



Vision 2004

Sound Services Division

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Executive Summary

Mind's Ear Audio Productions, Inc.
is an Indiana arts corporation
dedicated to providing affordable,
professional, state-of-the-art sound services
and theatrical audio presentations.

The company was formed in 1990 by founders
Dana Dyer Pierson and Joel Pierson,
and was incorporated in 1997.

The organization began strictly as a volunteer-driven
theatre which created both live performances and
studio productions in and around the Chicago area.
In the following years, the organization branched into
a wider service and product base, in response to
growing demand for its unique sound and
approach to audio design.



*Mind's Ear
exists to
redefine
how sound
is perceived
and used
as a
storytelling
tool.*

Company Analysis

In 2000, Mind's Ear made the commitment to improve both the overall production quality and profitability of the studio itself. A midsized, traditional multitrack recording studio was replaced with a sophisticated, powerful, portable digital recording system, and productions then moved into the purely digital realm. Unlike our competitors, Mind's Ear is no longer burdened with the expense of maintaining a large, expensive, space-intensive studio, and this evolution in both production capabilities and philosophy has served both the studio and its clients well.

Aided by our commitment to 100% digital recording and editing systems, Mind's Ear consistently produces award-winning audio presentations at a fraction of the cost of larger studios. The founders decided not to compete with the larger traditional studios, but rather to focus on doing what Mind's Ear did best and most effectively: producing creative, groundbreaking, dynamic works of audio art.



*We focus
on what
Mind's Ear
does best:
producing
creative,
groundbreaking,
dynamic
works
of
audio art.*

Statement of Purpose

Mind's Ear has made a commitment to creating only the most engaging, cutting-edge, creative audio possible. The studio's extensive experience in multi-cast, fully-dramatized audio theatre is apparent in each of its works. Never content to provide just the expected industry standard of vocals with a music bed, our engineers and designers meet with the client to determine how best we can push the envelope of sound design to best serve each unique project. We believe that sound is as dynamic and expressive an artistic medium as paint. We create vibrant tonal landscapes, not just voices captured on tape.

The Mind's Ear philosophy is the result of the uncompromising demand to produce only the best each project inspires. Our goal is to sweep the listener inside the experience, to pull him or her along with the story each sound tells. Because of our commitment to groundbreaking audio storytelling, we create more interesting, more engaging audio productions which result in a more interested, engaged audience--the goal of any audio theatre producer or advertiser or educator or Web designer.



We believe that sound is as dynamic and expressive and valid an artistic medium as paint.

Industry Analysis

Our conscious decision to focus only on more dynamic audio art projects means that we can provide a better product at a better price, faster, and more efficiently than the larger studios. Most recording studios in the United States are exorbitantly expensive to set up, maintain, staff, and operate. Because of the crippling overhead these studios must manage, they are forced to pass a higher operating cost along to clients. Mind's Ear is operated from a professional studio as well, but our studio itself bears little overhead.

Our skilled company of audio actors and voice talent represents a broader demographic than most traditional studios, as we actively recruit from theaters, professional performing arts schools, broadcast communities, and more.



*Mind's Ear
brings
an
uncompromising
level
of
audio artistry
to every
project
we accept.*

Customer Analysis

Mind's Ear has targeted a very specific, sophisticated, and discerning niche in the industry, and dedicates its operations to the specific needs of that clientele . The ideal Mind's Ear sound services client is one that needs to establish an identifiable sound at an affordable price. Our ideal client is frustrated by a traditional studio's inability, or lack of interest, in producing more artistic audio – or cannot afford the exorbitant hourly rates these studios charge to create it. Projects ideally matched to both the Mind's Ear philosophy and production capabilities include:

Fully-dramatized narrative tracks for audio, video, DVD, Web sites, training videos, product demonstrations, educational videos, and visitor/guest information.

Books on tape and CD

Radio and television commercials

Acoustic music projects

Dynamic voice mail, phone directories,
and on-hold recordings

On-location digital recording services for conferences,
meetings, lectures, and other special events

Audio archival and restoration

Poetry and other spoken word performances

Academic projects such as field/laboratory or research
notes archiving, interview databases, and more.



*We
pride
ourselves
on constantly
redefining
what is
considered
possible
with
sound.*

Competitive Analysis

Because of our cost-effective, sophisticated digital studio, uncompromising design philosophy, and low operating costs, Mind's Ear can provide finished productions that not only compete with larger studios, but are *better* – more dynamic, creative, effective, and affordable. We offer a dedicated regional company of professional, non-union voice talent, and have access to celebrity voice talent (and sound-alikes) as well.



