

THE PODCAST SHOWNOTES COOKBOOK



**6 INGREDIENTS OF
GREAT SHOWNOTES
(WITH REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES!)**

Introduction

Shownotes are important. But they're also a pain in the arse.



Let's start with the positive. They're important because listeners value a summary of the topic, they look for links to the things you mentioned, they might want to play a particular section again, or they might want some follow-up material.

They're a pain in the arse because you've already recorded the content, but now you've got a bunch of admin to do before you can put it out into the world. And that admin tends to take a while.

The thing is, you can make them easier with a bit of structure. A simple template which you can use, week in, week out, saves a lot of time. You can also reduce the pain if you make them so effective that the benefits are huge. That might be in:

- ⦿ Growing your audience
- ⦿ Turning listeners into subscribers
- ⦿ Turning subscribers into raving fans
- ⦿ Turning anyone into a paying supporter

If they work - they really, really work - then that hour you spend creating them isn't a pain in the arse any more - it's worth every second.

How to use this guide

This guide will give you a cookbook for great shownotes. It outlines the ingredients you can choose from when you put them together.

You might not use them all, but it'll help you put together a standard 'recipe' for your shownotes to use every time. That recipe will save you time and it'll train your listeners to take action on it.

Once you start to offer them the same things, every week, then they know exactly where to go and why they should do it. That's the way to get them to take action. And action is what leads to you smashing your aims.

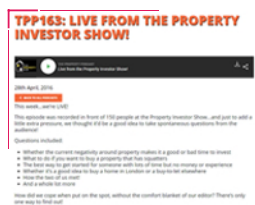
Read the ingredients, and choose a recipe that suits you. Then try out for a month.

If you find an ingredient isn't working, then dump it. If you find the recipe works, and doesn't take too much time, then try adding something else.

Find what works for you, stick to it, and you'll see results in no time.

1. The Essentials: Intro & Links

We're starting with two ingredients, because these are essential. This is the very least I think you can get away with. Here's what the **minimum viable shownotes** look like.



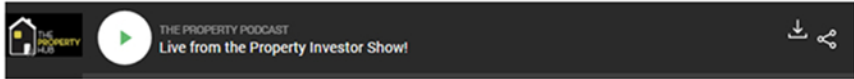
➔ Introduction:

One paragraph, just a few sentences, introducing the topic. List one or two big benefits of listening. What's the best and most unique thing the listener will gain? That's how you sell them on listening.

This can double as the description field in your ID3 tags.

1. The Essentials: Intro & Links

TPP163: LIVE FROM THE PROPERTY INVESTOR SHOW!



28th April, 2016

[← BACK TO ALL PODCASTS](#)

This week...we're LIVE!

This episode was recorded in front of 150 people at the Property Investor Show...and just to add a little extra pressure, we thought it'd be a good idea to take spontaneous questions from the audience!

Questions included:

- Whether the current negativity around property makes it a good or bad time to invest
- What to do if you want to buy a property that has squatters
- The best way to get started for someone with lots of time but no money or experience
- Whether it's a good idea to buy a home in London or a buy-to-let elsewhere
- How the two of us met!
- And a whole lot more

How did we cope when put on the spot, without the comfort blanket of our editor? There's only one way to find out!

Screenshot from *The Property Podcast*

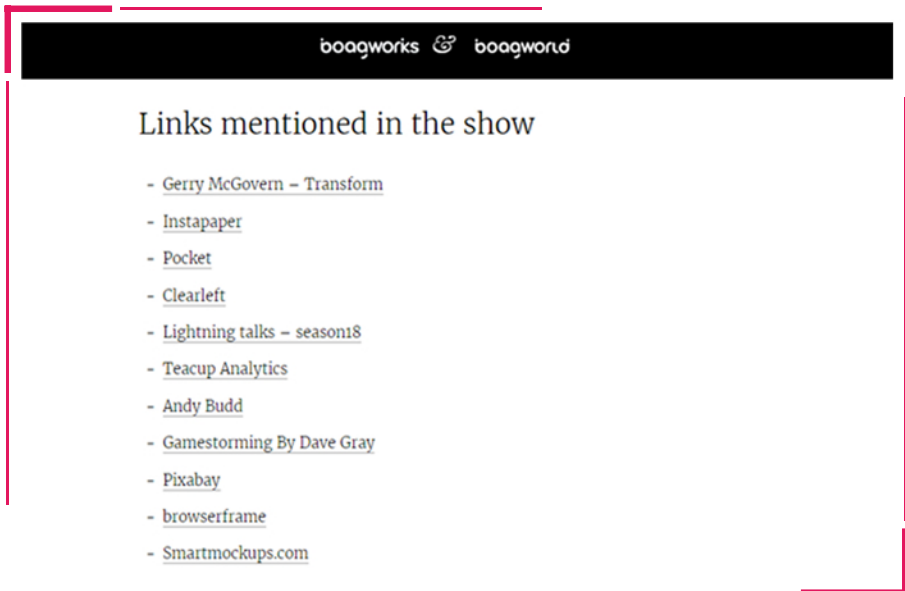
💡 Other examples:

