



# THE BACK DOOR TO HOLLYWOOD

## Supplements to Action Guides and Learning Modules





# THE BACK DOOR TO HOLLYWOOD

## Production Tips



## The Back Door to Hollywood

by **Beth Rosen**  
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## WHERE TO OBTAIN ROYALTY FREE PHOTOS

Obtaining royalty free photos is easy when you know where to look. You never know when you will need them. For example, you can turn royalty free pictures into posters that need to paper a character's wall. You may need to place them on a computer monitor that the character is looking at. If you have a picture frame with a photo, you may be able to use a royalty free photo. You may need to create a flyer or a digital computer print out as a prop. Many times in crime scenes, the police or FBI will have a series of photos on the wall which they may reference in dialog. You may also want to use a photo for the cover of one of your scripts or television pitches.

Although Learning Module 1 has a ton of free resources, here are some additional websites to find royalty free photos for props. Some sites you may have to pay a small fee but even on those sites, there are often free downloads available.

Many photos are in the public domain and are freely usable by you without paying anything. I've included those here as well (see the last 2 links). Your props person will ultimately be responsible for obtaining the necessary photos but if you know where to look, you can point them in the right direction and save time and money.

<https://www.pexels.com/>

<https://pixabay.com/>

<https://all-free-download.com/>

<http://morguefile.com/>

<http://www.adigitaldreamer.com/gallery/>

<http://stockvault.net/>

<http://www.sxc.hu>

<http://freestockphotos.com/>

<http://www.flickr.com/>

<http://www.inmagine.com/>

<http://pdphoto.org/>

<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/>

<https://www.freepik.com/>

# SAMPLE CALL SHEET

|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|---------|-------------------|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------|
| <b>TITLE</b>                                                                                                        |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| Date                                                                                                                |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| Producer:<br>Exec. Producer:<br>Director:<br>Co Producer:<br>Asct.Producer:<br>Asct.Producer:<br>1st AD:<br>2nd AD: |                 | DAY _ of _<br><br><b>CREW CALL</b> |         |                   |             |         |             | <b>WEATHER</b><br>Sunrise                      Sunset<br>High:                              Low:<br>Forecast:<br>Precipitation: 0% chance |      |          |
| <b>LOCATIONS</b>                                                                                                    |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| SCENE#                                                                                                              | SET/DESCRIPTION |                                    |         |                   | I/E         | D/N     | INT/<br>EXT | PGS                                                                                                                                       | CAST | LOCATION |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   | TOTAL PAGES |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| #                                                                                                                   | CHARACTER       | CAST                               | PHONE # |                   | E-Mail      |         | SETCALL     | LOCATION                                                                                                                                  |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
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|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| PROPS                                                                                                               |                 | VEHICLES                           |         | EXTRAS            |             | SCENE   | SET CALL    | DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                               |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| WARDROBE                                                                                                            |                 |                                    |         | Medical Facility: |             |         |             | NTES.                                                                                                                                     |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         | Tel:              |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| Crew                                                                                                                |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| Camera                                                                                                              | Name            | Phone #                            | E-mail  | Production        | Name        | Phone # | E-mail      |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| <b>G &amp; E</b>                                                                                                    |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| <b>LOCATION</b>                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| <b>SOUND</b>                                                                                                        |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
| <b>PAs</b>                                                                                                          |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |
|                                                                                                                     |                 |                                    |         |                   |             |         |             |                                                                                                                                           |      |          |

Once you start production, you will need a call sheet for the cast and crew for each day of filming. A call sheet sets forth the time each crew and cast member should report to the set. It should have all vital information, including names, emails, phone numbers, set locations, etc. Above is a sample call sheet. It must be circulated to the cast and crew reporting to set at least one day before. A member of the production crew should be

assigned this task. Always bring a copy with you to set in case someone is late or the call time changes during the day and you need to call people.<sup>1</sup>

## **Transportation**

Transportation fees are a part of movie making. It's up to you whether you will pay for airline tickets, tolls, gas and car rentals. Many cast and crew will want to negotiate these costs into their contracts. You ultimately decide whether you can afford it and whether you can get just as good cast and crew without paying for it. All established stars will expect transportation and lodging to be paid for.

As for production, you will need to scout out locations and arrange for parking ahead of time, especially if you will be filming where there is limited parking. You don't want your cast and crew driving around looking for parking spots or worrying about getting ticketed or towed. If there is limited parking, look for a lot or parking garage where you can negotiate to have the cast and crew park during the film shoot.

When you have more than one set in a day and you must move locations, you will need to arrange for a company move. Calculate the time it will take to pack up all the equipment, wardrobe and props, load them on the trucks, and add the time it will take to unload and unpack when you arrive at the next location. Add that to the time it will take to drive to your next location, taking into consideration the time of the company move and any likely traffic. It can easily take over an hour to two hours to pack, load, unload and set up equipment again at a new location. If your destination is far away and you are traveling during traffic, you should not be scheduling a very long film shoot at the next location or you may find yourself working into the wee hours of the night and early morning.

Too many company moves can take their toll on the cast and crew, especially on repeatedly long days of shooting so be aware of that when you schedule your shot list. Proximity of locations is definitely something to consider when you are scheduling different scenes to be shot on one day and arranging for company moves.

## **Budget**

Before you produce your film, you should always put together a budget. Think outside of the box. You may be able to pay some people on a deferred basis rather than paying them a large sum of cash upfront. If the movie script is good and you think you could get distribution, actors and crew members may be willing to take a small upfront cash

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<sup>1</sup> G&E = Gaffer & Grips responsible for the camera equipment, PA's = Personal Assistants, I/E = number of interior/exterior shots, INT/EXT = whether the shots are inside or outside, PGS = page numbers of the script relevant to the scene being shot.

payment in exchange for a very large deferred payment. It's a common practice in the industry. You will have to negotiate the fees upfront and setting out a budget ahead of time will help you do that. I've attached a spread sheet budget with possible line item costs so that you don't get blind-sighted when you go into production or postproduction editing.

SAMPLE SUMMARY BUDGET

| Budget Item                                           | Budget Cost |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| ACTORS                                                |             |
| PRODUCER                                              |             |
| WRITER(S)                                             |             |
| DIRECTOR                                              |             |
| DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY                               |             |
| EDITOR                                                |             |
| LIGHTS + GRIP EQUIPMENT + CAMERA AND CAMERA EQUIPMENT |             |
| CO-PRODUCER(S)                                        |             |
| ASSOCIATE PRODUCER(S)                                 |             |
| LINE PRODUCER                                         |             |
| MAKE-UP ARTISTS & MAKEUP SUPPLIES/KIT                 |             |
| PRODUCTION DESIGNER                                   |             |
| ART DIRECTOR                                          |             |
| GAFFER                                                |             |
| SOUND AND SOUND EQUIPMENT                             |             |
| BOOM                                                  |             |
| GRIP                                                  |             |
| 1st ASSISTANT TO DIRECTOR (AD)                        |             |
| 2nd AD                                                |             |
| PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS                                 |             |
| SOUND DESIGNER                                        |             |
| MUSIC                                                 |             |
| PROPS                                                 |             |
| MEALS + CRAFT SERVICES                                |             |

| Budget Item                            | Budget Cost |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| LOCATION FEES                          |             |
| TRANSPORTATION                         |             |
| LODGING                                |             |
| WARDROBE                               |             |
| EXPERTS                                |             |
| SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPPLIES               |             |
| SPECIAL SFX & CAMERA EQUIPMENT         |             |
| PUBLICIST                              |             |
| MOVIE POSTERS                          |             |
| MOVIE POSTCARDS                        |             |
| FILM, EQUIPMENT AND LOCATION INSURANCE |             |
| TRANSPORTATION INSURANCE               |             |
| WEBSITE DESIGN                         |             |
| FILM FESTIVAL SUBMISSIONS              |             |
| PUBLICITY KIT                          |             |
| MISCELLANEOUS                          |             |
| <b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>                    |             |

Please also see sample excel sheets. This is merely a summary, not a line item budget. Please see sample line item budget.



# Sample Shooting Schedule Template

You have a chart for each day that you are shooting and the Day should be progressive (i.e. Day 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.) but the scenes will vary depending on characters, location and availability. The number of cells will depend on how many scenes you are shooting on that date.

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

| DAY | SCENE | DAY/<br>NIGHT | INT/<br>EXT | PAGES | SET<br>UP | LOCATION | DESCRIPTION | CHARACTERS | PROPS | EXTRAS | WARDROBE | PERMITS |
|-----|-------|---------------|-------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------|------------|-------|--------|----------|---------|
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |

TOTAL PAGES = \_\_\_\_\_

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

| DAY | SCENE | DAY/<br>NIGHT | INT/<br>EXT | PAGES | SET<br>UP | LOCATION | DESCRIPTION | CHARACTERS | PROPS | EXTRAS | WARDROBE | PERMITS |
|-----|-------|---------------|-------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------|------------|-------|--------|----------|---------|
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
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TOTAL PAGES = \_\_\_\_\_

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

| DAY | SCENE | DAY/<br>NIGHT | INT/<br>EXT | PAGES | SET<br>UP | LOCATION | DESCRIPTION | CHARACTERS | PROPS | EXTRAS | WARDROBE | PERMITS |
|-----|-------|---------------|-------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------|------------|-------|--------|----------|---------|
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
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TOTAL PAGES = \_\_\_\_\_

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

| DAY | SCENE | DAY/<br>NIGHT | INT/<br>EXT | PAGES | SET<br>UP | LOCATION | DESCRIPTION | CHARACTERS | PROPS | EXTRAS | WARDROBE | PERMITS |
|-----|-------|---------------|-------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------|------------|-------|--------|----------|---------|
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |
|     |       |               |             |       |           |          |             |            |       |        |          |         |

TOTAL PAGES = \_\_\_\_\_

## PROP LIST SAMPLE FOR A SCENE

Set forth below are some sample prop/wardrobe lists for scenes for a television pilot I wrote and a screenplay that I co-produced. They contain the type of set, specific props for the characters to use on set as well as their wardrobe and any continuity issues. Attention to details and wardrobe changes in different scenes in the script is critical for a smooth production. When you do a full wardrobe list, you can include Wardrobe Change notes.

### Example 1

In the example below, because the character has just been drenched in the rain and she is wearing the same suit as in the prior scene, I have made a note for the production crew that this scene must be filmed after her dry clothes scenes where she should look polished and neat, after the rain scene so she is already soaked and before the scenes where she is wearing wrinkled clothes that have dried from the rain event. These are important aspects of filmmaking and your props and wardrobe people must be sensitive to all these issues so make sure when you give them direction to do a list that they include any continuity issues like these.

