

Music

Metro Station's 'Shake It' Is A Time Capsule Of The Year 2008



Miley Cyrus has always been a star. Noah Cyrus is starting to make a name for herself. Billy Ray Cyrus catapulted to fame back in the '90s. But there's another musically-inclined Cyrus that often gets forgotten—the tatted-up, leather jacket-wearing Trace Cyrus, formerly of pop punk band Metro Station. Those who aren't sure why the name Metro Station sounds vaguely familiar probably know the band best from its smash hit "Shake It," an infectious, fluffy tune that ruled the radio waves for a solid few months back in 2008.

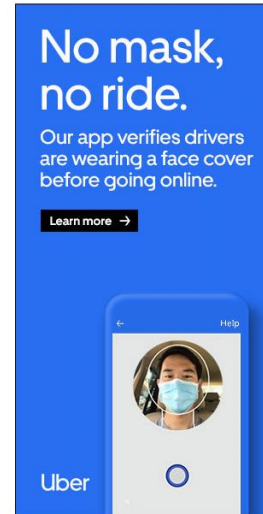
It just so happens that Metro Station released "Shake It" exactly 10 years ago today. And while that might be hard to believe, it won't seem so farfetched once you go back and actually listen to the song. From the in-your face synths to the nasal vocal cadence that continues to distinguish pop punk bands from their peers, "Shake It" is a song that hasn't aged particularly well.



But that's not a bad thing. "Shake It" is of its time in the same way that songs like "Hollaback Girl" or "All Star" are of their time. None of these songs could (or should) come out in 2018, but they all have the strange power to transport listeners to a completely different time and place—whether it's a family road trip or a warm summer day or, as one clever [Genius contributor](#) noted, a delightfully awkward grade school dance. "Shake It" is and was always meant to be quintessentially 2008. And that's why it's worth revisiting.

Let's start by examining the undeniable mid-2000s quality of Metro Station itself. While many musicians have joined and left the band since its formation in 2006, Metro Station's original lineup consisted of Cyrus, Mason Musso (the older brother of former Disney kid Mitchell Musso), keyboardist Blake Healy, and drummer Anthony Impropio. Cyrus and Musso met and started planting the metaphorical Metro Station seeds in what might just be the most definitive mid-2000s setting of all time—the *Hannah Montana* film set.

And that's not all. Metro Station first started getting attention when the band posted one of its singles, "Seventeen Forever" on MySpace. Not Facebook. Not YouTube. *MySpace*. If you want to get a better sense of the band's unwavering MySpace loyalty, check out this interview in which Cyrus admits that he's never used Facebook in his life and Impropio claims that Facebook "breaks relationships."



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Now let's break down the "Shake It" music video. While it didn't come out until 2009, it's hard to ignore the very mid-2000s fashion choices of Cyrus and Musso as well as their dancers and extras. The fingerless gloves. The button-up vests. The skinny ties. The *fedoras*. Totally in line with what other popular musicians (including Avril Lavigne and Fall Out Boy) wore at the time, but definitely not something we'd be caught dead wearing now.

And, as mentioned earlier, both Cyrus and Musso are clearly trying to imitate the whiny, overly enunciated singing style that's as much a part of pop punk music as cowboy hats and fishing metaphors are to country music.

Finally, let's look at the role that both "Shake It" and Metro Station play in the wider music landscape. Modern pop punk arguably hit its peak in 2007, when songs by the Plain White T's, Fall Out Boy, Red Jumpsuit Apparatus, The All-American Rejects, My Chemical Romance, Avril Lavigne, Boys Like Girls, and Hellogoodbye all somehow made their way on to the **Billboard Hot 100 chart**.

Fast forward to 2008, when the only pop punk acts represented on the Billboard Hot 100 were Metro Station and Secondhand Serenade (a band that briefly made waves with the sappy, soul-baring "Fall for You"). Pop staples like Pink and Britney Spears and promising newcomers like Katy Perry and Taylor Swift dominated the charts in 2008, and they continued to do so as bands like Yellowcard, Good Charlotte and yes, even Metro Station, dwindled in popularity. By 2010, the only "pop-punk" song represented on the Billboard Hot 100 chart was Paramore's "The Only Exception," the least Paramore-sounding single the band has ever put out.

Interestingly, it seems that Metro Station knew the tide was changing. In a **October 2009 interview** with *Alter The Press!*, the band talks about signing with Miley Cyrus' management company after previously being with the same company that managed Fall Out Boy, Cobra Starship, and Panic! At The Disco. Trace Cyrus also admits to wanting to be "more of a pop band" and play with musicians like Lady Gaga and The Black Eyed Peas.

Metro Station never found a way to infiltrate the mainstream pop world and put out a single as universally recognizable as "Shake It." Instead, they gave us something greater—a musical time capsule that, to this day, allows listeners to mentally transport themselves back to 2008. Future music historians will undoubtedly use "Shake It" to study mid-2000s culture, and we wouldn't have it any other way.