- ◎ **The Scott Barstow Show:** Simple and effective.
- ◎ **The Content Marketing Academy:** Including great bullet points for benefits.
- ◎ **Mad Marketing:** Summary and bullets with great effect.

1. The Essentials: Intro & Links

Links:

A bullet point list of all of the resources, the people and the companies mentioned on the show. Link to each of them.



Screenshot from *Boagworld*.

Other examples:

- ◎ **The Tim Ferriss Show** Always a slew of resources to follow up on.

2. Key Takeaways

Include key takeaways in your shownotes to give listeners a really top-level summary of what they can learn from the show. This means highlighting your top teachings in a solo/co-hosted show, or it means drawing out the most important lessons when you're interviewing someone else.

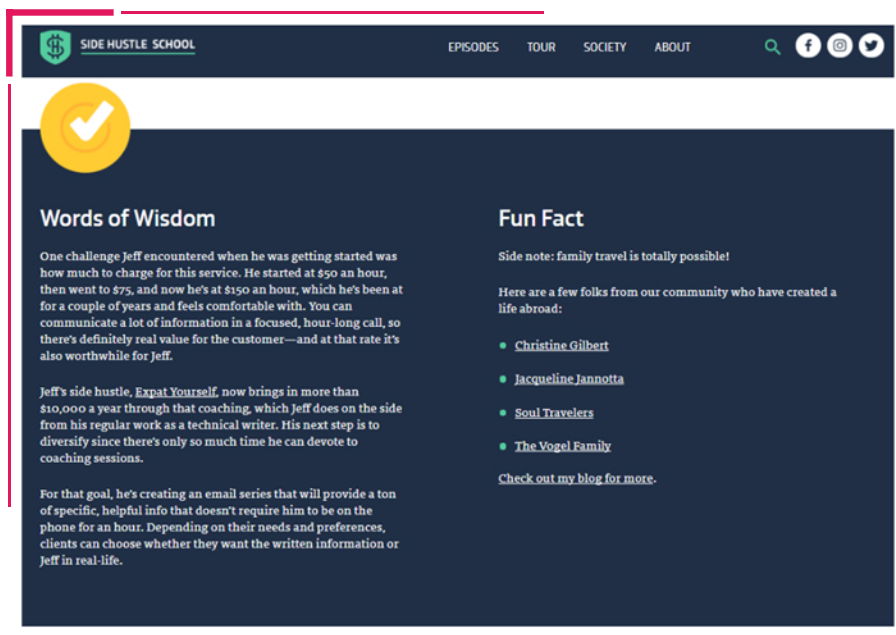


We do this because sometimes listeners don't have time to consume every show you put out. They just want to quickly skim what they missed. Or perhaps they enjoyed the episode, months ago, and want a reminder of what they learned.

? How:

Pick out the most important takeaways from the episode - from just 1, up to 4 or 5 - and list them in bullet-point form in the shownotes.

2. Key Takeaways



The screenshot shows the website for Side Hustle School. The header includes the logo, navigation links (EPISODES, TOUR, SOCIETY, ABOUT), and social media icons. A yellow checkmark icon is visible in the top left. The main content area is dark blue and features two columns of text.

Words of Wisdom

One challenge Jeff encountered when he was getting started was how much to charge for this service. He started at \$50 an hour, then went to \$75, and now he's at \$150 an hour, which he's been at for a couple of years and feels comfortable with. You can communicate a lot of information in a focused, hour-long call, so there's definitely real value for the customer—and at that rate it's also worthwhile for Jeff.

Jeff's side hustle, *Expat Yourself*, now brings in more than \$10,000 a year through that coaching, which Jeff does on the side from his regular work as a technical writer. His next step is to diversify since there's only so much time he can devote to coaching sessions.

For that goal, he's creating an email series that will provide a ton of specific, helpful info that doesn't require him to be on the phone for an hour. Depending on their needs and preferences, clients can choose whether they want the written information or Jeff in real-life.

