



# Casting for Video Games

Unraveling the Dark Art

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# Overview

- Introductions
- An Overview on Casting
- Identifying Key Characters
- Writing Sides
- Auditions
- Review and Selection
- Q&A

# Introduction

- Founder at Brightskull
  - Narrative and Audio Production Services
- Past: Bioshock 2, Minerva's Den, The Vanishing of Ethan Carter, ... and a few others
- Currently: Tacoma, Masquerada, Overdrive, ...  
And a few others
- Dad, Musician, Magician, Motorcycle Builder

# Why Cast?

- Opens a wide pool of candidates
- Demo reels are not auditions
- Requires developers to make decisions

# Identifying Key Characters

- Leads                      Featured through entire game
- Supporting                Recurs through entire game in significant chunks
- Featured Minor            Is featured in a small portion of the game
- Unique Minor              Requires specific trait (accent, singing, language, children)
- Minor                        Only has a handful of lines in one small part of the game
- Extras                        Background/Environmental/Walla and Extra Canon Fodder

# Casting Sides: Key Information

- Project Title
- Character Art (most times)
- Character Name
- Project Genre and Setting
- Character's Physical Traits
- Character's Vocal Traits
- Character Bio

## Project Title: Space Run

**Character Name:** Brown Beard

**Setting:** A sci-fi tower defense game set in the far future. The story centers on intergalactic freight ships and their crews competing for clients, fighting off pirates, and delivering payloads.

**Physical:** Male. Early 40's.

**Voice:** Traditional Pirate Accent. Rough. Gravelly. Dirty.

**Background:** Brown Beard is a techno-pirate who travels through space and pillages unsuspecting cargo ships. He is not the most effective pirate, but he still creates havoc and problems wherever he may be.



BROWN BEARD

Avast ye Matey. This be Brown Beard the pirate. You will surrender your cargo to me or suffer the consequences.

BUCK

(sarcastic)

Brown Beard?

BROWN BEARD

Blimy! It's 2525. All the good pirate names be trademarked.

BUCK

(sarcastic)

Sure thing Brown Nee?

# Casting Sides: Vocal Qualities

- Clean/Friendly/Chipper
- Young
- Old
- Vocal Fry
- Burnt/Dark/Harsh/Gravel
- Booming/Deep/Resonant
- "Trailer"/"Radio"
- Natural/Conversational
  
- Direct Comparative
- Soft Comparative

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Sure thing Brown Beard?

# Casting Sides: Sample Lines

- “Key” lines
- Range of emotions
- Range of projections
- Combat Barks
- Singing or other unique skills
- Ordered by importance/relevance
- At least one “meaty” line

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# Casting Sides: Some Advice

- Know your audience
- Be succinct
- Sides are tools, not products
- Rename game-specific terms
- One page

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# Assignment: World Synopsis

- Project Title
- Genre
- Setting

# Assignment: Character Synopsis

- Character Art (most times)
  - Character Name
  - Character's Physical Traits
  - Character's Vocal Traits
  - Character Bio
- 
- Mark your side with the letter that matches the character you are writing for.

A



B



C



D



# Assignment: Sample Lines

- “Key” lines
- Range of emotions
- Range of projections
- Combat Barks
- Ordered by importance/relevance

A



B



C



D



# Auditions, Review, and Selections

- Trade papers with another group
- “Actors” audition for each character
- “Casting Directors” decide on a casting
- “Developers” approve/deny

