

INTRODUCING THE PRODUCER PORTAL

STREAMLINING SAG-AFTRA COMPLIANCE

Filing and tracking documents for SAG-AFTRA compliance—and ensuring rapid return of the all-important security bond—has long been a pain point for producers. This is particularly true of smaller-budget projects, which often lack the bandwidth to manage a document-heavy process in a timely, organized way.

Enter the SAG-AFTRA Producer Portal, a new online tool to help producers easily navigate the signatory process, creating what SAG-AFTRA National Executive Director Duncan Crabtree-Ireland calls a “win-win-win” for producers, SAG-AFTRA and the performers it represents.

“The source of jobs for our members is producers. Whether they’re affiliated with big studios or they’re independent producers, every one of them is important because every one of them delivers work opportunities and creative opportunities to our members,” says Crabtree-Ireland, adding that the easier and more streamlined the signatory process is, the more projects will get signed, and the

more jobs will be created under SAG-AFTRA contracts.

“The Producer Portal is a meaningful solution for independent producers, simplifying the signatory process and saving valuable time,” says Producers Guild of America Chief Executive Officer Susan Sprung. “We’re proud to collaborate with SAG-AFTRA on a tool that not only streamlines the process but also empowers producers as they bring their creative visions to life. Our thanks to the entire SAG-AFTRA team, the PGA Independent Film Producers Task Force, and the Independent Film and Television Alliance for their hard work and dedication to this important project.”

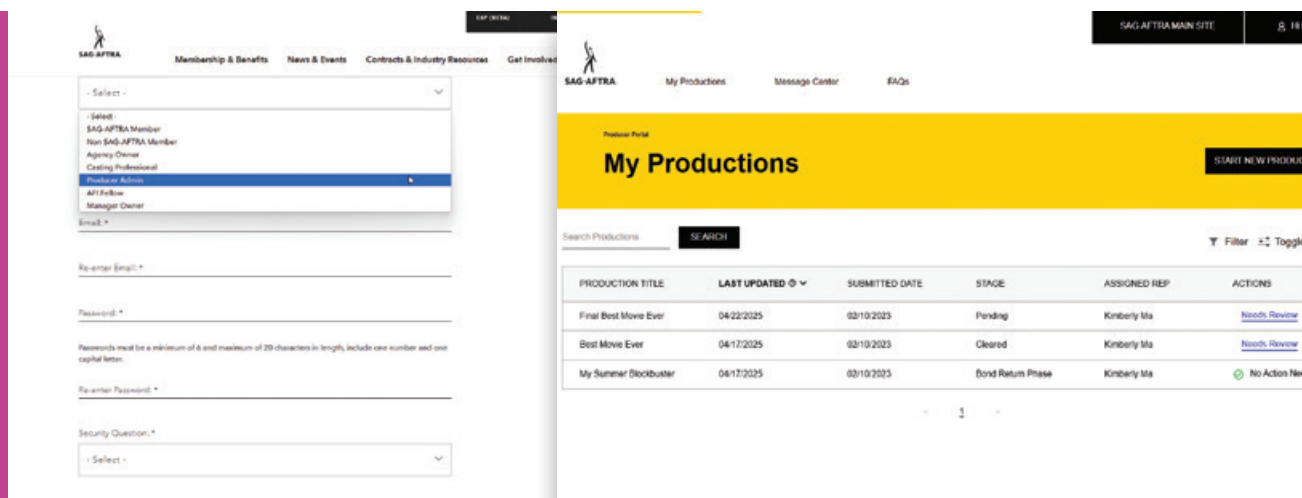
“The PGA in particular has been incredibly engaged with us,” says Crabtree-Ireland, “helping us get access to producers to test out the system and so on—and by doing that, helping us make sure that we were building something that would actually be useful to producers—because that was the whole point. So that is extremely meaningful, and I think reflects the fact that by working together, we can create these win-win situations.”

**THE SIGNATORY PROCESS IS SMOOTHER AND FASTER FOR ALL
INVOLVED—THE RESULT OF A CAREFUL AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORT
AMONG THREE KEY INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS.**

WRITTEN BY KERI LEE

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THE PORTAL'S GOALS: END-TO-END CLARITY AND EASE

Rolled out January 2025 and now in second-stage beta, the Producer Portal allows producers to:

- Upload, download, and view key documents
- Check the status of documents
- Identify problems with any documents at a glance
- Easily locate contact information for their business, background, and claims reps
- Immediately see the next steps needed for clearance and security deposit return

The portal also provides document templates—including cast lists, day out of days reports, and sign-in sheets—and a Message Center, which offers read-only copies of all SAG-AFTRA correspondence sent to the producer's regular email account. This disentangles SAG-AFTRA communications from the daily flood of production emails, further simplifying the signatory process.

“We want it to be as easy as possible for independent producers to work with us, and when we have a disagreement or we have a problem between us, we want it to be for a good reason, not because of some communication or administration gap,” says Crabtree-Ireland. “The more we can make routine tasks easily accomplished using the technology, the more we can devote the personal-

ized attention of our business reps and our staff to addressing real problems.”

