



Actor Resume Basics

Beginning Your Actor Marketing Journey

Written by Gwyn LaRee



Welcome to your first steps in building your profession as a Performer/Actor. You have probably heard many professional actors call what we do a “Craft” and that is very true. There is always more to learn about ourselves, our characters and how to best share our stories with the world. A very important part of that is making sure that casting directors, directors and producers know that we are available to make their project insightful and compelling. Our first step to doing that is presenting a professional resume.

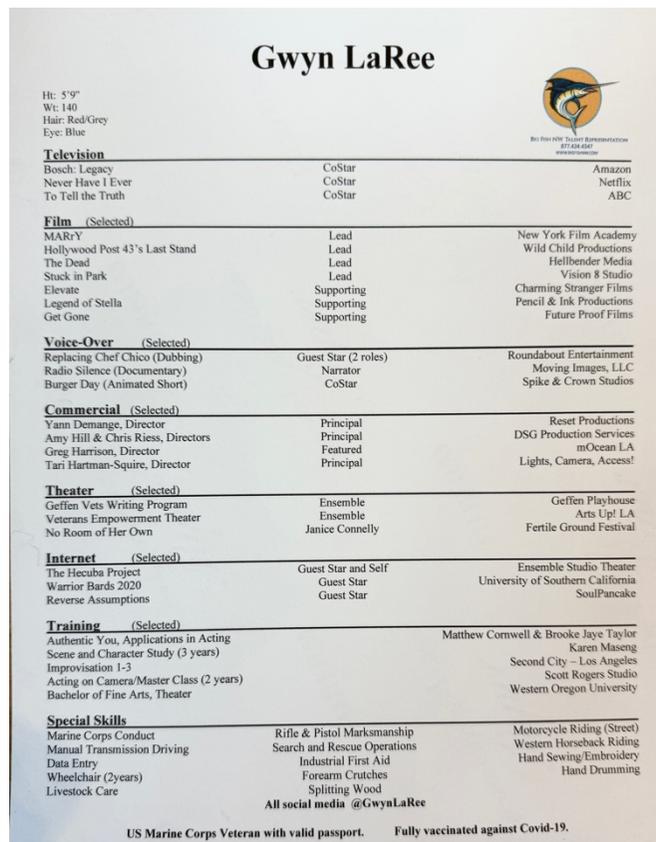
I have been a professional actor for the past 13 years in both Los Angeles and the greater Portland, OR area. As such, I have learned an awful lot about what Casting Directors and Producers are looking for when we send them our marketing materials. As actors, we have to create our own “brand” to sharpen our competitive edge and distinguish us from others.

Yes, your resume, headshot, demo reel, YouTube channel (if you have one) and all of your profiles on the different casting platforms are **MARKETING** - so it's really important to get all of those as well put together as you possibly can. Plus, I can help you avoid the myriad of mistakes I made when I was first starting out.

“Casting platforms” are the websites that casting directors and production teams use to announce the roles that they are looking to fill. Those announcements are called “breakdowns” because they give the pertinent details of each character in a project and “breakdown” what production is looking for. Casting professionals pay a subscription fee for each of the casting platforms that they use in looking to fill roles and it is up to us, as performers, to make sure that we are giving them the most up to date information possible there. We will talk a lot more about this later on.

Resumes:

The most important thing for your actor resume is that it is really easy to read very quickly and absolutely factual. If a casting professional is interested in what your resume offers, the first thing they will do is go to their IMDb Pro (Internet Movie Database) account and make sure that at least the majority of the information matches. If it doesn't, your resume will be trashed, you will not be considered and they may be hesitant to give you another chance. What is most important is that your authenticity shines, so don't try to “pad up” your resume - stay honest, even if you are just starting out.



This is one of my old resumes for your consideration as an example of the proper professional format. As actors, we have a different kind of resume than other professions. Our resumes show who is our talent agent (also known as “representation”, if we have them) and the several different areas in which we have worked. If you are not represented by a talent agent or manager yet, you may put a small photo of yourself in that area.

Most of my areas are marked "selected" because I have a lot of other credits available but I only list my strongest credits on this one page. Once you start working as an actor, you too can list “selected” - meaning you have more work that is not shown on your resume as you build your acting credits with different projects. You will also notice that the projects are not listed by date - but instead by the most recognizable title and then by the strength of the role. None of the extra/background work I have done gets to be listed on any resume, it doesn't count as far as productions are concerned.

