

Podcraft, Season 17

Episode 2

Colin: Hey, folks, and welcome to another episode of Podcraft. This is the show all about podcasting, from starting your show to monetization and everything in between. I'm Colin Gray from the podcast host, joined by Matthew, as always. How you doing, Matthew?

Matthew: Very well, thanks. Are you joined by me or is this an AI version of me that you've programmed?

Colin: Because I've actually been question. That is the question, yeah. Fired all the staff and we've now got a and I versions of every one of them. It's nice and cheap.

Matthew: Productivity is through the roof now that I'm a robot as well.

Colin: Yeah. So we're continuing our series, Matthew, aren't we, on future podcasting? Last time around, we talked about drones and how you can use video from drones. We talked about video in general, too. So if you're interested in either the use of drones in podcasting or video in podcasting, pop back and listen to the previous episode on drones. But this time we're going to AI. What was it that sort of prompted this in you, Matthew? Was it the huge amounts of chat on all sorts of socials? The fact that you can't escape GPT and its friends anywhere these days?

Matthew: Yeah, it's such a huge topic, isn't it? You mentioned social again. I feel like I say this on every episode, wouldn't know anything about that, but I read a lot and I listen to a lot, I follow a lot of industry stuff and it's everywhere at the moment. And I think, like, disruptive topics like this, it divides opinion. On one hand, you've got a lot of fear and panic and anger, and on the other hand, you've maybe got, like, complete optimism and drives to make loads of money, I suppose. And then somewhere in the middle, I think there's an area to find some balance and reason and look at this as there are opportunities in certain areas and there are other cases where we know rationally that this stuff could never fully replace all that we do. So it'd be good to dig into that in this episode.

Colin: Absolutely. We ran our Indie Pod summit yesterday, which was great. So much fun, actually. We had so many more people turn up than we expected, so much more engagement, so it was brilliant. But my talk at the start was I did a keynote which was around sharing some of our census data report coming out in March, by the way. If you're out there listening, you're interested in seeing that, but the trends as well. And one of them, I had to mention, AI just with all of the chat around it, but my kind of feeling on it is simply that it's going to be hugely disruptive. Like, this stuff is just bonkers what it can do. There is no doubt that jobs will be lost, that humans will be replaced by some elements of what this can do. But I think as podcasters, the podcasting industry we're almost the least likely or the last in the queue to be replaced by AI, because podcasting, the power of podcasting is really the human behind it. It's the personality, the transparency, the real kind of feelings and emotions and all that that come behind the podcast. That is the power of podcasting above, even blogging, video, all of those things. I think podcasting is the last place that will be negatively disrupted by AI, but I think actually, we can have huge benefit from it. There's so many things that I think we can use to plug some of the skill gaps that we come in and have as podcasters, or even some of the issues, like the biggest problems. That was one of the things that came out in the census. One of the biggest struggles people have is show notes. So text stuff that goes along with your podcast and we'll talk a bit about how that can be potentially helped by things like chat Gptm with you.

Matthew: Yeah, that's right. And chat GPT, I mean, that's a more recent discovery for me, going back the last couple of months. The first major sort of AI based story I remember in podcast was that Joe Rogan Steve Jobs thing, and I'm talking about the AI as in the AI of the last six months sort of thing. I know you could look back to audio cleanup stuff and that, and that's kind of AI in its own way, but I think that's kind of different topic altogether, isn't it? But that's Joe Rogan Steve Jobs episode, just in case anyone's not aware of it. I believe it was fully scripted by AI and then it was fully voiced by AI, certainly, obviously for Jobs, because he's pan bread, isn't he? It was like a 20 odd minute episode and sounded scarily realistic. I mean, there are certain points in it where you know it's not real, but like, have you heard that, Colin?

