

Millions of film makers can be heard over the Internet but who is listening to them?

The unprecedented power of the Internet is threatening to bring down traditional barriers in the most closed industry in the world - the film industry.

The rules could well be changing in the film industry. Highly guarded personal connections and contacts could be fighting a losing battle with the speed and accessibility of vast online communities.

Suddenly the power in the game is shifting hands. As online film communities threaten to sweep control away from the traditional power holders, wise use of the new phenomenon can help movie-makers gain all the benefits of the internet. And whilst a multitude of new projects and talent can very quickly gain tremendous exposure, those same projects and talent can also serve as a valuable resource to sustain an industry that is undergoing rapid changes.

Smart players in the industry will understand that power lies in numbers: more options lead to more opportunities, which in turn lead to more choice and ultimately greater quality. With the masses now able to pick and choose their favourites, the established power machine is no longer needed to produce stars. The audience dictates the terms as it now decides and seeks new idols in the next generation of internet media. Perhaps those who are not listening are living dangerously?

An online global film platform called **Studio Beyond** (www.studiobeyond.net) is taking a leading role in this fresh industry trend. **Studio Beyond** has cleverly taken stock of what everyone in the industry needs and brought it all together in an online, virtual 'Movie City' with buildings that house producers, writers, composers, directors/editors, actors, TV, the press and those all-important industry executives. It even has its very own movie theatre with a voting system that offers movie makers an open dialog with the online audience by acting as a focus group, voting for its favourite projects, talent, etc.

It's easy to see how aspiring talent can benefit from greater exposure and access to industry professionals, but how do industry executives benefit from this online business platform? The risk is that by giving content creators barrier-free, worldwide access to movie executives, production companies, sales agents, distributors, casting and talent agents, a film fund, TV executives, broadcasters, a music fund and the press, these good people could be overwhelmed with thousands of pitches. Yet Studio Beyond has identified a solution by offering unique tools for the protection and freedom of choice in each category of industry executive, who can choose from whom or from which category they want to accept pitches, invitations, open calls or contact requests.

Another great benefit of **Studio Beyond** is that it can significantly reduce the costs for industry executives of sourcing projects and talent, cut out middle man fees, promotion and advertising costs, and offer an instant online audience in a most effective manner. And with Studio Beyond's voting system, whereby members and the online audience can vote on talent and projects, industry executives can quickly get to see the best of the best within any given talent category, as well as the most promising projects, featured right there in the virtual city. **Studio Beyond** provides movie-makers with guidelines as to which projects and talent are in most demand, thereby enabling them to gain insight from the audience's perspective.

Whether movie-makers are able to embrace the changes of the emerging online movie world without seeing it as a threat to their traditional way, it yet remains to be seen!