

How winning *The Voice* is only half the struggle

AS reality TV singing shows struggle to produce bankable stars, a previous winner of *The Voice Australia* has revealed why coming first didn't guarantee him success.



WINNING a singing show used to be a guaranteed path to music success, propelling the likes of Guy Sebastian and Stan Walker to national stardom. But while shows such as *The Voice Australia* remain popular with TV audiences, recent iterations have struggled to produce bankable talent.

Despite being crowned this year's winner, *The Voice*'s Sam Perry saw his single bomb on the ARIA charts, debuting at no. 78 with just 2414 sales.

Perry's lacklustre sales even prompted one music expert to tell [*The Daily Telegraph*](#) that he advised budding artists not to go on reality TV.

"They're expected to do in a matter of weeks and months what most artists have done over a number of years," The Music's group managing editor Andrew Mast said.

For *The Voice* season two winner Harrison Craig, his rendition of Unchained Melody debuted at No. 2 on the ARIA charts in 2013.

Since then the Melbourne based musician has continued to work consistently with three albums, four national tours and a new music project, *Vice Dreams*, launching this month.

Now 23, Craig told news.com.au that while *The Voice Australia* had been an amazing opportunity, it didn't guarantee success.

"There's no right or wrong way to go about a music career. There are harder ways and there are easier ways but no one way is going to offer you a career next week, next year or in the next 10 years," he said.

"I think the bottom line is you need to be driven, you need to say this is what I am doing and I am going to go out there and go for it and not wait for it to come to you.

"Even if you've got a record deal, if you've got a great team behind you, you've got to be really driving the process. It's up to you as the artist to drive it, it's really not up to anyone else."

Revealing he still speaks to his coach Seal every three or four weeks for music advice, Craig said he was grateful to still have "incredible" fans who have supported him since his time on *The Voice*.

With a combined following of 170,000 across Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, Craig said he had worked hard to maintain his fan base over the last five years.

"That's one thing I don't take for granted too, because I know if you don't keep [the fans] up [with] what you want to do, or what you love to do it's very easy for that to just be taken away from you," he said.

"You need to be there to support them as much as they are there to support you."

For Craig, part of giving back includes his role as a Genes for Jeans ambassador, a cause he says is “close to my heart”.

He will be performing at this year’s [The Denim Dinner gala ball on Saturday July 21](#), which is being held to raise funds for the Children’s Medical Research Institute.

“Pretty much my entire life I’ve been aware of the work that they do and it’s been really great to know more about what they do,” Craig said.

“You get to meet incredible families and young kids who are just going through so much and it’s really hard to know that they are starting off their lives and its so difficult.”