

GETTING STARTED

TheVoiceworks.com, you will have realised, if you have studied the site, is a directory of international voice talent and the majority of those who have added their details to our database are professionals. However, we get many enquiries from newcomers wishing to make a career in this competitive industry. These can simply be people who've been told that they 'have a nice voice' by friends and family or, equally, radio and TV presenters, ready to diversify and build on existing skills. This is a guide on how to get started.

BE HONEST

Do you really think your voice is attractive and 'sellable'? If you already work in the media then this question is probably unnecessary. However, if you are really new to this business you need to think carefully. There are a huge number of people already doing this work successfully and they've spent a great deal of time developing the craft. It really is a craft and not simply a matter of making a quick recording and sending it off to Agents - even if you do have a good voice. It is a skilled art that professionals will tell you takes years to master (mind you, they're very protective of their careers and who wants competition in what is a fierce industry?!) But do be honest with yourself and consider your talent, commitment and ambition and also give serious thought to whether you're prepared to throw some money at it - because you'll need to.

DEMOS

These are the most important things you'll ever invest in. They are precisely how you'll be judged by potential employers. You wouldn't believe how awful some demos are that arrive at our office. This is your big opportunity – don't waste it, because once you've been rejected it'll be hard to climb back. If you work in radio or TV you'll probably have a way of making decent recordings but if you are totally new in the business please spend time and money on producing professional recordings. Think about content and the way you want to present yourself. Most demos are no longer than a minute or maybe a little longer. These could be montages or individual ones. We'd suggest that you make three of these. A commercial/spot, narration and promo.

BIO AND HEADSHOT

Some people ask why on earth a voiceover artist needs to post their headshot. It's easy to answer. Producers and Casting Agents like to know as much as they can about people they're thinking of using and paying money to. A good headshot, professionally shot, will work wonders for your credibility. Likewise, a well-written bio, of no more than half a dozen paragraphs, will give them details of your background and experience. Don't be tempted to write an endless CV/Resume listing absolutely everything you've ever done. It's boring and, really, who wants to scroll down all that? Keep it punchy and concise. Get the grammar and punctuation right, too. Take time.

PERSONAL WEBSITE

Most of our subscribers have their own websites, which their personal page points to. It's ideal but not essential if you're getting started. Use your page on **TheVoiceworks.com** to refer people to you when you promote yourself. And you do need to promote yourself – don't rely on others. Anyone who has been in the business for a while will tell you that you need to be listed in as many places as possible. Some you pay for; some you don't. If you choose to have your own site then be prepared to spend some more valuable cash – it'll pay you dividends if you have the talent and it'll enable you to go into greater detail and provide further demos. Your **Voiceworks** page will direct you there. Same principle – don't waffle and keep to the point!

AGENTS

Established voice talents gain work independently via their personal websites but also have affiliations to Agents to secure further employment. **TheVoiceworks.com** is NOT at Agency and we charge no commission fees because Producers and Casting agents deal with you directly. If you wish to sign up with an Agent, then you can use your **Voiceworks** page to show them what you're about AND it saves the hassle and cost of hard mail. If you want to act independently, your **Voiceworks** page is the ideal method for displaying your credentials.

YOUR OWN STUDIO?

Well again, that's ideal. Many do have their own facilities and some are very sophisticated, providing on-line, live link-ups with employers who can oversee recordings as they're being made. But don't let this put you off if you're starting out. The internet provides you with a fantastically quick delivery service. Just make sure that you can record in **quality** if you're working from home or, if not, that you always record in a professional studio that will put your audio files on CD or other media for you to subsequently mail-on.

THERE ARE NO SHORT-CUTS

Just believing that you have a good voice is not enough. You have to work at your new, chosen profession and get as much experience as possible – even it means doing things for free sometimes. It'll give you a proven track record.

To get started, register with **TheVoiceworks.com** via our front page – and remember that it's a once-only payment of \$100 and the only time we ask for more money is when you choose to update your files. If you follow our advice above, this won't be very often. Good luck!

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