

PRODUCER (FILM/TELEVISION/VIDEO)

Kaiwhakaputa Tukuata (Whitiahua/Pouaka Whakaata/Ripene atata)

Print Page

Description

Producers choose or come up with an idea for a film or television programme, and put together a team to create it and supervise the whole project.



Ken Burns budgeting for a new project

He Whakamarama



Mahi ai ki te whiriwhiri whakaaro, ki te whakaputa aria ranei mo tetahi hotaka whitiahua, hotaka pouaka whakaata ranei, a, ka whakaemi i tetahi roopu ki te hanga me te whakahaere i te kaupapa mahi.

Alternative Titles

- Producer (Film)
- Producer (Television)
- Film Producer
- Television Producer
- Video Producer

Tasks and Duties

Producers:

- choose an idea, script, book or play to turn into a film or television programme
- choose and hire the director for the project

- arrange finance and prepare the project (pre-production)
- organise budget and production
- choose key creative staff with the director, including the main actors
- supervise production
- solve any production problems
- supervise the film's distribution
- may plan the marketing of the finished film
- may liaise with foreign co-producers
- may make videos for corporate clients
- may be involved with marketing the production company and shows
- may pursue projects for the company to work on

Personal Requirements

Skills

Producers need to have good organisational and planning skills, business skills and excellent problem-solving skills. They also need to have story-telling skills, team-management and people skills, and skill in assessing scripts, books, plays and other writing.



"Team building and managing a project in difficult situations are your biggest tasks. When you have difficulty with either people or situations, you need to be able to solve those problems very quickly, and often make quick creative decisions too."

Ken Burns, Television Producer

Knowledge

Producers need to know about personnel management, team building and how to motivate people. They need to know about literature and drama, how to analyse scripts, books, plays and writing of all kinds, and the best ways of using moving images and sound to tell a story. Producers should also have a good general understanding of as many aspects of film/television and video production as possible.

Personal Qualities

Producers should be self-motivated, able to motivate other people, and good at setting goals. They need to be good team builders, good at creating and maintaining professional and personal relationships with people, and be creative, imaginative and able to work well under pressure. Producers also need to have common sense and leadership qualities.

Physical Requirements

There are no specific physical requirements for producers.

How to Enter the Job

Education

There are no specific educational requirements for this job, as experience and ability are generally more valuable in this industry. Film, television and video production courses are available, however, and are generally required for getting a foot in the door.

Related courses:



[Media and Broadcasting Skills](#)
[Media Production \(General\)](#)
[Video and Television](#)
[Audio, Music and Radio](#)
[Acting, Drama and Theatre](#)

Take off to tertiary!

[Take off to tertiary!](#) - information and advice to help with study or training decision -making.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority:



[Electronic Media](#)
[Film and Television](#)
[Performance Production](#)

Entry Requirements

There are no specific entry requirements for producers.

Useful Experience

Production is not an entry-level profession, and generally can only be entered once a person has a good level of experience in other areas of the film, television or video industry, such as work as a production manager or director. Other experience which may be of use is work in current affairs and news, print media, the visual arts, marketing or arts administration.



"As a path to this job, a lot of producers have been directors. It doesn't necessarily mean it will make you a good producer, but it helps you understand how things come together, and to anticipate some of the problems you may encounter out in the field."

Ken Burns, Television Producer

Training on the Job

Once a person is working as a producer, they usually pick up skills which build on experience they already have. They often attend conferences and seminars to expand and update their skills, especially in technical areas and other areas such as personnel management.

Working Conditions

Work Places and Travel

Producers work in offices, film and television studios and sometimes on location shoots.

Equipment

Producers use office equipment, computers and computer software such as accounting and spreadsheet packages, and usually a cellphone.

Workplace Conditions

Workplace conditions for producers are often high pressure and may be stressful at times.

Employment Conditions

Hours

Producers work long and irregular hours, often during weekends and evenings. They also often have to be on-call.

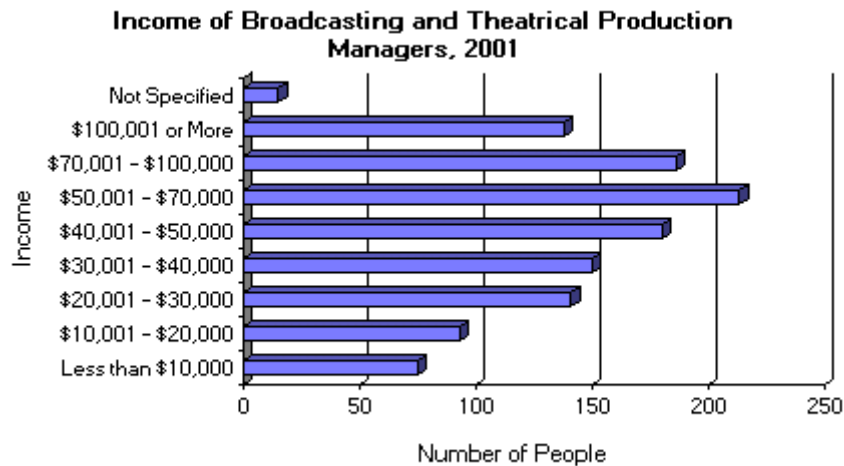


"You're your own manager in this job because there aren't the conventional nine to five hours. Some days you might not come to work because you know the next day you may be working 12 or 14 hours to get something finished."

