

## SMFA Targeting Commercial Reps

Please see page 165 (the chapter on **Agents and Managers**) in the 4th edition of *Self-Management for Actors: Getting Down to (Show) Business* for detailed instructions on how to make the most out of your commercial rep targeting plan of action.

Before digging in on the below, head back over to the *SMFA Hot Sheet* on targeting commercial casting directors, because it is the foundation on which the rest of this process is built.

Targeting talent agents is smart, of course, because agents are the most efficient shortcut to most commercial casting offices! Luckily, there are commercial agents who will sign you due to your look alone (unlike with theatrical agents, who generally need a lot more elements to line up before being "hell yes" about you).

It's not just about being with one of "the big commercial agencies"—although that's certainly helpful—if you're targeting commercials. Just like with theatrical rep targeting, if you can be with the commercial agency that is the direct line into the casting office for which your brand books regularly, there's nothing but good news flowing your way.

So, let's revisit our current AT&T pitch gal, Milana Vayntrub. (Again, see the *SMFA Hot Sheet* on targeting commercial casting directors for more information about her.) Now that we know her name thanks to iSpot.tv, we head over to IMDb-Pro and discover that, as of this printing, her commercial agency is Reign. In fact, she's currently their third top client (when listed by StarMeter ranking) of their 651 clients listed on IMDb. Should you target Reign? Depends! Do *allllllll* of the homework outlined in the Representation Targeting section of the chapter on **Agents and Managers** from the 4th edition of *Self-Management for Actors: Getting Down to (Show) Business* and then just keep in mind that you're looking at (usually) a less hands-on relationship, a more crowded roster, and a much more looks-based experience all the way around, when it comes to commercial representation.

Bonus! It's not as problematic to be on a roster "with your competition," commercially as it is in the theatrical world of representation. Especially if a high-end booker is on the roster and the buyer wants his or her type, but an actor who will work for scale, um, that could be you, if you're looking to book your first national!

What if you know a particular agency is one of the top commercial ones (say, KMR, for example). You can also study targeting in reverse by opening that agency's roster on IMDb-Pro, checking out their client list, and—let's say you decide to check out Allyn Rachel (Cricket Feet Showcase alumna and an actor who certainly shows up at the same auditions as Milana Vayntrub; this is not an accident, as trends go). You open her up because, on their client roster, you recognize her as a top commercial booker. You move from IMDb-Pro back over to iSpot.tv, where you can check out Allyn's latest ads and, you guessed it, details about the folks that populate those!

This is important because what you're calling your target agency may never get its clients booking on your target ads for your target brands. Meaning: So WHAT if they're considered a top commercial agency, if they're not the right fit for YOU and your targets?!? We're trying to drop breadcrumbs down a path to an eventual intersection between y'all. This is how we do it!

Talk about long-haul badassery! You're building your commercial show bible in a truly ninja way with these tactics. Targeting is *such* a multifaceted aspect of the commercial booking process. And certainly, you don't have to target, ever. You can walk around and hope to bump into the career of your dreams, whether theatrical or commercial or legit stage or voiceover or anything else! That's the cool part of this business: You really *can* just happen into the life of your dreams.

But why leave so much to chance? If you're the type who could really be a huge commercial booker, in addition to getting into classes so that you can nail your audition when you *do* get in the room, how about lining up those targets (brands, ad agencies, directors, casting directors, and of course agents) who can best get you to your next Super Bowl ad? Ah... so simple. Not easy. But simple.

If—as you do all of this research—you begin to note there just aren't enough patterns for you, as a type, showing up in commercials, that's actually great news in terms of where to place your focus today. Some actors are simply NOT commercial types. Think of the money you'll save on trying to get awesome commercial headshots or taking commercial auditioning classes if you decide there's no reason to pursue commercials right now!

Have great tools for your theatrical headshot and of course have great training, then let commercial buyers who really want to do something different find something in your existing tools that helps them tell their story. Then it was their brilliant idea and you didn't make yourself crazy trying to find something "round" when you're clearly "square," to go with the pegs of it all. But—and this is *very* important, here—be sure to do another lap of commercial research every year or so, as styles change, the narratives change, the pitch people change, and you may very well find yourself lining up beautifully with commercial bookings a few years down the line.

Thanks to this *SMFA Hot Sheet*, you know exactly what to do when that time comes, so you won't be slinging spaghetti at the wall and hoping something will stick. You'll target your butt off and make that delicious commercial dough, when the time is right.