

WHY YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS A PODCAST

—THE WHY, THE WHAT &—
THE HOW OF RUNNING A SHOW



My Marketing Isn't Working



Have you recently come to the conclusion that traditional marketing techniques are becoming less and less effective for your business?

There's little doubt that the days of placing adverts in as many places as possible are over. Joe Pulizzi summed this up in his book, *Epic Content Marketing*, saying, "People don't care about you, your products, or your services. They care about themselves."

It's a sobering claim, and might sound a little harsh. But, in short, we just need to take the old approach:

Shouting from the rooftops about how good you are, what you offer, and why people should do business with you.

And replace it with a new approach:

Using your knowledge and experience to publish free information on a regular basis that people will find useful, helpful & invaluable. In return, they'll feel gratitude towards you, tell others about you, and come back for more.

This is a new approach to a lot of people, but it's not a new idea. There are entire books and businesses dedicated to the art of content marketing, and thousands of case studies showing how well it works. If you're helpful to your target audience, answering their questions and assuaging their fears, then you'll stand out in your market. You'll also build loyal customers and fanatical fans that'll help you do your marketing for you.

So, assuming you're convinced, let's think about how you want to release your content to the world.

Creating Content

There are a range of ways to publish your knowledge, including blogging, video, social media and of course, Podcasting. We'll come to why we like Podcasting, but we're the first to admit, it's not the right choice for everyone. Let's look at the alternatives first.

First off, the humble blog. This is the most popular choice for creating and putting out content, in large part because of the low barriers to entry. There are two big benefits to this medium:

1. The thought of typing, rather than speaking into a microphone, feels a lot easier and less intimidating to most people.
2. Blog posts are, of course, text based, which is the main way you'll be indexed in search engines like Google.

Next, we have video. Video's a popular medium, thanks in part to the success of YouTube. Here's what it has going for it:

1. You can get much more of your personality and uniqueness across 'in person' than in writing.
2. YouTube is a search engine itself, one of the largest in the world, so this is another place to be found.

Finally we have social media, that chatterbox of the internet:

1. It's immediate, it's quick and you reach people directly in their down-time.
2. It's social – there's two way communication that builds relationships

Ok, What About Podcasting?

Video, blogging and social media are all great ways to promote, but we believe that Podcasting has advantages over every one of them.

Ease of Entry

Blogging is the best format for ease of entry. For most people, it feels easier and less intimidating to type a blog post, than it does to record a podcast or a video. Like anything else, though, Podcasting or video becomes easier and more effective with practice.



Podcasting holds an advantage over video here too. It's easier to record your voice, on its own, than it is to record a video.

For example, with audio, you don't have to worry about your clothes, the background or your lighting. You also don't have to worry about remembering your material, because you can have notes right in front of you.

Accessing Your Audience

Another area in which podcasting excels is access. Through a podcast, you can reach your audience almost anywhere, at any time.

One reason for this is that most people have access to a smartphone or a mobile music device. They can be subscribed and listening to your show in a couple of clicks.

More importantly, once they've subscribed, your audience needs nothing more than their ears to consume your content. This is important: it means they can consume

podcasts at times and in places where they couldn't read a blog or watch a video.

You won't find many people reading blog posts or watching a video whilst driving the car, cycling, jogging, mowing the lawn, or taking a shower. None of this is an obstacle when it comes to listening to a podcast however. In fact, this leads to the next advantage:

Filling Wasted or Bored Time

The fact that they can listen alongside routine tasks, means that people are even hungrier for your content. They want to have someone with them when they're travelling somewhere, working out, or doing a menial task.

Podcasting Vs Radio

I'm sure you're thinking: "Well, that's what the radio is for!" You're right, podcasts are consumed in many of the same contexts.

But imagine being able to listen to a radio station which you have control over. You can

choose the topic and the presenters. You can fast forward bits, or rewind to hear that part you missed.

Podcasting is iPlayer or Tivo for talk radio, and it's talk radio for practically any subject you can think of.

Listen to the hosts you like, talking about subjects you love, at the perfect time for you.

You can be that person that entertains, enlightens or inspires them when they would otherwise be listening to songs they don't like on the radio.

Engagement

Speech is a very intimate medium. When reading, it's often the case that you can't truly judge the writer's tone of voice. It takes good writing to convey sincerity, or to get across the fact that you're joking, happy, sad, or angry.

In a podcast episode you *hear* and *feel* every single word that the host says. After listening

to just a handful of episodes, you genuinely start to feel like you know that person.

Video obviously carries the same benefit, and has an advantage in that you can see body language and appearance. A good video presenter can connect with the audience deeply if given the chance. But, being given that chance is difficult. And, that brings us to the final podcasting advantage.

Huge Attention



People are overloaded with information nowadays, with attention being split every which way. When someone reads a blog post

there's a plethora of articles and links alongside begging for their attention, such that it's often just skimmed, or abandoned half way.

Similar with video. Watching requires all of your attention, and in a place where you could be doing so many other things. To watch a 5 minute video you have to dedicate yourself to it, and keep your clicking finger away from the temptations of Facebook, the lure of online shopping, the endorphin release that is email.

