

Voicing Commercials – Part 1

Class Notes

vo2gogo.com
presents
Voicing Commercials – Part 1
Created by David H. Lawrence XVII

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This is an Art class.
It's all about the storytelling.

Art
The skill of **storytelling**. How to voice commercials, animation and narration, it's where almost all other voice over classes stop.

Commerce
The **business** of the business. How to attract customers, how to show them your work, how to fill their needs, and how to grow your services and build your firm.

Science
The **technology tools and digital skills** needed to create and deliver your voice over projects. The science is always changing.

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HERE ARE CATEGORIES OF ANIMATION AND VOICING THE VIDEO.

Also, make sure to click here to download your clip selection and class notes and save them somewhere convenient on your hard drive.

Be patient. It may take a moment for the video to appear. And be sure to go full

Be sure to download your clips and notes.

They are right above the video for this lesson on the VO2GoGo site: click on the link, download the zip file, and unzip to get the two PDFs.

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Class Notes

Here's the plan for class.

- Introduction**
Voicing Commercials: why voicing commercials well is so vital to your VO career.
- Lesson 01**
Scripts, characters and reality. How to deal with all three.
- Lesson 02**
The important items in every piece of copy, and our little secret.
- Lesson 03**
Execution skills: slating, enunciation, pace, energy and pitch.
- 3 Or More Things To Explore**
Your homework and other actionable items.
- Questions and Answers**
Save your questions until the end, then fire away.

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Introduction
Why voicing commercials well is so vital to your VO career.

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Commercial copy is the bedrock foundation of all VO.
Here are three reasons why you need to absolutely excel at it.

- ✓ Commercials used to be all anyone cared about:**
There were no other demos than your "demo reel" - which was only created with sample commercials.
- ✓ Commercial copyreading skills inform all the others:**
What you learn as a commercial story teller will be extremely useful as you learn other categories of VO.
- ✓ Commercials are the most common type of work available:**
More commercials are cast and produced every day across the country than any other type of work.

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Lesson 01
Scripts, characters and reality. How to deal with all three.

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BREAKDOWN: male or female, looking for a voice that is a storyteller. An actor or actress who can perform the script. Not read it. We have a musical bed that is filled with playfulness and whimsy. We have a script that poetically written with a rhythm and cadence. Our words are about "damage". We are looking for a voice that has some gravitas to it. A sage. The weight of their voice will provide the perfect contrast to the music.

Glossary: Breakdown

The description of the character you are to audition for, and the approach, if any, the casting entity wants to hear you perform.

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AVQ: New Super Professional Coconut Oil Infusion. With pure and natural coconut oil, it visibly repairs 2 years of damage, starting every hair day, a beautiful one.

AVQ ALT: New Super Professional Coconut Oil Infusion. With pure and natural coconut oil, it visibly repairs 2 years of damage. For beautiful hair, every day.

AVQ SUPER: Super Professional. Works as well as salon brands.

Glossary: Copy

The content of the script you'll be performing.
Also, the physical pages of the script.

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LEGAL: Not all applicants will qualify. JD Power ratings based on Q4 surveys of qualified Toyota customers. See dealer for details. Offer ends this Sunday.

Glossary: Tag

A quick, usually legally required bit of copy, spoken as efficiently as possible, almost always voiced at the very end of a spot.

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Analyzing the breakdown and the copy
5 steps for maximizing your chances at a great read and a great submission.

Ignore the Breakdown
Just don't read the copy and see how the words speak to you.

No mumbling
Read out loud. Had a sixth grader reading a book report.

Read the Breakdown
See if there are any glaring inconsistencies between your read and what they say they want.

Watch for conflicts
Sometimes, the direction you'll get will be confusing, "edgy, but reliable."

Yours and theirs
Do one take your way. Then, if really, really needed, one take their way.

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Creating Your Character
Hearing the perfect voice in your head, and allowing it to come out.

Commercials are like sitcoms
Faster is funnier. Be understood, even at an accelerated pace. Tell your story lean and clean.

Fall in love with the product
Remember, this is your guy. Become the brand's biggest and most vocal cheerleader.

Call on sense memory
Remember similar situations and feel them in your bones.

Act as if...
...as if you were there, experiencing what your character is, right now.

