

Power Brokers of the Porn Industry

Women are the main attraction in the adult entertainment industry, but when it comes to the people behind the scenes, it's very much a male-dominated business. While there are some cracks in the glass ceiling, men still hold most of the power positions in porn—and that's likely to be evident at the industry's annual expo in Las Vegas Jan. 6-9. Some of the power players in porn are familiar names, but a significant number have very low public profiles. All of them, though, have significant influence and authority throughout the industry – and sometimes, that's entirely by accident. Here's a look at the industry's power brokers. *By Chris Morris, Special to CNBC.com Posted 6 Jan 2011*

Paul Cambria

Author, columnist and occasional porn director Tristan Taormino calls Cambria "the most powerful person in porn." Cambria, an attorney whose clients include Vivid Entertainment and Larry Flint, is best known for creating a 2001 list of sex acts that ran the risk of prosecution from the Bush administration. Today, when Vivid (which has a thriving celebrity sex tape business) needs a ruling on whether a film can be released it calls on Cambria.

Steven Hirsch

Co-chairman and founder of Vivid, the industry's largest studio, Hirsch is also something of a spokesperson for the porn industry. He developed many business models that have been adopted throughout the business, such as putting sought-after stars under exclusive contract and making high-budget films that might appeal to couples as well as solo viewers. Vivid dominates porn and has launched some of the biggest stars (including Jenna Jameson), and released some of the biggest films of all time, including sex tapes from Pamela Anderson, Kim Kardashian and Jimi Hendrix.

Larry Flynt

The publisher of "Hustler Magazine" and its popular film studio, Flint is one of the industry's more controversial figures, but his power in porn has never wavered. The Hustler brand also extends to casinos, mainstream clothing lines and adult novelty stores. He has withstood several legal challenges, including a Supreme Court case in 1988. Most

recently, he [sued two of his nephews](#) , alleging they were using his family name to sell "inferior" porn.

Hugh Hefner

Hefner prefers to stand apart from the porn industry, noting his efforts in adult entertainment have been more high brow, but Playboy has launched several stars. And if it weren't for the ground the magazine had tread, today's porn industry would be much smaller. Hefner's company also owns several pay TV networks dedicated to adult programming, and runs a station for Sirius radio that openly and frankly discusses sexual issues.

Samantha Lewis

The co-owner and CEO of Digital Playground, Lewis was in the real estate business when someone brought porn to her attention. Since then, she has built one of the larger production companies in the industry. More importantly, the company's contract stars have deep loyalties to her, regarding her almost as a mother figure. When the industry shut down earlier this year, she found other work at the company for displaced employees, so they wouldn't see a significant interruption in income.

Frank Koretsky

Koretsky owns IVD and East Coast News – the largest distribution companies in the porn industry worldwide. Whether it's a DVD or adult novelty, if it's on the shelf at the adult store in your town, there's a good chance it passed through one of Koretsky's companies. Headquartered in New Jersey, Koretsky's also active in commercial and residential real estate.

Ron Braverman

The sex-toy industry is the fastest growing segment in adult entertainment--and there's no bigger company than Braverman's Doc Johnson. Braverman is CEO of the company, which boasts a catalog of more than 5,000 items. Smaller boutique companies can command higher prices for their products, but no one can match Doc Johnson when it comes to volume.

Derek Hay

Hay runs L.A. Direct Models, one of the industry's biggest booking agencies. His clients include Lexi Belle and Tori Black, two of the industry's [most popular performers](#) , and his brusque, straightforward manner commands both respect and fear – along with a little bit of

loathing – in the industry. But with over 140 performers working for him, Hay is on everyone's list.

Mark Franks

Franks, the CEO and president of Castle Megastore, oversees the biggest chain of adult-merchandise stores in the country. In 17 stores across five states, the company has steadily built its presence over 23 years. Companies frequently use the stores as the launching pad for new products and movies.

Allison Vivas

Over the past four years, the president of Pink Visual has helped that company become one of the more innovative porn makers in the mobile space, launching, for instance, the first iPhone dedicated Website. That briefly earned Vivas an "Entrepreneur of the Year" award from Newt Gingrich's 527 Group in 2009 – until it realized what Pink Visual produced. More recently, Vivas made headlines with a tongue-in-cheek job offer to Conan O'Brien after he was fired from The Tonight Show.

Michael Weiner

The CEO and chairman of New Frontier Media, Weiner oversees nine adult-themed, pay-per-view networks, including XTSY, TEN and Penthouse TV, which are carried by cable and satellite operators around the country. Instead of the \$3.99 consumers pay for a new Hollywood release, they pay up to \$14.99 per film for New Frontier's offerings. The company is also often the producer of films that air late at night on Cinemax and Showtime.

Mary O'Connor

You've probably never heard of O'Connor – and she has nothing to do with the traditional porn industry per se - but if you want to get into a Playboy Mansion party, you need to know her name. Since 1974, she has been the personal secretary of Hugh Hefner – and the gatekeeper of the mansion's shindigs. She also made several cameos on "The Girls Next Door" on E!.