In podcasting, however, your listener is often there looking for entertainment when there aren't many alternatives. The radio is there, but it's playing songs you don't like. Other than that, you have the view....?

In podcasting, people are far less likely to float from show to show without finishing anything. There are no distractions brought by other pieces of content, or links begging to be clicked. It's just you, your task and the entertainment alongside.

Talking of that task, even that brings advantages. Your listener is often physically preoccupied, doing something by rote, whether driving, ironing or cooking. That means they're less likely to immediately stop and change the podcast during a slow section (we all suffer from them from time to time...).

What About the Search Engines?

Finally, just to answer the question about search visibility. I mentioned that blog posts are more discoverable than audio in an internet search.

This is true, which is why we always accompany a podcast episode with its own show notes. This is just a fancy term for a blog post which forms the online home for that episode.

The contents of that blog post can range from a simple bullet point summary with the relevant resources, right up to a 1000 word article offering a written alternative. This essentially means that you're blogging AND podcasting in tandem of course. In a lot of cases this is exactly what we'd recommend to people as the ideal combo. Repurposing is always a great way to get better bang for your buck!

Some podcasters even have their entire episode transcribed word for word. Whichever route you choose here as a podcaster is entirely up to you. Each one ensures that you can easily be found in the search engines.

What Would My Business Podcast Look Like?

Remember the Joe Pulizzi quote I used at the beginning?

“People don’t care about you, your products, or your services. They care about themselves.”

This needs to be your starting point when planning a podcast series. Keeping that in mind, let’s take a look at the development of an example show.

Our fictional business is called “Jarvie's Clothing Company” based in Aberdeen, Scotland. They make hiking gear, such as boots, waterproofs, etc. Imagine they decided to create a podcast about the business and jotted down some ideas for their first three episodes:

Series Title “The Jarvie's Clothing Company Podcast”

Title “Episode 1”

Subject: We talk about the history of our business and how successful a company we are.

Title “Episode 2”

Subject: We had a new water cooler installed in the office, and we interview one of our employees about working for the company.

Title “Episode 3”

Subject: We talk about our new sales campaign, and we opened a new shop recently.

Straight out of the gate, you can tell this podcast would be an utter disaster. Who would listen to this, aside from those involved, and their friends and family? To be honest, friends and family would be a push too!

So, what have they done wrong?

First, the podcast title is bland and offers no value to potential listeners. Remember, they want to benefit from listening to a show, perhaps by learning something, being

entertained or being inspired. You need to start to convey, in the name, why it's worth listening to. You don't need to fully convince here, just start to hint.

The episode titles are also meaningless, and you'd be surprised how many people actually do name their episode "Episode X".

Most importantly, the subject matter is all about the business, rather than the listeners they want to attract. It's me, me, me, giving little incentive for anyone else to listen.

Imagine finding this show on iTunes, or any other podcast directory. Can you think of one reason that makes you want to listen?

So what could they have done instead?

First, let's look at the name. We need to put a bit of incentive to listen in there. It's tempting to be clever, include a pun or two, but those often don't inform or add value. They don't tend to tell you what the show is about. They could have named their show "The Hiking Podcast, with

Jarvie's" or – to niche down a bit – "The Jarvie's Scottish Hiking Podcast".

Next, their first 3 episodes might look something like this

Title: "Five 'hidden gem' hiking routes in the Scottish Highlands"

Subject: Where they are, how to find them, and why you need to walk them!

Title: "Seven simple 'must-have' items to have in your pack at all times"

Subject: These things won't cost much, they won't take up much room, and they could save your life!

Title: "What snacks should I take with me on my walks?"

Subject: Interview with nutritionist, we tell you the best foods you can take with you to keep you energised and well-nourished whilst out on the trail.

Now, anyone interested in walking, hiking or the outdoors can easily find this podcast, and they'll know right away what it offers.



Why Giving Away Ideas & Info is a Good Idea

Right now, you're probably thinking, "Okay, but if I'm just giving away information, how does that benefit my business?"

There are a range of ways that you'll benefit by spending time and effort to create and put out all this free content.

I mentioned at the start about using this intimate medium to build relationships with people. When someone listens to your show, they begin to feel like they know you. If they keep listening, it's because they like you, and this, combined with the great information you're giving out, leads to a huge amount of trust.

If that's the case, the next time your listener nips online to buy a new jacket, who do you think she will think of first?

You can become the go-to business in any space by publishing hugely valuable content for free. Your audience will listen, read, watch, grow to like and trust you, and will buy from you even though they now know everything you do. It's amazing how many people out there can know HOW to do something, but still want help in DOING it.

A final note on selling, this isn't banned from your show by any means. In fact, as long as the bulk of your show is valuable material to the listener, you should be doing at least a little selling in some form.

The easiest way to do this is to add short unobtrusive adverts. Essentially, you sponsor your own podcast.

Alternatively, you can simply mention your products, services and special offers in amongst the normal, engaging, informative content. It's natural that this will happen from time to time anyway, and is completely fine as long as it's not pushy.

Just remember that your podcast episodes will be found by new listeners for years to come, so try and avoid time sensitive special offers if you can.