*We
envision
sound
as a richly
textured,
three-
dimensional,
tangible
creative
design
element,*

Marketing

The centerpiece of the Mind's Ear marketing plan continues to be the Web site at www.minds-ear.org. The current site (as of April 2004) was launched in October 2002, and enjoys a worldwide audience (average monthly traffic is approximately 35,000 visitors per month, as of April 2004). A new site is planned for the summer of 2004, which will integrate more interactive features, a secure catalog, an enhanced resources section, password-protected areas for both casts and clients, and will ideally feature a new MP3 download on-demand/pay-per-download service as a new distribution opportunity for our work. The site is the primary point of contact for the majority of new listeners, customers, and clients, with radio, satellite and Web broadcasts as the secondary source of new attention, and retail sales as the tertiary.



*Mind's Ear
is a
regional
company
serving
a
global
audience.*

Management Team

The sound artisans who founded the organization still manage day-to-day and studio operations:

Dana Dyer Pierson, Executive Producer, was named by AudioWorld as "one of the finest sound designers working in the industry" for her groundbreaking work on *French Quarter*, the signature series of Mind's Ear. For both stage and audio, she is an experienced actor, designer, and director, as well as an award-winning playwright and producer. She has over 35 years of theatrical production experience, and has worked with such renowned theatres as The Cleveland Public Theatre, Karamu House, The Nantucket Actor's Theatre, The Crested Butte Mountain Theatre, The Bloomington Playwrights Project, and numerous others. She has seven years of broadcast experience, and is a respected voice actor and voice artist whose work has been heard on local, regional, and national radio ads, as well as in a variety of industrial training films, videos, and Web sites. She is an aggressive and demanding sound designer and engineer, and her work is used as a teaching tool at conferences, secondary schools, and universities. She served on the national board, and as a trainer and producer at the Midwest Radio Theatre Workshop. She and Joel Pierson formed Mind's Ear together, and remain the creative force behind the organization's growth, vision, and success.



"I gleefully accept any challenge that starts with 'I doubt that this can be done with sound, but...'"

- Dana Dyer Pierson

Management Team

The sound artisans who founded the organization still manage day-to-day and studio operations:

Joel Pierson, Artistic Director and Studio Manager, brings to Mind's Ear almost 20 years of theatre, radio, television, and sound engineering experience. He founded WVKC Radio Theatre in Galesburg, Illinois, then went on to nurture audio theatre troupes in five cities. For the stage, he has been an actor, director, sound designer, lighting designer, and dramaturg for Galesburg's Prairie Players and Knox Theatre, Urbana Illinois' Station Theatre, Chicago's Wisdom Bridge Theatre, the Bloomington Playwrights' Project, Windfall Dancers, and the John Waldron Arts Center. He is the author of more than two dozen audio and stage plays, including *French Quarter*, *Hamlet Overheard*, *The Vigil*, *Cow Tipping*, and *The Children's Zoo*. He has acted, directed, and taught at the Midwest Radio Theatre Workshop six times. In addition, Joel is the script writer for the educational television series *The Voyageur Experience in Global Geography*. He served as voice actor, audio producer, and script consultant for the ETV series *We All Live Here* (English version of *Todos Vivimos Aqui*), and served as creative consultant for the award winning video series *Letter TV*. When he is not in studio or on location, Joel is a book editor, and has edited books for well-known authors Paul Winchell and Ferdie Pachecho. He is awaiting the arrival of Gloria Estefan's first book for editing.



"The power of the audio medium never fails to astound me. Our work has touched lives, and on one occasion, may have even saved a life."

- Joel Pierson

Awards and Nominations

French Quarter

- 1999 Broadcast on National Public Radio's "NPR Playhouse"
- 2000 Encore Broadcast on National Public Radio's "NPR Playhouse"
- 2000 Winner, Golden Headset Award
for Best Multicast Production of the Year
- 2000 Winner, Communicator Crystal Award for Excellence

The Dante Experience

- 2002 Winner, Ogle Award for Best Fantasy or Horror
Audio Production of the Year
- 2002 Winner, Golden Headset Award
for Best Multicast Audio Production of the Year
- 2002 National Finalist, Silver Microphone Award
for Best Audio Production of the Year

**In addition, The Piersons have
12 national scriptwriting awards between them,
and have served as judges for
8 national and international audio production
and writing competitions.**



***Mind's Ear
productions
have competed
and
WON
against
major
commercial
audio
production
studios
including
Skywalker Sound
and
Dell Audio***