

Colin: Hey folks, and welcome to another episode of *Podcraft*. This is the show all about podcasting, helping you to grow a successful show. I'm Colin Gray from the podcast host and joined by Matthew. How are you getting on Matthew?

Matthew: Very well. Thanks, Colin. How are you?

Colin: Not bad at all today, actually, not bad. Winter's kicking in here in the frozen north. How's it down south where you are?

Matthew: I always laugh, because all our pals and colleagues in America talk about the autumn is there's romantic period, the crispy leaves falling down and it looks really good when you see photos out there. Fall as they call it. Here it's just wet, isn't it? It's just torrential rain, slippy, wet, rotten leaves all over the path. It's really, it's not a great time. Not a great time at all.

Colin: You can vaguely look up and see some orange trees and things and you're like, "It's nice," and then like a wet leaf hits you in the face.

Matthew: Down your back.

Colin: Isn't really fun, and then you just hunkering down waiting for the coldness to creep in. Do you know what though? I always find myself saying that and then I actually talk to some of our friends from the US and they're like, "What temperature does it get down to?" I'm thinking, "Just under freezing, it's pretty baltic." Then they say, "It's minus 20 here during the winter half the time."

Matthew: The land of mediocracy.

Colin: Shuts me up, exactly.

Matthew: We're just mediocre in all that we do. I did have the optimistic thought the other day though, that the longest days, like the 21st of December, the shortest day sorry, which isn't that far away. It's basically summer already. I'm going with that. By the way, time we're recording is November. Just because somebody could obviously be listening to this in summer.

Colin: Anytime. Anyway, let's get to it. What are we covering today, Matthew?

Matthew: Returning to our 16th season of *Podcraft*. This is a great opportunity for us, I think, to draw on the expertise, experience and insights. I always go on the rule of threes. Expertise, experience, and insights of our team here at the podcast host now too. We've already had Sean on talking about SEO for podcasters, and on this episode I've got my content team comrade as I'll call her, Lindsay, and I thought this was a good chance to catch up with Lindsay. I know that she does a lot of podcasting with her brother Ted, and we've heard wee bits and pieces about that through the company and through her Slack channel.

It was a really good chance to sit down with her and just find out a lot more about like the benefits and challenges of what the guys are doing together with our podcast. I'll just crack on and dive into it, and I started off just by asking Lindsay for a bit of background on her brother Ted.

Lindsay: My brother is two years younger than me. We're pretty close in age, and people may give you a different sense of what language people should use when they describe people who have autism spectrum disorder. Some people say that, 'it's correct to use the term people with autism or people with autism spectrum disorder.' Some people prefer the term autistic, and I know that other podcasters in the autism sphere often get a lot of feedback about what language you're supposed to use. The language that Ted prefers is he describes himself as autistic. He also says that he has autism and sometimes he'll use the word autistic as in noun.

He'll say, "I need to hang out with my autistics," instead of his friends who have autism. I use the language that he uses which he is autistic, he has autism, and we use it both interchangeably. Ted was diagnosed at probably age two and it's been something that he has his whole life. When he got to be in his teens, or maybe a little bit younger than that, was around the time that the consumer electronics market started exploding with video cameras and stuff at home. Ted started making videos and as the technology progressed, his ability to make videos progressed. He was very interested in making videos of himself, of the world around him.

Sometimes fictional videos too, and he would do puppet shows on video because he's really inspired by the Muppets. As time progressed, he moved in with us. He moved in with me and my husband in March of 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic, and since then we've been working on his media skills for job skills. We were moving along with video editing because that was something he was interested in, and I thought, "Hey, you know what? Let's just try a podcast." What I'm discovering as we're moving along, he really enjoys editing. He takes to it like a duck to water.

He also loves a good countdown clock, whether it's the last 10 seconds before New Year's or watching how a waveform moves along on a screen. He's very, very conscious of that and his brain just tunes right into it, so that's why podcasting's been a good fit for him. I hope I answered your question without digressing too much.

Matthew: There's a few great things we could dive in there. Just a quick question for you. Why do you think he likes editing? Why do you think that is?

