



FILE 02 · THE TOOLS

Casting Platforms & Submission Networks.

What every NYC actor needs to know about Actors Access, Casting Networks, Backstage, Playbill, and the rest.

NEPA·PRO TALENT

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Pick the right platforms. Use them well.

There are roughly six platforms that matter in New York. You don't need all six. You need the right two or three for the work you're actually pursuing — and the discipline to submit on them daily.

THE BIG SIX

Actors Access

actorsaccess.com · Run by Breakdown Services · Free profile, paid submissions

The single most important platform for film and TV in the U.S. Casting directors post breakdowns directly here, and a huge percentage of New York film/TV submissions flow through it. The free profile lets you build a page; paid submissions cost a small fee per project (or buy in bulk). Showfax, the sides-distribution site, lives in the same ecosystem and is where you'll actually download audition material once you're selected.

Strategy: upload three to five high-quality photos, write a clean resume, get your reel up. Submit daily. Don't pay for premium until your materials are professional.

Casting Networks

castingnetworks.com · Originally LA Casting · Subscription tiers

The dominant platform for commercials, print, and a lot of branded content. Many NYC commercial casting offices live here. The subscription model means every active actor in town pays for it; miss it and you miss commercial work.

Strategy: commercial-focused photos perform very differently from theatrical headshots — warmer, more direct eye contact, often more lifestyle-oriented. Update seasonally.

Backstage

backstage.com · Long-running trade publication · Subscription tiers

Excellent for non-union, student film, indie, and theater work. Wider net than Actors Access, lower average pay-rate, but invaluable when you're building credits. Their editorial side (articles, advice columns) is also genuinely useful.

Strategy: use it actively for student films and indie shorts to build reel material. Cancel and rejoin seasonally to manage cost.

Playbill

playbill.com/jobs · The trade for theater · Free to view, free to submit

If theater is your focus, this is non-negotiable. Equity calls, regional theater seasons, summer stock, Off- and Off-Off-Broadway, cruise lines, theme parks — they all post here. The job board is free.

Strategy: sort by date, check daily, submit by mail or email per the listing instructions. Theater submissions still very often want a physical headshot/resume in some cases — read carefully.

NYCastings / DirectSubmit

nycastings.com · NYC-focused · Subscription model

Smaller than the giants but locally focused on New York work, including a lot of student film, indie, web series, and lower-budget commercial. Worth a look, especially when you're newer.

Project Casting

projectcasting.com · Aggregator-style · Free + paid tiers

Aggregates open casting calls from many sources. Heavy on background and extras work but useful for finding non-traditional opportunities. Verify any listing carefully — quality varies.

BACKGROUND & EXTRAS-SPECIFIC

Central Casting

centralcasting.com · The standard for background work in NY/LA · Free registration

If you're open to background work — which can pay decently and sometimes leads to upgrades — register here. New York has its own NY office and registration process. Check current registration days before going.

Grant Wilfley Casting (GWCNYC)

gwcny.com · Major NYC background casting office

One of the largest background casting offices in New York. Handles a lot of NYC-shot television and film. Maintain your file with current photos and accurate measurements.

VOICE-OVER PLATFORMS

Voices.com

voices.com · Largest VO marketplace · Subscription tiers

The biggest pay-to-play VO marketplace. You'll need a clean home setup and a small library of demos. Bidding wars can drive rates down, but volume is real.

Voice123

voice123.com · Pay-to-play · Subscription tiers

Smaller than Voices but with better customer service and often higher-quality projects. Run both if VO is your primary focus.

WHAT TO SPEND ON

If you're budgeting hard: prioritize Actors Access (theatrical/film/TV) and Casting Networks (commercial). Add Backstage when you're building credits. Playbill is free. Most actors do not need every paid platform every month — rotate based on what you're chasing.

Common mistake: paying for premium subscriptions before your headshots, resume, and reel are professional. The platform amplifies your materials — it doesn't fix them. Spend on materials first.

RED FLAGS

If a casting platform asks you to pay to be considered for a specific role — that’s a scam. Real casting directors don’t charge you to audition. Pay-to-submit fees on legitimate platforms (Actors Access charges around a couple dollars per submission) are different from “pay \$200 to be guaranteed an audition” pitches.

Other red flags: requests for upfront fees from “agents” or “managers” (legitimate reps work on commission only); “modeling agencies” that require expensive in-house photography; “showcases” charging four-figure fees with vague promises of industry attendance. Walk away.