

Notes 1/13/2021

Eric Chung - Producer, Casting Agent, Director in Philadelphia

Eric admits that Zoom is new to him and that casting in person is easier. Lighting, sound, etc pre Covid was done ahead of auditions, and each audition had the same quality. Now, lighting and mic quality is especially important because it is done by individuals with different backgrounds and equipment.

Eric hires mainly lifestyle models. He recommends that headshots be done to the shoulder and have proper lighting. Models also submit head to toe photos, and Eric definitely wants to see head to toe photos. Because peoples looks change often, Eric also requests CURRENT headshots (slate headshot with the date).

Pre Covid, Eric did most of his casting through Heery Loftus with in person auditions. Now all auditions are via Zoom.

Eric produces a lot of casino commercials where actors are paired. He suggests that we tell our agents if we work well with someone and have the agent submit us together for lifestyle imagery and videos. He admits that it takes a lot of time and consideration to pair people. If any of us are interested in submitting with another, he will look at our photos. You may also submit your well-lit headshot, examples of print work, portfolio, resume, skills, media experience (with your strongest at the top), head to toe photo and reels to his email sprocketsystemcasting@gmail.com

Eric emphasized that our backdrop and lighting should be complimentary to what we are wearing. Grey is ok. We should look larger in the photo and make sure our faces are easily seen. **Your face is your live resume on Zoom!**

Energy and talent are extremely important to Eric. He looks for good energy in auditions and prefers model looking people who can act. He does not have time for character development, so good energy is important. "It is harder to bring energy up than down" according to Eric.

While on set, trying to get still photos and video are very different. As a producer when acting out live video, actors are interacting and looking at each other. Still photos need individual reactions. Actors/Models need to know their good side for the camera and must develop skills for both still photos and live video.

When it comes to wardrobe, Eric says to communicate and ask for specifics prior to the booking date. In general, wardrobe basics for actors or models should include jewel tones, solid colors, casual and not too shiny or sparkly, a variety of styles and colors and nothing too fancy. In his experience, he casts mostly models and production usually provides the wardrobe.

In Eric's opinion, production companies are all over the board when it comes to Covid compliance in relation to filming (he mentioned a Netflix show that just filmed in Philly had a 30 page regulatory guide). Commercials are not as strict however, everyone must take a Covid test and provide the negative result. Additionally, N95 masks must be worn, temperature is taken, PA's constantly sanitize surfaces, there is no craft service (bring your own), air filtration is brought to the site and everyone must sign a waiver. The cost of production has risen with the pandemic because of these prevention protocols and

liability. Insurance companies will not cover liability on the business side. Production was hoping for Congress to pass regulations, but for now there is little known. Small boutique companies do not have the deep pockets like studios and other. As a result, there is a big concern about Covid being traced back to production and their liability.

Eric urges us to be professional, on time and easy to work with while on set and throughout the booking. We must trust production and not question their choices because, there are usually good reasons for the choices made. Also, **morale is important so be flexible!** Leave a good impression and the chances of getting a copy of your finished work increase. Be gently persistent when asking for your tear sheet and be patient. The day before and day of a project many people are spread thin! Also, please keep in mind that agencies move on to their next project quickly, so they don't always have time or access to your specific material. All exposures are important, so you should leave a positive mark on the project. There will be different levels of appreciation on each set, so do **NOT** take things personally.

Relationships with different parts of production are subject to many variables. Eric wants everyone to do the best they can and have what they need on set. In many instances, not all people involved in the project know each other. There are a lot of moving parts, so be professional and do your job well. Come prepared!

Ad agencies used to bid out to production companies. Now production is in house. Production gives the ad agency the cost attached to the project. When production gets the green light, then Eric starts calling freelance crews and casting directors. He supervises casting and reaches out to talent agencies for auditions. Then Eric puts people on hold, creates a call sheet and irons out all of the details including catering, parking, transportation, etc. He troubleshoots and tries to solve problems before they hit. Most of the work currently booked is non-union.

Eric ends with, **"Success is dependent on your performance through all difficulties and is appreciated!"**