

The Importance of Marketing Materials by Maxine Dunn

Chapter 26: "Tips, Tricks and Studio Stories"

Book: The Art of Voice Acting - fourth edition

James R. Alburger - author

If you're interested in a career in voice-over or if you're already working regularly as a voice-actor, one of the keys to your success will be your marketing materials.

I think of marketing materials as anything that your clients or prospective clients see, hear, or use to learn about you or to interact with you. They represent you to your potential buyers. Which is why it's crucial that you pay attention to their importance right from day one. I want you to realize that your marketing materials encompass much more than just a website.

They include:

- Your online reputation and credibility
- Your appearance and demeanor on auditions and jobs
- Your outgoing voicemail message on your phone
- Your email correspondence
- Your business cards
- Your voice-over demos
- Your website
- Your thank you cards and invoices

In other words, ANYTHING that creates an image of you in a prospective client's mind is marketing.

If you're interested in making your voice-over career the best it can be, then I strongly suggest you make your marketing materials the best they can be BEFORE you start actively marketing yourself. This applies whether you're just starting out with a very low budget and minimal marketing materials, or whether you're an established pro and have a large marketing budget.

Let me briefly outline how you can best use each of these vital tools to your advantage.

The Importance of Marketing Materials by Maxine Dunn

Chapter 26: "Tips, Tricks and Studio Stories"

Book: The Art of Voice Acting - fourth edition

James R. Alburger - author

> **Your online reputation and credibility:** Don't discount the importance of your reputation and your online presence. If you contribute to forums, Facebook, etc., never use profanity or denigrating verbiage. Be aware of what pictures of you are available online. Remember, clients can see all that too so make sure your online image is one you're proud of.

> **Your appearance and demeanor on auditions and jobs:** Many voice-actors think because it's only their voice that's being heard and not their face that's being seen, it's permissible to show up at auditions and jobs in torn jeans and tee shirts and flip-flops. I couldn't disagree more. You don't have to get dressed up to the nines, but I believe a professional appearance and a patient, cooperative demeanor on jobs are vitally important. It shows respect for your clients and portrays you as a professional with high personal standards.

> **Your outgoing voicemail message on your phone.** Your outgoing message should be clearly spoken, professional, short, to the point, and gracious. No music, background sounds, slang, or sarcasm.

> **Your email correspondence:** Your emails should be professional, error-free, and contain opening and closing salutations. As your relationship with a client progresses, you may become more informal but NEVER cross the line of becoming too personal, emotional, or using profanity. Even if your client's emails are all lower case, contain no opening or closing salutations and are filled with typos and slang, take the high-road and keep it professional. Trust me on this one. Create a code of conduct for your email correspondence and stick to it.

> **Your business cards:** You should have professionally printed business cards, ready to go at all times. They don't need to be fancy but they should be clear, easy-to-read (no tiny fonts or wild graphics) and contain all contact information you can supply. As you secure your domain name, e-mail, and website, you can add information as you go. If you're just getting started

The Importance of Marketing Materials by Maxine Dunn

Chapter 26: "Tips, Tricks and Studio Stories"
Book: The Art of Voice Acting - fourth edition
James R. Alburger - author

and don't even have a demo yet, at least get a business card with your name and phone number. But DO have a business card, no if's and's or but's on this one. No business card = unprofessional.

> Your voice-over demos: Depending upon your market, you should have a demo for each genre of voice acting that you do: animation, corporate, commercials, etc. They should be current, fast-moving, have superior sound quality and be professionally produced. You must also be able to perform in the studio at the level demonstrated on your demo. Have your demos available on a CD, as well as in individual MP3 files on your computer and also available for download on your website.

> Your website: As soon as you have your demo or demos produced, you'll need a professional website. Your website should be current, easy to navigate, and well-optimized. When you're first starting out a simple, one-page website is just fine. Any call-to-action or important information should be "above the fold" (the top part of the page) so no scrolling is necessary. Check your website regularly to make sure everything is working as it should be.

> Your thank you cards and invoices: Thank you cards are, of course, a given - after jobs, referrals, assistance from others. Make them prompt, brief, and specifically mention the reason for your gratitude. Avoid including any unrelated information, questions, or concerns. Your invoices should be easy-to-read, clear, and detailed. They should contain your contact information and address, payment information and terms, job details, as well as a thank you comment ON the invoice, thanking your client for their business.

This is just a brief over-view of some of the important aspects of your marketing arsenal, but if you pay close attention to these from day one, (or get them back on track if you're mid-career), you'll be way ahead of those that don't.

Wishing you success!