

Podcraft Season 15

Episode 7 – 3 Actionable Growth Tips

Colin: Hey folks, and welcome to another episode of the *PodCraft*. This is the show all about podcasting, helping you to create a more successful show. I'm Colin from thepodcasthost.com and here's Matthew as always. How are you getting on Matthew?

Matthew: Yes. You see it all, Colin, how are you?

Colin: Yes, not bad. I feel like I'm just about recovered from the podcast movement. It was over in Dallas for that conference couple of weeks ago. I feel like I'm still catching up, but getting there.

Matthew: Yes. Dallas, the Big Apple, the Windy City--

[laughter]

Colin: Yes, all of those things. [crosstalk]

Matthew: I always get at least one bite for something like that. I'm looking forward to it, I never see them anyways, so I don't know why I'm saying that.

[laughter]

Colin: What are we talking about today, Matthew?

Matthew: Yes, I don't think we've ever had a question about how you grow your audience before. It was about time that we tackled it. Wasn't it? Khaled sent us a question, and his podcast called *Curated Advice on Better Living*. We're going to dive into the age-old topic. How might I take my current listener numbers and just make them a wee bit bigger?

Khaled Soltan: Hi, this is Khaled Soltan. The name of my podcast is *Curated Advice on Better Living*. My specific problem is just trying to grow the number of the podcast. It's an English-speaking podcast based in Qatar in the Middle East. I'm talking to people from all walks of life with really unique stories. My question is numbers have been stagnant for a while and it just seems like they're either a little bit above my base, which was the first episode, or a little bit below. I'm in that zone, how do I go beyond that is my question. I'm promoting it on Instagram. You'll tell me you should DM everybody.

I don't want to spam people, so I'm trying to do things organically, if you would have any advice on how to grow the numbers I've done 22 episodes so far and it just seems like it's the same audience that's listening.

Colin: All right, thanks for that Khaled. That was really good. Plenty of thoughts on this I think. I think you want to be quite structured around it this time. Don't you

Matthew, like to give them a few actions because I thought we talk about growth relatively often, but we'll give them some really specific actions this time.

Matthew: Yes, sometimes you could go quite a high level, but I thought let's like just two or three actual tasks and not along with like some other actual bigger advice too-

Colin: Yes. Perfect. Cool. Okay, before we dive into it though, let's mention, I want to mention our show *Pocket Size* podcast and that's our other podcast, isn't it, Matthew?

Matthew: Yes. Daily podcast. It's great. When I look and overcast every day and see that I've got an episode out that day so it gives me a small sense of pride.

Colin: A real sense of achievement.

Matthew: Daily podcast, isn't that? We're hoping we could get some more listeners. Especially now that we've been doing the show for a while and we've covered pretty much everything about starting a podcast, all the things you need to set it up for success. Now we're doing episodes every single day. You get one tap about actually growing it. This is relevant to this actual episode too, if you just want one short, sharp tip, every single day of the week, every weekday about how to grow your podcast, then you could head on over to the [podcasthost.com/pocket sized](https://podcasthost.com/pocket-sized) and get a subscribed or followed on your listening app of choice.

Colin: Indeed yes. The first hundred episodes or so were all about how to launch your show, how to start running your show, tips on actual workflow, and all that stuff. All in one to one and a half, maybe two the most minutes. Now the last 30 or so have all been little growth tips. If you want anything around that even if you're already running a show, there are tons of tips in there about workflow. As I say, presentation skills, all that kind of stuff. The first hundred, but particularly the growth stuff recently. Matthew said that's the [podcast host.com/pocket sized](https://podcasthost.com/pocket-sized). Let's jump into Khaled's question now, where do you want to start on this?

Matthew: All right, first thing, when these questions come in, the first thing I like to do is just find a show online. Stick it into my Google machine, and see what pops up.

Colin: Indeed.

Matthew: I did that, so again, the podcast is called *Curated Advice of Better Living*. I take that in and the first thing that comes up is the Apple podcast link. You've got Podchaser link, links on various podcast directories. I really can't find an actual website for this podcast. There's the generic anchor webpage that you get if you host on there, which is coming up as well. I think this is a massive, low-hanging fruit, isn't it, for growth and discoverability and all sorts of things.

