

# THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

## GETTING YOU TO THE NEXT STAGE.

**PRO**

# SPRING CLEANING

**PRO**


### Hello Pros!

It's hard to believe that it's May, considering the extended winter we've had here in New York City. It feels like we're still crawling out of February. But nope,

Spring is definitely upon us, so don't let that weather fool you.

One of the great traditions of the spring is "spring cleaning." That's why every spring, I tend to take some time to not only clean out my closets, but to also clean out my project list as well. I'll reassess everything I started working on over the past twelve months and decide what gets tossed out (like that purple turtleneck I haven't worn in three years) and what gets more of my attention.

This is an essential part of making sure you're focusing on (1) the projects you want to focus on and (2) the projects most likely to reach completion first.

Because if you're like me (and if you're a Pro) then I'm sure you're constantly coming up with new ideas and projects to work on. And while that's great, you have to make sure you clean house every once in awhile to make sure your project pipeline doesn't get so full that it gets clogged.

So take a moment to write down the list of 3-5 (hopefully more like 3) projects you want to complete in the next year. And everything else gets tossed...or at least put in a storage facility with your winter sweaters.

And go get 'em.

### RAISING MONEY FOR PROS

#### *From Negative to Positive*

Page 2.

...

### MARKETING FOR PROS

#### *Cracking The Right Copy For Your Crowdfunding Campaign (Or How You Raise Over 7K in A Week!)*

Page 3.

...

### PRO UPDATES & CLASSIFIEDS

#### *Announcements & News*

Page 4.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### PRO Monthly Mixer

Thursday, May 17, 2018 | 5:30-7:30 pm ET  
Spoonfed NYC

### Spring Strategy Intensive

Saturday, May 19, 2018 | 2-5 pm ET

For more information or to sign up for other events, visit [www.theproducersperspective.com](http://www.theproducersperspective.com).

### Producer Pitch Night

Wednesday, June 6, 2018 | 7-9 pm ET





## KEN'S PRO TIP

No one is going to be as passionate about your show as you are, so it's your job to excite and inspire others. Whatever it is you want to do, do it 100 times, 1,000 times, 10,000 times! Not only will you be more confident doing it, but you will be ten times better!



## LAST MONTH'S OFFICE HOURS

Life rights and the proper way to go about creating a show on a public domain person or event

How to contact regional theaters

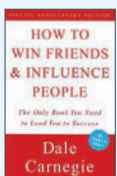
How do you know when you are ready for a staged reading?

What kind of perks should you give to your investors?

## WHAT KEN'S READING

### How to Win Friends and Influence People

by Dale Carnegie



Dale Carnegie's rock-solid, time-tested advice has carried countless people up the ladder of success in their business and personal lives. Discover six ways to make people like you, twelve ways to win people to your way of thinking, and nine ways to change people without arousing resentment.

## PRO QUOTE OF THE MONTH

**"A ship is safe in harbor,  
but that's not what ships are for."**

~John A. Shedd

*(Are you following Ken on Instagram? He posts a new inspirational quote on his whiteboard every morning!) Follow him @kendavenportbway.*

## RAISING MONEY FOR PROS

### From Negative To Positive

by Valerie Novakoff, Davenport Theatrical Associate Producer

When you are first starting out as a commercial producer, you are probably going to look to friends and family as potential investors. These are people who probably haven't invested in theater before. And the first thing they will ask is, "Will I make my money back?" Shows are risky commercial ventures. You know that, I know that, and most of all, potential investors know that.

And you should under no circumstances try to hide this risk from investors. Communication is key at the beginning of any relationship, especially when money is involved. Producers like to tell investors to write the check like they'll never see that money again. And when you cite the statistic that 20% of Broadway shows recoup, they're probably thinking . . . so why would I do this?



Early conversations with new investors can easily become negative. But it's up to you to steer the conversation positive. While you can't guarantee that investors will recoup their investment, there are some things you can guarantee:

- Opening night tickets and party passes. Having access to a once-in-a-lifetime experience is invaluable.
- Signed posters, backstage tours, a complimentary cast album, or free merchandise. Even a low cost gift can make someone feel special.
- Weekly or monthly updates on the show's progress. For curious investors seeking education on producing, this rare peek-under-the-hood of the process can be a key selling point.
- Access to talent. For some investors, just the possibility of taking a photo with their favorite actor is enough!
- The feeling of being a part of something special.

When you focus on guarantees—not uncertainties—investors will see the value even if they don't get all their money back.