Fun Fact

Side note: family travel is totally possible!

Here are a few folks from our community who have created a life abroad:

- [Christine Gilbert](#)
- [Jacqueline Jannotta](#)
- [Soul Travelers](#)
- [The Vogel Family](#)

[Check out my blog for more.](#)

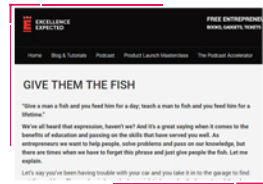
Screenshot from *Side Hustle School*.

💡 Other examples:

🕒 Excellence Expected

3. Full Summary

The full summary is a step up from both an introduction and the key takeaways. It outlines the entire episode, covering all of the lessons, tips and resources.

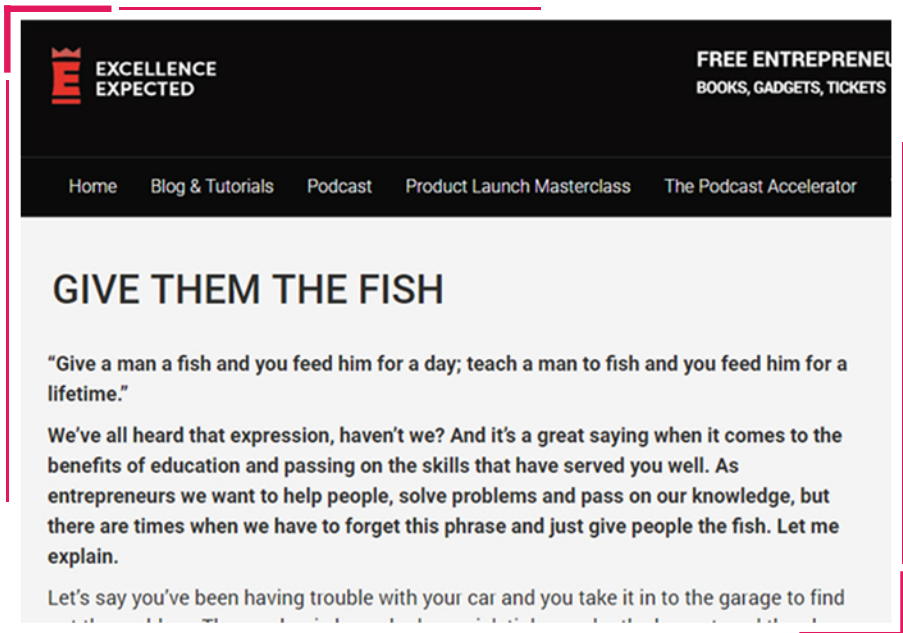


The full summary is great for listeners who enjoyed your content and want to review the learnings. Key takeaways aren't enough for them - they want the full story so they can extract every ounce of value - and for that they need the full summary.

? How:

Write up a summary based on your episode script. Or, if you're freestyling, listen back and type it up as you go along. This isn't a word for word transcript, it's a summary of all of the useful information.

3. Full Summary



Screenshot from *Excellence Expected*

💡 Other examples:

- 🕒 **Inc:** Full, but brief, summary done well with links.

4. Time Codes

Include an outline of the episode with timecodes, so that your listeners can jump to the exact spot they're interested in. This is for listeners who want to revisit a segment that really hit home. Or, it can be useful to time-pressed fans who can't listen to the whole episode, but still want certain parts.

Show Notes

- How do I feel about personality metrics such as Myers-Briggs, and what's my type? (25:00)
- Why I study questions to prompt introspection (26:40)
- What are the most common misconceptions people have about my work or philosophy? (28:00)
- What inspired the act for *Tracks of Thorns*? (32:30)
- What I think about before putting anything out into the world (33:30)
- What do I love most about being a mom? (34:30)
- What is my current view on balancing future focus goals and enjoying the present moment? (36:30)
- Why I don't say to go after your "vision" or "passion" -- and what I prefer instead. (38:00)
- Why I embrace being a jerk at all times. (38:10)
- What is my ultimate in difficult situations? (39:45)
- How many goals do I think would be where they are now if they followed their own advice to their teenage selves? (40:45)
- Memory retention, 50/50 breakdown, and training advice for students preparing to take a big test. (40:55)
- Effective ways to cultivate higher confidence. (44:00)
- *Subscribe to 50 Shades Friday* if you want to see the questions for the next round (45:00)

? How:

Create a bullet point list of the segments within the show and, during your listen through, note the time that they appear. This can be done alongside other ingredients, like the full summary.