Colin: Yes, definitely. You have to have a website, you have to have that home base that people can come back to can revise what episode you had there. Look at your show notes. If they hear a good episode, they want to have a place where they can go and they're listening out in their car or they're walking their dog or something like that. They get home, they want to be able to go and have a look and check through

the show notes and things. What were the two or three things? That was a great episode. I took some great points for that, where can I go, and just skim back over everything it was covered? Maybe even listen through, if you've got some time codes on and that kind of stuff, all that stuff needs a website to go to really. It's so important.

Matthew: Yes absolutely, and it's never been easier to get a website these days, has it? Because you can obviously go down the self-hosted WordPress route, which many people do. You'll find our guide to getting set up if you go to the podcasthost.com/website, but also these days I'm finding more and more. I'm just sending people to the pod page because if your podcast already exists, which this one does, you just paste your RSS feed into the site, the pod page site. Basically just creates this really good website for you and you can do as much or as little with that as you want.

Like you can really especially if you sign up to this subscription, which are really reasonable prices as well, you can almost get everything you'd get with a WordPress site. All sorts of different features. It has never been easier to get to a website for your podcast. If you're looking to grow your audience, this is a no-brainer, it'll help you be found and it'll also help you convert those existing listeners and hardcore fans and really get them either promoting your podcast or doing a bit more with your content as well.

Colin: Yes. It used to be the big benefit of having someone like WordPress particularly was that you could put all the growth stuff in there that didn't really exist on a lot of the hosting platform websites, you wouldn't build to **[unintelligible 00:07:16]** like an email sign up very easily or some social feeds or there's all sorts of stuff that you can put on a WordPress site that's designed to help you grow your audience. Actually pod page includes a lot of that stuff, and even some of the hosting sites, like like captivates hosting sites, you can put an email sign up and a few of the others as well. There's really no excuse these days, it's easy.

If you go and do that, Khaled to start with, that'll give you a place to point your listeners much more easily to help them become either get into your funnel, whether it's like the email sign up, whether it's your social profiles and really start to build that loyalty and build that sharing as well. Help them to share your content too through all of those. All right. What else, Matthew, what do you think?

Matthew: Is it worth just touching on the Instagram thing? I don't want to become the person that constantly minds a bit of social media and I'm not going here. I wanted to just say like, if your sharing the show on Instagram and stuff like that, that's fine. Won't do any harm at all, might even pick up a few listeners, but I would never look at either post on Instagram or Twitter, or Facebook, as a full promotion strategy, this should just be like something you do as well. I wouldn't put too much onus on this. I've heard a lot of anecdotal examples of people that have even millions of followers on some platforms and they post a podcast episode **[unintelligible 00:08:44]** and it generates almost no lessons.

Again, won't do you any harm. I know that there are legal things that you could do on these platforms, but I don't place too much onus on it because a lot of other better things that we could do as we're going to find out shortly

Colin: I think this needs to be quite specific. Doesn't it? Like it needs to be, you're actually putting the effort in to go through your episode and finding like a 30-second or a 60-second clip that really is a highlight of the episode that really gives a bit of insight, a bit of value on its own, and then posting that on social, if you can post those things on Instagram, or even if it's on Reels, if it's something longer or similar things like that, where you're really putting the effort in to find very specific parts of your content that draw people into your world and encourage them to listen to the whole thing.

I think the days I've been able to just post a link to your episode and help them and that encourages people to listen are, I don't know, I wouldn't say dead. You're right. There's places it can work, people that can make it work but it's very difficult. It takes a lot more effort now I think, but if you want to put that effort in, by all means, I have seen that work for people. Neither of us are big massive fans of social. Are we?

Matthew: I'm going to flag you off on Twitter for that. Before we jump into those really actionable tips, Colin I just wanted to read you a part, a college description here for the show. It says the show features unique guests from all walks of life and there's a space for growth by reflecting on different perspectives and experiences. What's your opinion on this, is Khaled maybe casting the net a bit too wide here?

Colin: This was the first thing I thought when I saw this show. Khaled, I'm sure you're making great content. I'm sure you're getting on great guests, but looking at the image, looking at the title, *Curated Advice on Better Living*. Thinking about that description, I have really no idea who this shows for. That's my worry. Really, especially in the early days, a lot of people look at like Tim Ferris and Joe Rogan and the like, people that interview like wide-ranging guests and think, "Oh, I can do that too." They've often started with really specific initial topics or they've started with an audience already, which started with a very specific topic which went way before the podcast.

