

## Podcraft Season 15

### Episode 6 - How Do I Turn Listeners Into Followers, Subscribers, & Supporters?

**Colin:** Hey folks, welcome to another episode of Podcraft. This is a show all about podcasting, helping you to make a successful show. I'm calling from thepodcasthost.com, joined by Matthew, as always. How you doing, Matthew?

**Matthew:** Very well, thanks Colin, how are you?

**Colin:** Good, good. The unseasonal, super hot Inverness weather has broken and it's traditionally chucking it down again, so I feel much more at home again back here.

**Matthew:** Yes, exactly the same here because time of recording, it's been a bit of a heat wave, hasn't it?

**Colin:** [chuckles]

**Matthew:** Summer of 2022

**Colin:** Yes.

**Matthew:** -I've been running about in the Speedos.

**Colin:** [chuckles]

**Matthew:** It's a great sight for all.

**Colin:** Yes, it's weird when it's hot here. What is it? [chuckles] Just Glasgow saying is tops off. "Get your tops off, pal and get straight in the sun," whether it's like minus seven and sunny, it doesn't matter. As long as it's sunny, it's tops off. When it's actually hot and sunny, just people just go crazy up here. Go jump in the river and all sorts of bonkersness. We're just not used to it.

**Matthew:** Yes, all that Vitamin D goes to our heads.

**Colin:** [chuckles] That's it. We've got another question today, haven't we? Another listener question on our listener questions season, which I've been enjoying a lot, get these questions in.

**Matthew:** Aye, it's really good, isn't it? It's good just to be able to riff off like genuine real-world feedback and real-life case studies if you like so-

**Colin:** Indeed, indeed.

**Matthew:** -hopefully, we're able to help some folks along the way, and we've had good feedback, too, from the folks that have already submitted their questions. You could do that at thepodcasthost.com/answers. We're providing usefulness, which is always great to hear that you're useful.

**Colin:** Useful, useful. I think we should just keep going with this as we keep getting more questions. As they keep coming in, we'll continue on with this for another few episodes at least. Send them in at [thepodcasthost.com/questions](http://thepodcasthost.com/questions). Should we do this week?

[crosstalk]

**Matthew:** At host, actually or answers.

**Colin:** [sighs] Useless-

**Matthew:** [chuckles]

**Colin:** -[thepodcasthost.com/answers](http://thepodcasthost.com/answers) because you want answers, not questions. Right, should we get to this one, Matthew?

**Matthew:** Yes. I got a question in from Michael, so we'll just dive in and have a wee lesson.

**Michael:** Hey, good morning, Colin. This is Michael with *Night Moods HDQ*, and I'm just having the challenge with the ministry content/story/teaching for the podcast and in the small interviews, how to increase listeners to turn into subscribers/supporters for *Night Moods HDQ*?

**Matthew:** All right, thanks for sending that in. That's Michael of *Night Moods HDQ*. You could find that [blogtalkradio.com/nightmoodsHDZHDQ](http://blogtalkradio.com/nightmoodsHDZHDQ). BlogTalkRadio's not one I've heard of in a long time.

**Colin:** No. Don't [unintelligible 00:03:06].

**Matthew:** Maybe we could touch on that here, but the question I'm gleaming there basically how do you take those listeners that you get that are checking out your show and turn them into subscribers or maybe even more than that, isn't it, Colin?

**Colin:** Yes, that was what I got from it. It was how'd you get somebody? They find your show, and they just have a listen to a wee bit of it. How do you turn them into a subscriber that listens on a regular basis? A follower who then actually follows your work, maybe even outside the podcast right up to, you mentioned the word supporter, so maybe even somebody that supports the show in future. There's a whole kind of funnel there, isn't there, stage by stage? Yes, that's great to delve into actually, good question. How would you start with that, Matthew? What's your entry point?

**Matthew:** I like the absolute short answer, isn't it, because there's multiple layers to this, but the absolute short answer, the most obvious one that surprisingly people do still overlook, is just to ask people to initially hit that subscribe button. A lot of folks just don't do that, do they?

**Colin:** Yes, for sure. It's the call to action. [chuckles] Either they ask them, so you might put in a, "Make sure you subscribe to the show at the end," or you actually put in too many things and ask them like seven different things, like, "Give us tweet in Twitter or send us an email here or send us a survey here and then subscribe."