4. Time Codes

Show Notes

- How do I feel about personality metrics such as Myers-Briggs, and what's my type? [05:09]
- Ways I study questions to prompt introspection. [05:49]
- What are the most common misconceptions people have about my work or philosophy? [08:00]
- What missed the cut for Tools of Titans? [12:35]
- What I think about before putting anything out into the world. [15:12]
- What do I see myself doing when I reach old age, and would I take immortality if it became medically available? [20:30]
- What is my current view on balancing future focus goals and enjoying the present moment? [26:28]
- Why I don't say to go after your "vision" or "passion" — and what I prefer instead. [30:49]
- Why I endorse being a jack of all trades. [34:16]
- What is my self-talk in difficult situations? [37:41]
- How many guests do I think would be where they are now if they followed their own advice to their younger selves? [42:43]
- Memory retention, 80/20 breakdown, and training advice for students preparing to take a big test. [46:47]
- Effective ways to cultivate higher confidence. [54:09]
- [Subscribe to 5-Bullet Friday](#) if you want to ask me questions for the next round [1:00:49]

Screenshot from *The Tim Ferriss Show*

💡 Other examples:

- ◎ Excellent Expected
- ◎ Steal the Show

5. Lead Magnet

One for you AND your listeners: offer something useful that builds on the episode content. If you're talking about meditation, offer a free guided meditation recording. If you're teaching woodworkers how to build a chair, offer a cutting template PDF. The key thing is, this is something desirable that gives the listener something extra. That's what's in it for them.



What's in it for YOU is that, in exchange, they give you their email address. They have to fill in an email opt-in. Now they're on your list, you can work to give them even more great stuff, and turn them into true raving fans.

? How:

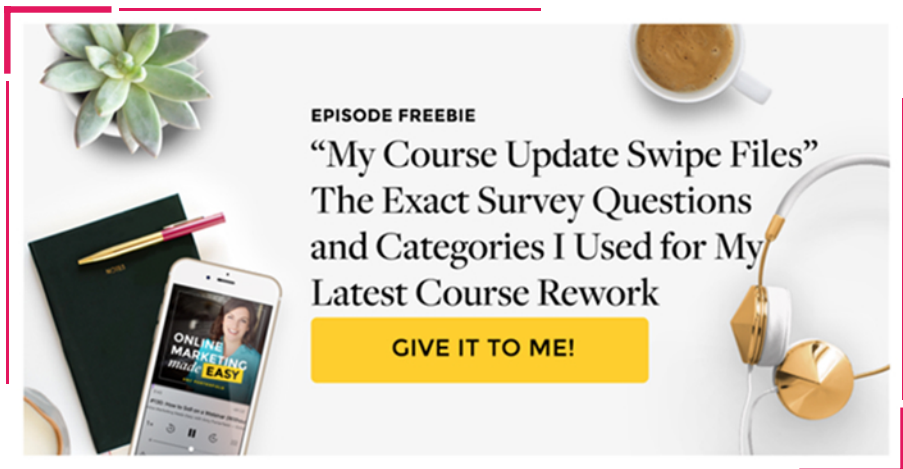
The 'ideal' model is to create something really specific for every episode, and mention that on the show. Because it's directly related to what they're listening to, this has a great conversion rate.

5. Lead Magnet

Amy Porterfield is a master at this, pictured below.

The more achievable method is to have just a few resources which apply more broadly to your audience, and mention them on relevant episodes. Eg. If we're talking on Podcraft about a particular audio editing technique, we might offer our general editing resource called 'Our Pro Audio Editing Checklist for Crystal Clear Audio.'

The lowest work method is to create one good general resource that applies to everyone in your audience and is mentioned on every episode. For example, our 'How to Podcast' ebook.



Screenshot from *Online Marketing Made Easy with Amy Porterfield*.

5. Lead Magnet

Other examples:

- ◎ **The Membership Guys:** Downloadable PDF resource
- ◎ **Meaningful Money:** Optin Transcript

6. Transcription

A transcription is a straight up, word for word, text version of your episode. This is the easiest method for creating a text companion, since it's possible to have external companies - like [rev.com](#) - create a transcription for you at a reasonable cost. Transcriptions can form the bulk of a shownotes page, or they can be offered as an extra, perhaps even in a minimised box as Darren Rowse from Pro Blogger does. They can also be offered as a leadmagnet: opt-in to download the PDF, as Pete Matthew from [Meaningful Money](#) does.



Some fans may even consume the transcription more than the audio, and it also makes your content more accessible to hearing impaired visitors.