Lindsay: Some of it is the countdown clock. Some of it the timestamp as you're recording. A lot of it is that he can see his voice on the wave form and it's something that he's doing. It's a cause and effect relationship. As he's talking, he can see the wave form on the screen. One of the symptoms of his particular condition is they call it narcissism, which is a word that most people don't like to hear, but basically he's more concerned about himself than other people. It's just an autism thing. I don't know if he would be good at working on content that doesn't include him. That's something that we have to try in the future because I need to find out if this is just about, "I'm recording me talking, I'm editing me talking," or if it's, "I love this particular activity."

That's a goal we're working on, we just haven't had a chance to do it yet because Ted loves to record, so we have tons and tons of material to work on. He also really enjoys editing transcripts, so we've been working with different transcription software. He's always mystified by why the computer thought he said, he knows he said bacon and it thought he said begging or something like that. Another challenge

for him is he appears to have symptoms of what they call tardive dyskinesia, which means that his mouth makes involuntary movements. Especially his tongue. It can make it difficult for him to speak clearly, so that's another one of the things that we're working on.

Matthew: Just going back then, you talked a bit about like him being interested in in video and when he moved in with you. You've been podcasting for how long now? It must be a fair few years.

Lindsay: I started making podcasts in, I want to say about 2015. My husband and I made one episode of a sketch comedy podcast called *Radio Free Taconi* which was just a proof of concept thing to see if we could do it, and we didn't even distribute it widely. It was a great confidence builder. It's one of those things that I highly recommend to anybody who's thinking about starting a podcast. Just make one episode and don't distribute it widely. Only show it to people you trust and it'll make you feel really good about doing it because when you're first starting, you just need that cheerleader stage.

Then I made *Jarn Socks Arising* which is spelled with a J, very confusing for a lot of people, which was an audio fiction podcast. That did pretty well, it definitely made me think, "I know what I'm doing here." Then Ted has been making videos for as long as he's had a camera and access to the internet. He may have more than one YouTube channel. We don't know exactly how many channels he actually has. He puts up videos of himself doing anything. I'm waiting for the day that there's some weird sub Reddit out there. Somebody who's actually been watching all of his videos.

Sometimes he gets troll comments, sometimes he gets no activity at all on his YouTube channel, but he and I, we've made it. He and I worked on a few videos together for Halloween and Christmas and things like that, and he's getting a lot better at it.

Matthew: I saw that video you shared with me coming up to Halloween, at the time of recording. It was really good production values and that. He obviously, he's really into the video. It'd be an easy sell then to transition him into podcasting?

Lindsay: Exactly.

Matthew: How is he found the two by comparison?

Lindsay: He prefers a video medium because he likes acting. He has a character that he plays that he calls Uncle Scary, who likes to host horror movies. I don't think you have this in the UK. I don't know if you have this in Scotland, but you've probably seen this kind of thing on the internet. There was a phenomenon in the '60s and '70s. and the early '80s where TV channels would show a horror movie and have it hosted by somebody who called themselves something like Dr. Shock. Elvira Mistress of the Dark was one of these characters and Ted wants to be a horror movie host. He made up this persona, this character, Uncle Scary, and he does all the puns and stuff and he hosts different horror movies.

Unfortunately, this has gotten him in a lot of trouble with copyright strikes on YouTube. Some of his videos, YouTube just takes him down immediately, but he

and I just worked on one for this past Halloween that was all clips from different movies that we found on archive.org. With the podcasting, I'm not exactly sure what it is, but I think seeing his voice on the waveform is about as exciting for him as seeing himself on camera, but it's lower pressure too. He doesn't really have to think about it as much as he has to think about the acting.

Matthew: I suppose as well, you're talking about YouTube, and the obvious negatives of that you mentioned that he does get some troll comments. We'll talk about that in a second. It is easier to get feedback, good or bad, when you're doing video on YouTube because most people have a YouTube account or a Google account and they could easily give feedback. Whereas podcasting, it can take a bit more work and a bit more time and there's a lot more places that feedback could come in. Do you think that's part of the reason. Like I say, I know not all comments have been positive, but you can get that feedback, can't you, with video a lot easier?

