

Joe's Guide to How to Create Your Film's withoutabox.com Profile

First, why? Why set up your film on withoutabox? Because you want people to see it is the main reason (why else did you make a film?). Withoutabox is how most film festivals handle their entries, and if you want to be in film festivals, you have to set up your film on withoutabox.

You also need to be on withoutabox to get on IMDB. IMDB owns withoutabox, and once you enter a film and they receive it, you'll automatically get an IMDB page for your film.

Withoutabox ("WAB") is a pretty old website and not very new-user-friendly. That's what this handout is for. You may want to dive right into the WAB website (after reading the next paragraph) with this handout by your side.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU START:

There are a couple of things that you want to have ready before creating your film profile. First is a list of cast and crew, so you don't have to fumble around for that info while you're creating the profile. You'll also want a 125 word or less synopsis that sells your film, not just a list of the plot points. The synopsis is one of the key ways to advertise your film, so spend some time thinking about it. You can change this later if you need to, so don't let not having a good synopsis stop you from creating a profile.

CREATING A WAB ACCOUNT

To set up your film's profile, first you have to create an account on withoutabox for you as a filmmaker. Once you've done that, you'll be able to set up your film (and any other films that you create).

Step one is to go to www.withoutabox.com. Once there, you'll see a "Start a Free Filmmaker Account" box. Click that, and you'll get a screen asking for basic info (name phone#, etc). You'll also want to put in a valid email that you use regularly, so that any time a festival wants to get in touch with you, they can. And you'll create a password.

There's also an "IMDB" box - if you already have an IMDB account, you can link this WAB account with that IMDB one. Or you can skip that step.

Finish filling out the page and select "Register." It may ask you again about your IMDB account. You can just skip it again.

And for your filmmaker account, you're now finished-- Hazzah! By the way, the log-in whenever you visit WAB again is in the upper right hand corner of the window.

THE WAB "ACCOUNT HOME" / MAIN SCREEN

The WAB main screen is big and text-heavy. It can look pretty intimidating, but it's not really that hard once you know what you're looking at. The left side is navigation – it'll get you to the different parts of WAB. The middle section has a bit of navigation at the top, but then will list your films and give you some options. The right hand side is dedicated to helping you find festivals that might be right for your film.

Always keep in mind that this website is old and a bit lame, so when you're frustrated with it, so is every other filmmaker in the world. It's a rite of passage, navigating the WAB website.

ADDING A PROJECT/FILM TO WAB

Take a look at the left side of the page. The top two links are: Account Home (which is this page) and Add A Project. Since you want to add a film profile, you should click on Add A Project.

Something to keep in mind as you're adding a project is that many of the steps can be skipped if you don't know or don't want to provide the answer. That may cause you a problem if a festival wants that specific info and you didn't provide, but often it's not that big a deal. Some steps you can't skip, so I'll try to clue you into those as we go along.

Another thing is that as you fill out the various pages, the right side of the screen will show you all the steps you've done so far. You can go back and change and answer at any time.

So here are the various pages/steps, with some hopefully helpful notes:

- First, "What type of project" (Film/Video)
 - You're making a film, so select "Film"
 - You can select "Power Submitter" to upgrade your project, but it costs money and won't save you money until you enter a LOT of fests.
 - Click "Continue" when you're done.
- Next: WAB tries to sell you an upgrade
 - You probably don't need it unless you have a lot of promotional materials
 - Click "Continue"
- What's the title of your film?
 - Click "Save"
- What's the Translated title in different languages?
 - You don't have to enter anything.
 - Click "Save"

- Type & Forms
 - “Movie” and “Short”
 - Click “save”
- Niches
 - Select whatever fits (including “Student”) – there are a lot of student film festivals out there.
 - Click “Save”
- School: Level
 - Select “Undergraduate” if you’re undergraduate
 - Click “Save”

The next page is an odd one, and you’ll see this layout a lot in WAB. It’s a “People” page, where you add people who worked on the film to your film’s profile (and also to your IMDB page). It works like this:

The top section has a drop-down menu that includes anyone you’ve already added as a part of your film. That way you don’t have to add your info twice as both the director and as the writer (if you did both jobs). You can just add it once, then select it in the drop down menu, and all that info will get put into the correct boxes.

