

# VoiceActing Studios ~ Talent Information

858.484.0220 ~ [info@voiceacting.com](mailto:info@voiceacting.com)

## If we've booked you for a session... please read this carefully!

This document is intended to give you, our valued voice actor, the information you need in order to connect with our studio using either an Internet video conference or a phone patch. Although some of this might appear a bit "technical," it's really not very complicated.

We've included information on how we book your services, how to connect to us for your session, how to deliver your files, and how you will be paid.

### Tell me the basics:

- Almost all of our remote sessions require a high-speed Internet connection or phone patch so we can hear exactly what you are doing and provide the necessary direction.
  - We prefer an Internet connection which will give us much better quality than a telephone.
  - We rarely book producerless/directorless sessions where you simply record the project and send us the files.
- We do not currently use ISDN, Source Connect, or any other Internet connection for recording at our end. All recording will be done on your computer.
- Your audition will normally serve as a "test recording" for us to evaluate the quality of your recordings. In some cases, we may ask you to make some adjustments in mic placement or recording settings.

### I live in the San Diego area:

- If at all possible, we'll want you to come to our studio in order for us to get the best recording of your work.
- If you live far from our studio - and we know the sound of your room - we might be willing to waive this requirement.
- If you've never been to our studio, just search Google Maps for either Voice Acting Studios or VoiceActing.com. You'll get a map and directions.
- Please plan your travel so you will arrive about 10-15 minutes prior to your session time. Or go to [www.VoiceActing.com/directions](http://www.VoiceActing.com/directions).

### I live outside of San Diego:

- You will need to have a high-quality home studio.
- You will need to have a high-speed Internet connection and a way to listen to us on your headphones as you record (phone patch).
- All recording will be done on your computer.
- Before your session start time, please check that your recording software settings and your Internet conference settings are correctly set to record and send us your microphone signal (see below.)
- We highly recommend you use headphones for monitoring so as to avoid any noise from your speakers from getting into your recording.

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- To avoid any latency (delay in your audio), your headphones should be connected to a mixer or your USB interface.
- If you must use your computer speakers to hear us, please have the volume turned down far enough so that any speaker noise from your computer does not get recorded.

## How do I use the Internet to connect to VoiceActing Studios?:

- An Internet connection to our studio is used for high-quality monitoring only.
  - We will NOT be recording from the Internet connection.
  - You must be able to record simultaneously with the Internet feed.
- We'll send you the information to connect to our studio through an Internet video conference. In some situations, Skype may be an option.
- If you use a mixer connected to a USB interface (or a USB mixer), here's the setup:
  - Your microphone connects to the mixer on any Mic input channel.
    - Make sure you have phantom power turned on if you are using a condenser mic.
    - Make sure your gain trim control and mic input level control are set for proper recording levels on your computer.
    - Disable any audio compression, EQ, or other signal processing on your audio input path.
    - Set the mic input channel pan pot to center (equally Left and Right)
  - Your computer audio output connects to a LINE level input on your mixer
    - Using a USB direct return from your computer may NOT work for monitoring an Internet connection. It can result in our audio getting into the recording.
    - You must use an audio adapter cable to connect from your computer's audio output (the headphone jack on a laptop or the line out jack on a desktop) to a line input on your mixer. This is usually a 1/8" connector for the computer at one end of the adapter cable and a 1/4" connector for the mixer on the other end. Your adapter cable should be a stereo cable if possible.
    - Turn the Balance knob for the computer input channel all the way to the RIGHT.
  - Plug your headphones into the "headphone" monitoring jack on the mixer.
    - Adjust headphone volume for a comfortable monitoring level of your microphone.
    - Adjust the input level control for your computer (Internet) audio for a comfortable level. This should be in your right ear only.
  - Set your recording software audio input preferences:
    - Set your recording software to select your audio source for recording.
      - Set your software audio settings to record stereo from the mixer.
      - If you normally record mono (CH 1 or 2 only), please reset this setting to record both channels of your mixer.
      - What we want is a single stereo audio file with your mic on CH1 and your mic and our audio on CH2. (see below)
  - Set your Internet connection audio in and out:

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- Open the Internet connection settings to adjust “speakers,” and “microphone.”
  - For the “Microphone” (or input) source, select your mixer or USB device.
  - For the “speakers” (or output) destination, select your computer’s audio output (usually “speakers”)
- If using Skype, go to “Tools”, “Options”, “Audio Settings” for these adjustments.
- If you’ve set everything up correctly, when you open your mic and the computer input faders...
  - You will hear your microphone in both ear pieces (left and right)
  - You will hear the Internet connection return audio (that’s us) in your right ear only.
- Test your setup before connecting with us.
  - Do a test recording to make sure your microphone is completely isolated from the Internet connection (or Skype) return audio. In other words, the only thing recorded on CH 1 should be your mic.
  - Put your headphones on
    - In the Internet connection settings (see above) you can click on a button to the right of the “Speakers” selection to test your computer’s audio output.
    - Set your recording levels and start recording.
      - Your mic should be on BOTH CH 1 and CH 2
      - Click the Internet conference “speakers test” button and you should hear the test tones in your right ear only and see them on CH 2 only. If you hear or see the test tones on CH 1, something isn’t set correctly - probably the Balance (or Pan) knob for the computer’s input to the mixer.
- Connect to our studio via the Internet conference connection we send to you about 5-10 minutes before your scheduled session time.
  - Click on the link in the email invitation we send you, or copy/paste the URL in the email to your browser.
    - You may be asked to download a small app in order to connect to our video conference.
    - If you have a webcam, if at all possible, please aim the camera so we can see you performing.
  - If using Skype, use the following to connect with us:
    - Open Skype on your computer and add VoiceActing to your contacts list.
    - In the Search field, type James Alburger Voiceacting.
    - Our Skype address should appear with a picture of our conductor logo.
    - If prompted, please send a request for us to add you to our contacts list.
    - We’ll accept your request and connect with your call.
    - Note: DO NOT try to use any of the “Call Phone” options to connect with us.

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- If you have a webcam positioned so that we can see you, that would be great.

## **I don't have a mixer. Can I still use an Internet connection?**

The simple answer is "yes... probably." Depending on how your microphone is connected to your computer and how you monitor your recordings as you work, there may be different ways to set up a connection to us... or it may not be practical at all.

The real key to using the Internet instead of a phone patch is to be able to record your microphone completely isolated from any other audio source. This may not be possible if you are using a USB microphone or in some configurations. The trick is setting things up so your microphone is going to both your recording software and the Internet connection simultaneously. The Internet connection "speaker" audio only goes to your headphones and CH2 of your recording. In most cases an Internet connection can be used, but it may take a little "tweaking" of your settings in order to make it work.

## **How do I use a phone patch to connect to VoiceActing Studios?:**

- First, I'll assume you understand the principals of a phone patch and how to connect it to your computer and phone system.
  - A mixer is required for a phone patch setup.
  - If you are using a phone patch (we'd really prefer using our Internet conference!), you can call us at 858.484.0220 a few minutes before your session start time.
  - We'd also like to have your phone patch dial-in number as a backup.
- We may use a phone patch or your telephone if you have a poor Internet connection or if phone patch is your primary method of connecting to clients for session recordings.

## **What format should I use to record my session?:**

- Please set your software to record at 44.1KHz, 16bit or higher in .wav format

## **What do I need to know about record levels, etc?:**

- Please check your recording levels before connecting to us for our session.
- Your record level should be set so that your voice averages at -12db on your computer's meters. This is roughly the point where the meters change from green to yellow.
- Please record at least 30 seconds of room tone only (silence). This should be at the beginning of your file. We can get this at the beginning of our session.

## **What about re-takes?:**

Your Voucher and Booking Agreement includes the terms and conditions of our agreement.

- One reason we want to be with you during your sessions is so that we can direct you to the best performance for the production.

