



Best Of: 25 Indie-Friendly Businesses, 2013

By [Kelly Leow](#) on November 26, 2013



Every year in our Fall issue, *MovieMaker* releases a list of 25 companies we've deemed especially 'indie-friendly.' Take a look at 2013's names!

The word "independence" connotes solitude and individualism: a lone wolf charting its own iconoclastic path through a barren wilderness. But in our view at *MovieMaker*, being "independent" is the opposite of lonely self-reliance. No independent moviemaker these days has to go without help from generous, like-minded comrades, and it's in that spirit that *MovieMaker's* annual Indie-Friendly Business List seeks to foster and celebrate.

We've hand-picked the following 25 companies and want to make sure they're on your radar, which will cause your own personal wilderness to be a little less lonely, a little more welcoming (yes—even in Los Angeles). So if you're not already tapping these businesses for your moviemaking needs, you might want to consider it. They form a minor but brilliant constellation in our universe, and they're all vying for your acquaintance.

1) **Azden** (azdencorp.com)

Arlington, New Jersey-based Azden's audio gear includes an extensive range of microphones, mixers, and wireless systems, and they regularly offer rebates on various products.

2) **Blackmagic** (blackmagicdesign.com)

One of the world's leading innovators and manufacturers of creative video technology, Blackmagic combines top-quality product design with an eye to affordability—check out their DaVinci Resolve color correction platform for just \$995, or get the free Lite version!

3) **Cinelicious** (cinelicious.tv)

Cinelicious is a comprehensive post-production studio offering digital, celluloid, and restoration services. Their clients range from low-budget independent features to (decidedly non-indie) projects for the Superbowl, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and Cannes.

4) **Digital Bolex** (digitalbolex.com)

Venerable Swiss camera maker Bolex dives into the 21st century with Kickstarter-funded Digital Bolex and its new pistol-gripped, CCD-sensored, RAW 2K-shooting D16 model. While the first run of D16s are sold out as of this printing, one can pre-order the second round on their website, on sale late 2013/early 2014 for just \$3,299.

5) **Gathr** (gathr.us)

6) And **Tugg** (tugg.com)

Skip the dicey journey of traditional distribution and take the exhibition of your film into your own hands. Equal-access distributors Tugg and Gathr allow moviemakers to schedule and promote screenings for their own fanbase. Reach a certain seat-count quota and you're all set to watch your film at the venue of your choice.

7) **Glidecam** (glidecam.com)

Glidecam separates itself from its competition by offering a line of camera stabilizers that is both versatile and won't break the bank. And if their prices still don't meet your budget, buy a used demonstration model in complete working order for an even lower price.

8) **ikan** (ikancorp.com)

Texas-based ikan designs and manufactures digital video and DSLR gear, from video production monitors to camera support and components, lights, teleprompters, software, bags, batteries and chargers.

9) **IndieClear** (indieclear.com)

Now that you've read our legal article (pg. 18-20), you know how important the script clearance IndieClear provides is. Tirelessly independent in their clientele, they draw up a report already tailored for an attorney to review, saving his time and your legal fees.

10) **Indie Film Factory** (indiefilmfactory.com)

A reader puts it like this: "They provide an inexpensive and supportive studio for the up-and-coming Las Vegas independent film community. Not only that, but they host seminars on a weekly basis to help teach new filmmakers the basics to help them get their projects made. They are as indie-friendly as it gets. Hands down."

11) **JAG35** (jag35.com)

JAG35 grew out of DIY 35mm adaptors that its founders built for their HV20 camcorders. The company has since expanded to a large range of gear—packaged into affordable bundles in their online store.

12) **JuntoBox Films** (juntoboxfilms.com)

JuntoBox Films is a collaborative online studio and social media platform that produces projects chosen by community. Beyond funding, green-lighting, marketing and distribution, indie-friendly touches like a "crew up" feature help moviemakers connect with others to work on their projects.