The middle section is where you put in the info about the person. You’ll only see specific options for their job on the film. For instance, here you’re inputting faculty advisors, so you’ll only see options for that. Later, you’ll be putting in writers and will only get options related to the writing. If you don’t see the job you want, it’s likely that you’ll get that job as an option in a later screen.

When you’ve put in all the info, click “Save Person” at the bottom of the screen. Once you do, you’ll still be on the same screen, because you may need to input more than one person. You may see some notes in red at the top of the screen telling you that you didn’t put in some necessary info- so go fill that info in and click “Save Person” again.

The “Skip” button will appear after you’ve successfully put in the first person for any “People” page. You can “skip” to the next section when you’re done.

- School: People
 - You’ll need to add a supervisor (probably your professor)
 - Put in their name, and classify them as an academic advisor
 - Click “Continue”
 - PLEASE DO NOT add the IMDB link for you professors
 - Unless they ask you to do so.
 - Select “Not on IMDB”
 - Then “Save Person”
 - Click “Skip” to move on to the next section

- Genre
 - Select any that apply to your film.
 - Click “Save”
- Synopsis: Logline
 - Enter your short 125 word synopsis/logline description of your film
 - Click “Save”
- Logline (French)
 - Unless you have a logline in French, Click “Skip”
- Synopsis: Medium
 - This is for a 250 word synopsis. For short films, you can write one or skip it.
- Synopsis: Long
 - For a 1000 word synopsis.
- Synopsis: Medium (French)
 - “Skip”
- Production: Country
 - Enter USA
- Production: People
 - Again, QuickFill at the top lets you select people you’ve already entered in another category
 - Enter the name, positions
 - “Save Person” when you’re done with that person
 - you may get an IMDB screen after you click “Save Person”
 - You might need to search to see which IMDB credit is theirs.
 - “Skip” when you’re done with the section

Again: You don’t HAVE to put all positions in, but you may want to reward your crew with IMDB credits.

- Production: Funding
 - how much was the budget?
- Script: Info
 - You can upload the script (but most people don’t)
- Script: People
 - Generally just the writer, but anyone else associated with the story
- People: Talent
 - Same as other “People” screens, but for the cast
- People: Craft
 - Cinematographer, Camera, Electric, Art Dept, etc.
- People: Post
 - Editor, Sound Editor, Etc.
- Date of Completion
 - When the film was (or will be) completed
- Running Time of the film
- Production Status and Screenings
 - is the film finished? Where’s it screened at before?

- Rights: Status
 - You probably haven't sold the film yet...
- Dialog: Original
 - What language is the dialog in?
- Dialog: Translations
 - Has it been translated? Into what languages?
- Format: Picture
 - Probably Color
- Format: Aspect Ratio
 - 1.78 is normal for widescreen video projects
- Format: Shooting
 - What did you shoot on? If you shot on a T2i or 7D, then you shot onto "Media Files – Other NTSC"
- Format: Exhibition
 - What formats can you get to them to show the film
 - DVD should be a no-brainer
 - Blu-Ray if you know how to make one
 - You should also be able to get them a Media File Quicktime
 - And anything else that you know how to make
- Format: Sound
 - Stereo, most likely
- Format :Sound Mix
 - There isn't a simple Stereo PCM setting, so you should select "Other" or "Skip"
- Format: Screeners
 - What format can you send the festival to view your film?
 - Usually, this is an NTSC DVD, but feel free to check any format that you can create
- Print Traffic: Value
 - You can skip this one, or put in a few dollars to cover the replacement cost of a DVD
- Print Traffic: People
 - Again, Skip, or put the person who's going to be sending the copy of the film
- Publicity: Website
 - Put in your website if you have one.
 - Your facebook page will do (Make sure and put in the http:/)
- Publicity: Trailer
 - Do you have a Trailer? How long is it?
- Publicity: Consent
 - Are you willing to be interviewed and let clips from your film to be shown for publicity? Yes is the normal answer
- Publicity: Press Kit
 - Do you have a press kit – Digital or Paper? If you have a paper press kit, what's in it?