### RESTAURANT BATHROOM - Act Two, Scene 11

#### Set:

1 or 2 Stall Bathroom with sink, vanity, mirror and electric hand dryer

#### Props:

Soap Dispenser  
Tissues for Bathroom  
Garbage Can  
Toilet Paper  
Pocketbooks

#### Wardrobe:

Rachel:  
WET & DRENCHED Suit #2 & Blouse #2, High Heels #2, Pearl Earrings #2, Watch (same wardrobe as Act One Scene 1-5, Act Two, Scenes 9, 10, 14)  
Patron: Business Suit and Dress Shoes.

#### Casting Call:

Rachel  
Patron

#### Notes:

Must be filmed after rain scene and after Act One Scenes 1-5, Act Two Scene 9 and before Act Two, Scenes 10 & 14)

## **Example 2:**

In the example below, the girl friend was supposed to drink a Caramel; Frapuccino with whipped cream. Since I had already had on set experience with drinks and whipped cream, I knew that the film crew would easily need at least 2 to 3 cans of whipped cream for continuity as they did re-take after re-take and got different angle shots so I wrote that into the prop list. I also left a space for the director and producer to add their own notes.

### **JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - Scene 19**

Plastic Board

Law books on shelves

Legal Diploma on wall

Pens

Papers

Various folders

Various pleadings

Plastic Board with words in this order (all with lines through them except Serial Killer):

Accountant

Pig Farmer

Florist

Golfer

Waitress

Criminal Defendant

Attorney

Girl Rock Band

Serial Killer

Black Markers to write the words

Trash can (for continuity of scenes)

Phone on desk (for continuity of scenes) Caramel Frappuccino in Paper Coffee Cup (several of them or extra liquid for continuity of shots) Whipped Cream (for continuity of shots)

### **Wardrobe**

Judge: Robe, Shirt & Pants or Suit (discuss - depends on what other scenes you will be filming that day)

Girlfriend Lawyer: Sexy Suit or blouse and skirt, dress shoes, earrings.

### **Notes:**



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## **The 180 Degree Rule Kickstarter Campaigns Star Branding**

### **The 180 Degree Rule**

In filmmaking, the 180 degree rule basically states that two characters in the same scene should always have the same left/right orientation and relation to each other. This way you maintain continuity of the scene and create a seamless sequence of events.

So if you do a two shot and then go to close ups of your individual characters, make sure they maintain their left/right relation to each other. The only way you should violate this rule is if you do a panoramic shot so that the camera moves around 180 degrees on screen so that the left/right orientation changes. The other benefit to this rule is that you maintain the same cohesive lighting which makes things easier in the editing room.

### **Kickstarter Campaigns**

Kickstarter campaigns are a great way to fund your creative projects. It involves a sincere and dedicated marketing effort on your part with continuous follow-up emails and social network postings to raise funds but if you do it right and offer people incentives for investing in you, even if it's a small amount from a lot of people, you may

be pleasantly surprised to find your project funded at the end of a specified period of time. The downside is that if you don't meet your projected budget with enough donations, all donations that have been pledged will disappear. So it puts the pressure on you to really market and push your project and get people as excited about it as you are, especially at the end when the deadline for donations is almost up.

So how do you run a successful kickstarter campaign? These are the seven essential elements which increase the likelihood of getting the full amount of your projected budget funded with enough donations.

- **Propose and Disclose Components of Your Budget:** You must have a donation goal to reach that matches your projected budget. Don't use an arbitrary dollar amount. Do some research to make sure it's accurate and disclose the components of the budget so people know where their money is going. It does not have to be a line item budget but a general disclosure to satisfy your potential funders.
- **Presell Your Project:** Offer a copy of your MP3, DVD, Flash drive of your movie, Vimeo Pre-screening ticket, etc. when it's done if they make a specified donation.
- **Offer Credit to Large Donations:** Offer credit on the project to people who offer large donations. People love to see their name in print and call themselves producers or contributors to a successful creative endeavor.
- **Limited Editions:** Offer your pre-sold copies as a special limited edition with personal signatures from you. Offer a limited number of these personally signed copies.
- **Share Your Story:** Give them photos and tidbits from the creative process to bring them along for the ride so they feel involved and an integral part of the project.

- **Creative Experiences:** For your largest donators, the ones who invest thousands, offer them an opportunity to be on set or in a recording session with you. Rarely does anyone get to experience this and the chance to be a part of your creative experience and see it first hand may go a long way in getting large donations.
- **Campaign with Emails, Social Networks, Phone Calls, Radio Shows, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and Blog Sites:** Contact everyone you know, especially friends and family and ask them to do some campaigning on your behalf. It's fairly easy to get a lot of people to donate \$1 to \$10. Don't be shy about strutting your stuff and asking for help. Blog about it. Post it on your web page, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other social networking sites. Try to get on a radio show and be interviewed about your project and plug your kickstarter campaign. Be sure to give the listening audience a sample of your work. If you don't already have a personal website, get one immediately.

Where can you conduct kickstarter campaigns? Do a Google search for kickstarter campaigns for the full listings. Here are two of the most common crowdsourcing sites to fund creative projects:

<http://www.kickstarter.com/>

<http://www.indiegogo.com/>

If you haven't already downloaded the bonus e-book **How to Run a Successful Kickstarter Campaign, download it here**. The e-book has step by step instructions to keep you organized and on track to meet your projected goals. Keep it nearby as a checklist if you plan to run your own kickstarter campaign.

## **Star Branding as a Business**

You are in the business now of branding yourself as a star which means you are in the

business of you. Anyone who has succeeded in Hollywood will tell you when you get right down to it, it's a business just like anything else so you need to put your business hat on as well as your creative hat.

That means you must also think like a business person. You will have to get up to speed on how much it costs to bring your creative projects to life as well as distribution costs. If you do that ahead of time, you can stick to your budget and seek financing from friends, family and people in the entertainment financing business. If you plan on producing a film, you must have a business plan with a budget in addition to a treatment to get financing. Also look into tax incentives and grants in different locations for filming.

If you plan on using your personal name, a stage name, a band name, a sketch comedy group name, or a television series name in connection with your career, make sure you reserve a website domain name for each right away so that no one else can take it. You can do that at <http://www.godaddy.com>. It doesn't matter if you are not ready to build your website yet. Still reserve the domain name. You will be surprised how many people there are out there with your name and if you start to gain popularity, you want to make sure no one else reserves your name as a domain to hold you hostage to pay an exorbitant fee for it, especially since as word gets out, people will begin to search for that name online. Domain names should cost \$10 per year. If you plan on using it a long time, you can reserve the domain name for several years. Do the same thing on Facebook for free.

You have an option to create a permanent link to your Facebook Page. Do this right away because there are many people out there with the same name.

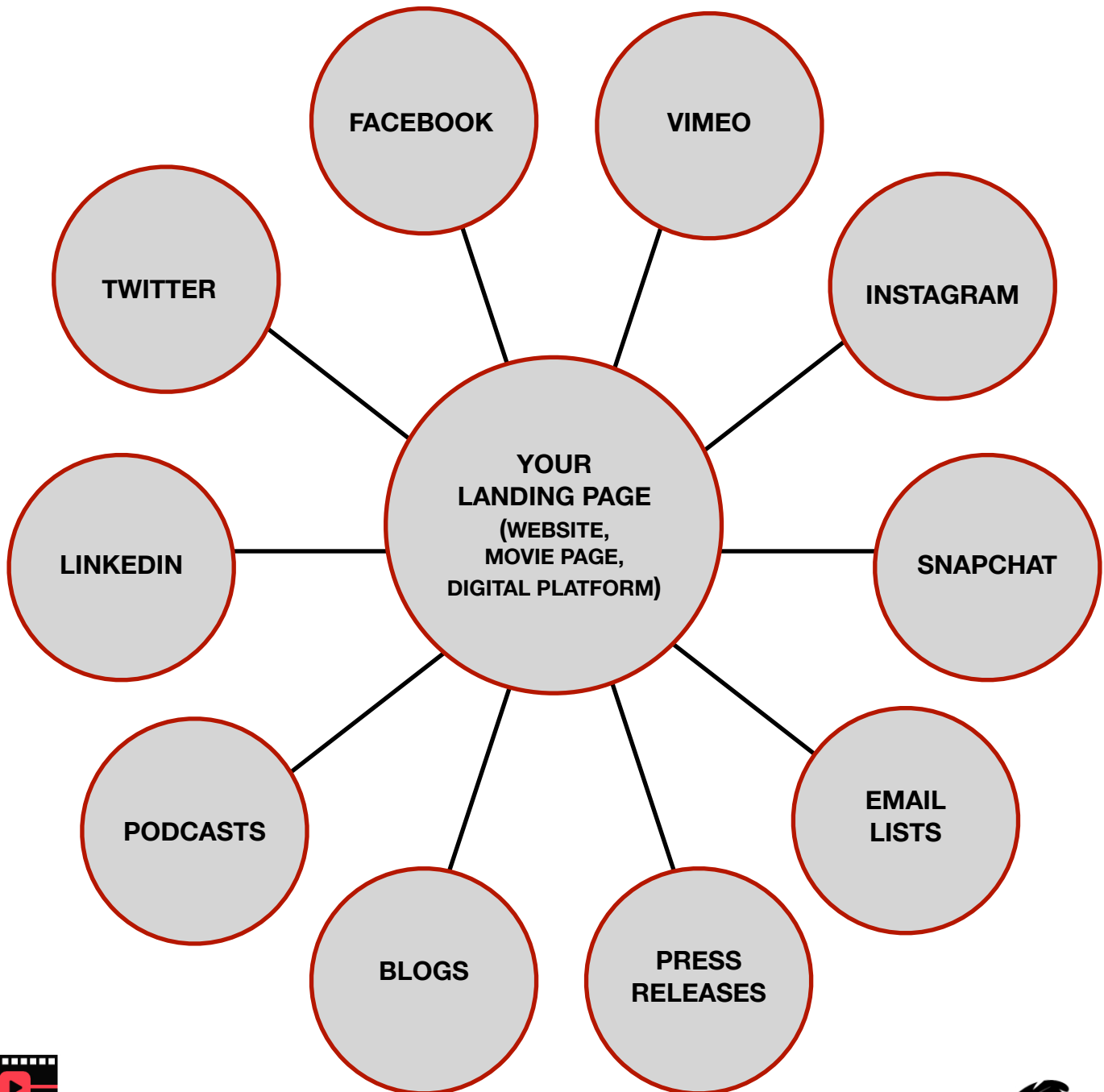




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## SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING & NETWORKING WHEEL

Promote yourself on as many platforms as you can when you upload content or information about your content (such as a short entertaining video, box office release or movie screening). Do not get overwhelmed. Start with the platform you already have a presence on and then expand from there. These are just a sampling of social media networking platforms. They can include Affiliates who have all these outlets too.







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## VIRAL VIDEO TIPS SUPPLEMENT

The best way to reach a large number of people and get your message across on the internet today is through video but not just any video. It must be a video that captures and keeps your audience's attention.

Video is considered by Google as a higher form of engagement than a simple blog or article and ranks higher in the ratings. Therefore you have a better shot at reaching more people if you do a video rather than a simple article. And the more people that watch your video, the higher you will rank on Google and the more likelihood people who are searching in your niche market will see a link to your video and watch it.