? How:

Send the audio file to [rev.com](#) for a fully automated, but highest cost, process (around \$1 per minute). Or use [Trint](#) and a little manual editing for a cheaper but higher maintenance method. Then copy the

6. Transcription

transcript into your shownotes page. Of course, you can always do it yourself for free - but that would take aaaaaages.

▶ [21 Ways to Drive a Better Blog](#)

▶ [10 Things You Can Do Today that Will Pay Off On Your Blog Forever](#)

Full Transcript

▶ [Expand to view full transcript](#)

ProBlogger and all we do over at problogger.com.

Today's episode is episode 201. In it, I want to talk about a key to creating a blog with lots of traffic and profit. It comes from a conversation I had this morning with a new blogger who was asking me about how to create content that will go viral. As I look back on the growth of my own blog, I think it's a really important lesson for bloggers of all stages, good reminders on how to grow a business around your blog and traffic to your blog.

You can find today's show notes with some further listening at the end at problogger.com/podcast/201. Also, join our Facebook group at problogger.com/group. Just wanted to let you know, a bit of a reminder of our events that we've got coming up. If you are in Australia, we do have a limited number of tickets left for our events that are happening at the end of July and the start of August in Melbourne and Brisbane. You can get more information on those events at problogger.com/events.

If you're in America and can get to Dallas, Texas, in October, we've got a great event coming up there. You can find out

How did you go with today's episode?

Screenshot from *ProBlogger Podcast*.

Other examples:

- ◎ **Boagworld:** Full edited transcript with added links, sections and headers.
- ◎ **Mike Cernovich Podcast:** Full edited transcript with nicely highlighted quotes.
- ◎ **Meaningful Money:** Uses a transcript as a lead magnet.
- ◎ **Steal the Show:** Nice dropdown version.

7. Script

An interesting alternative to summaries and transcripts is to actually just offer your podcast script. Some podcasters prepare in a way that their scripts are not only readable, they're really useful.



The script can then go alongside the minimum offering of intro and links, to help flesh out the information you offer on an episode. The benefit, of course, is that this is something you're doing already, so it's quite a quick and easy way to make your shownotes stand out a little more.

This one really benefits from an example - check out this excellent specimen, [one of Jeff Sanders' scripts](#), for the 5AM Miracle. You can also see [how we think about scripting](#) here.

Similar to transcripts, the script can also be offered as a lead-magnet, requiring an email address optin to receive it.

7. Script

? How:

If you already create an extensive script (anything from detailed bullet points to a word-for-word record) then you can just post that on the shownotes page. If you don't, then try fleshing out your plans a little more, include the main points and takeaways, until it becomes readable to a non-listener. You never know, the extra planning might end up improving the audio content too!



Photo Credit: Elle Rae, Flickr via Compfight cc

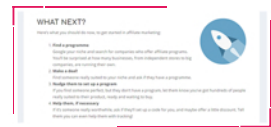
Download the Script

Here you have access to the script that I use to record each episode. This is not a complete word-for-word transcript, though it does provide you with a detailed account of what I do to produce every episode of this podcast. [Download the script.](#)

Screenshot from *the 5AM Miracle Podcast*.

8. Tasks or Next Steps

This is the one that people always miss, and it amazes me. Maybe it's the teacher in me, but I've got to give homework! Without homework, you're just spouting a load of information, and the listener isn't really learning. It takes action to really drive home a point. If you can give the listener an action or two that makes a real difference in their life, then that's even more powerful.



If you want more on how and why this works, here's an article that includes [the 3 Laws of Teaching](#), and why thinking like a teacher is the BEST way to grow your audience.

Even if you're not teaching, this still applies. You might ask the listener to contribute to next week's content, or you might tell them to go read a book, or watch a TV show that you talked about.

It's a small thing, but giving them something to do, and then discussing it on the next show, even just a

8. Tasks or Next Steps

little, hugely increases how engaged a listener feels with the show. It's not longer at a distance - it's something they're interacting with.

WHAT NEXT?

Here's what you should do now, to get started in affiliate marketing:

1. Find a programme

Google your niche and search for companies who offer affiliate programs. You'll be surprised at how many businesses, from independent stores to big companies, are running their own.

2. Make a deal!

Find someone really suited to your niche and ask if they have a programme.

3. Nudge them to set up a program

If you find someone perfect, but they don't have a program, let them know you've got hundreds of people really suited to their product, ready and waiting to buy.

4. Help them, if necessary

If it's someone really worthwhile, ask if they'll set up a code for you, and maybe offer a little discount. Tell them you can even help them with tracking!



Screenshot from *Season 5 of Podcraft*.

