



Gaming Showreels and Getting Picked

- Gaming Showreels. You can split up your gaming reels into parts if you have enough space on your/your agents webpage, or you can create one single gaming reel encapsulating everything. The following shows how reels should be split, or a combination of the following if you are creating one reel:
 - Normal dialogue read (narrative). Ensure that this is how you normally read. Pick a good topic, or a nice book, or something slightly more up-tempo. This reel is there to show exactly how you sound as an individual actor.
 - Accents (your range). It's really only worth doing accents that you are good at on this reel. So, if you're only good at English and Scottish, then only put English and Scottish on the reel. A crappy American accent is going to make you look like you are bad at accents. If you can find a nice way of tying all the accents together though, for example, creating a script that travels the country and allows you to change your accent as you go, so much the better.
 - Characters (a wide variety). It goes without saying that the more, and the more varied characters you can put on this reel, the better you are going to fare. However, do edit them down and make sure that you only have a max of 20 seconds per accent. Less if you can get away with it.
 - Caricatures. These reels are very important. You need to think about gaming and what kind of characters there are in games. From young kids, to monsters to evil sorcerers, to fluffy cute bunnies and so on. You can even get some of the voices processed to make you more dramatic! Just don't copy voices off of the TV or other shows/films. If they wanted impressionists they would have asked for them. Be original! Be creative!
 - Dramatic acting. This is a serious dramatic read, so pick something good, short, and not pretentious. There are lots of serious games out there, but they don't want the Archers, they don't want Am-Dram and they don't want melodrama. Just a good, solid read. It's up to you if you include characters or accents, but remember: this is the one reel that really shows them you can act!
- Your gaming voice reels **MUST** be for gaming!!!!!! Do not put ANY examples of you doing commercial, radio, ELT or corporate work on there. It won't ingratiate you with casting directors! How can they possibly tell how good a character-actor you are simply by hearing you sell BMW's? Most gaming casting directors hear that stuff and turn-off.

- Take your ego out of the equation and put the best first. Yes, you may love your (long) performance as Hamlet, but the casting director has another 130 reels to listen to. Make him want you instantly, and not have to sit through 1 minute 30 seconds of you droning on in prose!
- Treat your showreel as importantly as iTunes do their homepage: This is your ONE chance to sell yourself to a prospective employer. If there are any parts of the reel that you would *cough* over if you were playing it to your mother, take it out!
- The best reels are ones which keep you engaged and are self-contained. For example, having all the characters at a film-premier being interviewed on a red carpet, or all the characters at a gaming convention, or all the characters breaking into the casting directors office etc. It makes a good story and good listening - much better than 10 random characters with mini-scripts.
- File-Label and voice-label your reels clearly. It should say your name and reel-type at the very start, and your contact details if you don't have an agent. This is really important for casting directors working on big games where they literally have 500 reels to go through. For example at the start of the reel: "Hugh Edwards - Character Reel", would be fine.
- Don't let each individual reel be longer than 2 minutes. Casting directors have a life too.
- Never, ever, ever, ever have anyone else on your vocal reel. If it's a previously recorded piece with another actor, you have the wrong piece - replace it. This is YOUR reel, selling YOU. This even applies if it's with a famous actor. Sean Connery wouldn't have you on his voice reel, and neither should you have him on yours.
- Use music and sound effects if you want to, anything to help make your showreel stand out from the 35,000 that exist in the UK. Really think long and hard about what is on there - remember you have to beat the celebrities who are picked just because of who they are - so really illustrate why you're good enough! Don't however, allow any SFX etc to get in the way of your performance - better no SFX than intrusive SFX.
- Casting for free - If your agent has a part offered to her, get a bit of the script from her and your phone and record some dialogue for the director. It's easy to do, shows willing and will make your agent more willing to put you forward for jobs in the future.
- Read 'Edge' & 'Develop': the industry magazines. Find out what games are being developed.
- IMDB and Spotlight: your CV - this is hugely important to keep up to date. Always send a link in with your reel.
- Research & Rehearse! Make it easy for your agent!
- Become a gamer!
- Beat the celeb's by being brilliant!

For anyone wanting to have their gaming reel's professionally produced, give Hugh Edwards a call at High Score Productions Ltd on (01295 738337, hugh_edwards@hotmail.com) who runs a monthly showreel recording session for actors wanting to get well-produced gaming voice-reels. Prices on request!

GravyForTheBrain.com also offers a specific E-Learning course showing you how to create fantastic showreels yourself without having to pay for it! Have a look!