



7 Steps To Your Most Profitable Voice Over Genre

By David Goldberg

HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHICH GENRE IS MOST PROFITABLE FOR YOU?

To create an effective demo, focus primarily on your chosen genres. And choose them well.

Your natural voice is one factor to consider when choosing genres. Nuances are good. Affectations, not necessary. That's because whatever type of voice a casting pro seeks, they tend to prefer someone who sounds like that naturally. Among other things, it's more reliable.

Here are 7 other ways to identify your most profitable genres.

1.) Local market.

Although voice-over can be performed remotely nowadays, that's a big pond. Don't neglect opportunities in your own locale. Which sectors of the voice over industry predominate in your geographic area? What are hirers looking for?

Pursuing cartoon voices makes sense in L.A. and N.Y. Not so much in Topeka. Is your city known for landmark tourism or museums? Consider focusing on museum tours. Are you in a high-tech corridor? If you have a technical bent yourself, your focus might be how-to videos, sales presentations and other corporate narration.

Naturally, while you should be right for your geography, the geography should also be right for you. Which sectors pay well? Which sectors are growing? Which sectors involve ongoing work and long-term client relationships?

2.) Delivery.

Few producers need "a thousand" voices. And even fewer artists truly have them. What producers usually need is **one right voice**, with a natural delivery in the style they are seeking, a delivery they know they can depend on.

So demonstrate only vocal styles that come naturally and easily for you -- even if it's only one. Skip the artificial dialects and accents. Other people were born with them, or have studied and practiced for years, sounding far more authentic than you.

Also skip the announcer-style car spot. Every local DJ can do that. Casting agents seek the unique.

3.) Passion.

Hate commercials? Then don't record them. Someone who enjoys doing them will sound better. Pursue your aspirations.

You might be surprised at what you might find rewarding. For example, if you like kids, you don't necessarily need to have a gaggle of your own to be good at recording children's books. On the other hand, if you take after W.C. Fields ... maybe not.

4.) Terminology and expertise.

As much as you should pursue your aspirations, it's also important to know your limitations.

If you don't have a scientific background, don't put scientific narration excerpts on your demo. The best that could happen is you get a scientific narration job for which you are not well qualified for, and you do a mediocre job, or the casting professional learns you can't read scientific scripts "cold" as you waste time during the session. Would you expect a second call?

The worst that could happen is that they (or you) make that discovery with their client watching, or a mispronunciation of some common scientific terminology slips through! Your career is pretty much ended with that person.

Remember -- your demo must be trustworthy, representative of your actual abilities. Within those abilities, however, make yourself shine!

5.) Personality.

Fidgety? Audiobook recordings are not for you -- you'll never sit still long enough. Consider short recordings. Do you hate to get serious when the occasion demands?

Industrial narration might not be your thing. Always consider the best type of work for YOU.

6.) **Creativity.**

Different genres require different kinds of creativity. Can you read a line ten different ways? If so, you're geared for cartoons, talking toys, and other types of voice over that require "overt" creativity. If you tend to speak somewhat repetitively, consider on-line tutorials, telephony, etc. These narrations usually require less dynamic presentation, yet involve challenges all their own.

7.) **Personal contacts.**

If you work in a large corporation, network your contacts before producing your demo. Learn what various departments need. You can hardly find a more specific focus than in this situation.

In fact, you may not even need a demo to land an opportunity.

- Offer your services to the HR department, by suggesting you record the "welcome to our company" video, "job fair" video, and such.
- Talk to The Communications department and record the telephony systems (menu-prompt, information on hold, voice mail, etc.).
- Talk to the Marketing department to record commercials, tradeshow exhibit videos, and promotional material.
- See the Training department about training videos.
- Speak with the Web/IT department to narrate Flash presentations, online tutorials, "welcome to our home-page" narrations, and so on.

One warning: If you need to make a demo specifically for work at your company, consider that. But when it comes to your demo for the world at large, keep your personal focus. Put your company work on your demo ONLY if that work fits within the focus you've chosen.

Real-world stuff is as authentic as it gets. But never include a performance simply because it was produced, or just because you got paid for it. Include it if it is quality and fits your demo.

WANT MORE, BETTER PAYING JOBS?

Consider the above factors BEFORE producing your demo.

They'll help make you unique, memorable and invaluable to the proper casting professionals. Your other marketing tools and personal salesmanship play a major role in that. But focusing your demo is where it all begins.

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