? How:

Here are some suggestions:

1. If you're teaching, pick a task that puts your teaching into action. For example, if I did an episode on how to script your podcast, I'd ask them to complete a few steps: a. go write a word for word script for their podcast

8. Tasks or Next Steps

introduction, b. Record that script, c. write an outline bullet point script, d. Record that script, e. Compare the two and decide which approach suits them best.

2. If you're an entertainment podcast, ask the listener to answer a question which contributes to the next, or a future episode. For example, next episode we're going to discuss our top 3 games from our childhood. What was your favourite? Let us know and we'll feature the most mentioned three from you, our listeners.

9. Shareable Quotes

One way to kick-start both listener engagement AND promotion is to include some shareable quotes right there in your shownotes. By shareable, I mean using a ['click to tweet'](#) tool for Wordpress, which allows a reader to really quickly tweet out your top quotes.



? How:

To put this into action, pick out 1 or 2 really actionable, memorable quotes from the show. You can make this quicker by keeping it in mind during recording, and noting down timecodes when you notice a possible 'top quote.' Distill the best 1 or 2 quotes down to 100 or so characters and then use your 'click to tweet' tool to include them in the shownotes.

9. Shareable Quotes



"THERE IS NOTHING MORE POWERFUL THAN BELIEF."

👉 CLICK TO TWEET

Screenshot from *The School of Greatness*.

💡 Other examples:

- ◎ Excellence Expected
- ◎ The Membership Guys Podcast

10. Next Week

This is a simple one, but, again, often missed. And why? Mostly due to lack of planning, I think. If you can manage to plan at least 1 week ahead, then a simple mention of “This, on next week’s Show” can have a big effect on your listener retention.



Why? Because it gives them a concrete reason to come back. Tease them with next week’s topic, share a few benefits, and tell them when it’s coming.

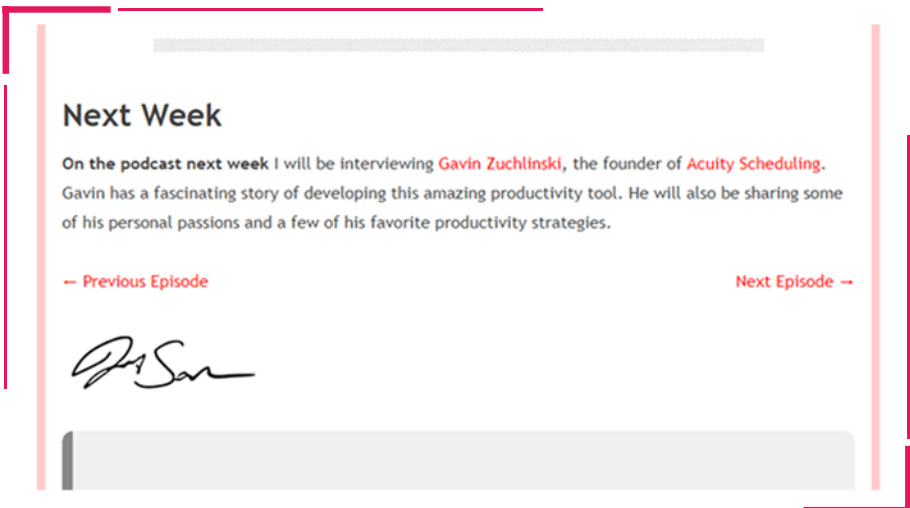
? How:

This simply takes a bit of planning. Sit down and lay out your topics every month or two. That allows you to tease forward to future shows.

Even better, once you release that future show, edit the shownotes of the previous episode to link directly to it. Then, you’re not only encouraging the listener to

10. Next Week

come back next week, but, if they come across the shownotes in future, you're encouraging multiple listens, and driving people through more and more content.



Screenshot from *the 5AM Miracle Podcast*.

11. Prominent Subscribe

It's surprising to me, every time I look at my stats, how many people listen to podcasts straight from a website. The scariest thing with that? They're not subscribed!



That means you're relying on them actively seeking you out every week. Let's be honest, more often than not, that's not going to happen. And that's why we need to really encourage them to subscribe to the show.

