

Hey Folks!

Here are some more questions and answers...

I am in the polishing stage of my first screenplay and its 120 pages. From what I've been reading, screenplays are now around 90-110 pages. Do you think my screenplay would be considered over written in today's market?

That depends. I once read a screenplay that was sort of a post-apocalyptic Tarzan.

Tarzan never spoke. Not really.

So there was no dialog. Just action.

Lots of action. Every flip, roll, tumble, stretch, breath etc.

It was BRUTAL and boring.

THAT is overwritten.

So my question to you is...what are you writing? If it's a romantic comedy? Yeah, it's probably overwritten.

Is it a buddy comedy or a stoner comedy? Probably, yes.

Is it a World War II epic? Maybe not.

As a first time writer, you really want to keep it short and sweet. Save the 120 pager for when you're established.

Loved your article in Mr. Acuna's newsletter! Question: One of my projects is a musical for film. When pitching; is it necessary to have the full book recorded (16-20 tunes) or are 4-6 tunes acceptable to illustrate the plot twists? Also, any suggestions who might be looking for these types of projects? The charts will be complete.

Thanks Manny!

Vicki

Vicki, you win the award for the most talked about question in the office. I had to confess, I didn't know the answer, so I asked some colleagues your question and a heated debate ensued.

This isn't going to be a direct answer to your question, but here's what came from our discussion.

First off, the last original musical was Moulin Rouge. The only other one we could come up with was South Park, but that movie had the backing of the show, so we didn't count that as an original musical.

The point is...you have to shelve the original musical idea. Keep it as your passion project. Something that you get a director excited about and wants to make your film. It doesn't matter how many songs you have finished, no one wants to do an original musical.

We came up with two musicals in the last year: Nine and Burlesque. Nine was based on a Broadway play and Burlesque was a "musical" about a stage performer, which we didn't count as a real musical.

If you want success, I'd try writing the play, get it in theatres and then write the script based on the play.

Otherwise, move on.

I really enjoy your column and although I don't have a specific question right now, I surely will in the near future. I'm an unsold/unproduced writer in LA, but I have a manager and a free option on a script that a producer is trying to get going (he's attached a director and A List actor). My questions will probably fall under the business of screenwriting and navigating the process, if that's okay?

Best,

Casey Costello

Dear Casey,

You must have me confused with someone else. Seeing how my column directly tackles such subjects as: Twilight, The art of the 69, Whip Its, economic raping, the Magna Carta and whether or not Spray Cheese is a food group...why would think questions about screenwriting and the navigating process would be something I could handle, is beyond me.

Manny (a.k.a. Team Edward)

Thanks for the advice your articles in the BOSI newsletter have provided the last several months. I did have a question regarding the pitch festivals. Having attended a couple, my writing partner and I have had occasions when a company representative will ask for our one page synopsis and/or contact information. Sometimes we get a follow-up response, sometimes not. Does it just depend on the individual company, their needs and company protocol as to whether or not a response should be expected? Also, when will you be attending another pitch fest? We have a political thriller we'd love to pitch to you.

Keep up the good advice and we will continue to "write on"...

Stephen

Stephen, you kinda disappoint me. You allude that you've read my articles, yet ask a question I covered, specifically, a couple of columns ago. Sure we may ask you for a one sheet, but that doesn't mean shit. Go back and read.

Now on to the pitch:

Stephen here wasn't the only one to email me their next greatest script.

At first, I was a little pissed. Have you people not read what I write? Do you really think, that when I ask for questions and comments, that I wanted to be pitched? Are you asking to get verbally raped?

But...then I thought of an idea.

Here's what I propose: You like America's Next Top Model? Then I give you America's Next Top Pitch.

FOR LEARNING PURPOSES ONLY.

Send me your pitch and I will pick the top 5 pitches.

In this article, I will post said pitches.

All of the readers, via comments to me, will vote on which pitch they like best. I will then ask for the script and we'll pick it apart via the column.

Here's the upside. You'll get your pitches read by anyone and everyone that reads this column.

The "winner," so to speak, will get their script read by a Hollywood Gatekeeper.

If your pitch doesn't get chosen, it will still be read and maybe someone will like it.

And finally, you'll get FREE feedback on your script.

Here are the downsides:

Your script will be read by an industry professional.

As a learning experience, you will be putting your mistakes out there for others to learn from.

Unless you have the next greatest script, your script WILL NOT go further than this column. I'm not moving you forward, but if you want to pitch to someone with power, bring it.

Put your money where your mouth is.

Are you too chicken?

Send all of your pitches to weekendread@gmail.com and I will see you next week people.

Till then...