### **Becoming a Quasi Celebrity with a Viral Video**

If you want to become a quasi-celebrity by making a video go viral, garnering millions of views and gaining the attention of morning shows and major news outlets like CBS News, Access Hollywood, Good Morning America, the Ellen Degeneres Show etc. you will need to keep a few things in mind.

#### **Leap When Someone Beeps - Opportunities Open Doors**

If the opportunity arises to film something or record a short smart phone video in a funny or interesting moment, do it. Slice of life videos that touch the heart, evoke an emotion or make you laugh get shared like crazy.

#### **Expand Your Social Media**

Once your video goes viral, you will receive an outpouring of friend requests on your personal page. Create a fan page to build followers so that you can build a huge fan base beyond the 5,000 friend limit on your personal page.

## **Know Your Target Audience and Which Platforms They Frequent**

You need to reach the right target audience which means you need to be on the right social platform for that audience. Instagram targets younger audiences whereas. Use #'s (hashtags) that garner millions of views on instagram because your video will appear under those hashtags. Share your content on the right platforms and ask others with large followings to share the same content.

## **Create an Entertaining, Authentic, and Unique Video and Create Videos that Follow a Hot Trend**

Be creative, entertaining, unique and fun. Address something that is already going on in your audience's mind or ride the wave of something in the news or a trend that is getting views.

## **So how do you make your video go viral so you rank as high as possible on Google?**

1. Keep your video short and to the point.
2. Keep it simple and entertaining.
3. State the problem in your niche market you are going to help them solve right up front in the beginning of the video.
4. Give them useful information so that you move them from a place of no or little knowledge to a place of educated knowledge that puts them ahead in their industry.
5. Choose a title with key words - ones that captures your niche market's attention and offers a solution to their problem.
6. Use key words, tags and SEO (search engine optimization).
7. Create a coordinated attack with link bait so that you rank on the first page of Google within 24 hours of posting your video.

## **What is a Coordinated Attack?**

A coordinated attack is when you post your video on as many social networking sites as possible and get large numbers of people to link back to your video and share it all on the same day. The way to do that is to create link bait, something that causes people to click on your link to watch and share your video.

## **7 Steps to Create a Coordinated Attack**

1. Post your Video on Youtube and other social networking videos sites such as Vimeo.
2. Post it on Blog sites, Facebook (Fan Page, Movie Page, Groups), Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and other social networking sites. Note that Facebook favors videos of 3 minutes or more and will rank them higher in the news feed. Titles and Subtitles
3. Put a Call to Action in it asking people if they liked the video or found it useful to please share it with others. (Facebook/Instagram do not favor asking them to like or share outright - you need to find creative ways to do this).
4. Email it to your mailing list and ask them to share it with others.
5. Do online press releases with a link to your video.
6. Contact as many people as possible, especially people who have large email mailing lists and social networking audiences to post, email and blog about your video as well. Have them share it. Get sharing partners and affiliates on board.
7. Offer link bait, such as an ethical bribe offering more knowledge, a free gift, or a chance to win a contest in order to get them to link back to your website and share your video.

When Google sees a large number of people linking to a video within a 24 hour period, it views that as a high form of engagement and moves the video quickly up in rankings.

## **Why Does Hook, Story, Close Work?**

1. Videos that have a good Hook, Story and Close are more likely to be shared.
2. A strong hook will capture someone's attention and stop them from scrolling to watch your video.
3. Hook them in the first 3 - 5 seconds. Be creative.

4. Have a strong story, even if it's a short (although slice of life funny moments, this does not necessarily apply). You know how to do story from what you have learned in this course.

5. Bridge them with something dramatic, thought provoking, funny, heartwarming or personal as you close with something that makes them like your video, buy a ticket to your film, share your content, become a fan, subscribe to your platform etc. You want them to keep coming back and to be your lifelong fans. This is your call to action.



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SIGNATURE BETH  
PRODUCTIONS

# Getting Your Film Onto the Big Screen



**The Back Door to Hollywood**  
**by Beth Rosen**  
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## Star Power

If you want to see your film on the big screen, you need to make an outstanding film with good cinematography, good acting, good sound quality and a captivating story. You can increase your chances of getting distribution and seeing it on the big screen in theaters across the country dramatically if you include celebrity star power in it. Although celebrities can be expensive, many will work for a minimum payment upfront (so long as it meets SAG-AFTRA requirements) with a deferred payment once the film gets distribution and starts making money. It is a very common practice in the industry. Even if you can only afford a cameo appearance or small role for a well known actor/actress, particularly an award winning actor/actress, you will attract the attention of distributors if their name is in the cast. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how many older award winning actors you may be able to cast at an affordable rate, particularly those that are in the mode of (i) "giving back" to independent filmmakers and/or (ii) jumpstarting their careers again.

One way to get distribution is to get your films into film festivals and network with distributors and industry folk who can put you in touch with distributors. You can also partner with a production company that has access to celebrities and distributors. Meet as many people as you can at a festival. You never know where another filmmaker is in their own journey. They may have already secured distribution for their film and be more than happy to help you and give you tips on how to get a distributor. You may even work with some of those people on future projects and if you are brought into a blockbuster film that receives massive media attention, then you can leverage that for your own films.



# Film Festivals

So to which film festivals should you submit your film? You should always submit to local film festivals because home grown films usually have their own category and that increases your opportunity to win an award. You should also apply to top 25 film festivals that pull in star power and publicity. Do your research on Google to see which festivals are most appealing to you. If you like to travel, then apply to festivals around the world which receive press in Hollywood and attract celebrities. Get on the Withoutabox mailing list for film festival deadline alerts so you do not miss them. Try to submit early so that you pay a reduced fee.

## Top Film Festivals

Set forth below are some of the top film festivals in the United States and around the globe with clickable links so that you can do further research to see if you want to apply. They attract celebrities and a great deal of media attention.

### **Sundance Film Festival**

Park City, Utah, United States

<http://www.sundance.org/festival/>

### **Tribeca Film Festival**

New York, New York, United States

<http://www.tribecafilm.com/festival/>

### **Hoboken International Film Festival**

New Jersey/New York, United States

<http://www.hobokeninternationalfilmfestival.com/>

### **Nantucket Film Festival**

Nantucket, United States

<http://www.nantucketfilmfestival.org/>

**International Film Festival Rotterdam**

the Netherlands

<https://www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com/en/>

**Cannes International Film Festival**

Cannes, France

<http://www.festival-cannes.com/en.html/>

**Guadalajara Film Festival**

Guadalajara, Mexico

<https://ficg.mx/35/public/>

**Rooftop Films**

New York, New York, United States

<https://rooftopfilms.com/>

**Toronto International Film Festival**

Toronto, Canada

<http://tiff.net/>

**Venice International Film Festival**

Venice, Italy

<http://www.labiennale.org/en/cinema/>

**Hong Kong International Film Festival**

Hong Kong, China

<https://www.hkiff.org.hk/>

**Berlin International Film festival**

Berlin - Germany

<http://www.berlinale.de/en/HomePage.html>

**East End Film Festival**

East London, United Kingdom

<http://www.eastendfilmfestival.com/>

**South by Southwest**

Austin, Texas, United States

<http://www.sxsw.com/>

**Telluride Film Festival**

Telluride, Colorado

<http://telluridefilmfestival.org/>

**Sao Paulo International Film Festival**

Sao Paulo, Brazil

<http://36.mostra.org/>



## **Austin Film Festival**

Austin, Texas, United States

<http://www.austinfilmfestival.com/>

## **Niche Film Festivals**

You can also apply to different film festivals in your particular genre or niche market. Do a google search for relevant festivals. Don't limit yourself to top 25 film festivals. If you find interesting festivals that attract film industry folk and cater to your niche market, apply to those festivals as well. Set forth below are some niche festivals that you can check out.

### **Slamdance Film Festival**

<http://www.slamdance.com/>

### **Marfa Film Festival (on hiatus)**

<https://www.marfafilmfestival.com/>

### **Just for Laughs Eat My Shorts**

<https://comedypro.hahaha.com/>

### **San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival**

<http://www.frameline.org/>

### **Screamfest Horror Film Festival**

<http://www.screamfestla.com/>

### **Terror Film Festival**

<https://matterstone.wixsite.com/terrorfilmfestival>

### **Eerie Horror Fest**

<http://www.eeriehorrorfest.com/>

### **American Black Film Festival**

<http://www.abff.com/festival/>

### **San Diego Asian Film Festival**

<https://pacarts.org/sdaff/>

### **Full Frame Documentary Film Festival**

<http://www.fullframefest.org/>

### **LA Film Fest**

<https://www.dtlaff.com/>

**Hot Docs**

<http://www.hotdocs.ca/>

**AFI Silver Docs**

<https://docs.afi.com/>

**Latino International Film Institute**

<https://latinofilm.org/>

## Oscar Qualifying Film Festivals

Some festivals are Oscar qualifying so if you want to be nominated for an Oscar and win an award, you should apply to those film festivals. You can Google festivals to see if they are\ Oscar qualifying. They will usually have a note in the festival description if it is an Oscar qualifying festival because it is a badge of honor.

## Film Festival Circuit

If you want to increase your exposure and the chances of getting distribution, you should apply to as many film festivals as possible. If you find that you want to apply to more festivals than your budget allows for, you do not have to resign yourself to bowing out of the festival circuit and missing out on great networking opportunities. Instead, you can raise more funds through Kickstarter campaigns, friends, family and/or investors. Alternatively you can ask a film festival that you would really like to attend if they will grant you a full or partial waiver, particularly if your film has won awards or is packed with celebrity star power. Most people do not know this but some festivals will grant partial or full waivers so don't take yourself out of the game. Just send them an email or call them to find out if they grant waivers based on your circumstances.



## SAG-AFTRA

When you are deciding how to cast your film, you will need to decide if you will be making a SAG-AFTRA film. SAG-AFTRA is the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. It is the union for actors and it has minimum work requirements that you must abide by if you plan on hiring SAG-AFTRA members. If you want to use experienced actors, they will most likely be members of the union so you will need to become a SAG-AFTRA signatory, which entails signing various agreements, keeping track of hours worked for each union member on set, setting up a payroll account and putting up a deposit to meet minimum SAG-AFTRA requirements. The downside of producing a SAG-AFTRA film is that it will increase the cost of your film and the amount of work you need to do but if you want celebrities or seasoned actors to bring your creative vision to life and increase the likelihood of getting distribution, it is something you will need to get up to speed on in the pre-production stage and work into your budget.

You can find out more about SAG-AFTRA requirements and download the necessary signatory documents, forms, actors' agreements, cast lists, rate sheets, digests and other production forms at the following website: <http://www.sagaftra.org/>. The different contracts can be found here: <http://www.sagaftra.org/production-center/theatrical/signatory-information> or <http://www.sagindie.org/resources/contracts>.

