

3 Ways to Double Check Your Auditions to Ensure they're Great

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When you send off an audition for a job, are you sure it's your best? Better yet, are you sure it's giving you your best shot at landing the gig?

As VO Talent, we've all been there - a great job posting comes your way and you think you're perfect for it. You pre-read the script a few times and then step in front of the mic to record your audition. After you've recorded and edited your audio, you send it off and hope for the best.

But maybe you skipped a few steps, maybe there's still a couple of things you can do to make sure you nailed the audition. Here's 3 ways you can double check your auditions after recording and editing them, to make sure you're putting your best foot forward.

1. Close your Eyes



This is an incredibly simple thing to do when listening back to your auditions before submitting them, but it can still be very powerful in terms of optimizing the quality of your auditions.

When you are staring at a waveform while listening back, you may anticipate what's coming and not be 100% focused on listening to your VO. The idea is to put yourself in the position of the person casting the project. They will not be looking at a waveform, they will be hitting a play button and

listening to your VO. So close your eyes and listen back, **so that you can experience what they will experience.**

By removing the visual stimuli from the process, you enable yourself to focus solely on the audio. You'd be surprised how things like awkward spacing between phrases, fumbled words, audio artifacts, background noise, mouth noise, and other negative elements of your recording become more apparent this way.

2. Reference with a Music Bed



For almost all Commercial and Promo projects, your VO will end up on top of a music bed. A great way to test whether or not your VO captured the right mood or tone of a piece is to reference it on top of a music bed.

Unfortunately, you rarely get access to the music that will be used in the project during the audition phase (or even during the actual recording of the job for that matter) But there's still a way you can do this. **All you need is a piece of music that is in a similar style to what will be used in the spot.** If the client gives a reference to another commercial, then track down the song from the reference spot and play it behind your audition. If not, use the direction given for the VO, and apply that to your music search. If they were looking for a sincere, emotional, believable read - then track down an emotional, sentimental piece of music.

Spotify is a great tool for this, and is free. If you are a Spotify user, under the "Browse" menu, you can select the sub category "Genres and Moods" and you'll be presented with a number of playlists

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all revolving around different moods. Find one that fits your project and reference a few different pieces of music behind it. Also, there's a great playlist on Spotify called "Apple Commercial Songs" that is updated regularly with music from Apple's campaigns. The playlist includes everything from emotional/sentimental to energetic/upbeat and everything in between. And it's all current and relevant music which is what you want.

Listen for how your VO and the music complement each other. Does it sound like it could be a finished commercial spot? Or does it sound amateur? Is something off about it? Referencing this way can make very clear whether or not you hit the desired tone of the project. If you did, laying a relevant piece of music behind your audition should sound like it could be something you'd hear on the TV or radio.

3. A/B with the Reference Spot



This one is not always possible, but in many cases it is. Often you will see job postings where a youtube/vimeo/etc... link is given to a reference spot. This is a big tool that you can utilize to help nail the audition. You now have a much clearer idea of the overall tone of the project and the style of VO the client is looking for.

Descriptive words are great (Upbeat, Conversational, Believable, etc....) but those words can mean different things to different people. **An audio example will always be much more useful for you.** *(Sort of like how a picture is worth a thousand words, an audio example is worth a thousand descriptive adjectives - Ok, maybe not a thousand, but you know what I mean)*

So if you are given this tool, **use it**. A/B your audition against the reference - meaning play a clip of the reference and then a clip of your audition, and go back and forth between the two. The scripts will be different, but compare the equivalent parts. How does your intro sound compared to the reference intro. How is your tagline compared to theirs? Do both scripts have laundry lists (ex: "You can buy books, clothes, games, toys, movies, music, and more!") How do they compare?

In Conclusion...

To sum up - **these aren't things that you need to do on every single audition**. But they are things that may be helpful to incorporate into your workflow and can help you perfect those really important auditions for those super high paying gigs before submitting. As always, your own methods, talent, setup, etc... will be unique to you, so look at these ideas as new things to experiment with and see if they help improve the quality of your auditions and start landing you more gigs.

Action Steps



Reading, learning, and absorbing content is great - but it does absolutely nothing if you don't take action. With that in mind, here are some action steps you can take based on the info in this post.

Try each one of the 3 review methods covered in this post at least once this week during your VO audition process. See if it doesn't lead to increased confidence in your audition quality immediately - and more bookings if you stick with it longer term.

If you have any other methods you use to review your auditions before sending them off, I'd love to hear them! Let me know in the comments below.

Talk soon!

-Mike

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