**Matthew:** "Buy me a coffee."

**Colin:** Yes, exactly. You ask for too many things, and you don't get anything. That short answer, like you say, Matthew, just ask that one thing. Spend like two, three episodes in a row just asking for that one call to action. Although, I don't know. There's an argument with the subscribers one at least, if somebody's listening, if you have to put it in two or three shows, then if somebody's listening to two or three shows, they're probably already subscribing. How do you think about that? In terms of in one episode maybe every month or something like that, just to try and catch those casual subscribers, or is this one you put in every time alongside your main and varying call to action, what do you think?

**Matthew:** Yes, it's a good point. If somebody's turning up to or three times down the line, the chances are they have probably subscribed, but they might not have. Every single episode that you've put out there is going to be somebody's very first impression of your show. Maybe even, yes, you go every second or third episode. It's worth pointing out, without diverting us too much as well, that the language around this has changed over the past year or so, hasn't it because what was subscribers on iTunes/Apple Podcasts? I think that's now Followers?

**Colin:** Yes, right.

**Matthew:** I think your subscriber now on there is because they do the premium paid content stuff, so I think now to be a subscriber, you're paying. Whereas for years, I think that when podcasting was less well known as well, people would think you subscribed as a podcast as, "Well, I'm going to have to pay for that," which wasn't the case. Nowadays, I think the correct term on most platforms is to Follow. Maybe that's a better term anyway because people are very used to that on the social media platforms, aren't they? They know that that's free.

**Colin:** Yes, potentially, absolutely. I think you're probably right. You are right, the terminology has changed. It's hard to delve into what people are actually thinking. I wonder what Michael's actually thinking in terms of followers. Maybe it is just actually getting somebody to hit that follow button, but I think there's something deeper here. The way I think about followers is somebody who actually it's more than just hitting that subscribe button. It's more than just having a listen and hitting the subscribe button and giving it a chance over a few episodes. It's you're a follower when you actually you're a bit into the show, and you actually follow the show. You look forward to listening to it. When you see a new episode pop up, you listen to it right away.

You maybe even follow some of the social media output that that person puts out. You look at their blog. You read their email list, all that stuff. To me, there's something more deep. Even if Michael didn't mean that I think that's an important part of this question, isn't it? It's like, how do you turn that casual visitor into somebody that's actually a fan of your show? I don't know about you. How do you try new shows, Matthew because think that's always an interesting thing as well? The whole subscribers' thing, I remember years back when I first heard people start to say that, like "Make sure you subscribe to the show." I always thought, "But they're listening, they're already subscribed."

Actually, I came to realize the way I test shows as I often do in pocket casts, for example. I think it's the same with most apps, most listening apps these days. If I'm looking for a new show, I will just add an episode to my listener feed and I won't necessarily hit the subscribe button. Is that what you do? When you're looking at a new show or listening to a new show, how do you test that out? Do you subscribe straight away and then unsubscribe if you don't like it or what?

**Matthew:** Yes, good question. I recently did this with, very interestingly a football tactics podcast. Not something I know anything about, but just something I like to listen to. I found a new show, and it looked pretty good, so this is typically what I'll do. I found that, and then I downloaded I think it was like three episodes in their feeds that-

**Colin:** Sure.

**Matthew:** -seemed the most appealing to me. Then once I've listened through a couple of them, I'll know whether I want to hear more from them. In this case, probably yes.

There are obviously sometimes where you check something out and you just think, "This probably isn't for me." I'll test out those two or three and that's, again, completely different topic in a sense, but that's why we talk about episode titles all the time because I'm able to clearly see they're talking about the things that I want to hear about, so it makes it easy for me to pick a couple episodes out and try them for myself before deciding whether to hit that big button.

**Colin:** Yes, indeed. Aye, that's a funny one. Like Pocketcast, the way it works is that you can add to your playlist without having to subscribe, so that's what I tend to do. The whole asking somebody to subscribe actually is relevant because then it reminds me that I'm not yet subscribed if I'm enjoying it. If I'm deep into it, just listening away, that reminds me to do it. I think it is important. I think it is actually a really relevant thing to do. I think it's such a short thing to say as well, that it's a little call to action that you could put in like 5, 10 minutes into your show-- just as a little interlude, and it wouldn't take away too much. It wouldn't take away from you doing a kind of bigger, more varying call to action joining a show. It would be interesting to test that with a show. If there was a way to actually test the action on that, to test how many people hit subscribe at the same time, or maybe it would just be actually testing it over like four or eight weeks and see if your subscription rates increase. I'm not sure. Be a good one to try. [chuckles]

**Matthew:** I think as well, obviously a lot of, if not most podcast listeners these days, they know how to do these things, but you might be podcasting a space where your listeners are less techy. We've talked in the past about even creating a wee guide on your website where you do some videos of just you on your phone and maybe it's the top three or four popular podcast listening apps. You walk them through, load up Apple Podcasts and make sure that you get this podcast delivered to each time a new episode comes out. Here's how to do it on Spotify, here's how to do it on Pocket cast, Overcast. You don't need to go overboard on that spot, just getting those maybe top three or four apps in, and then creating a how-to lesson page that you could send people to, and then you could just track how many people are going to that page as well.

