

"I'd really like to be one of the
first people

to do Internet video successfully."

—MATT SMITH, HITPLAY.COM



Internet is great. It's a cool space, it's the new medium, and it's going to be a huge money-maker. But for now, it's basically the minor leagues for film and television," Tamir explains. "Then again, two years ago there was no minor league. A year ago I was a guy living on a couch in New York City, and now I'm an executive producer at my own production company. I've got my own business cards, an office, and an agent. There's a legitimacy that this thing has given us."

not everyone is like Barnes and Tamir, using Internet entertainment as a stepping stone to a traditional Hollywood gig. For some, like Matt Smith, the opportunity to help develop a new medium is an end goal in itself. While enrolled at the University of Southern California's prestigious School of Cinema-Television, Smith's long-held interest in writing and directing films became overshadowed by a new fascination with editing. "I got into editing because the

results were immediate," he explains. Where writers wait weeks, months, or even years to see the fruits of their labors, editors see results at the end of each day. He took every editing class USC offered and cut a friend's films to build experience. Because he could only gain access to top-of-the-line editing suites around L.A. at night, he pulled many an all-nighter editing.

Nearing his 1999 graduation, Smith acquired an assistant editor position at a small postproduction company, but much like the experiences of Barnes and Tamir Halaban, the work didn't provide the learning experience he expected. "I was under the impression that I was going to be the house assistant editor. As it turned out, the office work overcame everything else," he says.

When a friend tipped him off about an editing position with HitPlay.com, whose technology enables companies to target video web ads to specific user demographics, Smith jumped at the opportunity. In