

SPOTLIGHT ON NUR AZMAN

CO-OWNER OF CHOP STREET
MUSIC PRODUCTIONS



As a passionate muso with big ideas, bundles of energy, but no musical talents of her own, Nur never knew there was a place for someone like her in the music industry. But after eight years of playing amateur photographer and gig organiser for friends and local bands, she's gone out on a limb and a mission to help young musos make music, make in-roads and break into the industry through her Chop Street Music business.

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Give us your bbq pitch. What do you do?

We help create opportunities for emerging musicians to learn and develop their careers in the music industry through our workshops and programs at youth centres and the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre – whether they want to be songwriters, musicians, audio engineers, or someone like me who works behind the scenes organising gigs, managing artists and launching music. We also manage the John Butler Studio in Fairbridge, where we record up-and-coming artists from all over WA.

Did you always plan to work in this industry?

I had so many ideas in my head when I was at school. I wanted to be a teacher. I really loved drama, and enjoyed live music (although I'm not musically talented myself). I started taking photos for friends in various bands, but I didn't think music was a career option for me. So, after working part-time in retail while I was at school, I took on a full-time retail role, developed my soft skills in teamwork, communication and leadership and worked my way up to area manager. That was a great training ground for learning to network and manage my own business.

So, how did you get into the industry?

By the time I reached my mid-twenties, I was having a quarter-life crisis and searching for something new to challenge me. That's when I enrolled in the Diploma of Music Business at TAFE. At the same time, I started organising small music gigs under the Chop Street name with my life and business partner Jarrad (our sound engineer). I also got a six-month internship at WA Music and volunteered at as many music events as I could, and that gave me a lot of great contacts in the industry for Chop Street. We started off doing gigs and single launches for local musicians, then developed our artist development programs in our second year.

How would you describe yourself?

I'm a very energetic big-ideas person, always thinking about what's next. But I'm also super-organised and self-motivated, which means I'm very reliable. That's really important when you own your own business in the industry and artists are looking to you to keep them on schedule for releases.

What do you love most about the industry?

The diversity and creative freedom. Not just in the music but in the multiple roles a lot of us get to play working behind the scenes in the music industry. Every day and every project is different.

What's the best part of your job?

Many young people come into our programs with a lot self-doubt and I love seeing them grow in confidence as we work with them and support them in writing, performing, recording and releasing their own music, as a solo artist or starting up their own band. We have a trio of artists who started off just jamming together on our program this year and now they've got their own band page and they're playing gigs in Fremantle, Perth and Mandurah regularly.

What's your best advice for anyone starting out?

Check out what the music community is doing in your suburb. There might be open mics, a music club, programs or music nights or volunteer opportunities you could take part in. Follow Chop Street's social media pages for upcoming workshops and put your hand up to volunteer at all-ages festivals and events. Getting experience and demonstrating reliability goes a long way in our industry, and it's the best way to make connections and get started.

And what's next for you?

Our next big goal is organising our first large-scale music event and inviting national artists to play in Mandurah, where we're based, and provide a stage within that festival format for up-and-coming WA artists to play.

Connect with Nur and Chop Street Music on socials

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