

Measuring Success

by Deb Munro

If you've delved into the wonderment of the Voice world, then you've been forced to make some decisions about the way in which you obtain work. You may or may not work in your local market. You may or may not have an agent or perhaps even several. Some even hire a talent management team and have joined the union (SAG, AFTRA or ACTRA) or perhaps you find work online or even better on your own. Depending on where you live, this will help decide what market will best suit your specific needs and how much you can make along the way.

I thought I would address this so that you are clearly informed of your options when working as a voice talent, no matter where you live. Some of this may or may not apply to you but I hope it will open your eyes to more opportunity or help you to focus on where you can make the most impact and how to meet your salary expectations.

I've been fascinated to hear the opinions of local talent working in the larger markets. Many who have been working in the industry for 15 years plus and are finding it extremely successful to keep working through their agents and maintaining their union status. This is the ultimate goal of course; to be a known LOCAL talent in a major market with a great salary. With an economy like this though, many big clients are cutting back and this is causing a change in all markets. I hear time and time again from talent wanting representation in the major markets while they live in a small to medium market. I understand this goal, but it's not easily obtainable without moving to the market you seek. It wasn't until I moved to Vancouver that I discovered why the local talents get the work and those of us outside of the market were not taken into consideration as often.

What is Success to You?

When you make the sacrifice to move away from your family and friends to live in a major market and become the 'Starving Artist', being available 24 hours a day with no real time off, to sacrifice whatever you need to make it happen.... then you too deserve the work first. There is enough talent to go around in the major markets to cover the amount of work available. New talent will always be wanted, but if they don't live local to that market, then the work SHOULD be harder for them to obtain until they make the same sacrifices. Many people who live and work successfully in a market such as LA, don't necessarily want to live there, but this is a part of the package.

What do you want to obtain in your road to success? Are you looking for fame, fortune? Do you want to be rich and have servants and want for nothing? Or do you want to make a living doing what you love? Be comfortable and successful?

You may be surprised to learn that Voice Talent aren't typically up there on the rich and famous list. Many of the successful voice talent that I know make a good living but rich and famous is not their reality. What do you consider successful? Have you considered what you want out of this career?

Here's a list of Pro's and Cons between the local and global voice marketplace

Major Market Talent (Local)

Pros

- Substantial projects with big name potential*
- World recognition from the public*
- Higher rate potential*
- Frequent large scale auditions*
- Variety of work opportunities*
- Union Opportunity*
- More frequent training options*
- Frequent networking opportunities*
- Variety of agents to choose from*
- Talent Management opportunities*
- Don't have to learn technology*
- Less business expenses*

Cons

- Must be available at all times*
- Live local to the market*
- Cost more money to live in this type of community*
- Less frequency of work unless you're known in the market*
- Need to be more creative in marketing*
- Tough competition*
- One agent (for each acting genre you pursue)*
- 'Who you know' factor exists*
- Network Functions cost more*
- Need a side job with flexible schedule*
- Technically not ready for the global market*
- Not skilled in self marketing (usually)*

Global Market Talent (Home Studio)

Pros	Cons
<i>Work from home</i>	<i>Must be self disciplined</i>
<i>In full control of your finances (Non-Union)</i>	<i>Make less money on projects (not always)</i>
<i>Agent in each state/province/country</i>	<i>Non-union</i>
<i>Work your own hours (for the most part)</i>	<i>Spend more on marketing</i>
<i>15 or more auditions a day</i>	<i>Audition Site expenses</i>
<i>Own studio</i>	<i>Spend more on equipment</i>
<i>Business owner</i>	<i>Business owner (Lol)</i>
<i>Become your own engineer</i>	<i>High Maintenance</i>
<i>More world recognition within your industry</i>	<i>No holidays</i>
<i>Many marketing opportunities</i>	<i>Work around the clock and always available</i>
<i>Still have access to the Major Market projects</i>	<i>Edit your own projects (major negative)</i>
<i>Can voice from anywhere in the world</i>	<i>Hard to remove work from your everyday life</i>
<i>Join Audition sites (Pay to Play)</i>	<i>Consistent marketing</i>
<i>More tax right offs</i>	<i>Not as much access to larger scale projects</i>
<i>Don't need to move to find the work</i>	

As you can see each have their pros and cons and you can be successful at either. The choice is truly up to you.

I've finally discovered my need of success in this industry. As a child I only ever wanted fame. Now that I've had some small samples of fame, I've since changed my mind. I've never been a fortune hunter. Don't get me wrong, I want to make lots of money but I didn't join the industry of entertainment with the hopes to get rich. I joined this industry as a need to be appreciated for the talents I feel I possess. Why, I don't know, but that's my reality. I have grown very comfortable in my home environment. I love having what I consider Global Fame. I am honored by the work I obtain and I'm appreciative that my career is in my hands. I do have many agents who work very hard to find me work, but I also work equally hard to obtain my own so that I can assure myself of work when slow times come. I am more than content on my current success and it can only get better.

There are many levels of success in this industry and if you work hard enough and keep open to the pathways needed to obtain it, I'm sure you'll find yours. I know I've found mine and I am thankful each and every day to be a part of it.

consideration as often.



Until next time everyone

All my best
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