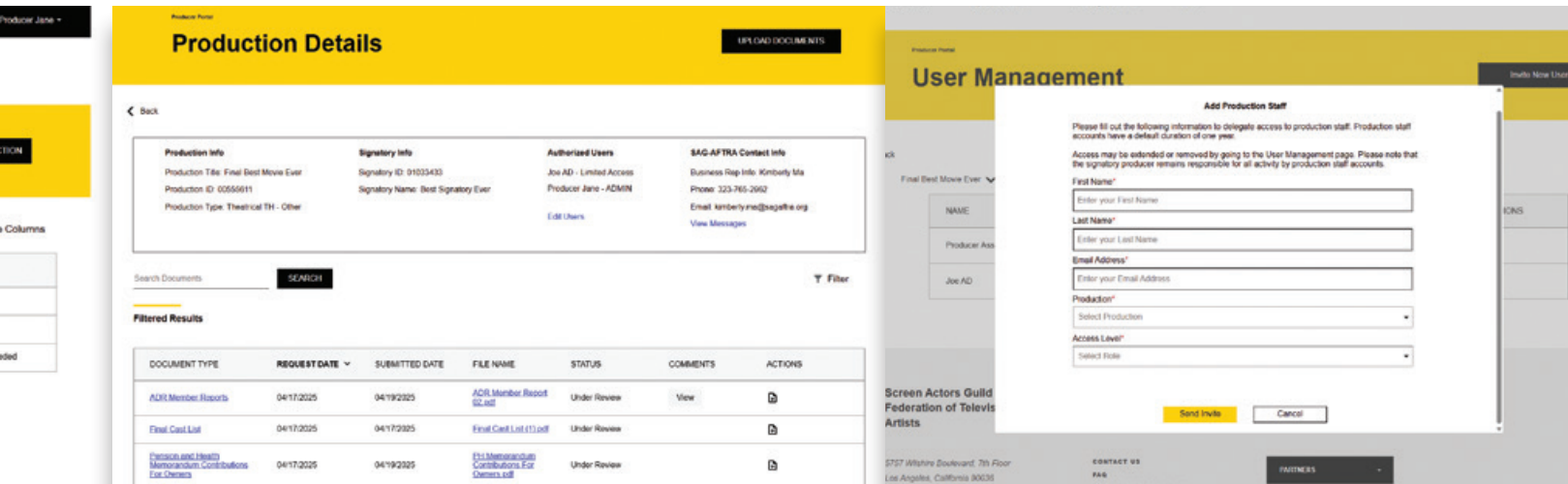
The portal will help make these real problems—such as issues with benefit plan contributions or nonpayment of wages—readily visible both to producers and their business reps. Because these reps will be increasingly freed up from routine admin tasks and paper chasing, they will be better able to focus on and help resolve problems that can derail the signatory process.

“Those are the kinds of issues we want our business reps spending their time on rather than sending out another packet of paperwork to be filled out,” says Crabtree-Ireland, adding that while he doesn't see the Producer Portal as “a panacea or magic bullet,” for every problem between independent producers and SAG-AFTRA, it will make it much easier for producers to get their projects signed.

STATE OF THE PORTAL: HOW IT WORKS

Currently, the portal serves producers working on projects under one of four contracts:

- Theatrical (Basic or CBA)
- Low Budget Agreement (LBA)
- Moderate Low Budget Project Agreement (MPA)
- Ultra Low Budget Project Agreement (UPA)



Film producers who submit a preliminary signatory application for one of the contracts listed above will receive an email inviting them to create a Producer Admin account on the SAG-AFTRA website using their Producer ID and the email address indicated on their signatory application.

Producers need only one portal account, which is tied to their signatory relationship. This single account will automatically include all current and past projects from 2021 to the present.

To facilitate submissions, producers can easily grant staff members access to the project's portal through the "Invite New User" button on the portal's "User Management" page.

- To protect sensitive information, producers can assign new users to one of two access levels:
- Full access: These users can access and upload all types of documents, including production and financials
- Limited access: These users can access/upload only production documents—e.g., cast lists, day out of days and sign-in sheets

Portal information includes at-a-glance updates on:

- The status of required documents: Requested, Under review, Accepted, or Rejected
- The production's stage in the signatory process: Pending, Cleared, Conditionally cleared, Void/other, Default, Security deposit return phase,

Security deposit return initiated, Security deposit returned, or Closed

SAG-AFTRA is now developing an update to the user interface, planned for release in fall 2025, that highlights what producers need to do to get to the final security deposit release stage, including:

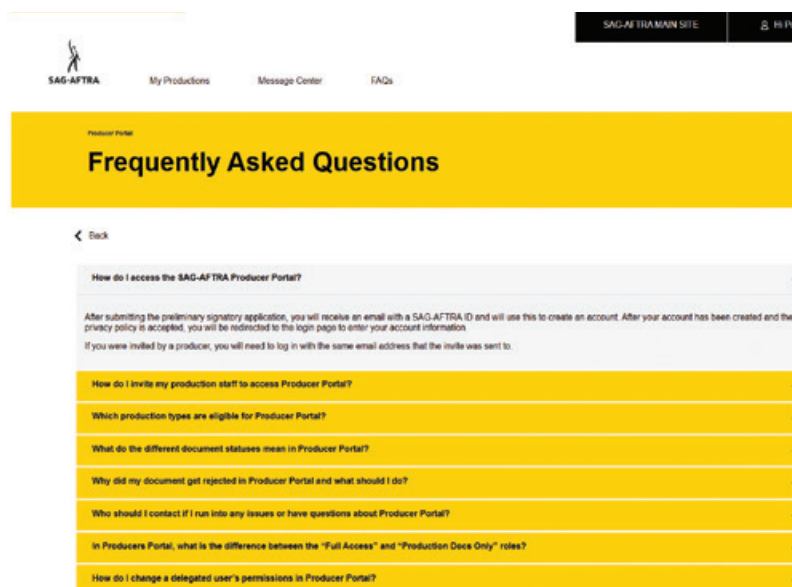
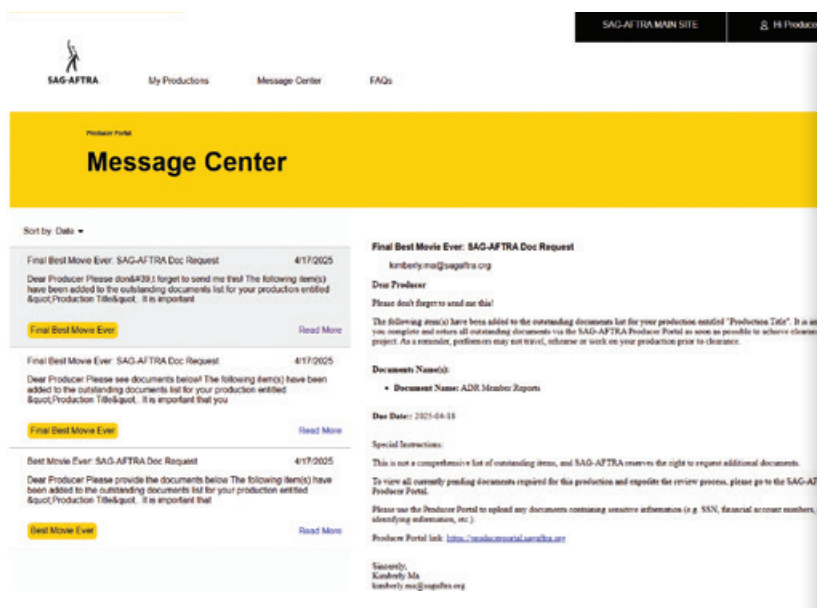
- Highlighting required documents
- Displaying information on outstanding claims that must be resolved
- Providing the status of any contribution audits conducted by SAG-AFTRA Health Plan and/or SAG-Producers Pension Plan.

Projects on a producer's portal homepage remain visible and accessible to producers as long as they maintain a portal account. For users whom producers assign to a specific project, access to that project is available until the producer terminates it or their access expires, whichever comes first.

The portal will be expanded to include TV, New Media, Short Project Agreement, and Student Film Agreement contracts in the future.

PORTAL DESIGN: AN ONGOING, COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

To create the portal, SAG-AFTRA collaborated with



the PGA, the Independent Film & Television Alliance, and members of the PGA's Independent Film Producers Task Force and Independent Film Committee to ensure that producers had an audible voice in the design and development process.

"The Producer Portal is a major step forward for independent producers navigating the SAG-AFTRA processes," says Independent Film & Television Alliance President & CEO Jean Prewitt. "This platform offers a transparent and accessible system for producers to track compliance amid the inherent challenges of production—from shifting schedules and changing personnel to uncertainties around requirements. The portal lets producers spend less time on paperwork and more time on creating. SAG-AFTRA's commitment to this initiative strengthens its relationship with the independent sector and fosters greater confidence in the process. We commend SAG-AFTRA for its yearslong dedication to this project and thank the Producers Guild of America and IFTA's members for their support."

Beginning in 2021, the portal's development team conducted interviews with a diverse group of producers from the PGA and IFTA to understand their pain points and shape the portal's initial designs. The same group of producers provided early feedback to inform a working beta version. Testing was then opened to the initial group as well as producers of Ultra Low Budget (UPA) Projects.

The team's producer-focused usability testing resulted

in several key design changes over time, including:

- Dividing what was originally one long list of documents into three tabs to separate documents that need review from those that are approved or are simply informational
- Augmenting a pop-up contact window with the business rep's contact information to also include contact information for the project's background and claims reps
- Easing a pain point in casting by issuing a production ID up front, rather than waiting to issue the ID only after the application is reviewed and accepted.

This collaborative ethos will continue as the team designs and develops future portal features and releases.

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Here's how to learn more about the Producer Portal:

- Visit sagaftra.org/ProducerPortal for an overview of its features and an FAQ
- Watch the "Introducing the SAG-AFTRA Producer Portal" video on SAG-AFTRA's YouTube page
- Email questions and feedback to SAG-AFTRA at entcontractsinfo@sagaftra.org and include "Producer Portal" in the subject line. ■