Sounds Good, But I Need Immediate Results

When considering a new marketing method which requires time and financial investment, this is a natural reaction. But, let's keep in mind:

1. Usually, immediate results cost a lot of money.
2. Usually, immediate results have no longevity.

A good example is a business owner who decides to spend thousands on adverts in a few major newspapers. The business might receive a number of enquiries and sales in the days following release, but what then?

Best-case scenario, this advertising works well enough to pay for itself and earn a profit. That means the business owner can continue to place them.

In this situation, however, the minute calls start to tail off, the advertising immediately becomes a drain on resources. Even worse, as soon as you stop paying, the benefit completely disappears. Despite the fact that you've invested thousands of pounds and hours of time, all benefit is instantly gone.

It's like a hungry furnace that burns really expensive coal. The minute you stop feeding it, the fire will go out, and you'll have nothing left to show for it.

Regular content – in our case, a podcast – is something that you put time and resources into long term. Unlike the furnace, though, old content will continue to work for you long after you create it. It's an investment for the future, rather than a quick fix. Even better, the authority it generates isn't linear – the more you put out, the faster the effect accelerates.

Back to the furnace analogy, instead of feeding a fire with fuel, this is more like sowing seeds in a field. The seeds are going to germinate, grow, pollinate, multiply, leading to more and more yield, year after year.

With this in mind, think about whether the immediate results strategy is really worth it. Will it move your business forward on solid foundations? Ultimately, that decision does depend on your business, but ask yourself this: If you had started a podcast one year ago today, or placed a series of newspaper adverts one year ago today, which one would be marketing your business right now?

Make a note in your calendar to ask yourself that question in exactly one year's time.

In reality, both methods can work well together. Take half of your budget to place ads for immediate results and profit. Sow the other half of your budget into long term content marketing. This leads to smaller short term profits right now, but much larger long term gain.

Okay, But How Can Podcasting Benefit My Local Business?

If you run a taxi firm, a gardening service, or a café in Scotland, what use is 200 downloads in the USA?

Put Your Numbers in Context

Firstly, I'd encourage you to picture 200 people in your head. Imagine that crowd assembling every week to listen to your advice, your information and your entertainment. That number might seem small on paper, but what would you give right now to have that many people in a room finding out more about what you do. Even if that's the highest your audience grows, it's still a fantastic opportunity to build relationships, develop a community, and really have an impact in your field.

The Power of Referrals

So, what about the non-local aspect? They're elsewhere in the UK, or even in the US. They're not going to buy from you, right?

Firstly, having fans ANYWHERE is always beneficial. Word gets around, and, these days, the world is getting smaller and smaller. A fan of yours in London might have a brother in Fife who's looking for a plumber. Who's he going to tell his brother about?

If you have 1000 fans around the world, it doesn't matter where they are, referrals can always lead to local business.

Increased Local Search Rankings

Next, looking at the bigger picture, an increase in online interest through your podcast is hugely beneficial for your search rankings.

If a plumber's website is proving more popular through links, mentions and traffic than other

businesses in your area, then she's very likely to rank higher in that local search.

Diverse Income Streams

Finally, a loyal audience provides you with the opportunity to create new streams of income.

I mentioned a local café earlier; let's say the owner releases a podcast on baking pastries and cupcakes. As a side project, she can transcribe her episodes and release them as a self-published eBook. That can then be sold on Amazon for £5.



Once the eBook is released she can let her audience know that it's available to buy. Because of the loyalty and trust generated through a podcast, this approach can lead to really good sales. It's also something that's constantly working in the background. New listeners find the show, hear the old episodes, and eventually buy the book. The café owner doesn't need to do anything to keep this running other than keep on releasing those episodes.

When you have a 'passive income' stream like this you can wake up in the morning having made money whilst you were asleep.

Reaching Your Audience: How to Create a Podcast

So we've covered the "why". I hope we've convinced you that a podcast is an excellent investment for any business. If you're not, then please do give us a call. Some businesses don't naturally lend themselves to the approach, but we haven't seen a business yet which can't find a good angle.

Next, we're going to move on to the more practical aspects of podcasting. We've talked about your audience - hopefully you're clear on who you'd like to impact - but how do you reach out to those people? Even more importantly, how will they be able to listen to your show?

First things first, then...

Where do Podcasts Live?

Once you record a podcast episode and it's ready for the world to hear, there are a few different components to making it live.

The main thing to keep in mind is that you need a place to store the audio files, AND you need a place to put the pages they're placed on. A podcast episode is, after all, just a webpage which includes an audio file. So, you need a website for the podcast episode pages (sometimes called shownotes) and web storage for the audio files in the background.

The most simple approach is to use a media host like [Blubrry](#), [Libsyn](#) or [Spreaker](#) to host both the audio files AND the website. This means you don't have your own website though, and you lose a lot of control over what you can do with it, such as branding and design.

The next level is to include the Podcast on a website you own yourself and just use the media host to store the audio files. The website can be an existing one, or a brand new one built for the show. Either way, it's actually quite easy to set up a podcast-ready website

yourself (check out our free [Peerless Podcasting Websites course](#) for a full guide).

There are a lot of benefits to using your own site to deliver your podcast. You can brand it, customize it and set up any tool you need in future to turn it into a business. It's worth the investment in the beginning.