Ken Burns, Television Producer

Salary

Many producers are self-employed and work on short-term contracts where they are paid per project rather than by wage or salary. Producers are generally paid well above the average salary, although this depends on experience.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

[Interpreting Charts](#)

Contact with People

Producers work as part of a team and deal with a wide range of people. They are responsible for putting together a creative team and they work closely with both the writer and director. They also have contact with film crew, distributors, and television companies, and they sometimes have to liaise with investors, co-producers and marketing staff.

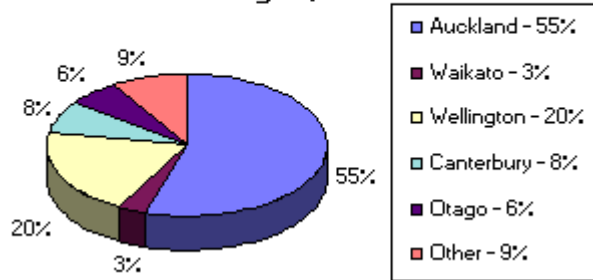
Job Market

Market Details

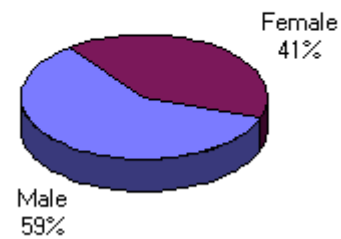
These statements and statistics are based on information available from Statistics New Zealand about broadcasting and theatrical production managers. Charts and statistics on broadcasting and theatrical production managers include data on producers (film/television/video), production assistants (film/television/video), production managers (film/television), radio producers and theatre producers.

- 1,191 people were employed as broadcasting and theatrical production managers in 2001
- 90% were employed full-time
- 41% were female
- The highest proportion of people were employed in the Auckland (55%), Wellington (20%) and Canterbury (8%) regions

Regional Location of Employment of Broadcasting and Theatrical Production Managers, 2001



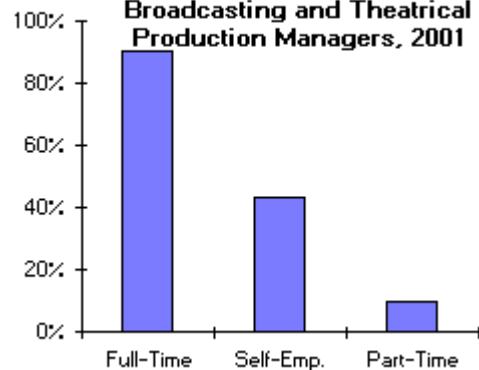
Gender of Broadcasting and Theatrical Production Managers, 2001



Age of Broadcasting and Theatrical Production Managers, 2001



Type of Employment of Broadcasting and Theatrical Production Managers, 2001



Source: Statistics New Zealand

[Interpreting Charts](#)

Job Outlook

The outlook for the occupation of producer (film/television/video) looks fairly good for the next two to three years. There is optimism in the New Zealand film industry, and enthusiasm about its future in the international and domestic markets.

As part of the current Government's investment in the performing arts, a \$22 million grant was given in 2000 to establish a Film Production Fund to support the production of New Zealand films. In addition, an extra \$5 million increase in annual funding was given to New Zealand On Air for the development of New Zealand television programmes, especially children's television.

The Film Fund is expected to foster a strong commercial film industry in New Zealand by providing job opportunities for people such as television/film producers and directors, who might otherwise have been forced to look for opportunities overseas. It is also designed to encourage low-budget films to be made by first-time film makers, and should ensure the development of a pool of new film-making talent in New Zealand.

It is hoped that Peter Jackson's feature film, Lord of the Rings, will attract further overseas investment in New Zealand films, as international funding helps develop a strong film-making infrastructure. Some film makers, however, fear greater numbers of big overseas productions will shut out homegrown producers by pushing up costs and draining the pool of talented crews.

Digital technology has made the making of films and television programmes faster. It has also lowered costs, and producers can now be involved in shooting films themselves with a digital camera. The film and

television industry is one where film processing, editing, and camera equipment are constantly changing, so producers are having to constantly keep up with these new technological developments.

With so many more television channels now available, there is a greater demand for programmes. However, getting a foot in the door to producing can be tough in the television and film industry because of its competitive nature. It also takes many years to become established in the industry, and doing so depends heavily on the skills and emotional resources of individuals.

There is a trend away from on-site training to institutional training at film and television schools like the recently opened Film School in Wellington. This move is bringing a greater consistency to production standards within the television and film industry.

