

THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

A BROADWAY PRODUCER'S OPINION ON EVERYTHING BROADWAY AND BEYOND

PRO



Happy April, PROs!

Well, what do you think of our new design?

We did a bit of Spring Cleaning with our newsletter here at PRO and came up with this. You like? We do.

Truth is, this newsletter was designed by one of you! That's right, we hired our own PRO member Holly Reed, to give our newsletter a facelift. Holly pitched her stuff to us (including taking some risk on her part—a

must for all entrepreneurs looking to break into new markets) and we bit. I wanted to call this out because Holly reaching out to us and us hiring Holly is another example of a community of people working together. Whenever people with similar interests gather in groups, there are so many ways those people can help each other.

That was the whole theory behind starting PRO, The Broadway Meetup, our Masterminds and even the suggestion I make in this month's Writing column.

I know you can all do great things on your own. But when you're in a group, you can accomplish even more...faster.

Enjoy the new newsletter! Go get 'em.

Ken

P.S. If you're looking for some graphic design work, let us know, and we'll hook you up with Holly. And stay tuned for a new "classified" section of PRO, coming soon, allowing you to advertise how you can help your fellow members!

WRITING FOR PROS

Writing Can Be Lonely. But It Doesn't Have To Be.

We've all been there. Staring at a blank screen. Trying to tap into the energy and emotion it takes to write something . . . anything.

Read more on page 2.

MARKETING FOR PROS

A Tagline That Does Double Duty

Lyrics make great tag lines for musicals. They can explain the story, suggest mystery, and they can also trigger another, deeper, impression. The music!

Read more on page 3.

RAISING MONEY FOR PROS

Official Offering Documents? Or Kickstarter?

While the many crowdfunding platforms are terrific ways to allow people to easily donate to your production, don't get seduced into thinking that you'll receive full funding.

Read more on page 4.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 6, 2017 | 6 pm | PRO Social at Hurley's (232 W. 48th St., between 7th and 8th Ave.)

April 11, 2017 | 7 pm | Literary Agent Workshop with Beth Blickers (APA)

April 12, 2017 | 7 pm | Monthly Webinar: The Dos and Don'ts of Producing a Reading

As a member of PRO, you're automatically registered for the Monthly Webinar! To sign up for other seminars or events, visit www.theproducerperspective.com.



PRO SOCIAL AT HURLEY'S • APRIL 6 • 6 PM

Writing Can Be Lonely. But It Doesn't Have To Be.



We've all been there.

Staring at a blank screen. Trying to tap into the energy and emotion it takes to write something...anything.

And even if your fingers start tapping on that keyboard, what's it all for? When does your show get seen? How do you even know if it's any good?

That's about the time I switch my screens to email, CNN, or Playbill.com and start reading about other people's success with their writing.

One of the ways to break out of the lonely prison that writing can be is to surround

yourself with other writers.

If any of the above sounds like a problem you've faced at one point in your career, then here's what I want you to do.

1. Email 10 writers you know. (Don't know 10? Check out all the writers in the Writer's Database in PRO!)
2. Tell these writers you're forming a "Writers Club" that will meet once a month/week/however often you think you can get people to commit.
3. Get 5 of them to commit and pick a time/place for the first meeting (that's 6 total including you).

4. Tell everyone they need to bring one scene/song/poem/commercial/anything for the "Club" to read out loud. And it needs to be less than 10 minutes long.

5. At the meeting, read everyone's stuff (with the other writers reading the parts). And talk about it. There should be enough time for everyone to get 15 minutes.

6. Repeat each week/month/however often you can.

A Writers Club is a simple way to get you on a path to success in this lonely creative profession because . . .

1. You'll have a deadline. You will have to write something for each week. You have homework. And just the accountability to the group will force you to write.

2. You'll get better. The more you write, the better you get. Period. And you'll get feedback from your peers, and there ain't much better feedback than that.

3. You'll meet people. Not only will you realize that you're not alone in your creative pursuit, but you'll meet people who may be able to help you. EVERY industry is all about who you know, so the more people you know, the better your chances of success.

Form your own Writers Club today.

Because if you don't, we're going to create one for you.

In fact, yeah. We're going to do that. Stay tuned, PROs, because you'll have first access.

OVERHEARD IN SHUBERT ALLEY

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

The Cher musical, produced by Jeffrey Seller of *Hamilton* fame (ever heard of it?), is being fast tracked to Broadway and may be on the boards in less than a year.

...

The Sutton Foster-led *Sweet Charity* is in talks to play the Hudson Theatre in the fall after *1984*. It'll be the second musical in the intimate theater. Expect more to follow.

...

There's a new ad agency in town! And it's being funded by some serious heavy hitters. Expect *Hamilton* to depart its current agency and set up at the new shop founded by some former members of SpotCo.

Got a rumor? Send 'em to me at ken@theproducersperspective.com.



“Remove the word ‘fair’ from your vocabulary.”

~Steve Tisch
American film producer and businessman

MARKETING FOR PROS

A Tagline That Does Double Duty

Let’s play a game. What happens when you read the following . . .

“Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way.”

Or what about . . .

“Somewhere . . . over the rainbow, way up high . . .”

Or how about this . . .

“Let the memory . . . live again.”