Lindsay: It definitely is easier because he has a little trouble telling the difference between good feedback and bad feedback. Sometimes he'll get a feedback saying, "Hey, this video was really great. Can you make a video about something else?" He'll say, "Yes, I can do that." For example, somebody asked him once if he could put spaghetti and meatballs in a blender and blend it into a paste and then drink it on camera and he did it. It was pretty funny to watch but the other thing too is that people will say to him, "Hey, can you do a video of--" something he really shouldn't do. He'll say, "Yes, I can do that," because he'll do it because the audience wanted it and we have to say to him, "No, you're not allowed to do that."

Matthew: There's that taking advantage or exploitation angle if somebody's messing around, basically. What you're saying is he's not ever been really hurt by any comments then, is that the case?

Lindsay: No. Every now and then he'll come to me and say, "They said I was a big, fat bloated tick, blah, blah, blah." I have to sit down with him and say, "You know what? Sometimes people just say mean things to get attention and they're just trying to get a rise out of you and just shake it off."

Matthew: What's it like, his actual podcast that you've been running with him? What's that called? Is it *Life in the Ted Lane*?

Lindsay: Exactly. It's called *Life in the Ted Lane* and it came out because as a caregiver, I spend a lot of time driving him around and I was thinking of the song *Life in the Fast Lane*, but with him it's life in the Ted lane. Wherever you are, you go at his speed and you have to be aware of the spatial relationships and stuff because otherwise he'll just walk right into people sometimes. You have to be, when you're living in life in the Ted lane, there's a certain awareness that you have to have so that you stay safe. Our friends said, "I would love to hear a podcast by Ted where he just talks about what he does for fun and you should call it *Ted Talks*." I thought about it and I knew I couldn't get away with it. I knew that it wouldn't go well but we decided *Life in the Ted Lane*.

Matthew: Why do you think it wouldn't have went well?

Lindsay: I'm sure that there's just an army of lawyers looking to preserve the copyright of the TED Talks thing and preserve the brand. That brand is tight. That brand, the fonts are perfect. Everything about it is always consistent and exactly the same. When you watch a TED Talk, you know exactly what you're going to get down to the cadence of the way they speak. If we had put out a podcast called *Ted Talks*, there would be a lot of people who would be saying, "This isn't what I expected." We're not going to get away with that. I don't need the army of lawyers from the TED Talks people coming down on me with a cease and desist order. They'd be at my front door.

Matthew: That's a good point. The concept I was going to call it *Ted Talks* there, *Life in the Ted Lane*. Ted, is he doing a monologue style, a solo show then or are you on there with him as co-host?

Lindsay: I'm on there with him as a co-host. What happened, actually the thing that was surprising was, "Ted," I said to him, "If we made a podcast, what would you want it to be about?" Right off the bat he said, "I would like to make a podcast about Hollywood, Broadway, the Muppets and what it's like to be autistic." I thought, "That's focused, that's really specific. Here's a man who knows what he wants." He knew exactly and I said, "Do you want me to do it with you or do you want to do this by yourself?" He said, "No, I want you to do it with me." Also because of the way he tends to ramble, he needed to have another person to steer him back on track.

It's like with *StarTalk* and Neil deGrasse Tyson, he usually has a comedian with him to make what he says makes sense to the average person who is not an astronomer. With Ted, you need somebody to get him back on track. The other thing is that his autism makes him do something, it's part of echo alia, which is when you echo things that you've heard other people say. He also does something called scripting, which is where you say things that you've heard before. Sometimes he'll talk about something and I'll think, "Gee, that sounds really scripted." Then I'll look it up and I'll find out that he's repeating something he heard on a television show. We have to be really careful about plagiarism. That's just one of the challenges.

Ted: We also saw dolphins.

Lindsay: Yes, we did. Please tell everybody about that. What was that like?

Ted: When we were last on the beach. We saw a big pod of dolphins go swimming by. They were leaping round, leaping round, leaping round. This is the first I ever saw wild dolphins. They call him flipper. Flipper ever is unlikely.

Lindsay: That was fun, wasn't it?

Ted: That's the first I ever see dolphins outside the aquarium.

Lindsay: Isn't that amazing?

Ted: That's incredible. I fully had a fish to feed them, but I don't think you're supposed to feed wild dolphins.

Lindsay: I don't think it would be a good idea. If you did it on a whale watching cruise, maybe that's different. Anyway, what else, Ted?

Ted: Now we want to talk about what we did the other day. On Saturday, we went to--
- What's going on?