(Updated 23/12/2002)

Regional Market Details

Northland / [Auckland](#) / Waikato / Bay of Plenty / Gisborne / Hawke's Bay / Taranaki / Manawatu-Wanganui / [Wellington](#) / Tasman / Nelson / Marlborough / West Coast / Canterbury / Otago / Southland

Auckland:

The number of broadcasting and theatrical production managers employed in the Auckland region is expected to remain stable over the next three to five years. In theatrical production, employment opportunities are influenced by disposable income levels and the demand from the public for productions. Limited theatre funding is currently impacting on job numbers. Despite an increase in the number of training courses available, and in the opportunities available to do amateur productions to gain experience, the amount of paid employment is small. However, for those with regular exposure and a solid reputation, opportunities are stable.

In the broadcasting industry, government funding impacts on smaller broadcasters making it harder for them to compete with government-owned radio stations. However, if new radio bands go up for tender this will create employment opportunities as it will allow new radio stations to enter the market. Technology is also impacting on this role as automated programming creates less need for broadcasting production managers but will increase the demand for technical support roles.

Turnover among broadcasting and theatrical production managers is moderate, and people in this occupation are employed both full and part-time.

(Written 26/03/2003)

Wellington:

The number of radio producers employed in the Wellington region is expected to remain stable or grow moderately over the next three to five years. Employment opportunities are often influenced by radio station budgets, the state of the economy and disposable income levels as these factors affect the ability of radio stations to operate, and in turn producer job numbers.

Most radio producers are employed part-time as this role is part of a wider job description. Turnover among radio producers is moderate to low and most stay within the occupation but change the station they work for. Enjoyment of the job, being good at the work and limited opportunities also contribute to the low turnover.

(Written 04/11/2002)

Current Vacancies



[Corporate Managers](#)



[KiwiCareers Job Vacancy Links](#)

Personal Profile

Ken Burns



I've always been a film fan, watched a lot of television, and was interested in how television programmes were made. So after completing a BA in politics and sociology, I did a postgraduate diploma in television production. I then got my first job with the TV3 children's department, then worked as a director at Sky TV and Ice TV before being taken on as a producer at Greenstone Pictures. I've been working in the television industry for 10 years now.

In the two years that I've been working as a producer, I have produced four prime-time series and two documentaries, and am in the process of producing a documentary about ghosts and haunted houses in New Zealand.

Often the producer is credited with an idea for a production, but a lot of the time you are managing other people's ideas. It's exciting putting your own ideas forward though, and then getting them funded. Some projects may come together quite quickly, or they may take years, depending on the climate of programme making.

You're responsible for managing the entire project, seeing that it meets the deadlines, and that it's produced within the budget allocated. When I first came here, I didn't know a lot about the budgeting side of the work, but I was given the opportunity to learn it. Putting together the creative team is also an important job of a producer. You have to be able to identify people's strengths and interests and determine whether they would be suitable for a particular project.

It can be quite stressful because you've got to keep in mind the whole process from start to finish. You can't just concentrate on a shoot one day, because that shoot is tied into that week, which is also tied into editing and sound. Producing is generally a lot more hands-off than directing but, if you're shooting a new series, then often for the first couple of programmes you'll be on set to make sure it's heading in the right direction.

There are projects you take on just because you've got a family and a mortgage. However, regardless of what shows you're making, there's a lot of work invested in all of them. Sometimes though, you can make a good programme that's been scheduled in a suicide time slot, and that can be especially heartbreaking when you've put in a lot of time and emotional energy. But it's good when you have the opportunity to make programmes that you really want to make, and then get excellent ratings for them.

Phillip Wallington



Phil Wallington, executive producer of TVNZ's '60 Minutes' current affairs programme, started out his career in journalism in his native Australia. "I went to a university where they didn't have a law faculty, just to be rebellious. My career advisors at school told me I should be either a journalist or a lawyer, but I wanted to be an army officer. Luckily my eyesight wasn't good enough or I probably would have got the chop in Vietnam, the fate of one of my classmates."

Phillip was working in a factory during a vacation and decided not to return to university. "I thought I wasn't getting anywhere doing university, it was great fun but I was going nowhere. Then I saw an ad in the paper for cadet positions at the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Network) so I went along."

Working his way through the ABC, Phillip worked in a number of different areas of reporting and journalism in both radio and television throughout Australia. He ended up in production work and spent several years producing for local stations and eventually national networks. He came to New Zealand in 1989 as producer of TVNZ's 'Holmes' programme, moved into directing 'Frontline' and is now executive producer of '60 Minutes'.

"Television is the ultimate team game - you have to let people get on with their job. There's no formal training for production, so the way you learn things like that is through experience. I love working on '60 Minutes', so I think I'll stay here for as long as they'll have me."

Further Information

Relevant Contacts

- [NZ Film Commission](#)
- [Radio Broadcasters' Association](#)
- [TV3 Network Services](#)
- [TVNZ](#)

Related Jobs

- [Artistic Director](#)
- [Director \(Film/Television/Video\)](#)
- [Film/Video Editor](#)
- [Financial Planner](#)
- [Managing Director](#)
- [Newspaper/Magazine Editor](#)
- [Production Assistant \(Film/Television/Video\)](#)
- [Production Manager \(Film/Television\)](#)
- [Production Planner](#)
- [Theatre Producer](#)

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- [Motion Picture, Radio and Television Services](#)



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