A



B



C

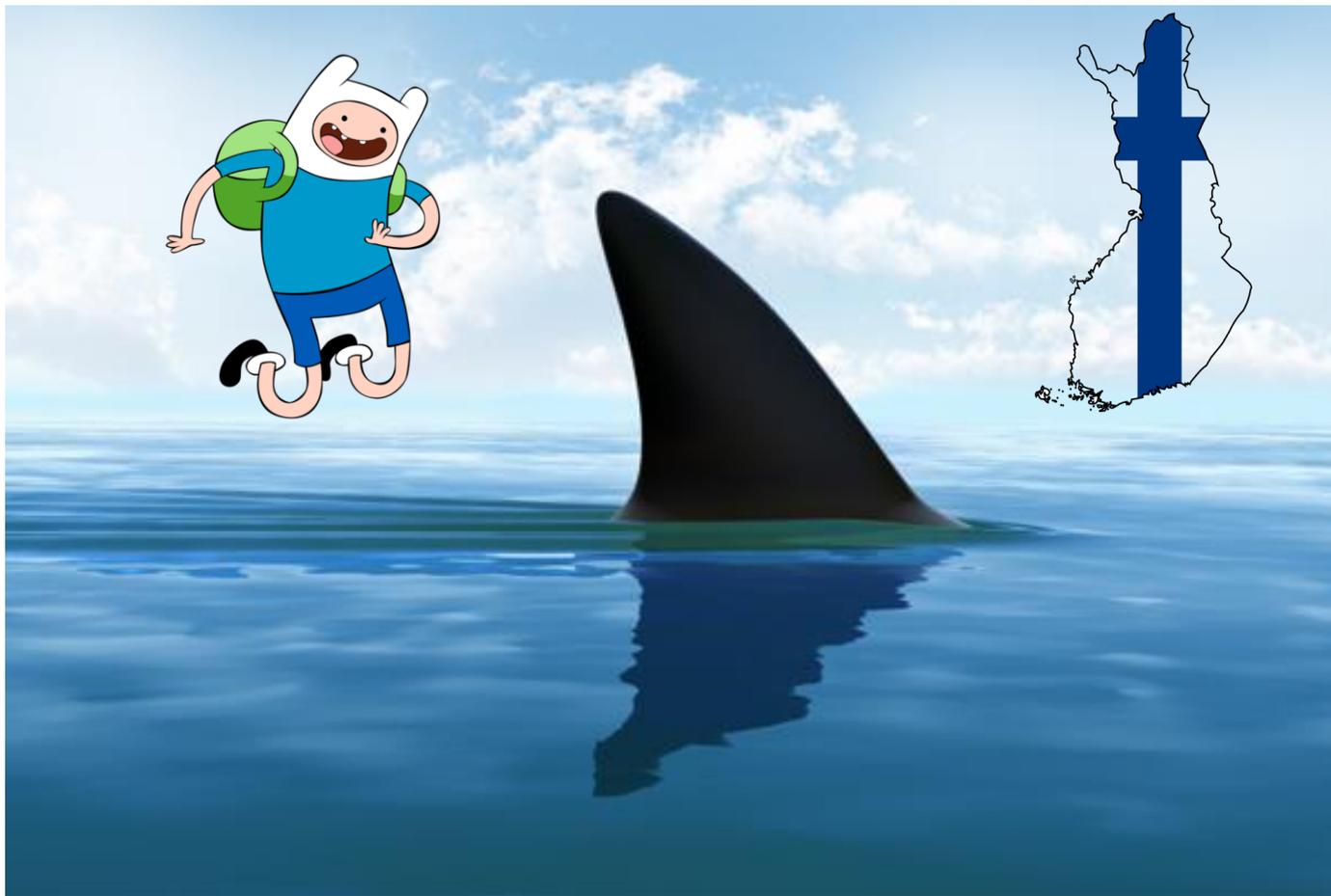


D



# Auditions in the Real World

- Actors have a regimen for auditioning
  - Daily, weekly, etc..
- Yours is not the only side
- Many actors audition at the agency
  - Recording booth
  - Engineer/Director
- A callback is acceptable
- Remember that nobody is getting paid to audition
- Realistic Expectations
  - Narrow vs Shotgun Agencies
  - Union – 50-100 per side
  - Non-Union – 20-50 per side
- Be aware of major events



# Q & A

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