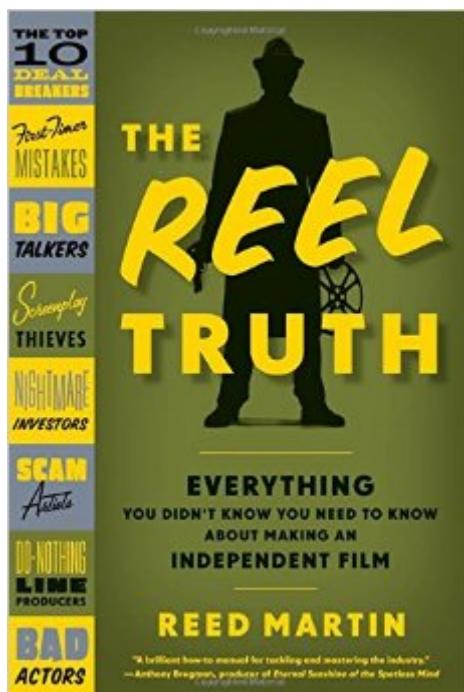


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# The Reel Truth: Everything You Didn't Know You Need To Know About Making An Independent Film



## Synopsis

Did you know that most of the biggest indie filmmakers, screenwriters, and producers working today each made the same avoidable mistakes early on in their careers? The Reel Truth details the pitfalls, snares, and roadblocks that aspiring filmmakers encounter. Reed Martin interviewed more than one hundred luminaries from the independent film world to discuss the near misses that almost derailed their first and second films and identify the close shaves that could have cut their careers short. Other books may tell you the best way to make your independent film or online short, but no other book describes so candidly how to spot and avoid such issues and obstacles as equipment problems, shooting-day snafus, postproduction myths, theatrical distribution deal breakers, and dozens of other commonly made missteps, including the top fifty mistakes every filmmaker makes. From personal experience and his years as a freelance reporter covering independent film for USA Today and Filmmaker magazine, Martin uncovers the truth about the risks and potential rewards that go with chasing celluloid glory. Whether you're writing a screenplay, looking for financing, about to start shooting, or thinking about investing time and money (or someone else's money) in an independent film, The Reel Truth is a must-read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Reed Martin's "The Reel Truth" is without question the best book on the subject of Indie Filmmaking ever published. It reads like a well-written and fast paced novel and yet gets down in the weeds of the actual pitfalls (ex: forming an LLC to avoid being vulnerable in the future to lawsuits, the

mishandling of data cards in a rush to see the dailies which leads to digital drop-outs, and the always overlooked importance of good sound recording - as Danny Boyle points out in the book, good sound is probably the most important aspect of indie filmmaking) and details brilliantly all the aspects of creating, funding, releasing, and marketing an independent film. Without this book I have no idea how much more painful the experience would have been - as I have just completed an indie film and am taking it to film festivals. I have used it like a roadmap, and it was the best twenty dollars I could have spent. A tool as essential as any piece of film equipment (even the appendixes in the back of the book which contain sample in-depth budgets and contracts are great). It was required reading for each producer and the director because we felt there was so much to digest reading it that we would all be better off have gone through the book individually and highlighted it. Although I enjoyed the other known works on the subject ("I Wake Up Screening", "Spike, Mike, Slackers, & Dykes", and "Down and Dirty Pictures"), I felt none compared, or - more importantly - were as relevant as the recently published "The Reel Truth". Nor did the other books really elucidate with clarity all the overwhelming aspects an indie film producer, director, or screenwriter faces. Really no comparasion.

As someone who heads a global film finance consulting, production, and distribution company ([...]), I come across hundreds if not thousands of investors, private equity funds, filmmakers, producers, and even former studio executives who are completely clueless or in the dark about the realities of what it takes to finance, produce, and distribute a film. It seems the majority of filmmakers and producers are still looking to make films like its 1995 and Sundance is like the Powerball lotto just waiting for a film to premiere there and be sold for gazillions of dollars. To add insult to injury, some of the worst offenders in not educating filmmakers and film producers on the realities of the film business are the top film schools in the United States. If they were to only take a portion of their marketing dollars for recruiting and apply it to more practical books and instructors such as Reed Martin, we'd go back to a time when we would have much better films with larger distribution options available. Hence, Reed Martin's book is really the only film school one needs, or if you are already in film school, this book should be your bible and holy grail on the semantics of the film business, the realities of distribution, film festivals, and all the chaos and noise in between. It covers some very detailed and fine points on the realities of everything from raising money, to financing your own films (which we suggest to all first time filmmakers), to attaching cast, to various distribution options and how its evolving in terms of video on demand, digital distribution, etc. Reed gives a very straight forward, politically incorrect reality check to what really goes on inside the minds of film investors,

film festivals, agents, actors, directors, etc.

I hesitate to jump in here for fear of being assaulted by the fans. 59 5-stars and only one dissenter? How on earth can that be real? Having said that I found the book to be chock full of information that I haven't heard or read anywhere else. It is rather dry though. I keep it by bed and read a little each night before drifting off. Usually I can only get through a chapter or so before I'm sleeping like a baby. One thing of particular interest was learning how easy it is to have your written word stolen. It makes me wonder about all the nameless "director/producer/filmmakers" you see on Craigslist who won't give their name but want you to send a script. And "if we find something we like we'll contact you." Yeah, I'll hold my breath waiting for that to happen. As I've gotten further into the book a few things have caught my attention. Martin seems to think that Sundance is the only game in town for the indie film maker to sell a film. He has made no mention of Slamdance, SXSW, Telluride, Toronto, Los Angeles or the some two dozen other festivals that acquisition Execs go to looking to buy movies. His information is a bit dated since the book was published in 2009. Maybe in 2008 box office sales were down. But in December 2009 Avatar made up for that with \$2.7B world wide. (yes that's billion with a B) The Hangover did \$467M. In 2010 Sylvester Stalone came out with an Action Movie where the average age of the stars was about 60. It did \$35m in the first weekend then went on to earn almost \$300M world wide. Then he did it again this year with an even older cast average. Hangover II did more than \$500M. To say nothing of The Avengers which did \$200M opening weekend. Eventually doing \$1.4B Worldwide.

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