### SAG-AFTRA Film Categories

- Short Film Agreement
- Low Budget Theatrical
- Modified Low Budget Project
- Ultra Low Budget Project
- Short Project
- Student Film

If you plan to do a SAG-AFTRA Film, you can find out more about the procedures, requirements and documents here (they change so keep up to date) <https://www.sagaftra.org/production-center>

### **Ultra-Low Budget Project Agreement**

- \$300,000 maximum budget
- Day rate set at 20% of basic agreement scale and increase annually with scale
- Filmed entirely in U.S.
- Non-episodic content only
- Producers no longer have to declare their intended exhibition market and residuals all be based on the initial release of the project.

### **Modified Low Budget Project Agreement**

- Total budget between \$300,000 - \$700,000
- Non-episodic content only
- Filmed entire in the U.S.
- Diversity in casting and background actor incentives are available
- Rates for daily and weekly principal performers are set at 35% of basic agreement scale and will increase annually with scale.
- Producers no longer have to declare their intended exhibition market and residuals all be based on the initial release of the project.

### **Low Budget Theatrical Agreement**

- Total budget of greater than \$700,000 but no more than \$2,000,000
- Initial theatrical release
- Daily and weekly principal performers will be set at 65% of the basic agreement scale (and will increase annually with scale)
- Diversity casting incentive available

## Special New Media Agreement

- Limited to projects with an initial new media release in 4 categories
- Category A will have day performer rates set at 20% of basic agreement scale and background actor rates at 75% of background actor scale. (rates increase annually with scale).
- Category B will have daily and weekly performer rates set at 35% of scale and background actor rates set at 75% of background actor scale (rates will increase annually with scale)
- Category C will have daily and weekly principal performer rates set at 65% of scale and background actor rates set at basic agreement scale. (rates increase annually with scale).
- Category D will have principal performer and background actor rates set at basic agreement scale. (Rates increase annually with scale.)

Learn more about Theatrical Contracts here:

<https://www.sagaftra.org/production-center/contract/813/getting-started>

Learn more about Television Contracts here:

<https://www.sagaftra.org/production-center/contract/807/getting-started>

You can expedite the SAG-AFTRA signatory process by submitting your basic information online. Once you start the process of becoming a SAG-AFTRA signatory, you will be assigned a SAG-AFTRA representative who will work with you and answer all your questions. You will be required to give them a security deposit depending on the budget for your SAG-AFTRA actors so be sure to work that into the production budget so the funds will be available.

When hiring your producer, if you are making a SAG-AFTRA film, make sure that he/she has produced a SAG-AFTRA film in the past and is completely familiar with the process so that they can easily complete all the signatory documents and set up payroll without you getting too involved. You will need to open a payroll account with a payroll company that can properly withhold taxes as required by SAG-AFTRA. Your producer should know how to do all of this but of course you will need to be integrally involved in the negotiation of contractual terms with your actors since that is a business decision and necessarily depends on your budget. Make sure your producer is on top of getting actors to sign the appropriate SAG-AFTRA production documents each day they are on set.

Whether or not you make a SAG-AFTRA film, you will need to set up a limited liability company to run your film production through. If you're not doing a SAG-AFTRA film,

then you can just issue checks to your crew and cast. If you are making a SAG-AFTRA film, you will need to supply AFTRA and the payroll company with formation agreements, including an Operating Agreement, your state and federal ID numbers, Articles of Incorporation and Corporate Resolutions approving the film production if not in the Articles of Incorporation. You can download samples from the internet but it is wise to have a lawyer look over all legal documents and revise them for your situation and any changes that are made in the law from time to time. Make sure to issue the appropriate tax forms to your cast and crew when tax season arises.



## **Pitching Your Ideas**

When you pitch your ideas, make sure you have your logline polished and you can talk succinctly and clearly about the plot of your film - a few sentences to capture their attention. If you're looking for financiers, producers, stars, a famous director and/or distribution, you should have accomplished celebrity power attached to your film already, either as writers, actors, directors, producers, or executive producers. Leverage what you have and all your connections to make this happen. This is an art form unto itself and it helps if you have someone onboard with a record for success and who knows how to package films to get investors, star talent and distribution.

Networking with people at film festivals will put you in touch with the right people and even if you make a non-SAG-AFTRA film, if it demonstrates your talent, your film will become your calling card and you will be able to leverage that and your film's acceptance into film festivals to break into the industry even further. Stay positive and keep pushing your dreams forward.

The film industry is like a family. Once you forge relationships, don't burn those bridges. Remember, Hollywood is also a business. Invite people who have helped you build your film career in to your own projects. Always have something in it for the person you are asking to help you. When you do that, you will find doors open faster and more easily plus you will continue to be integrally involved in many projects going forward, including theirs.

# Film Festival Checklist and Networking Secrets



**by Beth Rosen**

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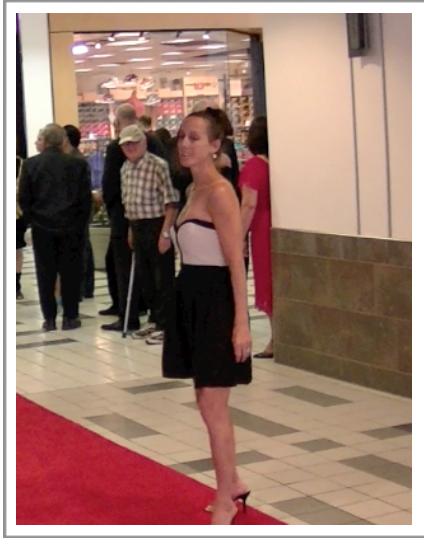
# **How to Make the Most of Your Film Festival Experience**



**by Beth Rosen**  
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# 7 Ways to Promote Yourself and Your Film at a Film Festival

by Beth Rosen  
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## Come Prepared to Network at a Film Festival

Once your film is accepted to a film festival, you want to make the most of the opportunity to promote yourself and your film because there will be influential people there. Distributors and film industry folks look for filmmakers who can promote themselves and their films because it shows that you are in tune with the business of Hollywood and you have what it takes to make it.

Here are a few tips that I've learned along the way that have worked for me and others in taking their film careers to the next level. If you know these networking secrets ahead of time, you'll come prepared and be able to shine and make the most of this extraordinary opportunity.

## 8 Ways to Promoting Yourself and Your Film

### 1. Show up and Show Off

Show up and show off. Dress to impress so you feel good. When you feel good, you look good and you're more apt to feel confident and talk to others. Be yourself. Be engaging and engage others. Don't be shy or let your mind take you out of the game. Everyone is there to network and meet people, and that includes meeting you! If the press is there interviewing people, introduce yourself as one of the filmmakers so you get interviewed.

### 2. Business Cards

Bring tons of business cards to hand out and make sure to ask people for their business cards. Send follow up emails and/or call the people you met so you can build on the relationships and begin working together.

### **3. Movie Poster**

Bring a full size movie poster of your film and put it up in the movie theater where the film festival is taking place. People look at movie posters in deciding if it's a movie they want to see and film festivals encourage you to post them where your movie is screening.

### **4. One Sheets**

Bring one-sheets with your film and the time it is showing. It is basically an 8 1/2 x 11 of your movie poster with the date, time and place on it. You will be able to put those out on a table for people to take so they will see your film. Make sure the one-sheet is professional, colorful and dynamic to capture their attention.

### **5. Post Cards**

Bring postcards with your film information on it to hand out to the press and people in the film industry. It's best to use regular sized postcards rather than oversized postcards because people can fit the smaller size in a purse or pocket which increases the likelihood of them keeping it and contacting you. You can get stacks of them made with generic log lines, images and contact information and then print and add labels on the back of the postcard with the time, date and place for each festival showing as needed. This is a common practice in the independent film festival circuit. You can also add the official selection icons to your postcards.

### **6. Take Pictures and Videos**

Bring a camera and take pictures of everybody. Post them on your websites and social networking sites and tag the people you met. Hollywood is about publicity and people love to see themselves looking glamorous, especially stars. It is also a great way to break the ice when you meet someone.

### **7. Movie Trailer**

Make sure you have a teaser or movie trailer for your film on Youtube so you can bring it up on your smart phone to show people to showcase your talent and entice them to see your film.

### **8. DVD**

Have a prepackaged DVD of your film to hand to influential people who cannot make the film screening.

# Sample Movie Poster for Photo Finish Film



## A SHORT COMEDY PHOTO FINISH

A SIGNATURE BETH PRODUCTIONS Film

Starring PEGGY MCGUINNESS, DANNY BOUSHEBEL, MICHELE MEISES and BOBBY BALLACK

Produced by BETH ROSEN Edited by BETH ROSEN Executive Producer BETH ROSEN

Screenplay by BETH ROSEN and MORT SCHARFMAN Directed by MORT SCHARFMAN

**Sunday, June 3, 2012 at 8:00 pm, Hudson Cinemas**

701 Route 440, Hudson Mall, Jersey City, New Jersey 07034

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[backdoortohollywood.com](http://backdoortohollywood.com)

[bethrosen.com](http://bethrosen.com)

# Elements of a Successful Movie Trailer



## Importance of a Movie Trailer/Teaser

Every movie should have a teaser or sizzle piece to entice potential viewers to go see your film. You can create your movie teaser before or after you are done filming. One reason to create a sizzle piece before you actually film is to get investors to finance your creative endeavor.

The important thing is to always have it uploaded on to the internet so you can show someone. You never know when the right person will walk into your life so always be prepared with a great log line and a killer movie teaser you can show them on your smart phone.

## 6 Important Elements of a Successful Teaser/Trailer

### 1. Capture Your Genre

Make sure it captures your genre. Remember content is king but content is queen. That means if it's a comedy, make sure your teaser is funny and makes your audience laugh. If it's a suspense thriller, make sure you convey suspense. If it's a romance, make sure you include a romantic moment that speaks to the heart.

### 2. Keep it Engaging and Moving

Keep it engaging, short and moving from clip to clip. Many successful sizzle pieces are actually 50 seconds. The standard Hollywood teaser is 2 minutes or shorter.

### 3. Use Powerful Music

Use music that plays to your audience and elicits the desired emotional response. Make sure it's professional and blockbuster quality music.

#### **4. Wet Their Appetite**

Don't give away the story. Just wet their appetite. Show them enough to entice them to come see the movie.

#### **5. Use Your Best Clips**

Include some of the best or most exciting shots in the teaser. If you have stars in the movie, make sure you include them in the teaser.

#### **6. Promote Celebrities and Stars**

Make sure to include your own credits and make sure you spotlight your stars and any celebrities in the teaser with their names in big bold print.

## **Sample Teaser for Photo Finish Film**

Here's a sample movie teaser I did for my film Photo Finish: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuIuPaz5eMw>



Some film festivals actually contacted me to submit my film to their festivals after seeing it on social media sharing sites.

My film Photo Finish was nominated for Best of the Audience Award at Hoboken International Film Festival - one of the ten biggest film festivals in the world.