Lindsay: This? Ted, don't you remember from the last episode? This is another flashback.

Ted: It is?

Lindsay: Yes.

Ted: The other day we were at-- Hi, Ted Harris. This is *Life in the Ted Lane*. This is a very special episode today. Maybe in one word. We got the great **[unintelligible 00:19:58]**. Especially, it's so hot out.

Lindsay: Where are we Ted?

Ted: We're at the Mag Arts Fair, garage art fair.

Lindsay: Yes. We are at Mag Rocks Art, which is a festival in Mount Airy on Germantown Avenue. Ted do you want to tell everybody what we can see around us? Actually, you know what? Let's turn around. There we go.

Ted: Around here I see a lot of vendors, lot of sellers, lot of art. There's a band over there playing music, lot of kids around. There's church right there. Lot of vendors, also a lot interesting art a lot of great stuff.

Matthew: Do you try and put a cap on the episode length?

Lindsay: I let him talk for as long as he wants to talk and then we go back and look at the transcript and say, "This stuff here, do you think this part is necessary?" At the same time, he has a really good sense of episode length. I think it's just from watching television all these years. We're kids of the '70s. I think he has a sense of a 30-minute episode in his head, and then we cut it down into the 20s. We also script everything beforehand, so that he's prepared. He likes to have a script ready to go, and he usually brings it in at about a page per topic. He'll digress a little bit.

Sometimes we'll talk about-- Donna suggested this actually from the customer success team. She listened to it and she said, "I would really love to hear more about what it was like for the two of you growing up together." Sometimes I'll just ask him a question about, "Hey I know we went to this place." For example we went to Disney World and I said, "You've told us a lot about what Disney was like now, but can you tell me a little bit more about what Disney was like when we were growing up?" Sometimes I'll get him to go off script a little bit, but he seems to have a pretty good sense of, "It's been 30 minutes," and also he's watching the countdown clock as we're recording.

Matthew: How do you- divvy up the tasks when you've recorded it? Obviously there's a bit of editing to be done, there's publishing. Even if you're doing a bit of promotion. What's the kind of setup there between the two of you?

Lindsay: Because this is job skills training for him I have him do as much as possible with me coaching him as he goes. Typically our workflow is we sit down, he

writes the script longhand on paper, and I sit next to him and talk it through with him. Then we sit down, we record it together. Then he takes a break to think about it. He has to process what just happened. Then the next stage is he transfers it into transcription software and he edits the transcript. Usually what I do is I let him do one pass by himself, because he's so excited and so enthusiastic that he won't accept outside direction.

He sits here saying "I know what I'm doing. I know what I'm doing and I know what I'm doing." I let him do one pass on his own, and then he and I go back together and I help him edit the transcript and usually he's very motivated to do that on its own. Then we'll sit down with the audio file, and he and I work on it together. It's one track, it's just the two of us on one track. It's not multi-track editing. Actually, we just started learning multi-track editing very recently. I think our last episode was multi-track.

Matthew: What are you using for that? What software?

Lindsay: We used Garage Band and then we moved up to Logic but what we're doing is something that you could really do on any **[unintelligible 00:24:14]** You could do this in Audacity or anything. We're not reinventing the wheel. He came up with some ideas that would require multi-track editing. He wanted to have flashbacks because some of it we field record. For example, we went to the zoo we made a field recording at the zoo. We went to an art fair, we did some field recording at the art fair. He'll say "Well we need to talk about something that happened in the past, so this has to be a flashback here. So we needed sound effects."

Then what we're doing now is that once he gets the dialogue assembled the way he wants, once he cuts out the parts that he doesn't want to keep, then we give the file to my husband Vince, who has a much more closer to a professional audio setup and experience than we do. He goes through and he does things like normalizing the volume and removing mouth sounds. He runs it through Isotope and makes it sound really really professional. Then while we're doing that, Ted and I go back to the transcript and take out whatever parts we cut out. If we moved anything around in order or anything like that, we make any changes to the transcript.