For each project you list on either your resume or the casting platforms (explain what this is) you will need to know:

- 1) the title,
- 2) level of role you played (examples below), the
- 3) director's name and
- 4) the actual production company that hired you.

We don't list where the project is available for viewing. For the resume, you will list whichever has the best name recognition between the director or the production company.

Television roles are always: Lead, Series Regular, Recurring, Guest Star or Co-Star or (in some very specific circumstances) Self.

Film is usually only Lead or Supporting but I have been seeing Principal as a role description in recent breakdowns. The best bet is to follow how the Production company lists your role.

Commercials are only Principal or Featured.

Commercials are a bit strange in that we **never** want to advertise what products we have already shot for as that can keep us from booking other commercials. If you are invited to audition for a commercial the production company will ask either you or your agent for a list of your "conflicts". That list is the actual products that you have filmed commercials for within a certain period of time. That amount of time changes so to avoid any confusion we don't list products. If you filmed a Pepsi commercial ten years ago, you don't want that listed on your resume as Coca-Cola then will not consider you even though it was so long ago.

Because of this in the last couple of years it has become more acceptable to put the Director's name where we would normally put a title (this is also the only place that you have to indicate that it is the director) and the Production company in the 3rd column.

On my resume, you might notice that the 3rd commercial listed I was only Featured instead of being a Principal but I still list it above the Lights! Camera! Access! commercial. That commercial, directed by Greg Harrison, was widely shown for JESSICA JONES which was more widely seen than the one for ADA31. Plus, I have an error here. The ADA31 promotion was actually produced by ADA Lead On Productions and I need to list Danny Woodburn as the director instead of Tari Hartman Squire as Danny's name is the more recognizable of the two.

Theater always lists the character that you played and "Ensemble" is used if you play more than one.

Internet projects use the same role categories as television.

Training is usually just the class name and the instructor though you may add location if there are several for that school (Second City has schools across the US) or the location gives some other sort of weight. You can also list Lights! Camera! Access! after you receive your Certificate of Completion when the cohort ends.

Be creative with your Special Skills! Something you take for granted could be considered incredibly unique when compared against other actors competing for a role. Can you ride a unicycle? Play the bagpipes? Handle sheep? Those are all special experiences that YOU can bring that others cannot.

The major difference between your one page resume and your casting profiles is that you will list almost all of your credits on your profile. You can absolutely let ones that you don't

particularly care for "go away" as you gain stronger credits so there is no rule saying that you must list everything. Still, this listing is your chance to shine and give casting a feel for the amount of time and effort you have put into making this your career. Don't sell yourself short.

Casting Profiles:

You will arrange your credits on your profiles much the same way as we do on the resume so be ready to type them all in as you set up your account. I tend to print out my Casting Frontier profile after each update to keep a record of what I have done. Casting Frontier actually lists all four fields so it's a great reference for all of those director and production names.

Your casting profile needs to be present on these platforms:

- 1) IMDb,
- 2) Actors Access,
- 3) Casting Networks, and
- 4) Casting Frontier.

There are a lot of other platforms available that you can list yourself on such as Backstage and Cast It plus platforms that will be just for your local area. Your agent or manager may also have a program on their website that functions much like a casting platform that you will need to keep updated as well.

If you are not working regularly there is no need to pay for premium profiles. Each of these platforms has a free subscription level and even if you are working with an agent/manager that is usually enough for them to submit you. They will let you know when it is time to move to a paid subscription so that you can post more photos/videos and submit to projects without an additional fee.

My links are:

IMDb: <https://www.imdb.me/gwynlaree>

Actors Access: <https://resumes.actorsaccess.com/GwynLaRee>

Casting Networks: <https://app.castingnetworks.com/talent/public-profile/gwyn-laree>

Casting Frontier: <https://talent.castingfrontier.com/gwyn-laree-1>

AgencyPro (through my agent): <https://bigfishnw.com/gwynl>

I keep these links available on my phone as well as in a file on my computer so that any time someone asks I can provide them very quickly and easily. I also have a copy of my resume with links to video clips imbedded in the project names and small versions of both my commercial and theatrical headshots in the same places. If I am asked to provide my "hs/r" which stands for headshot/resume, I can send the files within seconds which shows (again) that I am a professional who understands how important these things are.

You will want to make sure that your casting profiles are updated at least every 3 months or so.