Really for a new podcast, you want to try to go really specific, so what I would say is I would go back to the planning. I would go back and episode 20 to 30 is often a good time to do this because you've now been running this show for at least a few months, if not up to six, at that point. You've started to get a handle on the type of content you're creating the type of guests that you're talking to, the type of insights that you tend to get of those guests. Often you can find an area in there that actually jives best with you and even better, you might have got some feedback from some of your existing listeners.

Like you say, you've got some listeners already you want to grow them, but look at those listeners, you've got already, look at the feedback that they've given you. What have they enjoyed? What have they not enjoyed? What have they told you that they want more of? Try and narrow down to something in the topics that you cover that can become more of a focus for you. A lot of people can rebel against that. They say I don't want to cover just like just one part of it. Your episode number one there, the creative process, like maybe that's something to get in on like maybe it's creatives, maybe it's better living for creatives.

That's an angle, or you've got something in there around episode 27, your recent one artist management and casting. Maybe it's actually something for media, like

whether it's film or TV or taking an angle like that, or it could be anything, anything that you talk about, but something that really narrows down that topic so that when people come across your show, they'll look at it and say, oh, that actually is really specifically related to me. That is what really persuades people to listen. It doesn't mean that you have to talk about just that forever. You can expand out over time, but it's much easier to grow that early audience and start that snowball rolling if you have a much more specific thing in mind.

I would do that. I would go back to the planning and think right over the first 20, 25 episodes, what have I enjoyed? What can I redefine my topic at? What can I focus in on? Then you can have the problem you're solving, the type of person you're solving it for, and really what is the way that you're uniquely doing it for them. That would be my advice to start with, well worth doing that. Even if you don't end up changing the show, at least it'll help me think through topics and stuff. I think you do really well to focus down a little bit and maybe refine the show description, this title, maybe in the artwork a little bit too, or do you think Matthew is that jive with what you thought?

Matthew: Definitely, yes. I think I point to this a lot on the show these days, but with good reason or planning tool or free planning tool, what is the URL? The podcast host.com/planner

Colin: Could be. We'll put a link in the show notes but--

Matthew: Yes, it is.

Colin: It is? Oh, well done. Good guess.

Matthew: Khaled get yourself on there. Ask you a load of questions. Good questions, podcast-related questions. Questions about your aims and target audience, and you fill that out. It doesn't take very long and then it spits out. I think I've done the spitting-out thing before as well. It provides for you a PDF that you can pin up on your wall and use as a little handy reference. The podcast.rules.com/planner is where you'll find that.

Colin: Yes, indeed. It'll guide you through that refining, that narrowing down, that focusing. Hope that helps for you, but right, Matthew, we've got some specific stuff, aren't we? A few of these are related stuff we've covered on *Pocket-Sized Podcast* and just now in our podcast growth book as well, by all means we haven't even [crosstalk] Go and find our podcast growth book which has got 80 something, 86 different tips I think it is, isn't it? Little things that you can do and big things too that you can do to grow your show, but here's three go for it, Matthew, you find a way with the first.

Matthew: Cool. This is one of my favorites is to run a co-hosted or crossover episode with another pod-caster in your niche. There's two approaches here. One of the approaches we've done this before on *PodCraft* is just that somebody else. Essentially the starting point is who's another podcast either in my niche or with a similar target audience and is at a similar level so that this is mutually beneficial for both ideas. You're going to collaborate either on they'll record, an episode, which is going to be played on your feed and you'll do the same for them, or you could

actually get together and record the co-hosted conversation and play it on both your feeds as well.

A classic example, this might be Collins, Warhammer, 40,000 podcast. He's doing really well on there. I've got my frost grave podcast because it's a much better game. We get together. We have a debate over the two games and we post them on both feeds and we make it very clear that like, this is a collaboration between X podcast and Y podcast. Here's where you could find both. Then the audiences are both are going to want to probably check the other one out too. It's just a really nice win-win growth strategy, aren't it?

Colin: Yes. I love that actually because it's like the old school if I bring on podcast guests, then they'll share the episode with their audience, but it doesn't really work much anymore. People are quite reluctant to share so many of them with each other, with their own audience and their own audience aren't necessarily podcast listeners. If you collaborate with another podcast creator, then you get on their show, you get in front of their podcast audience, obviously podcast listeners by default. It just helps, it's much more focused, much more specific the topic suits them perfectly, so much more likely to get the people to actually convert to listening to your show too.