# The Press Kit



Once you get accepted to a film festival, you will need to supply them with a press kit. The requirements vary from festival to festival but these are some of the main elements:

A Teaser for Your Movie (in the form of a hyperlink and/or DVD copy)

Press Clippings and Press Releases about Your Film (Newspapers, Radio, Television, Online Press Releases, Magazines)

A Director's Statement

A Statement from a Member of the Creative Team

Head Shots of the Producers, Writers, Director, Stars, Co-Stars and Celebrity Actors

Still Photos from the Film and Set

Bio's for the Creative Team (Writers, Director, Producer, Stars, Co-Stars and Celebrity Actors)

Logline About Your Film

Short Paragraph Description of Your Film for the Festival Brochure and Website Ticket Sales

A One Page Executive Summary of Your Film

A Summary of Other Festival Screenings and Awards

Exhibition Copies (High Definition)

Movie Posters

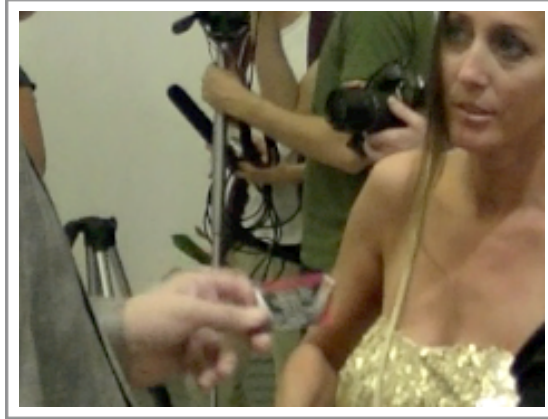
One Sheets/Flyers

Postcards

Website for the Film (in the form of a hyperlink)

Contact Information

# Networking Secrets to Engage Industry Folk and Celebrities



## Plan to Form Long-lasting Relationships

Remember that attending a film festival is an amazing opportunity for you to take your film career to the next level by mingling with industry folk. Long-lasting relationships in the business are often formed at film festivals so plan on meeting people and staying in touch.

Don't be shy. Be engaging because engaging people easily engage others. You will be pleasantly surprised to find out just how approachable and kind-hearted many industry people are, including celebrities, and how easy it is to talk to them, especially when you have a film that is being screened for competition in the festival. Whether you are aware of it or not, you gain credibility and legitimacy in the business by mere acceptance to a film festival, especially if it is a top 25 film festival.

With that in mind, here are some networking tips to help you engage writers, distributors, producers, executive producers, celebrities, directors and film festival board members.

## Networking Tips

Attend the films of people you want to stay in touch with and talk to them immediately after the screening about their films. Make sure to congratulate them on their success.

Don't be shy about asking industry people for advice. Nobody is going to bite your head off for asking them how they did something. The truth is that people are often flattered when you treat them as experts and ask for their advice. If you talk to someone who has already succeeded in an area that you are unfamiliar with, such as getting distribution rights for your movie, asking for suggestions and tips is a quick and easy way to get free advice. They may introduce you to people who can help you or point you in the right direction. People who ask questions usually find answers.



Film high-lights from the festival with a hand-held video camera and do a short video or teaser from the festival. Let influential people know that you are filming it and tell them where you will be posting it on Youtube and websites so they look for it and stay in touch. Remember to tag everyone in the video.

Introduce yourself to people. Don't be shy about who you are, what you do professionally and what you do for fun. Common points of interest break the ice and often lead people to introduce you to other influential people.

Ask industry folks and celebrities about their current film projects.

Talk about the films that you have personally seen: what you liked best about it and what it was like for them to be part of that project. Ask them if they have any funny stories from the set.

Ask others to take a picture with you and then strike up a conversation during the photo opportunity. Often times it will lead to a much longer interaction.

Be light-hearted and make jokes.

If you would like to work on projects with people in the future, talk about it and see if they are interested. Often times they will ask for your business card and/or tell you to talk to their agent or manager when the timing is ripe.

Find out what they do for fun and their major interests.

How can you add value to others? Let them know. When you become clear in your own mind and can articulate it to others succinctly and confidently, you can then approach them with an energy of mutual benefit rather than wanting something from them, which can easily put people off.

Follow up with an email to stay in touch if you make a solid connection with someone.

If they are interested in working with you in the future and they give you their contact information, arrange to meet them for a cup of coffee. Don't be afraid to make phone calls if they give you their phone number. If they didn't want you to call them, they would not have given you their number.

If people have family members there, engage them as well so when you talk to them you have something in common.

Take pictures of everyone including celebrities on the red carpet so they look directly at you, make eye contact and smile for the camera. Smiles go miles and can immediately break the ice between you. You'll be amazed how quickly you'll be talking to people you believed were unapproachable within seconds after snapping their picture. Next thing you know you'll be taking photos with them.

If you have a radio show or podcast, offer to interview them and tell them where the interview will be posted.

Film any honors or awards they receive and offer to send them a copy of it once you get their contact information.

Have high energy when you talk to them. People love to be around high energy because it is uplifting.

Ask them what their favorite film project was and what their plans are for the future.

Take tons of pictures from the festival of everyone you meet and those you want to meet. Post albums on Facebook. Let people know where they can find those photos and make sure to tag them in the photos.

Attend all parties that celebrities attend because many influential film industry people are likely to be present. People let their hair down at parties so it's easier to engage them in conversation.

Offer to speak at film symposiums if you teach courses related to filmmaking. You gain instant prestige when you are a speaker.

Promote the festival to your email lists, friends, family and social network groups. When festivals see that you are willing to share in promoting, they will remember you and be more apt to connect with you in person.

Befriend people on Facebook and start to interact with them there.

Remember to perfect your elevator pitch and logline in case they ask you what your film or other projects are about. The last thing you want is to drone on and on or they will lose interest. If you can cut to the chase, you won't chase them away.

# Press Interview Tips



## Publicize Your Film

Hollywood is about stepping into the limelight and owning your own star quality. So if you attend a film festival, make sure you get publicity. There are usually press people at quality film festivals: radio, the local news, major networks, cable stations, prominent internet shows, newspaper reporters, magazine reporters and photographers.

Always introduce yourself to the person in charge of the press at a festival. If you can find out who it is ahead of time, contact them by email or phone and politely ask when the press will be available for interviews and how can you schedule one for you and/or your cast.

Don't be shy about introducing yourself to the press as one of the filmmakers, stars, writers, directors or producers of one of the films being screened at the festival. When you do that, they are likely to interview you on camera.

Have a friend film your interview so you can post it on Youtube and social networking sites.

Remember to ask the press where to find the interview so you can share the link and/or article.

Avoid negativity at all costs in an interview. Don't say anything bad about anyone or any film unless you are actually a movie critic.

Dress to impress. Keep in mind that you may be seen on television and the internet by your future fans and industry folk.

Be engaging and have high energy in the interview so it flows easily and they include your segment in their show. Remember they are interviewing many people so you want to make sure you stand out. Be entertaining since this is the entertainment business.

Hand the interviewer a postcard or one-sheet of your movie before the interview.

Get organized ahead of time as to what you will say. That means getting your elevator pitch down perfectly. One of the first questions an interviewer will ask you is what your film is about. Be clear and cut to the chase.

Remember to go with the flow when they ask you questions. They are professionals and they know how to make their interviews entertaining.

Mention celebrities and well-known directors, producers and writers associated with your film.

If you won any awards or were nominated for awards, mention it and thank the people in your film for their help in making it a success.

If you have members of the cast and crew with you, make sure to get them on camera with you and give them public accolades.

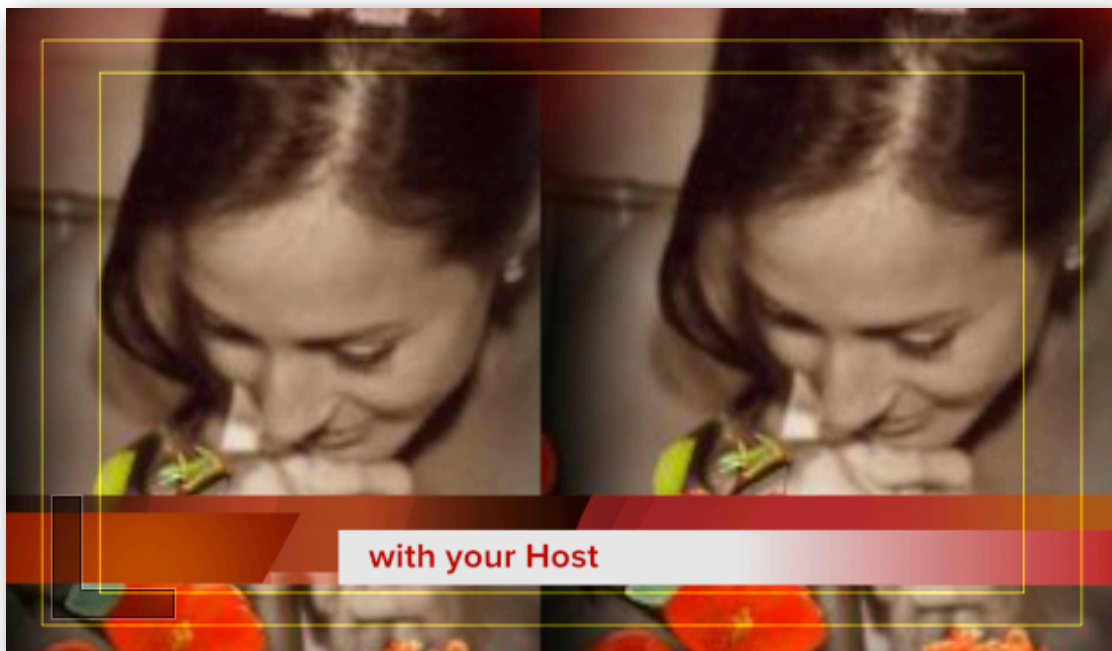
Plug your movie in the interview and let the public know the date, time and place of your screening.

Tell the listening audience where to find you and your film (i.e. your official website and/or the film's official website).

Thank the interviewer for the interview and look for the next press opportunity.

Once the interview is over, don't be shy about striking up a normal conversation with them as you mingle. It's always good to build solid relationships with the press.

# How to Make Your Film Title and Action Safe



## The Back Door to Hollywood by Beth Rosen

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## Title and Action Safe Grids

The yellow grid boxes represent the areas of your shots that are title and action safe. They are sometimes referred to as safe zones or safe grids and can be found in most professional movie editing software. They are different colors in different software programs but they always show up visually as a box within a box. The important thing to remember is to keep your titles within the inside smaller box and your important character action within the outer bigger box.

If for some reason you need to change your image so that it fits within the action safe area, then you will need to learn how to work with image and wire frames and other advanced editing techniques so that you do not distort the image or adversely impact the quality of your clip and/or continuity of your scene as you move to another clip. When you are behind the camera on set, keep these grid lines in mind when framing your shots so you avoid having to make changes in post-production.