Once you've chosen your platform (media host website, or your own), you'll need to fill in the details of your podcast series. That includes the show title and a description of the topic. You'll also have the opportunity to add some cover art, which is an image that represents your show. This might simply be your business or company logo, or you might hire an artist or graphic designer to create one specifically for your series.

Now that the series is set up (even if you don't have a single episode yet) your podcasting website will contain a unique web address called an RSS Feed. With that, people can subscribe to your show in any podcast listener application.

An invaluable next step, however, is to then list your show on the big podcast directories. That's how most people find new shows, and it makes it easier for people to subscribe even if they find you via your website.

iTunes and Stitcher are two examples of this, and you simply submit your RSS feed to their 'list a podcast' section. Your podcast series will then be approved and listed within each directory with 3-5 working days.



How Do I Publish a Podcast Episode?

A podcast episode is simply a blog post with an audio file attached. That means that uploading

a podcast episode is not much different to uploading any other file to your website.

In creating your post, you'll be asked to fill out a couple of text fields to set an episode title and your show notes (300-400 words explaining what the episode is about).

Once you hit 'Publish' your podcast will appear online. When people download your show somewhere like iTunes, it isn't actually being downloaded *from* there. iTunes is simply connecting to your media host via the RSS Feed you gave it, and pulling the episode from there. This is great because you only need to upload your new episodes in one place (your media host), and yet they can be available to download and subscribe to in loads of different podcast directories.

The important thing here, that a lot of people miss, is that you never upload anything to iTunes. It's all done via your own website and the media host you choose.

How Will People Find & Listen to my Podcast?

Promotion is the subject for another book entirely, but there's a saying in content marketing: "go where your audience is". Start with your existing audience, and then go out there and find more like them.

Social Media

You should always share and promote your episodes on your social media channels, but avoid being too spammy about it. This could mean a Facebook group, or a certain Twitter hashtag focusing on the topic or problem around which your business is based.

It's often frowned upon when someone just starts throwing unsolicited links at people on social media. Instead, try to talk to people, answer their questions, and offer advice.

On Twitter, if you help someone, then they're very likely to check out your profile and spot a link to your show. On Facebook you have a little more room, so you can have more in-depth conversations. That means you can offer a lot of value and then end an answer with: "I hope that helps explains things. I actually did a podcast episode (post your link) where I go into more detail on this issue, so check it out if you're interested!"

Most people will appreciate this as helpful advice, followed by a link to more helpful advice, rather than something akin to walking into a room and shouting "HEY EVERYONE, LOOK AT ME!"

Being Found in Search Results

Podcast episodes with good titles and detailed show notes are very likely to show up in normal search results. As I said earlier, a podcast episode is really just a webpage or a blog post with an audio file attached. As a result, treat google search as an avenue to be found outside of the podcast directories.

An example of this is a gardening podcast with an episode titled "How do I get rid of moss on my lawn?" People will be searching for an answer to this question every day. If you include this as the title, and some good shownotes which summarise the topic, then the page will start to appear in search results.

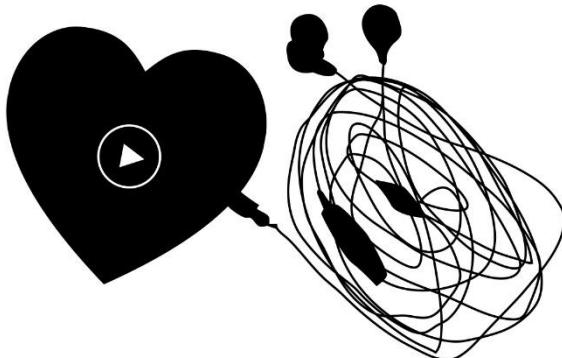
Once a reader has found the article, they're likely to listen to the episode. And having done that, there's a decent chance they will enjoy your other episodes too. To make that easy, ensure you always have clear "Subscribe" links for iTunes and Stitcher, and guidance to find other episodes of your show.

Of course, you don't need to be subscribed to a podcast to listen to it. Listeners can download or stream each episode from the show website or any directory it's listed on. That's good as a starter, but you want to encourage your listeners to subscribe after they've had their first taste of the show. That means episodes will come to them in future, rather than relying on them to visit you.

We won't go into how to subscribe to a podcast in this guide, but if you're interested in how to do so, and all the different apps that allow it, please visit...

The Podcast Listeners Guide:

<http://thePodcastHost.com/listeners-guide>



Khalid Albaik

How Much Time and Money Will Podcasting Take?

Okay, it's time to take a look at your business's two most important resources - time and money. How are they going to be impacted by running a podcast series?

How Much Does It Cost to Podcast?

Let's start out with what you need. What are the components of podcasting? This covers the parts you'll need, and the types of people that would jump in at each level. Once we've covered this, we'll reach the actual costs in the next section.

Here are the components we'll discuss:

- **Equipment** - from microphones to recorders
- **Software** - from media hosting to editing packages

- **Cover art** - graphic design to represent your show
- **Music and FX** - sound design to represent your show

Let's see what each of these components looks like at the various levels of podcasting.