- Publicity: People
 - You can skip, or put in who they should contact regarding publicizing your film
- People: All
 - There's a list of EVERYONE you've entered so far, so you can modify or add people and positions as you need to

And that's it (finally!). But rather than WAB telling you that you've successfully entered everything, it just kicks you out to a "Short List" page, which lists festivals WAB thinks might be good for your film.

To get back to your account page, in the left Column, click on "Account Home."

PRESS KITS ON WAB

In the middle column, about ½ way down the page, you'll see your project. If you want, you can make a press kit by turning "Build your Filmpromotion Kit" on, and uploading your press kit info.

FINDING FILM FESTIVALS

But the real info that you want is in the left and right columns. On the left column, you can find a festival by clicking "Search Festivals." If you know a festival's name, you can search for it here. Even if you only know part of the name, search for that, so for instance "Little" will find you many festivals, including the Little Rock Film Festival.

The left column on "Account Home" also lets you create "Watch Lists" (you can add festivals to your watch list so you can quickly find them if you want to submit to them later), and you can also check your "Submission Status." This will show you what festivals you've entered this film into and info about that submission.

I keep separate databases about the festivals I've submitted to, when they are, when they notify you if you've made the festival or not, and whether I've been accepted or not. This helps keep that info organized and helps me stay on top of the festivals.

On the right hand side of the Account Home page are drop-down lists of festivals divided into certain categories. Some are just for documentaries, some are for well established festivals, or newer festivals, animation, genre, etc. All these divisions can help you to find festivals that fit your film.

DEALING WITH MORE THAN ONE FILM ON WAB

For future films, you can have multiple projects (films) on WAB. They'll all be listed on the Account Home page, and most sub-pages (like the Submission Status page) will have a drop down menu at the top, where you can select the film that you want to see or submit. Be careful as you submit to festivals, that you've selected the correct film!

SUBMITTING TO THE UCA FILM FESTIVAL

Submitting to a festival isn't difficult, once you've created the project on WAB. First, click "Search Festivals" from the left column of the Account Home page. Then search for "Central Arkansas." Our festival should be the only one that comes up

Next, select which category you want to submit: Narrative Short, Documentary, or Music Video & Experimental. For other festivals, you'll often see different deadlines with different prices, but for our festival, you can submit anytime during the year, up to our deadline for that year.

Then click "Submit Now." You'll get a screen telling you if your film's criteria match the festivals criteria. If they don't match, you can still submit, but know that you might not qualify, depending on what it is that doesn't match. Click "Submit Now" to get past this screen.

This sends you to the Submission Details screen, where you need to put in or verify the following info:

1. Verify that you're putting the correct film into the correct festival
2. Do you have a waiver?
If you don't know, you don't have one.
3. Accepted Submission Formats
How do you want them to view and judge your film
for the UCA festival, you'll submit it over the UCA Network
for other festivals, you'll select from the formats they list
probably DVD
or an Online Screener that WAB allows you to upload
4. Exhibition format
how will you have them show it at the festival
select the best format you can provide
5. Cover Letter
Not at all required, but if you want to put a cover letter with your submission, you can do so here, as well as save template cover letters.
6. Terms & Conditions
"Agree" if you agree
7. How'd you hear about the festival?
Select how you heard about the festival
8. Send the Submission
Click "Send Submission & Continue"

Next, you'll need to put in your credit card info and contact info (make sure the contact info matches the info your credit card company has so you don't have any problems).

Once you've done all that, you'll get a confirmation that you've submitted, and a tracking number. You should keep track of that info, but you can also check it by selecting "Submission Status" from the Account Home page.

If you're submitting to a festival other than the UCA festival, you'll likely have to mail in a submission DVD (often with multiple copies). Make sure the copies actually work in a DVD player (not just on the computer), and that they're legible. Put your tracking # on each DVD (and any other info they ask for), as well as on any correspondence and on the envelope. Make it as clear as possible so anything you send them can get tracked back to you with that number.

For the UCA festival, make a QuickTime video with the .h264 codec, and drop that in the "Film_Festival" folder that should be on the desktop of any computer in SRH.

And that's it! Now start getting your film out to other festivals! They all work basically the same way – get to it!