VOICE-OVER DEMO PRODUCTION

A good voice-over commercial demo that gets you the voice-over agent and lucrative bookings you want is a skillfully engineered mix of extracts from radio and TV commercials. It runs no more than two and a half minutes, and many advise an even shorter running time. With 6-12 carefully chosen pieces, often just a few seconds long, you demonstrate the range of your vocal skills. When I produce that all-important first demo for a beginner (for examples, listen to several such clients from my website at www.paulmeier.com/voiceover.html), here's what happens:

1. You, the client, collect "copy" – a mix of real **radio and TV commercials,** and **print ads** from glossy magazines. Choose pieces you like on a gut level and think you can perform well.
2. You type these into **a script** (see sample below) that ends up with as many as 20 pieces, and e-mail it to me.
3. I edit the script, make suggestions, and e-mail it back to you. You work some more and send it to me again. We might repeat this process several times.
4. When we have a really good script we do our first **Skype-coaching session.** I record the session at my end and put the download link on your personal page (see http://www.paulmeier.com/client_template.html) so that you can listen to it over and over. You perform the script; I direct you this way and that, finding out your strengths. Based on this session, we make further adjustments to the script until we're sure we have **exactly the right script for you**. We may have one or two further Skype sessions until we know we have the right mix of pieces and have rehearsed you to perfection.
5. We produce the final script. Everything we've done to this point ensures that when you get to the studio – the expensive part of the process – **you are thoroughly comfortable and can perform to your personal best**.
6. Armed with the very best script possible, rehearsed to a high standard by phone, **it's time to go to the studio**. I work with one of the best studios and one of the best engineers in the world – here in Kansas City, Missouri: Don Martin at Evolution Audio (www.evolutionaudio.com). It's typically a 3-hour session. Recording your performance takes about an hour and a half – sometimes longer. Editing, laying in music and effects, and mixing it down to the final product is done after you leave. Within a week you will have a brilliantly performed and produced voice-over demo. You're ready to send it to agents and producers, have it hosted by one of the online casting services (www.voice123.com for example) and to break into one of the most lucrative fields in the world for a performer.

OPTIONS

Working face-to-face with Don Martin in Kansas City is the best, and often the cheapest option. But there are other ways to go.

- Thanks to modern technology, we don't have to be in the same city. We can book an hour in a good studio near you, and via a special kind of phone hook-up, record you ***here*** while you are performing ***there***! This is how the industry works these days – producer in one city, voice talent in another. This kind of special phone link (we use a **CDQ Prima 220 system** compatible with all the leading systems in voice studios the world over) can be expensive, which is why coming to Kansas City can sometimes be the best option.
- A cheaper option – still a good one – is for me to direct you by phone in your studio; the local engineer records you and then sends the raw recordings to my Kansas City

engineer for the final mixing and editing (a hugely important part of the process). Alternatively, the mixing can be done by your local engineer, while I can be involved by approving the work after he or she emails me an mp3 of the work-in-progress.

- The cheapest is for you to use me simply for the first stage of the process – creating the best possible script and rehearsing you to a high performance standard. At this point you would book a local studio where the engineer would record and produce the final product. This way you avoid the costs of coming to Kansas City, or doing a remote hook-up, and having my services as producer at the session. However, engineers vary widely in their skills in producing demos and, of course, I can't guarantee the final result if you choose this option.

COSTS

This is a complex process taking place over several weeks. There are many variables, such as the number of Skype sessions before going to the studio, and whether we work together in-person or remotely. **The first stage of the process, steps 1-5, is the most important, and yet the cheapest!** So many people don't have the guidance and rehearsal they need before they pay for expensive studio time, and consequently either take more time in the studio than necessary or fail to get the best end-product. Working with me via Skype and e-mail costs $450, based on two or three hour-long Skype-coaching sessions (script consultation via e-mail is included in that price). The Demo Production Package from Evolution Audio costs $650 and includes three hours of studio time; the final mix, edit and music beds are completed after you leave, with the finished demo sent to you within a week. For remote hook-up the charge is an additional $220 for the hour, a cost you will also incur at the host studio in your city, as well as their per-hour studio fee. (You can see how coming to Kansas City might be the cheapest option.) Here's how the various options break down (all figures in $US):

OPTION A

(Record in Kansas City)