13) **Michael Wiese Productions** (mwp.com)

There's simply no area of moviemaking that Michael Wiese Productions hasn't published a comprehensive array of literature on. Their catalog of books, all available online, reads like a veritable four-year film school syllabus, perfect for any moviemaker who wants to improve their craft.

14) **Noise Industries** (noiseindustries.com)

Noise Industries' FxFactory offers hundreds of cutting-edge visual effects plug-ins for Final Cut Pro, Motion, Premiere Pro and After Effects at an affordable price. Equally invaluable to both the beginner and the expert post-production artist, their packages are a steal for the polished results.

15) **The Padcaster** (thepadcaster.com)

Padcaster founder Josh Apter says he wanted to make use of his iPad's HD camera, but "rigging it up with a mic, tripod and other gear was a real challenge." Thus the Padcaster was born—an aluminum frame (with flexible insert) that holds an iPad, allowing better DIY moviemaking for only \$149.

16) **Revolution Cinema Rentals** (revolutioncinemarentals.com)

"Because we're a boutique rental shop," Q Edwards of Revolution Rentals told *MovieMaker* earlier this year, "it allows us to be pretty aggressive and come up with solutions within people's budgets." Their San Fernando location makes them convenient for Hollywood, and they ship worldwide as well.

17) **SAGIndie** (sagindie.org)

SAGIndie has a casting listing, a production directory, and regular workshops for moviemakers using the five low-budget contracts for SAG-AFTRA actors—those all-important agreements that allow a production on even the slightest budget to employ professional actors.

18) **Seed&Spark** (seedandspark.com)

The alternative crowdfunding platform to oft-overcrowded megaliths Kickstarter and Indiegogo, with more personalization and more choice. "Rethinking the way films are made and marketed, and bringing together a community to support them.

19) **Shooting People** (shootingpeople.org)

The indie film community Shooting People consists of 38,000 members who use the social network to connect with cast, crew and myriad other collaborators. With access to funding calls, film commissions, industry feedback, and discounts for festivals and services, the \$45/year membership fee seems well-spent.

20) **Studio Depot** (studiodepot.com)

A quick browse of Studio Depot's online store categories boggles the mind at the sheer amount of moviemaking paraphernalia in their stock—from "Sound Equipment" to "Globes, Lamps, Light Bulbs," "Digital, Lighting and Fog Effects," "Rope and Cord," and even "Janitorial Supplies." They offer various student and union discounts, too.

21) **Tangerine Digital** (tangerinedigital.com)

Tangerine Digital is a digital content management agency specializing in media distribution, monetization and analytics. Moviemakers seeking to expand the reach of their content across nontraditional platforms may do well to employ these experts.

22) **Trew Audio** (trewaudio.com)

Trew Audio sells a range of specialized products for the tricky art of location sound recording. From their offices in Los Angeles, Toronto, Vancouver and Nashville, Trew Audio promises to provide a high level of cost-consciousness and personalized customer service from experienced professionals.

23) **Vimeo** (vimeo.com)

With its new Vimeo on Demand platform, the already-popular online streaming platform Vimeo upped the indie-friendly stakes, offering a fantastic depth of control while maintaining the name-brand familiarity of a top destination platform.

24) **Yekra** (yekra.com/corp/)

We've been talking up a storm about Yekra of late, but that's because for the right independent film, their online distribution strategy makes a lot of sense. Yekra advocates bringing a movie straight to the people who want to see it via the championing of affiliates.

25) **Canon** (usa.canon.com/cusa/home)

Seems counterintuitive, but *here's* why Canon is an indie-friendly business: their EOS series, with high-quality h.264-based codecs, are the best option for moviemakers looking to venture into the world of DSLR filmmaking, with a price-quality ratio that is undeniably advantageous.

Know any other businesses that we should get friendly with? Please let us know in the comments below! We'd love your help in compiling next year's list. **MM**