Matthew: When are we doing the Warhammer 40K frostgrave episode? [crosstalk]

Colin: Just got some new [unintelligible 00:16:57] you can talk about them [unintelligible 00:17:00]

Matthew: Good cartoon terminators.

Colin: Indeed.

Matthew: What about our next one then Colin, you want to talk about creating a roundup as a strategy?

Colin: Yes, I like this as well. Actually, we've done this a fair bit in the past, haven't we? Create a roundup of something in your area that really the idea would be to include a few people that you can maybe even collaborate with, involve in the process. Once it's completed, you can reach out to them, share it with them, and because it's such a valuable resource, then that encourages them to share it more with their audience. An example might be something for us, it could be something around equipment. We get asked about equipment all the time, so we create a roundup which is all the best microphones that came out in 2022.

We actually include all of these brand new microphones or audio devices, whatever they might be, see this one from [unintelligible 00:17:59] and this one from Samsung, and this one from Focus. We round them all up and then we include all of those makers and those makers because it's a roundup that promotes their products, talks about their products and most topics, most podcasts out there, you can do this, even if it's not products, maybe it's other people's podcasts or maybe it's other people's blogs or other people's social profiles or anything like that, whatever you include it's in their interests to share it because they're included, they're promoted in it.

It shows them or it gives them some social equity, like some validation that they get and therefore it grows their audience as well. If you can create that roundup, make it really good, include a good set of people in it and then try and include them in all the promotion around it and reach out to them and ask them if they don't mind sharing it as well. Just making that ask in a nice way sometimes makes all the difference. Then quite often that stuff can get out there really well. Make its way around the industry or the area, the topic that you're in and help grow your audience a fair bit.

Matthew: My favorite example of us doing this quite successfully was back in the day. This is like four or five years ago potentially, but we did-- When we were doing our show *Hostile Worlds* and we did our best space podcast roundup. We were sure to mention our own show in there, but then we were these are the other podcasts, the other space podcasts that really helped and inspired us, and stuff like that we'd really recommend them. Then we just shared that out, the folks that were mentioning a lot of them even really big shows, I think even one NASA show mentioned it to their audience. That was really cool. It brought a lot of listeners our way.

Again, it was one man because it wasn't like we were just spamming them saying could you please mention our podcast. We're literally saying we're promoting you here. This is good content. They were happy to share it.

Colin: Useful to their audience and it helps them. That's all the incentive. Yes, absolutely. Cool, what about the last one, Matthew? What's our third tip for Khaled?

Matthew: This is also underrated. In fact, one thing that's constantly underrated by us podcasters is focusing on people who are already listening. I always like the idea of reaching out to three to five people, three to five crew fans of your show, those folks that are listening to every single episode that you do. They're the first people who reach out to you when new episodes go out or maybe you miss an episode one weekend, they're the first people to check in and make sure everything is okay. If you can identify even three of those people and just ask them if they wouldn't mind getting under the phone or Zoom with you one day, just for 20 minutes, and have some pre-prepared questions for them.

You want to be asking them things like how did they initially find the show? That's always a really valuable thing to ask because if there's common patterns and that you definitely want to do more of that, you want to be finding out things like what actually keeps them listening as well, why are you always listening every single week, what value are you getting from it and even stuff as well? Is there things about the podcast that you don't like or you would recommend changing? That's all really good data from those people that are listening. You could definitely do stuff around that. That's going to help grow your show to a wider audience as well.

Colin: For sure. That totally relates into the planning stuff we were talking about earlier, isn't it? That stuff is core. It's like gold for deciding where to focus down your show. That reaching out to those people as well, there's a huge growth in there. Growth technique in there, I suppose, in that if you talk to them, you turn them into even more loyal fans, evangelical fans, even totally fanatical fans that will help promote your show for you. You can ask these people, even if you don't, you can do it at a higher scale where you find 20 of them and you don't necessarily have to talk to them for 20 minutes or something.