**Colin:** Yes, for sure. Aye, having any link that you could send people to is really relevant for that, being able to test those different methods, so yes, Michael, if you fancy trying out a few different things like popping in a call to action three minutes in, just take a wee interlude from the content after you've given an intro. I think that's the thing, isn't it? We always say, "Matthew, you can put a "Make sure you subscribe to the show," during the intro. I think that one that's so short that maybe you could get away with it in the intro, but then again if somebody is not subscribed yet, they want to listen to 5, 10 minutes at least before they're willing to give you that subscription.

Actually, probably it's not relevant at that point. You want to be 5, 10 minutes into the show when you do a little intro, so you could try that out and use a link to send them for some intro content to the show or some kind of cheat sheet or something like that, that you can test the clicks on it, the visits at least. Yes, I think that's a really good way to go about it. Should we go in? I think the deeper part of this is the content itself, isn't it? Make sure they actually want to subscribe and come back for another episode and another episode and then graduate to that more follower status that I was talking about. Maybe even a supporter, like Michael mentioned the word supporter. I'm not sure if he means their subscriptions and people actually paying for the content or donating or Patreon, or anything like that. It's about the content, isn't it, Matthew? Is it worth doing that a wee bit?

**Matthew:** Yes, well, definitely you could ask all you want. You could make it as easy as you want, but if the listener-- and I'm not saying this about Michael's show- this is a general thing that applies to all of us. If you're not doing enough to tempt listeners to come back for more, then all that's going to fail anyway, isn't it? You've got to really get back to those basics of like, "Why am I doing this? Who's this for? What purpose is it? What we're trying to do here? Who's coming here? what are they getting from it?" because again, we've talked in the past, listeners are selfish in a sense that they want something from you. They want to be taking something away from the podcast that benefits them.

There's all sorts of ways that you could ensure that you're doing that or Podcast planner too, we talked about a couple episodes ago. [Thepodcasthost.com/planner](https://thepodcasthost.com/planner), that's a free tool where you can go in. I think that could really go a long way to helping you hone that, to making sure you're creating something that people want. If not, you might just have to tweak a few things, but there's a lot to do to want listeners to keep coming back for more, isn't there?

**Colin:** Yes, for sure. To me, one of the most relevant parts to this, in terms of the content itself, obviously, you need to make good content. You need to make good compelling content. That's all about the planning process, really. It's all about how you structure your episodes, that kind of stuff, but the most relevant to this to me is the intro. If you get somebody that is doing what we were talking about there, just testing out your show, dabbling into it, we've talked about it so many times, haven't we, that with the power of podcasting is how long form and how in-depth and how much personality and all that come through over hours and hours of content. because it's so deep. The downside of it, that means there's a barrier to entry.

People often need to listen to quite a bit of it to really get into a podcast. Capturing somebody within the first minute, two minutes, three minutes of a show is actually quite tricky in some ways. That makes it even more important that every single

episode you put out, it needs to be quite well planned. The first one, two, three minutes need to be really well-planned to capture that person. It's all about, like you just said there, Matthew, it's the benefits. On this episode, don't mess around. At the start, say, "On this episode, this is what we're going to solve for you. Here's the pains that I know you have because I know you as a listener. I know my audience really well. Here's the pains I know you, have the problems, you have the barriers you have. Here's why this episode is going to solve this one, these two pains for you, and that's why it's worth you hanging about for the next hour and listening to every single word that I'm about to tell you." [chuckles]

It's that intro, where there's no messing around, there's no words advertising in the first one or two minutes. There's no talking all about yourself. The first one or two minutes of every single episode has to be all about your listener, all about the benefits for your listener on why this episode is the one thing that they need you to listen to this week. If there's only one episode of a podcast they listen to this whole week, it needs to be yours because it's going to be so valuable to them. That's how you're going to get those casual listeners, those people that are just dabbling, to hit subscribe right away if they see the pains that you're solving, the stuff that you're fixing for them, and the inspiration, the motivation, the entertainment you're going to give them right away.