Then once it's all done, Ted and I sit down and we upload it together. Sometimes what we do is also Ted will draw, Ted does the cover art and also Ted does the show notes. What we do is we have one file in a Notes app that is the stuff that always stays the same. He copies and pastes that into the show notes, just like credits and stuff like that. Then he and I write the show notes together. Then he refers to the transcript there. He'll say "We talked about this, we talked about that, we talked about this, we talked about that." He'll put that up. Sometimes he'll make new art for the episode if he feels it's warranted. The cover art for this is always hand drawn.

He draws it, then we upload it to photo editing software and he gets it all set up with the right size parameters and everything. Then we upload that, and he publishes it and the part where he drops the ball is promotion. That's where his interest flags. The feedback that we get ends up being critical to him continuing to want to do it. It's important for any podcaster but it's especially important for him. The number of downloads doesn't mean a whole lot to him. Fortunately our hosting service shows

what countries it's been downloaded in. If I show him, "Look Ted, your podcast was downloaded in India," that blows his mind.

If I say to him "Look, it's been downloaded in the UK, look, it's been downloaded here." Our hosting service can get pretty granular with that data. They can say what town it's been downloaded in. The first time I showed him, "Look Ted, your podcast has been downloaded in four different countries." He just had to sit on the couch and stare for a really long time. "This is really happening. People are hearing my voice in another country." The idea that people in countries where that he's never been to are listening to him just absolutely amazes him. We did the five-day review challenge on the *Podcraft* community and just asked for reviews.

As soon as he started getting reviews, he said, "We have to go record another episode. My audience needs me." He's like a superhero. "It's not about me, it's about my audience. They need me."

Matthew: What have been some of the challenges for you? Overall this is an entirely positive experience and doing some with your family member, doing some with your brother. You're creating recordings that are permanent, that are forever, but obviously it won't come without its challenges. What difficulties have you come across at times?

Lindsay: With me it's patience. He's willing to work on really tiring, tedious tasks like editing. Whether it's transcripts or audio. He's willing to sit there and work on it for maybe an hour at a time or two hours at a time without a break. The other thing is that he refuses to get his eyes checked and he refuses to wear glasses. He could stand to get his eyes checked. A lot of the stuff on the interface is really tiny and hard for him to see. I'll sit there saying to him "No, you got to move up a little bit. It's up there, it's up there at the top." Also his memory retention for details of editing isn't always great. I do have to coach him. I do have to prompt him as we go.

Sometimes it's very tiring for me so it's the patience that's hard because I want this to be a positive experience for him. There was one time I said to him, "Listen, Ted, I need a break," and he said, "No, just keep going." He's a taskmaster when it comes to this stuff. He's a tough, tough guy. He'll work on something on two hours before he feels he needs a break. What he'll do is, when I say to him, "I really think it's time for a break," first of all, he had to learn that it is okay to take a break rather than doing something all at once. He had to learn that jobs aren't necessarily finished in one work session, that you can set a task aside and come back to it later.

He wants to use the same ball of enthusiasm that he had when he started rather than trying to generate a new ball of enthusiasm. I said to him, once, "Look, you really need to take a break, because otherwise you're going to burn out." He said, "Okay," he went downstairs, poured himself a huge glass of water, drank the whole thing then he sang a song and then he came upstairs and he said, "I'm ready to get back to work." Ever since then, it's always been the same thing. He drinks a glass of water, he sings a song, and then he comes upstairs and he's ready to work again.

My guess is that singing the song resets his motivation but it also has to do with breathing. I think it's like the way somebody might take deep breaths like

mindfulness breathing. He drinks a glass of water, sings a song, and then he's ready to go back to work.

Matthew: Just as we come towards the end of episode, Lindsay, what are the long term or future-- Have you set any sort of goals or targets or anything like that? Any ambitions for these podcasts adventures with Ted?

Lindsay: With Ted, it's very different than it would be for a neurotypical person. Even if Ted's podcast took off and he was getting like Rogan-level listeners, I would still have to coach him through it and he wouldn't want to hand over the workflow tasks to someone else. I don't think he would want to just sit back in a chair and talk. He likes to have the control that you get from doing the editing and doing all of the processing and uploading the new episode, and making the art. For him, that's part of the creative process, that's him putting his stamp on it.