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- This helps to minimize re-takes and pickups.
- This also gives us a very fast way to check your recording for quality and any other potential issues.
- However, sometimes a line just doesn't work - or we discovered a noise that we couldn't hear during the session. When this happens, we'll need to schedule a "pick-up" session to re-record the flawed part of the session. In rare cases, we may need to re-record everything.
- When you send us your signed Voucher and Booking Agreements, you agree to provide one additional session at no charge for pick-ups and re-takes that might be needed.
- If or when we schedule a pick-up session, we need for you to duplicate the recording setup and performance as much as possible.
  - You can listen to the original session backup on your computer to match levels, mic placement and performance energy.

## How shall I name my files?:

Please use the following format for naming your files:

**FirstnameLastname\_ProjectName\_Date.wav**

The Date should be in a six digit format eg: May 1, 2013 = 050113

The .wav extension will normally be automatically added to the file name. We can also accept .aiff files.

## OK, I've recorded the session... how to I deliver to VoiceActing Studios?:

There are a few ways to deliver your recordings to us:

1. Our preferred delivery method is Dropbox. Prior to your session, we'll set up a shared folder for you to use.
  - We'll send you an invitation to share our Dropbox session folder prior to your session start time.
  - To set up a Dropbox account, go to [www.Dropbox.com](http://www.Dropbox.com) or click the link in our invitation.
  - When you accept our invitation, our shared folder will automatically be added to your Dropbox folder.
  - Instead of recording your files to your usual place, you simply set your recording destination to our shared Dropbox folder. This puts your recordings directly onto our computer within moments and eliminates uploading/downloading time.
  - As you record, your file is immediately uploaded to our studio.
  - When your session is complete, we ask that you copy the session file(s) in your Dropbox folder to a safe place elsewhere on your computer.
    - When your session had downloaded to our computer, we'll move it out of Dropbox to our project folder. This will remove the file from the Dropbox folder.

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- By you making a copy on your computer, there will be a backup just in case something happened during the upload or to our copy of the file.
- Alternatively: if you prefer to record to your usual place, you can put a copy of the session file(s) in our shared Dropbox folder immediately after our session.
- 2. If you are not using Dropbox for our session...
  - Use [www.WeTransfer.com](http://www.WeTransfer.com) to send your session files(s) to [info@voiceacting.com](mailto:info@voiceacting.com).

## How do I get paid for my work? Do I need to send an invoice to VoiceActing Studios?:

Here's how our payment process works:

- When we book you for a session, we will send you a payment Voucher and Booking Agreement.
  - Our Voucher provides details regarding your talent fee and/or other services we are booking and is considered to be our contract with you..
  - By returning your Voucher and Booking Agreement, you are contracting your services for the work specified in the agreement.
  - Details regarding session time are arranged separately, usually by email.
- Your signed Voucher and Booking Agreement serves as both your contract and invoice.
  - You do not need to send us a separate invoice, unless you need to do that for your own bookkeeping purposes.
- We pay for your services via PayPal or by company check as soon as we can.
  - If you send us a paper invoice, you will only receive a return copy if we pay by check.
  - You do not need to have a PayPal account to receive payment from us.
    - If you DO have a PayPal account, please provide your PayPal primary email address on your Voucher and Booking Agreement.
    - if you DO NOT have a PayPal account, we will send payment to the email address you provide and you may be asked to set up a PayPal account at the time you receive payment.
  - Payment is normally sent within 7 days after one of the following has occurred:
    - We have completed production and your work has been "signed off" by our client.
    - Our client has paid us.
  - We'll always do our best to pay for your services as quickly as possible, but we do ask that you be patient. You will normally receive payment within a week or so after your session. However...
    - Some of our corporate clients may not pay us until 30-60 days or more after we have delivered their project. So...
    - We ask that you allow up to 90 days after your session to receive payment before you start to get upset with us.
- Payment will normally be sent via PayPal from VoiceActing, LLC
  - You will be responsible for any PayPal transaction fees that might apply.
  - By using PayPal, we both have a way of tracking payment through a highly trustworthy and reliable payment portal.