Script development and rehearsal by Skype	450
Evolution Audio Demo Production package	650
TOTAL	**1,100**

OPTION B

(Record in Kansas City via remote hook-up to your local studio)

Script consultation and rehearsal by Skype	450
Evolution Audio Demo Production package	650
Remote hook-up fee (two studios)	440
1 hour remote studio fee	150
TOTAL	**1,690**

OPTION C*

(Record in your local studio with me directing by phone)

Script consultation and rehearsal by Skype	450
3 hours studio time (1 hour in your studio, 2 hours mixing and editing at Evolution Audio)	650
Producer fee	300
TOTAL	**1,400**

OPTION D*

(Record in your local studio without my assistance as producer)

Script consultation and rehearsal by Skype	450
3 hours studio time (or other rate you negotiate and pay independently)	650
TOTAL	**1,100**

*** actual cost may vary depending on your local studio and are based on the charges for the same service charged by Evolution Audio, rates subject to change.**

SAMPLE VOICE-OVER SCRIPT

1. Learn a language. Expand your world. Finally there's a way to learn a new language that's easier than you could ever imagine. Rosetta Stone interactive software teaches you any of 30 languages, all without translation, memorization, or grammar drills. Rosetta Stone. Language, learning, success.

2. Your smile says a lot about you. If you let it. When you're uncomfortable about your teeth, it's easy to hold back your smile. Invisalign's advanced technology now lets you straighten your teeth invisibly – so you can express yourself fully. And because they're invisible, no one has to know about it. Hundreds of thousands of people already have discovered Invisalign. Maybe it's time you were one of them.

3. Flights to Ireland to find four-leaf clover: $0. Flights to Vegas to try it out: $0. Flights to Ireland to return defective four-leaf clover: $0. Traveling for any reason at all: priceless. You could win 500 roundtrip flights anywhere to share with family and friends. Use your MasterCard from July 1 through August 31, and you will be automatically entered for a chance to win 500 airline tickets. You can earn double entries at participating airline partners. Find out more at priceless dot com. There are some things money can't buy. For everything else there's MasterCard.

4. For 125 years, we've put ourselves in dire situations because that's where we're needed. In the face of often impossible conditions we've pressed tirelessly on. We are the American Red Cross, an organization of volunteers who give our time, talent, and strength to relieve the suffering of our neighbors in over 70,000 disasters each year. Serve at our side. Contact your local American Red Cross in this, our 125th anniversary of hope. Join us at redcross dot org.

5. Listen hard enough and you can hear the spirits of those who came before you. The West is alive in Wyoming. It's a place of endless sky and storied past. There's a sense of adventure so thick you'll have to swat it away. From Mystical Devil's Tower across undiscovered places to historic Yellowstone, with hitchin' posts in between, Wyoming is the last way west. And all you have to do is look for it. Wyoming. Forever West.

6. Only one out of 100 barrels of our whiskey is hand-chosen to become Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Whiskey. Ironically, these special barrels live not a life of luxury, but one of chilling cold and sweltering heat in the top floors of our barrelhouses. Inside our charred oak barrels, a relationship is nurtured with the weather, the whiskey, and the wood. Summer heat opens the wood, absorbing the whiskey. In winter, the wood contracts, releasing the whiskey back into the barrels. Over time, this cycle imbues the whiskey with a variety of color and flavor nuances. Yet time is not the judge here. That distinction belongs to Master Distiller, Jimmy Bedford, who ultimately decides if the character of a single barrel is that of Jack Daniel's Single Barrel.

7. Linger in the deep end of moisture. Olay Body Wash plus body butter ribbons. Embrace your skin in the Olay body wash streamed with a ribbon of indulgent body butter. The rich lather infuses skin with a satin like beauty that lasts from one shower to the next.

8. From Romance to Comedy to everything in between, we've got it covered. Just use your remote to choose from a library of over 100 free movies ready to watch whenever you are. ON DEMAND with Comcast Digital Cable. It's Comcastic!

9. As the leaves begin to turn . . . so do our thoughts. To brisk fall days. And cool autumn eves. This fall, we're all about living in layers. The layers of your clothing and the layers of your life. At Eddie Bauer, living in layers allows you to be comfortable indoors, outdoors, and in every aspect of your day. It means easier transitions from work to lying low at home, or getting away on weekends. The Eddie Bauer Autumn Collection. When comfort is key.

