

Locations

by Steven Gowin

I scouted locations today.

Every year we interview business types and techies at our company's big trade show. We make the customer testimonials.

We need a place to shoot interviews. Somewhere businessy, but hip with nice angles, city views, light, and space for moving cameras. We keep the shot *dynamic like our customers*.

As part of the ciné vibe, part of the the shoot, customers expose creative aspirations. They confess love for Karaoke and metal rock. They tell of expensive Stratocaster and Zildjian purchases.

They have financed and built and burned great effigies at desert bacchanals. They desperately want us to believe they can *party*; they can *get down*: they can *create*.

And although they see themselves as entrepreneurs too, most can't walk the walk, and instead pepper conversation with mumbo jumbo - *disruptiveness, customer delight, shared pools, magic quadrants, and brands*.

The patois cycles every couple of years but never rises above gibberish, jargon, good uttered once, then clichéd forever. We don't hate them though. We are them. So we make them look good.

I find the first locale early, *SOMA Gallery*. The ceilings stretch up and up, so we could run a little crane to make powerful photography. We'd jib down from on high and push in when we got low for the God shot, à la Riefenstahl.

Northern light streams in honest, and although a bank of windows faces the west and a potentially violent sun, we can gel them up or lift a scrim. Our shoot's not until October; we're hoping for rain, clean and cold.

Lots of decent paintings here, good backdrop. The manager girl says the place goes for weddings, receptions, bar mitzvahs. She has bright blue eyes and crazy black hair.

I ask how long this exhibit will last. She says she'll level with me; just don't tell the boss. The paintings never change, but customers love the gimmick. Now we talk. I trust her.

She's lived everywhere - South Africa, DC, Korea, Israel. Her father was a Rabbi, and every day she walks to work from Tenderloin Heights. She deals with the grit.

This locale will be fine, I think. I don't imagine the Rabbi's daughter singing Karaoke or helling around the desert.

And she would never bring up *disruption*.