The Bare Minimum

The very minimum you require to podcast is a **microphone** to record some audio, a **podcast hosting account** to deliver it to the world and some **very basic, home-made cover art**. This is assuming that you already have a computer to

record it on, and then upload to your host, of course.

The bare minimum is easily enough to start out with, and many hobby, or even business podcasts, do fine on the bare minimum for years.

I often encourage people to start out with the bare minimum and follow that approach for the first 10 episodes. For one, it keeps the complications very, very low, so you have no excuse to get episodes out regularly, building your influence and gaining practice as you go. For another, it means you can decide if you like this podcasting lark before you invest a fortune in it.

Of course, if you're in this for business and you're sure about your aims, or you're a big brand already, then you might want to jump in at a higher level.

The High Quality

So, you want to do it all yourself, but you fancy some good quality equipment to make sure

your message is delivered in the best way possible. Hello High Quality!

At this level, we're going to buy **two good quality microphones**. You can use one, and you'll have one spare for in-person guests or co-hosts.

You're also going to need a **digital recorder** to capture the audio. This is because most pro microphones need a pro recording device, and won't work as standard with a computer. As an added benefit, it means you're now portable and can get out to capture great quality audio at events or interview locations.

One final addition, depending on your plans, is that **you might need a mixer**. You'll need that if you plan to do Skype recordings too, ie. talk to a co-host or an interviewee remotely.

Now it is possible to hack together a setup that would allow you to record Skype to your digital recorder. It would involve bringing Skype out to your recorder, from the computer, as the 2nd input, and speaking into two microphones yourself. One mic is for Skype and one is for

the recorder. The Skype mic doesn't need to be great, just good enough so your Skype guest can hear. A mixer brings benefits of being a bit more pro, though, and allowing you to play things back to your guest too. So it's an optional extra.

For **cover art and music**, you'll now be outsourcing it. For high quality, you can pay someone who specialises in the area to do it for you. That'll make sure you get the best possible result to represent your brand.

The Quick Starter

Do you want to have confidence in your approach, and to be able to get up and running as quick as you can? Then you're probably a Quick Starter!

Many people who invest money in good quality equipment will also invest money in learning how to use it. Not only that, but they'll **invest in courses** that teach them how to start and run a podcast in the best way possible. That means planning your show for success, launching well, promoting it effectively,

learning how to deliver amazing content, and figuring out how best to monetise.

Courses help hugely, but good ones aren't cheap - though education saves time and mistakes, so if you're a business podcaster then this could be a no-brainer.



The Focused Presenter

Do you want to forget about the technical elements of podcasting? Not interested in equipment, editing, bit rates, hosting, RSS feeds, iTunes submission or show publishing? Do you want to concentrate on what you do

best, which is creating and recording your voice? Then you're a Focused Presenter!

Some people just want to speak. They can craft and deliver an excellent message, but have no skill or inclination in then turning that message into a live podcast episode. For those people, podcast production services were born. But, how does a podcast production service cost?

Podcast production services will take your recorded audio in a raw format and turn it into a finished product. That means editing out mistakes and silences, adding music and sound effects, leveling, compressing and mastering, and finally publishing the file so people can subscribe in iTunes and elsewhere.

For businesses, this tends to be a given. If you plan to make money from the show, you should be concentrating on creating great content, not messing around with editing.

Details of the Cost

We've now covered the different situations, and I hope you identified yourself in there

somewhere. Many people start with the bare minimum and move their way down the list, even ending up with a fully produced show. Other jump in at the high quality level and stay there forever. Whatever you choose, let's see how much it's going to cost.

Cost: The Bare Minimum

Let's start off by justifying it. You may well have an in-built microphone on your laptop, or an old headset at the back of the cupboard, but do consider a decent minimum level of equipment. My [top rated headset microphone](#) is about as cheap as it gets (£30/\$50), while still offering good quality. Get hold of one and it'll help deliver your message so much more effectively.

It's possible to find free hosting for your podcast files, or to use your existing web hosting, but I'd highly advise against either. I've written before on [why you should always use dedicated podcast hosting](#). Suffice to say that if you're putting some time and effort into this, then a decent, reliable hosting account is the least you can do to help it succeed.

Finally, your branding. At this stage, you don't even really need music to represent your show. Just go with a voice introduction, and launch straight into the content. If you do insist on music, then you can get some decent tunes at a very low cost over at [Audio Jungle](#). For cover art, my favoured approach at this level is a tool called [Canva](#). Canva has a podcast cover art template, and some really good free designs. It lets you create something great looking, even if you have no design skills. It might not be really innovative, and it'll follow a template others may be using, but it'll do the trick.

Costs:

- Headset microphone: £30/\$50
- Podcast Hosting: £30/\$45 per month
- Music: £0
- Cover Art: £0

Cost: The High Quality

I've written about my favourite setup of this type before, so you can look up the details on that article: [professional podcasting setup](#).

The **equipment setup here** amounts to two Shure SM58s, a Zoom H5 recorder, two good quality XLR cables and a decent set of headphones. This is a proper professional setup and will allow you to record top quality podcast episodes for years to come. It'll also allow you to go out and do great sounding interviews in person, or speak to a co-host every week.