You reach out with an email and ask for feedback but say, "If you know two or three people that are like you, that like the same kind of stuff as you then do you mind just passing on a link to the show for me and trying to encourage them to listen." Often that's one of the best ways to actually get non-podcast listeners. Like you said, we often concentrate on people who already listen to podcasts but the biggest growth opportunity is all these folk that don't really listen to podcasts yet. You find a true fan, they have a friend, you're in a Warhammer example.

You've got somebody who's into Warhammer, listens to podcasts but they've got probably 5, 10 friends who play Warhammer that don't listen to podcasts, that they can talk into listening to your show and you're the first show that they find. It can work really nicely, I think.

Matthew: Cool. Just to run through the key takeaways then. First and foremost, I think we want to really be getting a website set up, don't we? You could find out a couple of options at thepodcasthost.com/websites. You want to try and hone in as well on the planning, get back to the drawing board and just try and develop your topic and your aims a wee back, so thepodcasthost.com/planner for that. Then your three little tips to try run a co-hosted or crossover episode with another podcaster in your niche or a podcast with a similar target audience.

Think about a roundup that you could create. That could be a blog post or a podcast but ideally both. You could do that of again shows that you like in your niche or products or services or anything like that. Then finally reach out to those three or five crew fans, people you could think of that you could growl a wee bit, and get some solid gold data from them as well to help you kick on.

Colin: Excellent. Perfect. Remember, I think one of the things that hold people back a lot is that they end up spending so much time making their show that they don't have time to do the growth stuff. You are a maker and not a marketer and that's how a lot of podcasters feel. Putting aside specific time for the growth stuff, it sounds like you're thinking about **[unintelligible 00:24:11]** Maybe you don't suffer from this but a lot of people do. Making sure that you're keeping the process simple, the workflow simple, the recording, the editing, the publishing as simple as you can is always great.

Of course, I'll say our tool Alitu is designed just for that. Alitu is our podcast maker app, which is designed to cut down the time it takes you to make your show. Absolutely, it's got the call recording in there, does all the cleanup for you automatically, it's got a podcast-specific editor that makes it easier to edit and helps you put your show together simply. We've got hosting in there now as well. You don't even have to download it from Alitu and put it somewhere else, it's all just in one place. If you want to cut down your workflow, make editing easier all with the aim of having more time to spend on growth, then absolutely go and check out. It's over at alitu.com, A-L-I-T-U.com and you get a 7-day free trial there. With that hasty plug given will we finish up the show, Matthew?

Matthew: Yes, we should. I do believe that was the last of the questions that we'd had then. I'm sorry that we had a big break in between them but August was a bit hectic for a few different reasons and you've been **[unintelligible 00:25:20]**

Colin: Holidays and conferences and all sorts of stuff.

Matthew: I'm pretty sure that was our last voice question. I'll have to check the speed pipe inbox to confirm that but we do already have a nice idea for season 16 as well, don't we?

Colin: Yes, that's right.

Matthew: We're looking forward to be bringing the lesson or more information on that too and that's going to be really good. I'm really excited for what we could cover in that season when it comes around.

Colin: Definitely, looking forward to that. Well, thank you for all the questions you've sent in. If you're out there having sent in a question that we've answered, I hope it was helpful to you. We're always open to them though. We always will take questions in and we can maybe fit in some bonus episode, even if we do start a new season quite soon, which I think is likely over the next month or so. Keep the questions coming in and we'll do another Q&A season upcoming or maybe even just put out some bonus episodes with those listener questions in. What's the URL for that again, Matthew, you know **[unintelligible 00:26:16]**

Matthew: Oh no. I'll put it in the show notes. That's slack **[unintelligible 00:26:21]** link in the show notes. Oh, that's old school.

Colin: Link in the show notes. Cool. Go over to thepodcasthost.com and you'll find all of our resources there, all of our help there, and probably the link somewhere for that. What is it? We've we still have our PodCraft one, don't we? We've got podcraft.net. This is a case of do what we say and not what we do.

Matthew: A million different URLs and domains and whatnot.

Colin: If you go to podcraft.net, I believe that still does. In fact, I don't know why I'm doubting it. It definitely does direct straight to the *PodCraft's* home page where you can see this latest episode and you'll be able to check out the show notes there and find the link. That should be fine. All right, thank you again for listening. I hope you're out there enjoying your podcasting, growing your own show. We'll talk to you on the next episode. Thank you for joining me as always, Matthew. We'll talk to you soon.

Matthew: Cheers.