebar (i.e. on the site, you buy a pair of Diesels that Izzy is wearing that you can't get in the store, but Ranjit can because he takes pictures of Kate Moss and people like Kate Moss for a living).

So far, the investment's paid off. After showcasing the pilot for a few months, interested parties have invested enough in RJ and Ranjit's vision to fund eight, one-hour episodes (that will be broken down into smaller installments once they're released online).

I recently spoke with writer [Brett Michael Dykes](#), who's working on fleshing out *Huge* scripts and story lines before production begins again in January. To say he's rabidly enthusiastic about the project and working on the web would be an understatement:

Tilzy.TV: The production is very well-put together. How much does it cost to make something that looks this good?

Brett Michael Dykes: Less expensive than television, but definitely more expensive than your normal web shows. In terms of per episode, we're working with a production budget that's somewhere in between the cost of an hour of an HBO show and an episode of *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*.

Tilzy.TV: So, what's that range?

Brett: HBO costs about \$3 - \$5 million per hour and *Philadelphia* I think costs something like \$60,000.

Tilzy.TV: Even on the low end, that's like a summer blockbuster budget for a web show. How are you guys going to make it back?

Brett: Ranjit has ideas for product integration. It's complete and pretty bad ass if I'm allowed to say that. A character enters a scene and the viewer will be able to point and click to purchase something he or she is wearing right there in the moment. We're working with various brands and manufacturers to make exclusive products as well. Think limited edition or first offering of new guitars, accessories, artwork, jeans, jewelry.

We're also working on product placements. And selling rights to foreign markets. The foreign interest has been huge! Foreigners seem to love stories about New York.

Tilzy.TV: What's been shot so far?

Brett: Only the half-hour pilot. That essentially became a marketing piece that my virgin producers, the Grewal brothers, used to exhibit their competence as...well...producers. And I think that they did so fabulously if I must say so myself.

Tilzy.TV: When are you shooting the rest? When will we see it?

Brett: We go into production on the full first season in January. Right now we're retooling some things that we think will make the show better. Now that we're out of "spec" mode, we've got a lot more freedom in terms of storytelling. Actually, I'm talking to you right now from one of the Grewal brothers homes in suburban Chicago. We're all here for a week long script retreat where we've been sitting around a table discussing characters, story, just throwing out all kinds of ideas. It's been very productive and a hell of a lot of fun.

First episode should be up sometime in the first half of 2009, if everything stays on schedule.

Tilzy.TV: Will the new episodes look as good as the pilot?

Brett: The new production will definitely look as good, if not better. What's on *Jaman* was shot on a very tight budget. We'll have much more freedom financially in the coming production. But that look and feel isn't going anywhere. It's our hallmark and the thing that I think has blown most people away. So we'd be tremendously foolish to depart from that. And we're not that foolish.

Tilzy.TV: You have a Hollywood background. How is it to work on the web?

Brett: I'm really happy to be working out of the Hollywood realm. Sometimes in that world you put a lot of your life into a project and then your baby is being gangbanged in a room and all you can do is sit there and watch it happen because you have no control. Unsettling to say the least.

I feel that we're on the cusp of something that could be potentially great and somewhat revolutionary in the industry. It's an exciting time. No one's yet really created that must-see online video series, and I feel like *Huge* will be the first.

Until then, catch all four parts of the pilot episode of *Huge* at [Jaman.com/HugeTheShow](#).