I challenge you to NOT sing the melody to those tunes as you read those lyrics.

And when those melodies do their job, and worm their way into your ears, your marketing message lasts longer. If you can get your target singing or humming along with your music AFTER seeing your marketing message (especially one that doesn’t have ANY musical component - like print), then they are more likely to want to see your show.

That’s why lyrics make great tag lines for musicals.

Lyrics as a tag line can do double duty. They can explain the story, suggest mystery, etc., and they can also trigger another, deeper, impression. The music!

And since music is one of the most important reasons why people see musicals (duh!), this is one of the best impressions a marketing message can make.

Obviously this is hard to do with new musicals, but super easy with revivals.

But if you have a new show, and you know you’ve got an earworm in it, then start putting that music out now along with a corresponding lyric in the advertising message.

You just might be able to get two impressions for the price of one.

CURRENT HAPPENINGS AT DAVENPORT THEATRICAL

I’ve got two shows currently running on Broadway.

The Play That Goes Wrong

Began previews on March 9 and officially opened on April 2.

Groundhog Day

Began previews on March 16 with opening night scheduled for April 17.

...

Just announced:

I’m bringing *Once on this Island* back to Broadway in November 2017!

Theater, casting, and further details will be announced at a later date.

In the meantime, check out OnceOnThisIsland.com!

LAST MONTH AT THE BROADWAY BOX OFFICE

Here’s Something You Don’t See Everyday!

Wowza. I’ve been analyzing Broadway grosses for over two and a half decades, and I’ve never seen the jump in grosses we saw this month over last year. Grosses were up in the double digits!

There’s no question that Broadway is feeling healthier than ever, with gobs of people in Times Square over the past four weeks (hello Spring Breakers!). But part of the double digit growth is due to Broadway continuing to master variable pricing. I’m hearing more and more groups are putting together teams of analysts to constantly monitor how to squeeze every dime out of every last ticket. That’s how shows like *Hello, Dolly!* can gross over \$2mm on only seven performances.

It’s also why the grosses may be up over 12%, but attendance is up only 2%. But hey, up is up, and I’ll take it.

Not long left in the Broadway season... but it looks like it’s going to be another record breaker.

**MARCH 2016
BROADWAY GROSS
\$132,446,164.50**

...

**MARCH 2017
BROADWAY GROSS
\$148,415,109.34**

Increase/Decrease: +12.06%

...

**MARCH 2016
BROADWAY ATTENDANCE
1,325,645**

...

**MARCH 2017
BROADWAY ATTENDANCE
1,353,038**

Increase/Decrease: +2.07%

...

Get the weekly grosses by subscribing to my blog.

Official Offering Documents? Or Kickstarter?

Many of my clients looking to get their shows up in New York City come to me with questions about “Kickstarting” their production, especially since I crowdfunded my Broadway revival of *Godspell* in 2011.

While Kickstarter, Indiegogo, and the many other crowdfunding platforms are terrific ways to allow people from all over the world to easily and quickly donate money to your production, don't get seduced into thinking that you'll be able to crowdfund any amount of money.

In fact, Kickstarter itself will tell you...

“Most successfully funded projects raise less than \$10,000.”

Since even most Equity showcase productions in New York City cost more than that, immediately you can see that using Kickstarter or similar crowdfunding platforms is going to be very difficult if you're trying to raise \$100,000 or \$1,000,000.

That's why people looking to do mini Off Broadway productions or full Off Broadway productions usually use official offering documents (or front money or development agreements for the smaller amounts) in



order to raise their funds.

But does that mean you should abandon the crowdfunding all together?

Maybe not.

I've been advocating Kickstarter or Indiegogo as a tip jar concept of raising money for smaller productions.

In other words, you don't have to choose one or the other. Use both!

Some of your prospects won't qualify for your official investment paperwork, whether

that's because they are not an “Accredited Investor” or because they aren't prepared to invest the minimum you need.

But maybe they'd give you \$500 ... or \$100.

So should you turn them away? No. When they turn you down for your official ask, that's when you can turn them to your crowdfunding campaign, so you at least get something out of them (and this is a donation).

This way, every investor has a chance to support your production.

ON THE PODCAST

The Producer's Perspective Podcast has become a veritable who's who of Broadway insiders. As a member of PRO, you're the first to know who's coming up:

- Scott Ellis – 7 time Tony-Nominated Director & Associate Artistic Director of Roundabout Theatre Company

ON THE BLOG

Just in case you missed it, here were the top read articles on the blog last month:

- 5 Things I Learned from The Billy Joel Show at MSG
- A DIY Home Remedy for Focus Groups
- 10 Takeaways from Last Night's Town Hall

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

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UPDATES FROM PROS

Patrice Cassedy

just completed a reading of her play, *Detroit Blues*, in NYC.

Dan Manjovi's

show, *I Am, I Will, I Do* was accepted to the New York Musical Festival!

Director

Justin Baldrige

was hired to direct a NYMF show this summer, written by two other PROs!

Lyricist/Book Writer

Margaret Rose's

new musical, *The Donner Party*, will have its world premiere at Sacramento Theatre Company on April 22 and runs through May 14.

Got a project update? Email me at ken@theproducersperspective.com