## TITLE SAFE

When you do your opening titles, subtitles and ending credits, keep in mind that people will eventually be viewing your film on their own television sets once it is on DVD or television/cable. Therefore you want to make sure you position those titles within the smaller inner grid box. Even if you want the titles to appear at the top of the screen, to the left or right or on the bottom, you still must make sure it is inside that inner box. It is the mark of a professional.

Remember to be careful with how you present credits so that people's names and titles do not go beyond the left and right grid lines which can easily happen if you do a two column credit scroll. The last thing you want is to have your own name or anyone else's cut off after all the hard work you all put into the film.



### CASE STUDY 1: NOT TITLE SAFE

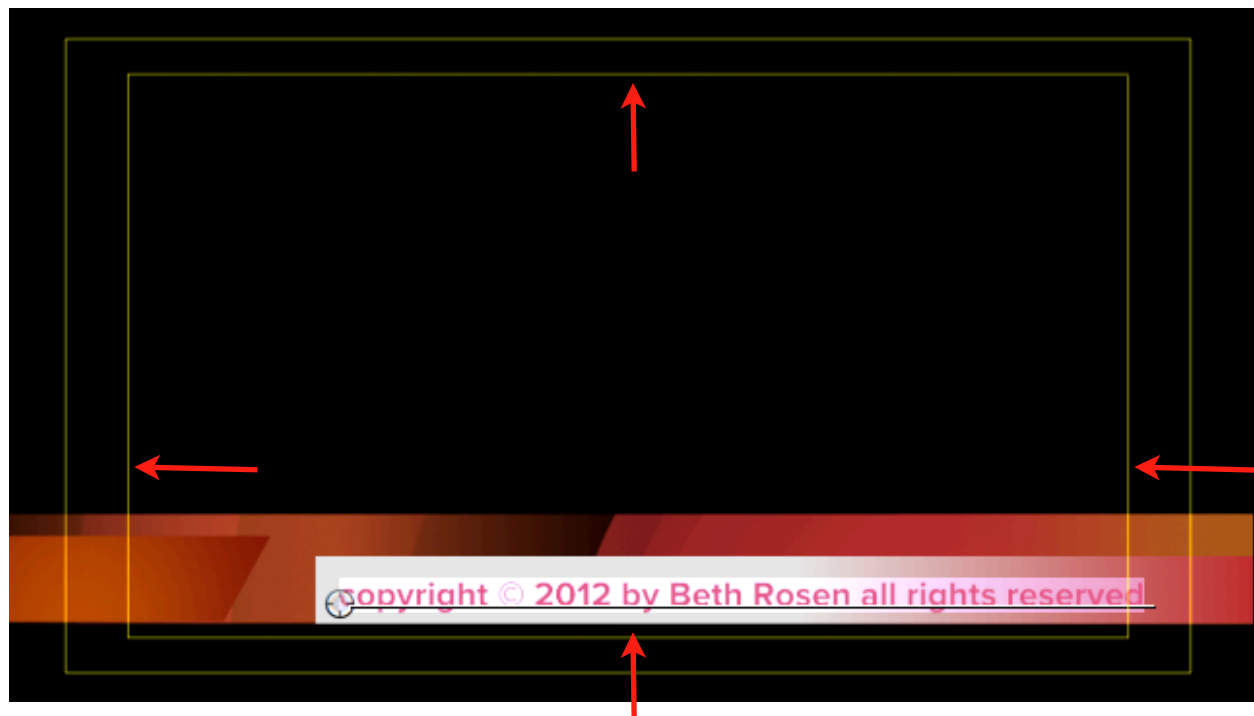
Notice how the titles in the clip to the left are not title safe. The first and last letters extend beyond the inner box so they might get cut off on a DVD burn or a television.



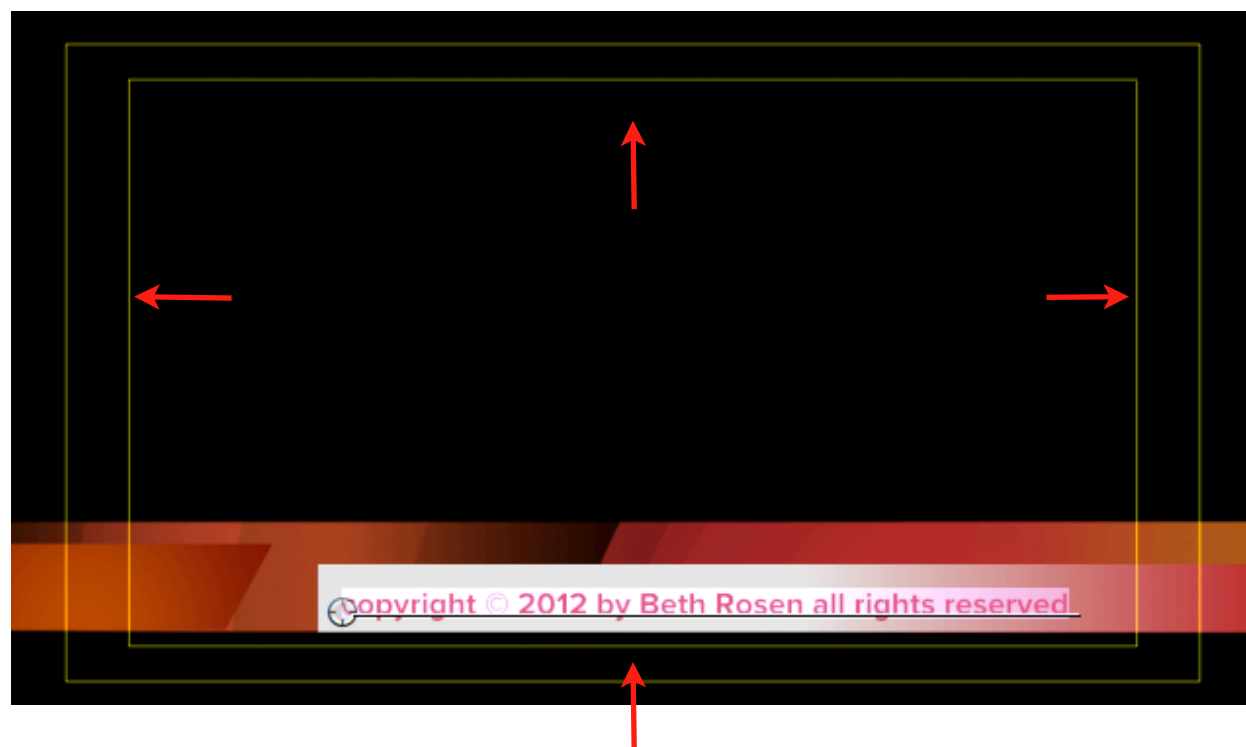
### CASE STUDY 2: TITLE SAFE

This is a title safe clip because the titles are within the inner box and therefore there is no risk that they will be cut off on a DVD or television when viewing.

**CASE STUDY 3: NOT TITLE SAFE: BEYOND THE INSIDE GRID LINE ON RIGHT**



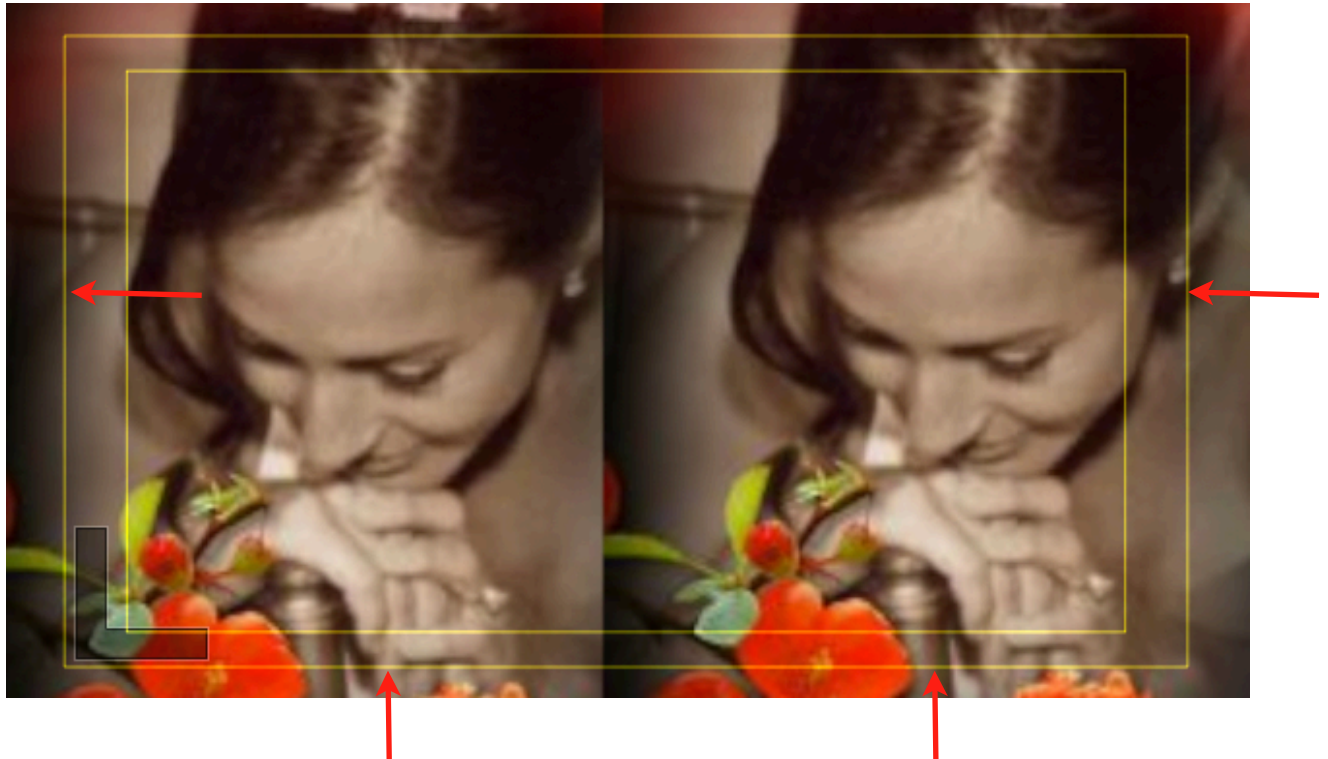
**CASE STUDY 4: TITLE SAFE BECAUSE WITHIN THE INSIDE GRID LINE**





## ACTION SAFE ZONES

### CASE STUDY 5: AREA BEYOND THE OUTER BOX IS NOT ACTION SAFE



Action safe means that the area that is inside the bigger yellow box (the outer yellow grid line in the clip above) will not be cut off on DVD's, television or home theater screens. Anything beyond that second outside frame may get cut off.