The **optional addition is a mixer**, required if you plan to interview people remotely using something like Skype. It is possible, as I said, to bodge a setup that can record Skype too, without the mixer, but the mixer would make it easier, which is why I've made it optional.

For **cover art**, at this level you might use your normal graphic designer. They'd charge anything from low 100s up to £1000 or more. If you want a more accessible alternative that's still great quality, then look at 99Designs. You can get cover art designed there for as little as £189 (\$270), or a little more if you'd like more options. The quality is excellent, and well worth the investment.

For **music and FX**, at this level, you'll be looking to have some custom audio branding designed. This means working with someone like the excellent [Music Radio Creative](#), who'll create you a full produced and amazing sounding podcast intro and outro. I use this for all of my shows and they're worth every penny of the £109 they charge.

Costs:

- 2 x Shure SM58 (£180)
- 2 x XLR Cable (£40)
- 1 x Zoom H5 (£200)
- 1 x studio headphones (£30)
- (1 x Yamaha M10 Mixer (£110) - optional)
- Podcast Hosting: £30/\$45 per month
- Cover Art: £189 (\$270)
- Music: £109 (\$170)
- **ONE OFF COST:** £748 (\$1122)
(£858/\$1287 with mixer)
- **MONTHLY COST:** £30/\$45 per month

Cost: The Quick Starter

There's a good choice of podcasting courses out there on the web. As you know, we offer a few here at The Podcast Host, most created by my own fair hand, but there are also plenty of others out there that I respect.

The prices vary, naturally, but let's take [Podcast Liberation](#) as an example. PL sells at £195 and takes you through the entire launch process, including planning, strategy and formats, then on to equipment, recording and editing. Finally it covers publishing and promotion.

You can expect to pay between £100 (\$150) and £200 (\$300) for a quality course on a particular aspect of podcasting, or upwards of \$1000 for something that covers the entire subject. It's up to you whether you'd like to get it all-in-one at the start, or pick and choose courses on particular subjects from some of the great providers out there.

Cost:

- Launch Course (to start off): £195 (\$300)
- Fully comprehensive: £700+ (\$1000+)

Cost: The Focused Presenter

The final option I covered was having your podcast produced for you.

For this one I'm going to give you a range, because there are as many prices as there are providers. And there are plenty of providers! You can search around Google to find plenty, perhaps even in your local area, or you can post a job on Upwork and wait for the offers to roll in.

The considerations here are reliability, quality and experience. For example, you'll find many good producers offering episode production around the £20 to £30 per episode mark.

Below that, you're getting into pretty unreliable territory.

At £20 per episode you'll start to find decent freelance producers. They normally work on their own, and probably run their own show, having learned their production skills through that experience.

If you simply need someone to edit up your show, to post it when it's ready and your posting schedules are relatively flexible, then

this is perfect. They'll normally be able to offer some advice on content, promotion, presenting skills, etc, but it'll often be based on limited experience with a small show. But, then, a lot of you won't need that advice - you just need produced.

There may also be short delays during busy times, or long delays during holidays or sickness. But, again, many of us don't need our shows up every week, or at a particular time. So, if that sounds like you and this fits your budget, then this could be a perfect option.

If, however, you want to make money from your show and you need it reliably produced, then you might want to consider a company. The benefits of working with an actual business, as opposed to the aforementioned freelancers, is that reliability and experience suddenly skyrocket.

When working with a production team, your schedule becomes much more reliable - sickness, busyness and holidays are no longer an issue. On top of that, a company will hold a lot more experience within its staff, and have

worked with many more shows. That means advice on growing and improving your show will be much more forthcoming, and far more wide ranging.

In essence, production is a get-what-you-pay-for situation, as with many things. But, in many cases, the low cost version is more than adequate. After all, how many podcasters manage to get an episode out every week anyway!

Costs:

- Budget production: £20 (\$30) to £30 (\$45) per episode.
- Professional podcast production: £50+ (\$75) per episode

The Cost of a Professional Sounding Business Podcast

Now a business has one goal in podcasting - to get a return on the investment it makes in the medium. This return doesn't have to be money directly - it may be leads, brand awareness, fans authority - but it has to return in some

form. That means it's worth putting money into doing it right.

A business could go with the above approach: bare minimum, plus a course to get started. Existing staff can be pulled away from their main roles for an allocated time per week to get involved in editing, publishing, etc. In many companies, there are staff that turn out to be really enthusiastic about the idea. It may even be an activity that really enhances someone's job. If that's the case, then perfect, I'd encourage you to follow the plan above.

But, some businesses want to work on the activities they're great at, and leave the technical parts of podcasting to experts. In that case, a business should invest in good equipment for the recording aspect, and a partner company to take care of production. The partner company will no doubt offer enough experience to bypass the need for a course as well.

Through experience, I would say that the latter tend to be found in larger companies, and the former in smaller businesses, or solo

enterprises. This may be budget related, or it may be mindset, I'm not sure. Either way, here's the cost for the business podcasting method.

Final cost for the Serious Business Podcaster:

£748 (\$1122) up front, then £325 (\$460) per month

(High quality equipment package, branding, podcast hosting, plus professional production for 4 episodes per month)

How Much Time Does it Take to Podcast?