## OVERHEARD IN SHUBERT ALLEY

### Here are the rumors people are whispering about these days...

We hear that a certain high profile out-of-town musical is only on its way in if the star wants to do it. And the jury is still out.

Bette Midler will be back in *Dolly* this summer.  
Will she perform on the Tony Awards this time? Could be.

*Got a rumor? Send 'em to me at [ken@theproducersperspective.com](mailto:ken@theproducersperspective.com).*

# Cracking The Right Copy For Your Crowdfunding Campaign (Or How You Raise Over 7K in A Week!)

by Chris Morrissey, Davenport Theatrical Manager of Events and Strategic Partnerships

*"Wait, remind me: what is this about?"*

I must have asked my friend that 10 times in our initial meeting. That friend had approached me to assist with creating a crowdfunding campaign for his first short film. The script was fantastic, the team he assembled was amazing and his passion for the project was infectious.

So why was his marketing copy so... boring?

I knew that with the current written draft there was no way that someone with no prior film experience would raise 5K on a tight, one-week deadline. So how did we work together to get from cold copy to a cash-producing crowdfunding campaign?

## 1. Put The Heart of the Project On Screen

You know how to sell your show better than anyone else. Period. You are your own biggest advocate, cheerleader, fan and supporter. To many potential investors (aka friends, family, colleagues), you are also the biggest selling point. Why hide behind stagnant text on a website when you can capitalize on your own appeal via video?

That was Step One in building my friend's crowdfunding campaign. We wrote a short 2.5 minute script, grabbed an iPhone (yes, a filmmaker used his iPhone!) and shot a compelling pitch video for our crowdfunding page. We even shot the vid in his bedroom



surrounded by DVDs of the movies that inspired him as a kid (major "awww" moment for the viewers at home!). It was personal, persuasive and cost zero dollars.

## 2. Your Netflix Account Can Help You Find Your Niche (And Sell Your Show):

When I asked my friend exactly who the movie was for, his first response was "everyone." While we all want our work to appeal to the masses, there has to be a target demographic. To help us narrow it down, I pulled up Netflix and started scrolling. I had him tell me to stop on every title that he thought had a similar audience to his short.

While we started with a list of 20+ films, tv shows, and documentaries, we narrowed it down to a Top 5. From there, we made our own list of commonalities and differences between the short film and our Netflix list. We studied the plot synopsis and genre

tags included on each film's listing, which helped immensely in creating a concise yet captivating copy for his project.

## 3. Personal Perks That Cost Nothing But Mean Everything

Remember you're looking to *raise* money, not *spend* money. We pinpointed some great rewards that offer excellent value with little to no price tag attached.

A PDF copy of the script with Writer/Director commentary and a digital download of the film's original score were perks we could offer immediately and at no cost. Likely, your project can do the same.

Outshining our more premium perks, the #1 buzzed-about benefit (even from top-tier funders) was a simple "Social Media Shoutout from the Film's Creator." It sounds silly, but it was hugely successful. Why? *People value the personal over the pizzazz.*

Don't go crazy and spend hundreds on branded swag or try to convince Lin-Manuel Miranda to offer a backstage tour at *Hamilton*. Instead, know that being personal and passionate sells more than anything.

*If you want additional insight, email me at [chris@davenporttheatrical.com](mailto:chris@davenporttheatrical.com) to learn more about our Crowdfunding Starter Kit and/or our in-person Pitch Nights. Both can be helpful in bringing cash to your dream project.*

## FEATURED PRO MEMBER



### Name:

Chana Wise

### Where You're

From: Long Beach, California

### PROfession:

Bookwriter/Lyricist

### What projects are you currently working on?

CW: Last month and again in June, my composer/collaborator (Carl Johnson) and I produced a staged reading of our show *Bagels!* which is about the story of the inventor of the first automated bagel-making machine. Outside of that, I'm continuing rewrites on lyrics to another musical, *The Max Factor Factor*, looking for a producing partner for *Mary Marie*

(NAMT 2014) and I have begun writing a currently untitled original revue.

### Why did you join PRO?

CW: I love the plethora of information Ken offers. In order to further my opportunities, I also felt I needed to step up my game in terms of investing in the tools I need to promote my work. Writing craft is one thing, but I've learned this business is so much more than that.