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Being an announcer versus being real.
Be as natural as the copy and the producer each call for.

Don't be too loud
You're not speaking to a crowd.

Use your body
The microphone will pick up the subtleties.

Play, play, play
Explore new ways to have fun with your story.

Always tell stories, always sell feelings
100 percent of the time you're speaking.



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Lesson 02
The important items in every piece of copy, and our little secret.



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The 3 most important items in your copy. In order.
These are the things you need to put the Hollywood on. Let's use the BMW 325i sedan as an example.

The product or service
You need to say its name expertly, without over- or under-enunciating it.

The company name
Sometimes, the company IS the product: **International advertising**.

The slogan
Also called the positioning statement. Know its rhythm and melody.



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“ Who is your audience of one? ”



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“ Commercials were always **one to mary**, in front of a live studio audience. ”



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“ Arthur Godfrey changed everything by talking to an audience of one. ”



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Every commercial's secret and its reveal.
In a nutshell, the commercial secret-and-reveal.

- + **Every piece of copy has a secret, which you reveal during the spot.**
- + **Every audience member has a problem that they may or may not know they have.**
- + **Revealing the secret will solve the problem the audience member has.**

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The problem. The secret. The solution.
Revealing the secret is your job, in every commercial you'll record.

 <p>The listener's problem Your kids and husband are leaving the house with...dingy whites??</p>	 <p>Reveal the secret Tide has new bluing agents! Gets clothes whiter than white!</p>	 <p>The problem solved You're not a bad housewife. You're a good housewife!</p>
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Now, you know your job. Know your listener's job, too.
Your listener is trying to get something done. And it's really important to them.

- + **Every listener is trying to accomplish something. Call it their "job."**
- + **That job is not just functional – it's life-changing, socially and emotionally.**
- + **Revealing the secret will help the listener do that job well.**

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The four items to check off before you start to speak.
Each of the items connects to the others. Make sure they are aligned before you voice your spot.

Design your audience of one.
Be very specific. And serve their job and your secret.

Determine their "job."
How will doing that job change their lives?

Know the secret, and how it will help them.
The secret will help the listener accomplish something great.

Make sure the listener, job and secret are in alignment.
Don't just try to "read words well on the page."

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Lesson 03
Execution skills: slating, enunciation, pace, energy and pitch.

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Slating is your first impression.
Don't waste it.

- +** **Slate with a friendly smile.**
- +** **Only slate with absolutely necessary information. No selling.**
- +** **How do you slate character auditions? Slate "into" your character.**

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Enunciation.

How you enunciate will determine whether the listener believes you.



Enunciate appropriately
The copy will tell you all you need to know about the words you're delivering.



Formal vs. Familiar
The copy has attitude. Match it with your spoken attitude: colloquial, usually.



Special circumstances
Never over- or under-enunciate the product name, the company name or the slogan.

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Pace.

Be aware of these four concepts to manage your pace.



01 Overwritten spots
Usually local spots, they have 40 seconds of copy for a 30 second spot.

02 Break the tape
Voice your spot as if it was a 220, not a 100-yard dash. Keep your energy up through the end.

03 Take the air out
Make sure there's no space between your sentences and phrases, except for...

04 Beauty reads
Occasionally, you have the luxury of space to infuse more richness in the copy.

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Energy and pitch.

Let the words do the heavy lifting, and don't paint yourself into a corner.

Break the tape
Keep your energy consistent through and beyond the end of the copy. Never coast to the finish line.

Character rules
Informative. Slicker. Cheerleader. Mordant. Friendly. Let your character dictate your energy.



Respect the copy
The copy will dictate the energy with which you enunciate, as well as energy changes.

Leave yourself room
Don't start your performance at a pitch that leaves you no room to explore and adapt.

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3 Or More Things To Explore

Your homework and other actionable items.

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3 or more things to explore.

Next steps: take what you've learned, explore and learn more, then put that all to work.

- + Listen to commercials on radio and TV – don't touch that dial.
- + Identify the audience of one in each commercial you hear.
- + Design your own personal slate, maximizing "friendly and helpful."
- + Practice class copy, and observe your enunciation, energy and pitch.

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Questions

Fire away. Or send them to david@vo2gogo.com.

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