Time is the most precious commodity we have. The only one we really can't earn any more of! So, let's get down to it: How much time does it take to produce a podcast episode?

Here's what we'll cover:

- **The Time You Have**

You can invest as much time as you like into podcasting - find out the options here

- **The Variables**

Here's what determines how long podcasting takes, and methods for keeping the time down.

- **The Approaches**

Three different ways to go about podcasting, and the time required for each.

How Much Time Do You Have?



Just to be clear, Podcasting can take as much time as you allow it. The range of podcasting styles, formats and production quality is as wide as the number of podcasts out there in the world.

There are people who spend weeks producing just one 20 minute episode. Then there are others that knock out something the same length in 20 minutes plus the time it takes to hit Record, Stop and Upload.

Over the years, I've found the majority of people fall into particular categories though. This depends on aims, aptitude and your context. It always comes down to the balance you're happy with between the time spent and

the resulting quality. I'll talk you through the options below, but, be aware, you'll find your own path.

The Variables

First, I want to go through all of the variables in podcasting: what elements of the process determine how long it's going to take?

Organisation

Organisation is the simple act of arranging everything that's needed to complete your podcast. The most obvious example here is someone who runs an interview show. When you're interviewing, a fair bit of time has to go into finding, researching, contacting, negotiating and scheduling interviews. Then you've got communications around the mic to use, the content to cover, and much more. Don't underestimate the organisation that goes into doing an interview show, it's not small.

Other elements of organisation might be coordinating with co-hosts, arranging meetup times or booking rooms to record in. You begin to see that these things depend a lot on your show format, and how you set up your episodes.

Of course, the great thing is, that means you can choose your format based on how much time you have. If you're really strapped for time, then don't do interviews. They tend to go for longer, they take a lot of organising, and still require a decent bit of planning. For the shortest recording time possible, do solo, and talk about something you know well. Then you can knock out a 15 minute episode at a moment's notice, with little organisation and only a bit of planning.

Talking of planning...

Planning

The planning process is completely individual, and there are as many approaches as there are podcasters. You'll find your own way, but it

does tend to fall on a pretty well established spectrum.

On one end, you have people who think up a topic, and just start chatting. That works well for co-hosted shows which are much more conversational, and the hosts know the topic inside-out.

On the other end, you'll find hosts who create a full script for their show, including narrations, interview segments, co-hosted elements, so every element of the episode is meticulously planned.

In between you'll find people who spend 20 to 30 minutes doing a little research, before writing up a reasonably detailed bullet point plan for what they want to cover. You'll also find those who just spend 5 minutes just writing top level talking points; perhaps 5 to 10 bullets which prompt a few minutes of chat each.

Of those latter approaches, I do both. Some topics require a bit more planning, (eg. my really detailed look into [Podcast Sponsorship](#))

and some require less (eg. my discussion on [setting up a podcasting website](#), something I know like the back of my hand!)

This is totally personal, and changes over time. You can control it, though, by defining your process, and sticking to it each time.

Setup

By setup, I mean equipment and IT. This includes all of the time you spend before a session getting your microphone out, plugging it in, firing up Skype and then working out your audio settings. If you're on a more complicated setup, it also involves testing your mixer, setting the levels and preparing the digital recorder, among a million other things.

After the recording, includes doing the opposite, packing everything away again. Then, getting out your PC, firing up your editing package, and getting started.

Setup time depends on your context. Can you find a space where your equipment is permanently set up? Do you have a desk at home where you could have your microphone

mounted on a boom arm, always ready to go? That could save a whole lot of time. But, it isn't practical for many.

Editing and Production

Removing Mistakes



Editing is where a lot, and I mean A LOT, of hours are wasted by amateur podcasters. There are two factors to this: confidence, and perfectionism.

Have the confidence to make a mistake when you're recording, and instead of repeating the section, just laugh, correct yourself, and move on. No-one cares if you stumble over a few

words, or say the wrong thing. Just make light of it and continue. If you take a perfectionist mindset, and decide to edit each and every one of these, you accomplish 2 things:

First, you make yourself nervous, leading to even more fluffs!

Second, you set yourself the onerous task of detail editing, which means listening through lots and lots of the show, increasing production time exponentially.

For big mistakes that you just can't get rid of, there are techniques to make editing easier, such as the 3-click approach. This simply involves clicking your fingers 3 times into the mic when you want to make an edit. These 3 clicks will be easily visible for you (or whoever produces your podcast) to spot during the editing process, and saves anyone having to listen through an entire episode to hunt for the offending segment.

Suffice to say, the aim is to cut down post-recording edits to almost nothing. Mistakes are fine, they make you sound human. Apologise, correct it, move on and leave them in!

Music and FX

Beyond the mistakes removal, you might also want to edit in music, sound FX, intros, outros, interviews, segments, and on, and on! These add variety and can increase the quality of your show, so are often worth adding. But music adds editing time, as do FX and bumpers. Even adding an interview means that you've got to piece together a few elements, thus adding editing time.