Casting Directors see a different page than we do when they are using these systems and their page shows the last time you updated your profile. If you haven't updated your profile in the last 6 months they will assume that you are not active.

I tend to go in and change my weight by 5 pounds if I don't have any new credits or something else to change. Other things that you will be changing on these profiles include: any "bookouts" which are the days you are not available to work/audition; an updated copy of your one page resume on Casting Networks and many smaller sites; new awards either for yourself or a project that you worked on; changes in representation; new training completed, etc. Casting Directors will not see what you updated, only that you were there.

I use an excel spreadsheet (pictured below) to keep track of the profiles I have and can provide a copy to you if you would like to try that. The dates are when I logged in to that profile and you see a lot of notes on what needs to be entered where. The <R> means that the platform has a place for my most recent one page resume. All of the notes at the bottom are my list of the updates that are needed. When I have them entered I cross them off and mark the date. When the sheet is filled I keep it on file so that I know what was done. It is also proof for tax purposes of the ongoing work of a professional actor.

Finally the "Sizzle Reel" list is the clips that are included on my reel. I have them here so that if I am submitting on a platform that hosts several clips I remember which are included so I don't submit clips from that project again. All of the blacked out areas are my passwords.

The most important thing is to find a method that works for You and lets you know at a glance when you last updated.

I understand that this is a ton of information to throw at you all at once and it can be overwhelming. Understand, it took me 13 years to get to this point!

It is my deepest wish that these 5 pages will save you many hours as your career progresses.

Gwyn LaRee

Agency/Platform	Last Updated	Notes	Contact	Website
ish Agency Pro	10/16	Theatrical	gwynl	www.biedtraw.com/gwynl
Actors Access (no bookouts)	10/16		GLaRee	http://resumes.actorsaccess.com/GwynLaRee
Casting Network #249039182 <R>	10/16		GwynL	www.locasting.com/GwynLaRee
Central Artists #294939907 <R>	10/16			No Bookouts Awards
Big Fish NW #249395878 <R>	10/16			
Casting Frontier - i.d.a. 100833	10/16	10/14 10/14 10/14 10/14 10/14	no awards	bookouts 40 Res only 3/4/18
Casting Frontier - Big Fish #663574	10/16	10/18 10/18 10/18 10/18 10/18	GLaRee	salendrum@ 4/18/18
Cast It Talent (no bookouts) <R>	10/16	10/16 10/16 10/16 10/16 10/16	GwynL	www.castitalent.com/GwynLaRee
Casting Workbook <R>	10/16	10/16 10/16 10/16 10/16 10/16		www.castingworkbook.com
General Theatrical Resume	10/18	Deleted		
Big Fish NW Resume	10/18	Deleted		
Miscellaneous Sites				
IMDb Pro #1771162 (no bookouts)	10/16			www.imdb.com/name/nm1771162
SAG-WIRA #6610066 (no bookouts)	10/16		GwynLaRee	www.sagwira.org/actor/GwynLaRee
Blacklist Voice Actors	10/16			
Casting Manager <R>	10/16		GwynL	Theater only
SAG Foundation	GwynLaRee			ZOOM GwynL #61351644
Breitbart	salendrum@			Facebook GwynL
Performer Tack	GwynL			Twitter GwynL
VME	GwynL			Instagram GwynLaRee
VME Connect	GwynL			YouTube GwynL
W8 Transfer	GwynL			Vimeo GwynL
CastIt	GwynL			Dropbox salendrum@
Casting About	GLaRee			Skype salendrum@
LinkedIn	GwynL			Microsoft salendrum@
Netflix	salendrum@			TikTok GwynL
AmazonPrime	salendrum@			746466 # 746466
Hulu	salendrum@			Disney+ salendrum@

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 Willamini Post 483
 Warner Bros 2018 Internet
 canba → Ingrid
 Hanna Gray → Internet
 Add updated Resumes
 1-18-18 after ADA

*Drop Central Artists
 10-18-18
 My 4th Resumes
 4/16-29
 5/16-2
 Post 4/18
 Hobbies/Member
 Central Artists
 Resumes*

*Book Out
 3/18, 3/13
 4/16-29
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*Book 4/3
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*Sizzle Reel
 Never Have I Ever
 Deep Wounds
 Legend of S:t. M
 Struck in Park*

*4/18
 Add First Book
 R 11 Bookouts
 update Visa*

Last Updated: 10/18/23