Even if he got like a Joe Rogan-level of listeners, he would still be doing all of that. The only way I think we could monetize it-- Now actually, that's another thing because when we started in 2020 with teaching him job skills, one of the things that we worked on was graphic design. He has a t-shirt store on TeePublic, and what he does is he draws t-shirt designs, and then he edits them in photo editing software, and he puts them up and people buy them. People love his art. We probably would monetize with his t-shirts and merch. The way that I see this being anything more for him is that it could have a positive impact on people who would hopefully reach out to him, write to him or contact him and say, "Hey, I really enjoyed your show. This helped me."

People who are parents and caregivers of other autistic people saying, "This helped me get through a long car ride." "This helped me get through a trip to the zoo." "You took your brother to the zoo, now I feel more confident taking my brother to the zoo," that sort of thing.

[music]

Colin: That was great. It was really good to hear Lindsay's experience with that. There's so much goes into it.

Matthew: The old podcast and that never fails to impress you. All the ways people are utilizing it, all the really positive impacts that it's having as well. I look forward to catching up with Lindsay in a future episode and just find out how Ted's getting on with his stuff as well.

Colin: Indeed. Cool. Just before we finish up, I'll mention we've had a couple of changes in our team recently, haven't we Matthew?

Matthew: That's right. You want to enlighten us on those?

Colin: Yes. If you're an ongoing listener, you'll know that our podcasting tool Alitu, we've long had it. We started out as an editing tool, it was a way to make editing much quicker and easier. It was always the question we got most often, wasn't it Matthew,? Back in the day, when we were producing shows for folk. "How do you

make editing easier? How do I get rid of this EQ and compression? How many questions during that did you answer Matthew?

Matthew: Plenty, yes, plenty. All these terms that trip people up. Then when you tried to shoot on, "This is how I do an Adobe Edition," and a lot of folks are sort of rolling their eyes.

Colin: Exactly. With Alitu, we decided to build a tool that basically did all the audio cleanup for you so you didn't have to worry about EQ and compression. Adds in your music and your transitions, and offers a really simple, clean, but still powerful and creative way to edit. Cuts out a lot of that stuff that you get in places like Audacity, Addition, that you don't really need. You're not an audio engineer as a podcaster, so we simplified it back. Then, later on, we added call recording. Now you can record your calls right in Alitu and the audio of that it's cleaned up too.

Most recently, just this month, we've launched hosting as well. It was always the goal really to get Alitu to be an all-in-one place where people can come, they can make their podcast, they can get some creative control. It's simplified, it's made much quicker, as easy as possible, it's built really just for podcasters. Sounds cheesy, but I'm just delighted we got there eventually. It was four or five years down the road from starting it. It was a 2016 I think the first idea came up for this. It's really cool, it's great to have the hosting in there. I think we've had some good feedback as well, haven't we Matthew? We've had loads of people getting in touch about it.

Matthew: I've been using it for a while doing our companion podcast *Pocket-size Podcasting*. I've been the guinea pig and there as well, and I've been working away on it. It's been working really well for that, which was great to see. Obviously, now it's come out a bit on and is out there in the world. Onwards to world domination, or somewhere close to it.

[laughter]

Colin: Or at least just making it easier for folk to make their shows.

Matthew: Exactly.

Colin: If you want to give it a try, go over to alitu.com that's A-L-I-T-U.com. There's a seven-day free trial, so you can give it a shot, see if it suits you. Try making your show from start to finish, do a call or a solo recording, put all together, see how it sounds with the audio cleanup. Then you can publish it too. If you already have hosting, you don't have to use our hosting, it's a free extra. You get 1,000 download for free per month. That suits quite a lot of podcasters actually. You can get that hosting for free. You can upgrade it for a reasonably low price as well, but if you have other hosting, you can link to any host as well.

Pop over, give it a try. I'd love to hear your thoughts, get in touch, and let us know. We're always there on Twitter @thepodcasthost. If you want to get in touch, give us some feedback, and be great. That'll do it for this episode, Matthew?

Matthew: Yes. I just want to say to the listener as well, aside from the usual thanks for listening, you'll find links to anything mentioned, the show notes and the

transcriptions over at thepodcasthost.com/podcraft16. That 16, the number 16 rather than the letter 16. That's a topic of its own isn't it? Do you spell it out or do you write the numbers? Podcraft 16, that's where you'll get everything you need around the show.

Colin: Perfect. Thank you for listening and join us next time for another episode with one of our team.