10. Are you a hero or are you an alien chew toy? You've got .25 seconds to decide. When it's up to you to save your girlfriend, your people, and the Earth, you want all the help you can get. ATI Radeon X1900 series graphics cards deliver the best performance, most realistic 3D architecture and the edge you need to make sure these alien freaks know they messed with the wrong planet. To get the ATI advantage, visit ati.com today.

11. How does it feel to climb Everest? Breathe through a straw and climb one hundred flights of stairs. It's just like that. Except you have frostbite, you're dehydrated and fighting hypothermia. Maybe even hallucinating. Why would five amateur climbers go through all this? Find out in the most intense climb ever caught on film. Everest: Beyond the Limit. An all-new series starts Tuesday Nov, 14, 10 pm. Let's all discover how far we can go. Discovery Channel.

12. Relaxes like a back massage, but costs a lot less and lasts a lot longer. We could all use a little break. That's why AirWick designed a range of aromatherapy products with a unique blend of essential oils that will revitalize your spirits. AirWick. It's good to be home.

13. Soothing rest for mind and body. Peaceful, gentle sleep. Isn't that what you long for? That's what Lunesta is all about: helping most people fall asleep quickly, and stay asleep all through the night. It's not only non-narcotic, it's approved for long-term use. So you can feel comfortable taking it night after night. Talk to your doctor first before using sleep aids for extended periods. Ready for sweet slumber? Just leave the rest to Lunesta.

14. My girlfriend complains we don't travel enough so I asked her, "How would you like to go to Italy in just 15 minutes?" She didn't think it could be done, but then I made her Barilla Linguine with Barilla Marinara Sauce. Talk about quick, easy, and delicious! Pasta that's always firm, tender, and NEVER, sticks or clumps – topped with chunks of ripe tomatoes and olive oil, fresh garlic, and onions! It's a quick and easy meal that makes you feel like you're in Italy! Try Barilla Pasta and Pasta Sauce. You'll see how Italy is only 15 minutes away. Anytime.

15. Congress is at it again, playing games with health care and you're the big loser.
Congress passes a bill with new regulations and new lawsuits. Even employers could be sued – just for providing health insurance. Then, Congress makes you pay – increasing your premium by $200. A few lawyers hit the jackpot – and the rest of us are out two hundred bucks. If you can't pay, you can't play and you'll be one of the two million who lose their health insurance. It's time for Congress to stop gambling with your health care.

16. She did what? He didn't! Sometimes, the greatest dish isn't the gossip. Invite Cuisinart into your kitchen (or what you're calling your kitchen) and discover how easy it is to make great stuff for friends. Get the secrets over schmoozing; tidbits over Thai-burgers; and get the four one one over frozen margaritas. Let your Cuisinart Griddler and Blender get in to the mix, and see how gossip can leave a great taste in your mouth.
When the burgers and 'ritas are as good as the gossip!

17. Bravia LCD TV. The world's first television for men and women. It's true, men and women can actually agree on a television. Specifically, the only one that can deliver both performance and style in Sony Full HD no matter what you choose to watch. So while men and women may like different features of the bravia, there's one thing they both like: The world's most powerful HD experience. Sony Bravia: the ceasefire of the sexes.

18. You always went for the tall, dark, and handsome types. So who'd have thought the love of your life would be short and bald? Having a baby changes everything. Johnson and Johnson.

19. In Italy, wine is an everyday part of life. Whether at home or out in the village, people share a glass of wine and a bit of conversation as a way to end their day. So put the day behind you with a glass of our new Bella Sera Rosso and savor the evening like the Italians do. It's going to be a beautiful evening. It's going to be a Bella Sera.

20. Many try to predict what the future will hold. At Lexus, we've already taken one step toward the future of luxury vehicles. Our LF-S concept car embodies the next evolutionary step in our design philosophy: L-Finesse. The goal of L-Finesse is to build a luxury sedan that's designed around you. The sleek lines skillfully combine dynamism and elegance, while surrounding a comfortable, driver-friendly interior. Innovations include a transparent roof that incorporates security illumination. This groundbreaking luxury sedan also features a V8 gasoline engine and high-output electric motor for a hybrid 4WD. The LF-S is where luxury is going. And that's a future we can all get excited about.

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