? How:

Most of the good podcast players include subscribe buttons, so that's a good start. Use the newer BluBrry and Libsyn players, for example, or the independent Simple Podcast Press plugin. Even better, though, is to create a template subscribe block that goes into every one of your shownotes. It should tell the listener why, and direct to their listening platform of choice. **Make it obvious and easy!**

11. Prominent Subscribe

STEAL the SHOW

The Book Arc

In this episode, we discussed:

- Why both online courses and info products can be valuable to your business. (5:30)
- Learn why the transformation from a course is where the magic is. Interaction is just a bonus. (10:39)
- No matter how brilliant you are, there are only so many things you can do well. (16:45)
- Sometimes people are ready to buy your product because it is exactly what they need. This may or may not correspond with a typical sales funnel. (19:15)
- Why a course should be rebuilt from scratch each year. Getting lots of feedback is the key to knowing what to change. (26:36)
- Find out how much content you should have to create a course. The answer will make you uncomfortable. (30:02)



Listen to all episodes
for free on itunes



Screenshot from *Steal the Show*.

💡 Other examples:

- ◎ **The 5AM Miracle Podcast:** Can't-miss-it subscribe box.
- ◎ **The Membership Guys:** Excellent prominent iTunes Subscribe box.
- ◎ **The Big Shift:** nice simple box style.

12. Shareable Images

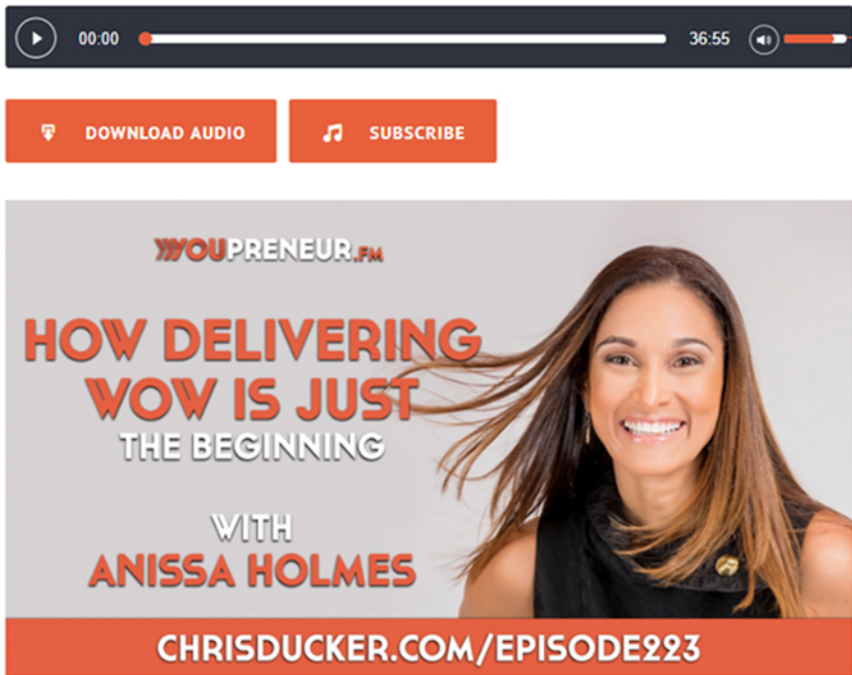
This is a similar tactic to #8, simply replacing a great quote with a great image. Even better, create the image with social media specifically in mind, combining text and images to really drive a click 'n listen.



? How:

Choose your main platform - Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc - and create your banner for their dimensions (currently 1024 x 512 on Twitter, for example). Include the episode title, the podcast name and a link, if possible. The title should persuade people to click, the name helps grow brand awareness and the link just makes it all that much easier for people to find the episode.

12. Shareable Images



Once the day-to-day rhythm of a profitable business has become established, many entrepreneurs start looking for more. They look to leave a legacy that can create a

Screenshot from Youpreneur.fm

💡 Other examples:

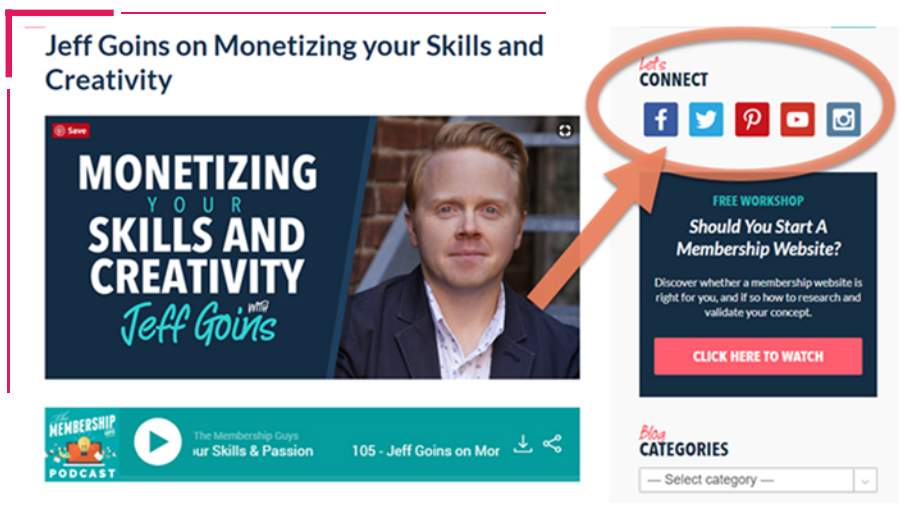
- ⦿ <http://www.excellence-expected.com/episode148/>
- ⦿ <http://stealtheshow.com/podcast/how-to-get-everything-you-want-chris-voss/>

