

SITE REVIEWS

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SPECIAL FEATURE

Casting Call

Launch your career as a star—from the Internet.

By Tamar Maor

Is a life of fame and fortune your ideal dream? If you answered yes, take your first step towards that Malibu mansion by starting your career online. Many casting agents are turning to online star searches and many web sites are hosting online talent competitions.

Ed "You could have already won \$10 million" McMahon is administering an online talent contest called Next Big Star (nextbigstar.com). All you have to do is send in an application (along with a video) to one of the 10 categories and wait for your performance to appear online. Visitors to the site vote on their favorite contestant, who advances into the next round of the competition. If you win you get public exposure through the site and there are also prizes in each category.

If you don't have any talent, but you have excess money, why not buy yourself a role in a Hollywood film? Head over to Who Wants To Be A Movie Star (whowantstobeamoviestar.com), where you can bid on a lead, supporting, or five-and-under role in the film. Once they have selected the cast, industry professionals will write a screenplay that will conform to the personalities of the winners. MP3.com (mp3.com/moviestar.com) is sponsoring the musical aspect of the movie and is also looking for musicians, although for this you actually need skill. Enter their contest by registering and creating an artist page on MP3.com. Six contests will be held, each with different song style specifics. The winner is selected by a music supervisor, given \$10,000 and featured on the film's soundtrack.

Once you enter your music into the MP3.com contest, you might as well submit your music to Dreamworks Records (dreamworksdigital.com) through an easy four-step process. Fill out an artist profile, accept their agreement, upload an MP3 track and wait for Dreamworks to come knocking at your door with a contract and a bottle of champagne.

If you still haven't started picking out the color scheme for that Malibu home, try your luck at open casting calls.

Aspiring Film Star (aspiringfilmstar.com) has a list of filmmakers interested in casting with a list of all their available roles. You send in a resume and wait for them to call you. Often they have open casting calls, which just specify a date, time and location for everyone to show up and try their best at acting. If you are a talented actor, this is an incredible opportunity to find out about major roles available.

Another easy opportunity to get in a movie is by being an extra. Generally you have to register with a company and pay a small fee. The casting agents will then try their best to get you as many roles as you request. Two good sites for registering are Film Extras Coalition (moviex.com/extras), for a \$10 fee, or Entertainment Partners (ep-services.com/htmls/cenex.htm), which has a \$20 fee.

Ready to star in your first motion pic? Remember there are downsides to fame. You are exorbitantly wealthy, never wait in line and spend your life vacationing in the south of France. OK, so I lied, there are no bad sides. Best of luck, and remember to leave your pool-house empty for poor, wandering journalists. •



SPORTS

NCAA Football ncaafootball.net

You're convinced that Florida State will fall to Virginia Tech this year. Keep track of the AP rankings, check out how your hometown team is doing and test your NCAA football knowledge here. There are top news stories about college teams and even a list of what games will be on the radio each week. Divisions I, II and III are all represented. *EDionne*

Content: A Usability: B+

I&I Sports iisports.com

Are you a weekend paintball warrior or into martial arts? If either of these are your games then you know how hard it is to find quality products for these sports. Offering top customer service and catering to customer satisfaction, I&I Sports has been providing consumers with quality paintball and martial arts merchandise for over ten years. Their Internet site provides pictures of each product to help dispel the mystery that online shopping often creates. Providing no content other than their retail pages makes the site utilitarian; however, it is a worthwhile stop for paintball and martial arts enthusiasts.

MDougherty

Content: A- Usability: B



STUDY

Harcourt harcourt.com

With thousands of pages to read, tons of papers to write and exams comparable to the SAT nearly every week, college can be as strenuous as obstacle courses in basic training. No student can do it alone. It's a good thing Harcourt.com is here to help you. With explanations of basic lessons necessary for success, any time spent at this site will immediately pay dividends. Only one problem remains: tell the rest of your group about Harcourt or keep the secret of your success under wraps. *JLowenthal*

Content: A- Usability: B