Plenty of great shows have shunned any type of musical fanciness and it's never hurt them (look at Dan Carlin's Hardcore History, with one of the biggest audiences in the world!). Keep things as simple as you can to cut down editing time and make everything more sustainable.

Publishing

Publishing is everything that happens after you've produced the final audio files. That includes creating your episode page, adding

shownotes, uploading your media file and any promotion you want to do of the episode.

Again, there's a balance here - you could spend hours on writing up highly detailed shownotes, publishing a full transcription and then promoting the show to every network known to man. But, it'll just mean you're still working on that next week when you should be recording your next episode!

Promotion is an art in itself, which I won't cover here, but shownotes are worth a quick discussion. Some prefer to keep it simple, just listing a few links which were mentioned during the show. Others put a lot of material up there, really creating a companion blog post for the audio episode. The former serves its purpose for the listener, but little else. The latter means that you're adding value to your website and making it more likely that people will find your content via the search, and thus be directed towards the episode. That can, of course, gain you listeners.

Pick the balance that suits you, and that allows you to get an episode out every week. I've

alternated back and forth over the years. I'll aim to do a full blog post, but sometimes time just doesn't allow. In that case, brief bullet points will suffice.

Three Podcasting Approaches

As I mentioned earlier, there are many, many ways to go about this, and you'll find your own path. But, having spoken to 100s of podcasters over the years, I've found 3 common approaches. A big chunk of podcasters out there fall into one of the following three categories.

The Min-Time, Max-Value

This is for those that have very limited time, and want to make podcasting as easy as humanly possible. Nothing wrong with that in the slightest. You can argue that sustainable, regular average quality output beats seldom-released high quality audio every time. Your audience needs something regular to latch on to, after all. Here's the approach:

Format: Fly solo.

Display your expertise, on your own, with confidence and panache, talking mostly on the fly. This means very little organisation and cuts down planning and editing.

Equipment: Simple as, bro!

Get yourself a [decent headset mic](#), plug it in, and record. Nothing more needed, and your setup time is slashed.

Editing: Let it all hang out.

Keep it raw and transparent. No editing, mistakes laid bare, and people will trust and love you all the more.

Publishing: Just enough.

Basic show notes, only enough to summarise the topic and direct listeners to any resources which were mentioned.

Time Commitment: 1 hour for a 30 minute episode.

The Balanced Method

This method is for those that want to produce a good quality show that reflects their brand, but still need to find a time commitment which allows it to be sustainable.

Format: Co-Hosted, or Interview.

Bring in a co-host, or do interviews. Both increase variety, and the latter shares the work of interviewing and editing

Equipment: The simple pro setup.

Buy a good digital recorder, pro mics and record, in-person. Or, two good headset mics for remote recording.

Editing: The click approach

Add title music and outro, and edit only the big mistakes using the Click approach

Publishing: Blog post

Produce a 400 word blog post covering the main points of the show and linking to relevant resources.

Time Commitment: 1.5 to 3 hours per 30 minutes of episode.

The Polished Producer

The polished producer approach is used by those for which only the best will do. This can take anything from a day to numerous weeks to produce a show, so it's only for those with a lot of time and money to invest.

Format: Documentary style

Work with 1 or 2 presenters, and interviews with numerous people, weaving all content into a narrative

Equipment: The full shebang

Working with pro mics and mixers in the studio, plus the pro interview setup out in the field.

Editing: Audio production master

To [create a show like this](#), you're editing sentence by sentence. This takes time. A lot of time...

Publishing: Pillar Article

To accompany a show of this caliber, you want to create an article of similar quality. Spend

time on an 800+ word pillar article on the topic.

Time Commitment: 8 to 50+ hours per 30 minutes of episode.

Another Way of Time Saving

Of course, one final way of saving time in podcasting is to find someone to help! Most people who take podcasting seriously know that it's a good idea to concentrate on the content and the presenting, while leaving the systematic stuff to someone else.

You can find someone to produce your podcast relatively easily. That takes care of the editing and the publishing, cutting down the time required considerably.

[There are a lot of good audio producers out there](#), or you could check out our own [podcast production service](#). We'd be happy to help!

Summary – What Now?

So there you have it. In this short book we've tried to include all of the information that's you require to decide whether a podcast is right for your business.

You may come to the conclusion that a podcast isn't something you're going to pursue at this stage. For some people that's absolutely the right decision. In that case, we thoroughly appreciate you spending time with us, and should you change your mind in the future we'd be delighted to hear from you.

If we *have* piqued your interest, or helped you 'off the fence' towards podcasting, then that's fantastic news. So where should you go from here?

Well, we like to think we practice what we preach, so you can check out our own 'how to podcast' podcast series, [Podcraft](#). There you'll find over 100 episodes on all aspects of

launching, growing and benefitting from a podcast.

If you're looking for an all-in-one resource, then check out our free [step-by-step guide to starting your own podcast](#).

If you're looking to really speed the process up and get started as soon as possible, then we'd love to work with you directly inside [The Podcast Host Academy](#) too.

Here you'll get access to all of our video courses, tutorials, downloadable guides, and other essential podcasting resources.

On top of that, we run regular live Q&A sessions, and can also be found talking podcasting with our members inside the community forum.

We'd love to see you there!