13. Contact on Social

Another way to grow engagement, of course, is to encourage fans to follow your social channels. That's where you can build a relationship, and do even more work to promote new and old content.

? How:

Include subscribe links for your favoured channels within each episode post, or visible elsewhere on-screen.



The image shows a screenshot of a podcast episode post. The main title is "Jeff Goins on Monetizing your Skills and Creativity". Below the title is a video player with a dark blue background and white text that reads "MONETIZING YOUR SKILLS AND CREATIVITY" and "Jeff Goins". To the right of the video player is a portrait of Jeff Goins. Below the video player is a green bar with the "MEMBERSHIP GUYZ" logo, a play button icon, and the text "The Membership Guyz for Skills & Passion" and "105 - Jeff Goins on Mor". To the right of the video player is a white box with a red border. At the top of this box is the text "Let's CONNECT" and a row of social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, and Instagram. An orange circle highlights these icons, and an orange arrow points from the video player to the social media icons. Below the social media icons is a dark blue box with white text that reads "FREE WORKSHOP" and "Should You Start A Membership Website?". Below this text is a red button that says "CLICK HERE TO WATCH". At the bottom of the white box is a section titled "Blog CATEGORIES" with a dropdown menu that says "— Select category —".

Screenshot from *The Membership Guys Podcast*.

14. The Full Blog Post

In an ideal world, you're not posting shownotes, you're releasing a full blog post on the topic. By that, I mean that you're covering the whole topic in a way that really suits the text medium. It just so happens that the blog post is accompanied by a podcast episode, the player included on the page.



The advantage of this is that a full blog post is far more likely to be found in search results, since it's valuable written content, created specifically for reading. It also serves as a full refresher for listeners, if they want to come back and revise your content.

? How:

After you've finished recording, start writing. Create a blog post using the same plan as your podcast episode. It should cover the entire topic so, even if they never listen to the podcast episode, the reader gets the same information. Of course, include

14. The Full Blog Post

subscribe links, a player and any other element from this cookbook. That'll persuade them to listen, and hopefully turn them into a raving fan of your show.



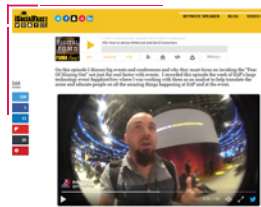
Screenshot from *Noah Kagan Presents*.

💡 Other examples:

- 🕒 The Mountain Bikes Apart podcast

15. Multimedia Post

This could be an alternative, or an addition, to the full blog post: the entire multimedia experience. That means adding video!



? How:

Record your episode on video, making sure to capture great quality audio. Then, take the audio off the video track - that's your podcast. But also use the video to create 2 or more clips from the show and include them on your shownotes. Now you have shownotes that include an audio player and some video clips. It's full multimedia, allowing your audience to consume it in whatever way they like!

15. Multimedia Post

subscribe links, a player and any other element from this cookbook. That'll persuade them to listen, and hopefully turn them into a raving fan of your show.

iSocialFanz KEYNOTE SPEAKER BLOG VIDEO P

DIGITAL F.O.M.O. CURE YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING FOMO! FOMOFANZ
032: How to attract Millennial and GenZ Customers

30% 00:00:00 1:30

On this episode I discuss big events and conferences and why they must focus on invoking the "Fear Of Missing Out" not just the cool factor with events. I recorded this episode the week of SAP's large technology event SapphireNow where I was working with them as an analyst to help translate the noise and educate people on all the amazing things happening at SAP and at the event.

164 SHARES

128
5
11
20
1

Brian Fanzo @SapphireNow

0:32 / 1:02

Screenshot from *the iSocialFanz Podcast*.

💡 Other examples:

- 🕒 **The Numbers Game:** a show that includes a full video version of the podcast, but cut into short segments for flexible consumption.