### What do you look for in a collaborator, and how do you seek out creative partners?

CW: Well obviously, I'm looking for someone whose work I love, but just as important, whose personality gels with mine. Someone who understands the gentle push and pull of the collaboration process,

who is truly a partner in both the craft and the business of writing. And they probably have to be a little crazy.

### What have you found to be the most valuable part of being a PRO member?

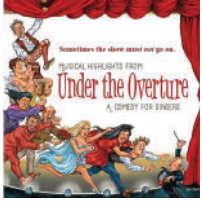
CW: I guess it sounds kind of obvious, but becoming a PRO has reminded me that I actually AM a Pro. That although I love doing what I do, there's more to doing it than writing a great scene or song. That although it may seem foreign and even uncomfortable at times, learning from people who are experts on the business side of creative work is essential too. This is what I feel has been the most valuable thing about being a PRO member.

**Want to recommend a Pro for our next feature?**  
Email [summer@davenporttheatrical.com](mailto:summer@davenporttheatrical.com)



## Competition

### UNDER THE OVERTURE



Ron Kaehler is happy to share that his musical comedy/operatic mash-up *Under The Overture* is one of six finalists

for the 2018 International Musical Theater Entertainment Award in Munich (Gartnerplatz Theatre) to be decided this summer!

[www.undertheoverture.com](http://www.undertheoverture.com)

## Fundraiser

### MESHAHNYE

A very special fundraiser will be held at The George F. Baker Mansion at 75 East

93rd Street, NY on Thursday, May 17 from 7:30–9:30 pm. Come and watch as the actors perform the opening scene of our next production *Mesbahnye* by Maxim Gorky then enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres and wine as you mingle with the performers and meet the production team. Space is limited! RSVP today! Email [DoubleDeckerProductionsNYC@gmail.com](mailto:DoubleDeckerProductionsNYC@gmail.com) or leave a message at 646-765-5292.

## Fundraiser



### MY DELIVERER

Jay Huffer just scheduled a reunion for everyone who helped with the workshop of his show *My Deliverer*. It will be to inform and start raising support for performing the show

in Tulsa area next spring. The reunion is May 16th. We've had over 200 people involved over 5 years.

## New Podcast

### BS DE RÉSISTANCE!



Dale Leopold is proud to announce the launch of his political satire podcast, *BS de Résistance!* A fast-paced, deliciously

irreverent and deliriously immersive political satire that follows the story of a Texas mom and her precocious five-year-old son, as they are unwittingly drawn into the shadowy struggle between the Deep State and its enemies. And there's a song in every episode! New episodes drop on the 5th, 15th and 25th of each month.

## ON THE PODCAST | Who's coming up:

- 5/21 David Lindsay-Abaire
- 6/4 Bruce Barish

## ON THE BLOG | Top read articles last month:

- Why movie attendance has dropped, while Broadway's has risen.
- Should actors be "required" to stage door?
- Is Long The New Short on Broadway?

*Make sure you don't miss a single blog. Subscribe today.*

## ON FACEBOOK LIVE | #EveryDayIsDifferent most viewed from this month:

- Testing different images for *Gettin' The Band Back Together* key art right here on Facebook.
- And the search for new writers for my developing musicals begins
- Watching the front of house for *Gettin' The Band Back Together* go up at The Belasco Theatre!
- At a photo shoot for a profile in a mag coming to a newsstand near you soon.

*Follow Ken on Facebook and turn on Live Notifications to catch all the action of #EveryDayIsDifferent!*  
[www.facebook.com/KenDavenport](http://www.facebook.com/KenDavenport)

## CONNECT WITH KEN



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[ken@theproducersperspective.com](mailto:ken@theproducersperspective.com)

## PRO ANNIVERSARIES

### See Who's Celebrating in May

**2 Years:** Kevin Davis, Tony Gibson, Larry Little, Andrew Smith, Scott and Jill Wilkinson

**1 Year:** Stan Beard, Dana Boll, Joey Boyles, Richard Grasso, Marylyn Varriale, Chana Wise

**6 Months:** Tim Barden, Carrie Bodell, Amy Drake, Jeff and Jacob Foy, Harold Heno, Neil Graves, David Lamb, Judith Manocherian, Ruth Fennessy Moss, Sally Rosenberg, Jim Scalfone, Todd Syswerda

**3 Months:** Jenny Lyn Bader, Kristen Coury, Emily Duguay, Keith Edwards, Robert Baird, Gerry Goldberg, Wendy Macdonald, David McCall, E. Thomalen, Beverly Ward, Kenneth Wood