If you intend to burn your films and/or videos to DVD (which you must do if you submit to film festivals because you will need screening and exhibitions copies), or you intend for your video or film to be aired on television or cable networks, or via online video streaming sites that will be viewed on televisions and/or home theaters, then you need to make sure your films and videos are action and title safe. It is the mark of a professional.

Make sure your important characters and their actions are framed in the camera so they will be action safe. It's helpful to know this before you get on set so that you make sure your actors don't go beyond action safe marks.

When you export your movie for showing in a movie theater, make sure to format your film for the wide screen. Choose the 16:9 aspect ratio when exporting your project and burning to a DVD. This is how you make sure that it is formatted for the wide screen.

## CASE STUDY 6: TITLE & ACTION SAFE: WITHIN BOTH GRID LINES



Even though there are some visual elements outside the safe zones, the critical elements are within the two boxes so there is no need to change anything. But if for some reason you have some item that is outside the safe zone grid and it is critical to the story line of your film, such as reaching for a priceless ring and the ring is outside the grid zone, you risk the home audience not being able to see it and missing a critical element of the plot line. If they cannot follow along, they will likely change the channel. Also keep in mind that members of the selection committee for film festivals will be screening your film and evaluating your work on their own television or home theater system so if critical actions or titles are cut off, it may impact adversely on your reputation as a filmmaker and you risk not getting accepted as an official selection to the festival.

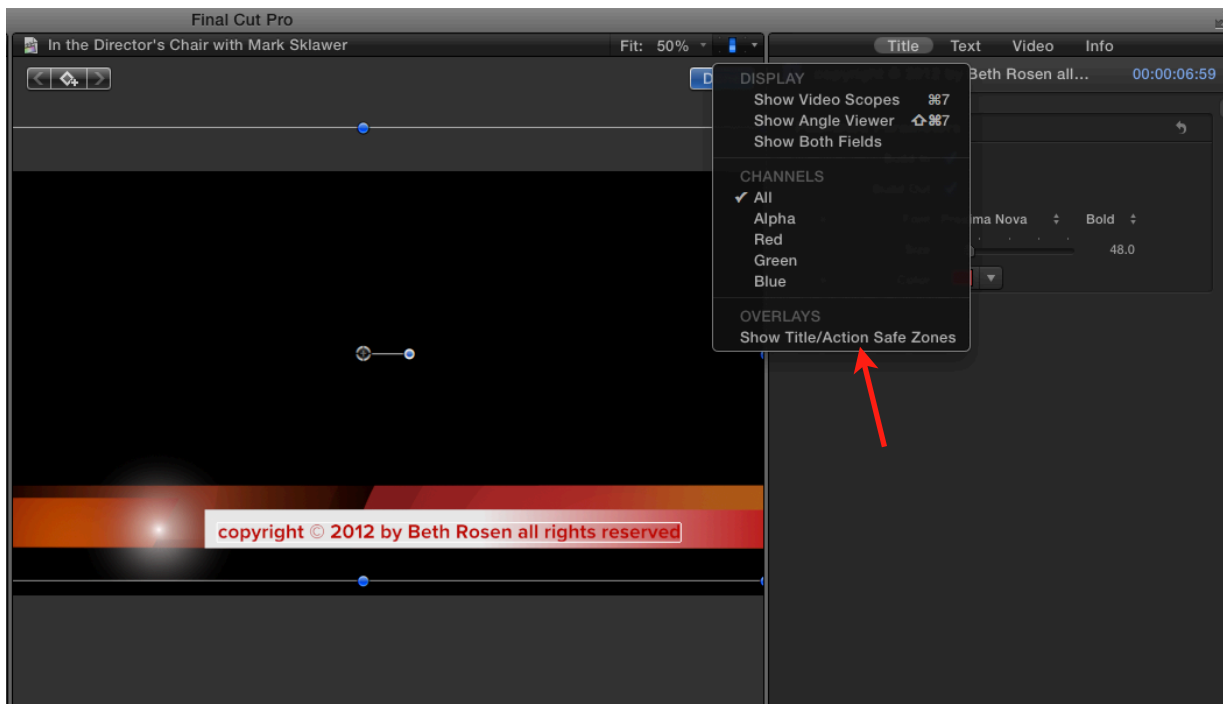
Even if you are planning on doing simple videos that are not full length feature films but you plan on burning to DVD for people to watch at home, make sure to title and action safe the video.

## WHERE TO FIND TITLE SAFE ZONES ON FINAL CUT PRO X

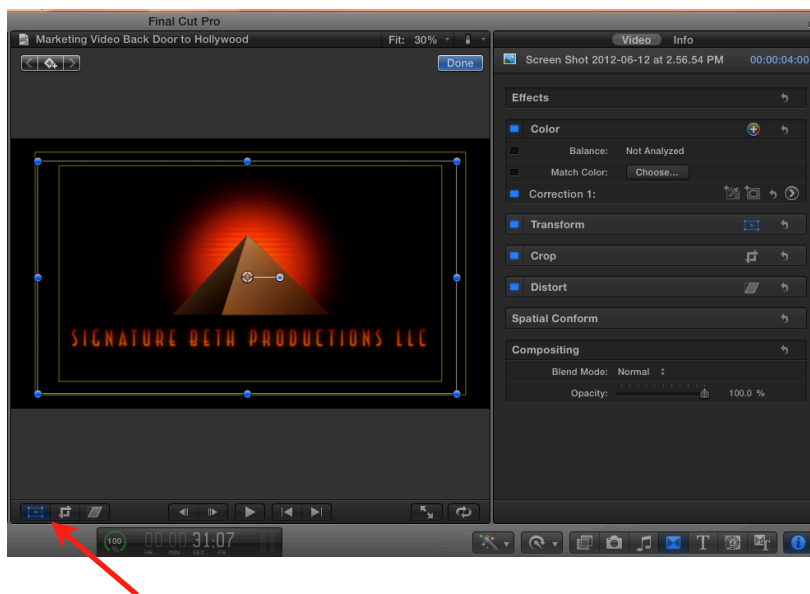
Click on the blue icon where the red arrow is pointing to



Select "Show Title/Action Safe Zone" option where the red arrow is pointing to



You can also click on “View” and then highlight “Show Title/Action Safe Zones”



One way to work with a clip that is not action or title safe is with the transform tool. Click on the blue transform tool on the lower left of the viewer (indicated by the red arrow) and then resize your video clip to make it title or action safe. Notice how the clip is resized by the blue dotted grid and is now smaller and within both grid lines.



# THE BACK DOOR TO HOLLYWOOD

## Top Film Markets/Variety

Knowledge is power and if you know where to sell your films and network, as well as get stars, talent, producers, directors, distributors, etc. on board, you are halfway home. While film festivals are great places for networking and finding distribution, you should know that many of the big buyers attend the top film and TV markets, which are more costly to attend. But you get direct access and can pitch directly to decision makers there. They are also great networking events. Do your homework and research the ones that are best for you. You can also check the delegates and speaker lists at each of the summits annually and research the attendees on LinkedIn and Google to find other ways to connect and reach out to them through social media. Professional networking sites for the industry also give you the contact information of decision makers, producers, talent, financiers, etc. when you are a paying member: Check out: **Variety Insights** <https://www.varietyinsight.com/> and **IMDb** <https://www.imdb.com/> (free version) and **IMDb Pro**, which gives you more information - you can get a free 30 day trial here: <https://pro.imdb.com/signup/index.html?u=https%3A%2F%2Fpro.imdb.com%2F>)

### **American Film Market (AFM)**

Where: Santa Monica, CA

<http://www.americanfilmmarket.com>

### **CineMart**

Where: Rotterdam, Netherlands

<https://iffr.com/en/cinemart>

### **European Film Market (EFM, associated with the Berlin International Film Festival)**

Where: Berlin, Germany

<http://www.efm-berlinale.de>

### **Hong Kong International Film & TV Market (FILMART)**

Where: Hong Kong

[www.hkfilmart.com/hkfilmart/](http://www.hkfilmart.com/hkfilmart/)

### **Hot Docs (documentaries)**

Where: Toronto, Canada

<https://www.hotdocs.ca/i/hot-docs-forum>

### **Independent Film Week / Project Forum (formerly known as IFP Market)**

Where: New York, New York

<http://www.ifp.org>

**INPUT (International Public Service Television Screening Conference)**

Where: International location changes every year

[www.input-tv.org](http://www.input-tv.org)

**Marché du Film (associated with Cannes International Film Festival)**

Where: Cannes, France

<http://www.marchedufilm.com>

**MIPCOM**

Where: Cannes, France

<http://www.mipcom.com>

**MIPTV**

Where: Cannes, France

<http://www.miptv.com>

**NATPE**

Where: Miami, Florida

<https://www.natpe.com>

**Sunny Side of the Doc**

Where: La Rochelle, France

<http://www.sunnysideofthedoc.com>

**TIFFCOM (Content Market at the Tokyo International Film Festival)**

Where: Tokyo, Japan

<http://www.tiffcom.jp/en/>

**KIDSCREEN (Content for Kids - get on the mailing list)**

<https://kidscreen.com/>

<https://summit.kidscreen.com/2021/>



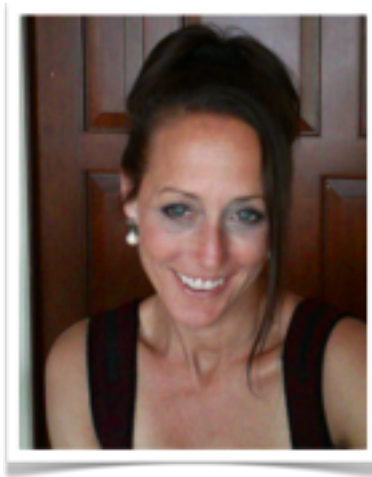
# How to Run a Successful Kickstarter Campaign



**by Beth Rosen**

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The Back Door to Hollywood  
Signature Beth Productions LLC



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Beth Rosen is a producer and a writer. As a filmmaker, she co-produced and acted in *Scavenger Killers*, a horror film starring Academy/Emmy/Golden Globe winners and nominees Eric Roberts, Charles Durning and Robert Loggia. The film was written by critically acclaimed Producer/Director Kenneth Del Vecchio. She also worked as an associate producer of three other Del Vecchio films: *The Life Zone* (a pro-life abortion suspense thriller which prompted a media frenzy), *An Affirmative Act* (a pro-gay marriage film), and *O.B.A.M. Nude*, a satire of President Obama. All three films are available on VOD (and DVD) through NBC/Universal and Screen Media Films. In 2012, Beth served as the Assistant Director of the Hoboken International Film Festival after her short film *Photo Finish* (co-written and co-produced with Emmy-award winning writer, Mort Scharfman), was nominated for “Best of the Festival Audience Award.” She also created, wrote, directed, produced, and acted in two Television Web Series: *Chasing Fairy Tail*, a comedy which pokes fun of fairy tales, and *Between Two Firs*, a holiday parody of *Between Two Ferns* with Zach Galifianakis. The films were subsequently invited into several prominent film festivals.