**Matthew:** Yes, good words. Just one last thought from me, I guess. I mentioned at the start, Michael's website is just is going to [blogtalkradio.com/nightmoodszhdq](http://blogtalkradio.com/nightmoodszhdq). Even a low hanging through for me, is go over [podpage.com](http://podpage.com) and stick your RSS link in there and just create a proper, if you like, website, which is really easy. You could use it for free on an ongoing basis, but that alone is going to help you to get followers around your show just because there'll be a much better presence for yourself online.

Further down the line, you might want to get a domain name as well that's easy to read out, easy to spell, and you can connect that to your pod page site as well. You don't need to know the slightest thing about web design or that to use pod page. Obviously, if you do, you could go self-hosted blog press and all that, but that's a different story. Something like that is a low-hanging fruit and it's going to make it a lot easier for your listeners to find you and keep in touch.

**Colin:** Yes, just having a better domain, really, rather than saying [blogtalkradio.com/nightmoods](http://blogtalkradio.com/nightmoods). This is HDQ, spell that with a Z, and a H, and a D, and a Q . It's cool. There's nothing wrong with the name there, Michael. I like the name, but because it has that-- What would you call it?- that confusion potentially with the Z rather than the S. I can see why you did it. That's all good, but if you can find a domain, even if it's something like NMHD or something like that, [nmhd.io](http://nmhd.io), you might be able to get something like that because if you use one of the various many different domains that are out these days, you can have an XYZ, and stuff like that.

You might get *Nightmoods* or [nightmood.xyz](http://nightmood.xyz) or something like that, it just makes it much more clear and easy. Yes, that could be a big win, for sure. The subscription buttons and all that on the website there, they make all the difference for people turning into subscribers too. Good point there, Matthew.

**Matthew:** Lovely stuff. I'm happy with that if you are, Colin. Hopefully, Michael is.

[crosstalk]

**Colin:** Indeed, yes, I think so. Hopefully, it is. Michael, we didn't delve too far into if you do mean supporters-- as in people who pay for the content- if that is something you're looking at, it'd be great to get a bit more detail on that. Get back and send us another question over at [thepodcasthost.com/answers](https://thepodcasthost.com/answers), and we could delve more into that. If that's something you're doing, it'd be good to get some detail on the kinds of things you would look at selling. Whether you do premium content, whether you do resources that you might sell or offer as follow-ups, or whether it would just be Patreon, or donations, or something like that. If that is someone you're looking at, by all means, send us in another question. We can delve into that too. It'd be good to have a look at.

**Mathew:** Great stuff. Just a reminder to the listener, too, [thepodcasthost.com/answers](https://thepodcasthost.com/answers) is where you could get your voice question in as well, and we'll get to it on a future episode.

**Colin:** Indeed. If you want to put in "Make sure to subscribe to the show," and put it in an entertaining way or with a bit of music, or you have a little slot that you put in the 5, 10 minutes slot every time, that's the kind of thing that Alitu is made for perfectly. We made Alitu, our podcast maker app to make it really easy to pop your episodes together. To be able to split a part of your interview and pop in an advert or a sponsorship or a promotion or anything like that. It's got a drag and drop episode building interface where you can split a bit of your episode. You can pop in an advert clip or something, so you don't need to record every time. You don't need to change it every time you can have this one set, one that you create just once and pop into the episode. If you want to try out Alitu, go over to [Alitu.com](https://Alitu.com), that's A-L-I-T-U.com. You get a seven-day free trial and you can try it out and you can try all the call recording, the audio cleanup, the editing, and the hosting now as well.

**Mathew:** Great stuff. We're recording on it right now.

**Colin:** Indeed. [chuckles] Cool. All right, folks, thank you for listening again. That link is [ThePodcastHost.com/answers](https://ThePodcastHost.com/answers). If you want to pop in a question for us, we'll answer it on a future episode. Thanks, Matthew, always good to catch up.

**Mathew:** It is, yes. Back to the beach now.

**Colin:** Indeed, yes, back to the rainy windy beach. All good. [chuckles] What about you? Anything planned now?

**Mathew:** Definitely the beach. Wind, rain, dead seagulls everywhere, which is literally a thing down here. There must be like a weird bird flu or something. We had to walk up there the other day and, by Christ, there were some dead birds everywhere.

**Colin:** [laughs]

**Mathew:** I took one home [chuckles] for my tea.

**Colin:** [laughs] We'll leave it there then. That's a great way to finish off the show.

**Matthew:** [laughs]

**Colin:** Thank you for listening. Hope you've got some podcasting goodness and some good dead bird goodness. Good stuff. Talk to you next time.