Beth is also a #1 best selling author of “*Living Proof: Celebrating the Gifts that Came Wrapped in Sandpaper*” with Lisa Nichols (co-author of “*Chicken Soup for the African American Soul*”). She has written and illustrated several children’s books and books of wisdom which are currently in development as potential television series. She is a Principal Member of Osprey Point LLC, a business consulting and capital sourcing company for mid-cap and start up companies in the entertainment industry, and Owner of Signature Beth Productions LLC, where she is currently in development and preproduction on a variety of media projects for television and film, including scripted and unscripted comedy, drama, suspense-thrillers, animation and reality docudramas, with award winning talent/producers/writers and composers attached.

Beth is an Ivy League graduate of the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia Law School, with over 25 years of legal experience, having worked as an international corporate, banking and insolvency attorney at top NYC law firms, including Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, Shearman & Sterling LLP and Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP.

IMDb link: [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm4225105/?ref\\_=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm4225105/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1)

Website: [signaturebethproductions.com](http://signaturebethproductions.com)





## INTRODUCTION

No matter how talented you are or how wonderful your ideas, the reality is that it takes money to implement your creative endeavors, especially if you want to position yourself as a star.

Crowdfunding campaigns are a great way to fund your creative projects. There are three types of crowdfunding: (i) reward crowdfunding where you raise funds from supporters who receive a gift or product sample for their pledged contributions, (ii) debt crowdfunding, where you receive a loan that you pay off within a specified time period, and (iii) equity crowdfunding

where you give a percentage of the company ownership to your financiers.

There are some very popular websites that facilitate running such campaigns. These sites provide a forum for gathering money from the general public, which provides budding new artists with an alternative to the more traditional and burdensome avenues of financing. Many people successfully raise enough funds to finance their films, music projects, music videos and other creative endeavors through such sites.

This e-book is designed to give you the nuts and bolts of running a successful crowdfunding campaign. The business of raising funds, even through crowd funding, involves a sincere and dedicated marketing effort on your part with continuous follow-up emails and social network postings. The good news is that if you do it right and offer people incentives for investing in you and your projects, even if it's a small amount from a lot of people, you may be pleasantly surprised to find your project funded at the end of a specified period of time, sometimes well beyond your projected goals.

You need to check for fees and whether it's an all or nothing site where if you don't raise the specified goal within the allotted time, you lose everything you raised. Many crowdfunding platforms take a processing fee from contributions and the overall raise. Some sites allow flexible campaigns where you can keep some of the funds if you don't reach your goal but the platform takes a higher percentage. You need to check their rules and read them carefully before you pick a platform that is right for you.

Regardless of which platform you go with, the campaign has a time limit and so it puts the pressure on you to really market and push your project and get people as excited about it as you are, especially at the end when the deadline for donations is almost up.

So if you're serious about moving forward with your dreams and getting the financing to do it, it's time to get started.



## **KEYS TO RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN**

So how do you run a successful kickstarter campaign? Set forth below are some essential elements which increase the likelihood of getting the full amount of your projected budget funded with enough donations.

### **Plan Ahead**

The planning stage is critical if you want to finance your creative projects with kickstarter campaigns. You must have a specific game plan before you start. Be able to succinctly describe your project in an exciting way to entice potential backers. Do research ahead of time so you know what it takes to bring your vision to life. Find out how long it will take and identify each step of the production process, who you will need on your team, how much money you will have to pay each person and how much the pre-production and post-production costs will be.

### **Post a Professional Video of Yourself**

You should have a good professional video when you launch a kickstarter campaign that includes (i) an introduction to who you are, (ii) the creative idea/endeavor you want to finance, (iii) the people involved in your project, (iv) a clear description of the product to be created, (iv) why your audience should get involved and help you finance the project, and (v) how your backers may benefit from the project.

- Build rapport and trust with your video.
- Give them a taste of your talent.
- Write a professional script and be natural and engaging when you speak.
- If you have clips that show how professional you are or how professional your movie or project will be, then include it.

### **Model Successful Campaigns**

Do a Google search for successful kickstarter campaigns to see what worked for projects similar to yours so you can model their campaigns and tailor it to your needs. Watch videos of successful kickstarter campaigns, particularly those that are within the same category (art, film, design, technology, etc.) as the one you want to target. You will quickly notice that most of the successful campaigns have more or less professional quality videos that introduce you to the idea and the person/people behind them.



### **Propose and Disclose Components of Your Budget:**

You must have a specified donation goal that matches your projected budget. Don't use an arbitrary dollar amount. Do some research to make sure it's accurate and disclose the components of the budget so people know where their money is going. It does not have to be a line item budget but a general disclosure to satisfy your potential funders.

Nonetheless, it's always good to get in the habit of doing a line item budget for any creative endeavor so that you know all the costs to produce what you want. Taking time to research the elements of producing a creative project will help you plan ahead and ask for enough financing to actually finish your project. Remember, the planning stage is critical. The last thing you want is to get half way through your project and realize you have no more money to finish it.

Remember to include the following items in your budget so that you do not have to go out of pocket: (i) 5%-9% crowdfunding fees, depending on which site you choose, (ii) 3%-5% transaction processing fees and (iii) product costs and shipping charges for the products that you promise to your backers.

### **Presell Your Project:**

Offer a copy of your MP3 or Film when it's done if they make a specified donation. You can also offer promotional items such as t-shirts, autographed photos, coffee mugs, bandanas, hats, tote bags, and even a big thank you on social media.

### **Offer Credit to Big Backers:**

Offer credit on the project to people who offer large donations. People love to see their name in print and call themselves producers or contributors to a successful creative endeavor. You can offer credits such as executive producer, co-producer, associate producer, special thanks, etc.

### **Offer Limited Editions and Sneak Previews/Screening Passes:**

Offer sneak previews, free screenings, VIP red carpet passes or your pre-sold copies as a special limited edition with personal signatures from you. Offer a limited number of personally signed copies to entice backers to chip in large amounts early in the campaign.

### **Share Your Story:**

Give them photos and tidbits from the creative process to bring them along for the ride so they feel involved and an integral part of the project. Let them know what you are doing during the kickstarter campaign so they know you are a go-getter who finishes what they start. It helps to build confidence in your abilities.



### **Create Custom Experiences:**

For your largest contributors the ones who invest thousands, offer them a custom experience like an opportunity to be on set or in a recording session with you. Rarely does anyone get to experience this and the chance to be a part of your creative experience and see it first hand may go a long way in getting large contributions. You may even offer them a walk on role or a cameo appearance. Invite them to the cast party.

### **Conduct a Social Media Campaign:**

Contact everyone you know, especially friends and family and ask them to do some campaigning on your behalf. It's fairly easy to get a lot of people to donate \$1 to \$10 or \$15 to \$25. Don't be shy about strutting your stuff and asking for help. Conduct an intense social media campaign.

- Blog about it.
- Post it on your website. If you don't already have a personal website, get one immediately.
- Search for Backers of similar campaigns and seek them out.
- Post it on Facebook. Create an Event and a separate page for the Project.
- Post it on Twitter.
- Post it on LinkedIn.
- Post it on Instagram.
- Post it on Snapchat.
- Post it on WhatsApp.
- Ask others to share it on their platforms, pages and groups.
- Post it other social networking sites. Make a list of sites and reach out to the contact person for each site so you can generate buzz and get picked up by the press.

### **Press Releases**

Do online press releases with links to your fundraising site.

### **Radio/Television/Podcasts**

Try to get on a radio or television show and be interviewed about your project and plug your kickstarter campaign. You can offer something valuable like priceless tips to their audience in



order get the interview spot. If you have a podcast, promote it on your own podcast and then be a guest on other people's podcasts and ask for contributions.

### **Sample of your Work**

Be sure to give the listening audience a sample of your work. Impress upon them why they should contribute to the project (i.e. sure to be successful, entertaining, social value, educational, etc.)

### **Marketing Timeline**

Make sure to create a marketing timeline of when and how often you will tweet, post on Facebook, email friends and family and blog about your campaign. Follow your marketing timeline for social media posting to create buzz and drive traffic to your site. Stay ahead of the gifts that you will give your contributors so you know how soon after the campaign they will arrive.

## **WHERE TO CONDUCT CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGNS**

You can do a Google search for kickstarter campaigns to find websites that facilitate crowdfunding. Two of the most popular crowdfunding sites are [kickstarter.com](http://kickstarter.com) and [indiegogo.com](http://indiegogo.com). There are many more platforms.

### **Kickstarter:**

You must apply to [Kickstarter.com](http://Kickstarter.com) before posting a project on their website. Research their guidelines ahead of time so you make sure you meet their requirements. Kickstarter takes 5% of the funds raised and charges between 3-5% per transaction. It's an all-or-nothing funding site. If you don't reach your projected goal, you do not get any of the money pledged and your contributors will not be charged anything. Kickstarter does not claim any ownership over the projects on their site but projects launched their are permanently archived and accessible to the public. Once funding is completed, projects and uploaded media will remain on the site and may not be edited or deleted. There is a 14 day waiting period to receive the funds if you meet your goal.

<http://www.kickstarter.com/>

### **Indiegogo:**

[Indiegogo.com](http://Indiegogo.com) has flexible and fixed rate fees that range from 4-9%, depending on whether you get your full project funded. There is a 5% funding fee for flexible funds and a processing fee of 3% and 30 cents per transaction. There is also a minimum goal for fundraising. There is an option to pay a higher fee and retain all the money pledged if you do not raise your projected goal but you must decide this ahead of time.

<http://www.indiegogo.com/>

### **Causes:**

Causes is the world's largest online campaigning platform focused on nonprofits which target social, political, and cultural issues. If you want to make a difference quickly and effectively, you should look at this site because it has over 180 million users in over 150 different

countries.

<https://www.causes.com/>

**Gofundme:**

Gofundme site collects a 2.9% processing fee and 30 cents for every donation. As it's not an all or nothing fundraising site, you keep everything that you raise. Plus, there are zero personal campaign funding fees for those based in the United States.

<https://www.gofundme.com/>

**Patreon:**

Patreon is a membership platform that provides business tools for creators to run a subscription content service. It allows creators and artists to earn a monthly income by providing exclusive rewards and perks to their subscribers. It's used by YouTube videographers, bloggers, podcasters other digital creators who post regularly online. It allows artists to receive funding directly from their fans on a recurring basis or per work of art. Patreon charges a commission of 5 to 12% of creators' monthly income, in addition to payment processing fees. Memberships are billed on the first of each month. You need to share work often or your pledgers can cancel their subscriptions. Patreon collects a 2.9-percent fee and 35 cents from each pledge.

[www.patreon.com/](http://www.patreon.com/)

You can do a Google search for crowdfunding campaigns and other websites that support such campaigns. Always check the rules, percentage fees on funding and per transaction processing fees as they may change from time to time, and account for those in your budgets.

I wish you the best of luck in getting your projects funding!



THE BACK DOOR  
TO HOLLYWOOD