Colin: I haven't listened, actually. No. I should go and listen, though. Yeah. I think that's the fear, isn't it? That we're going to be flooded by legions of podcasts that are just entirely AI generated. But there's so many podcasts out there that are quite robotic. Some human presenters. When we're first learning, when we're early stage, you can be a bit robotic and it takes you a weebly to find your voice. And podcasts always kick in when people do that. They find their voice, they find the real things that connect with their audience, and AI is never going to be able to do that, I don't believe. That is my belief, especially in podcasting, like a short thing like YouTube, potentially, it might be able to do that, like be able to sustain it for two 3510 minutes without giving away the fact that it's fake. Writing

certainly might be taken over a little bit more, but it's talking for half an hour or an hour and be able to really connect with your audience. I think we're a long way away from that, if ever. So that's why I'm not too afraid of it, if that makes sense. What do you think, Matthew? Is that naive?

Matthew: No, I think there's a legitimate concern there that the podcast directories and stuff could be flooded with this stuff and you might find yourself hypothetically in the future, looking for a new show to listen to, and you're downloading loads of shows and most of them you're like, SSAI, is it not? And that's the problem, because you're not concentrating there on the topic, you're trying to determine if it's actually a real podcast or not. So I suppose for us as podcasters, all we could control is our responsibility for our own shows. So it's just that kick up the **** to make sure that we're not just relying on people finding us through search and directories, but we're also marketing our shows and other ways and build an audience engagement as well. So it's probably a Colt Arms to podcasters. Just again, you're in control of your content and your destiny to be quite grandiose about it.

Colin: Indeed.

Matthew: A robot will replace it if you let them.

Colin: If you let it. And the control we have is that it can help us as podcasters. I do believe that there's tons of stuff we've used it for, haven't we, Matthew, recently? And I think there's a lot more we will use it for that enhances our podcast and supports our podcast and helps us grow our audience and all sorts of other stuff. So, yeah, let's get into that, then. Do you want to jump in first? We're going to talk about text primarily here, aren't we? Chat GPT in particular. But there's loads of other things you can do. Like, you've already mentioned the voice generation stuff. You could have an announcer that works with you and supports you. That's one way you can do it. Of what other kind of things are there as well? We're not going to go into these deeply, but did you say Lindsay is working on a roundup here for the future?

Matthew: Yeah, so there's lots of AI tools popping up at the moment, as you would expect, all in varying degrees of quality and how quickly they've come to market or how quickly they've been pushed out there. But, yeah, she's putting a roundup together and the idea with that roundup is that we'll just add over time, because there's only going to be more of these tools coming about. So, yeah, we'll put a link in the show notes to that roundup because it will be edited by the time this episode goes out.

Colin: Yeah, that's really cool. It's things like artwork. Like artwork. You can get artwork created by AI or full media kit or something like that. It's just loads of these other elements that you can get built through these tools that we otherwise can afford. Yeah, it's really cool.

Matthew: I just wanted to clarify this as well. It's a massive rabbit hole and it's probably subject for a whole other discussion. And I had a great discussion with Lindsay about this privately because we have kind of different perspectives on AI and the creative industries. And Lindsay very much is quite defensive of humans. I'm not saying I'm not, but I think I'm maybe just a bit more like I know that I could control what I could control and what I can't sort of thing. And we had a good discussion about this and I just wanted to get her opinions on it and that. And we were talking about things like our work and we would have made a good podcast episode, to be honest. But one of my key arguments, and I'm not going to try and replicate the whole discussion here, but I was saying that generally folks that pay for stuff, pay for it. And I'm talking about decent money that people make livings off. And you're folks who get stuff for free get stuff for free anyway. So maybe I'm being super naive there, but I don't think loads artists are certainly going to be out of work because folks that are doing really good quality work for decent amounts of money, for high quality paying clients, I think they're not just going to switch to using AI. Now, these clients. Yeah, just a week into that, if the listeners aren't interested, get in touch and I'll get Lindsey on and we'll have that conversation again on here and I'll get more stacked than she will, I can assure you. That.

Colin: Cool. All right, let's jump into how you can use AI to your advantage with the podcast. Before we jump in, I'm just going to mention Alex as well, of course. That's the product we run, which is our podcast maker tool. It has a bit of AI built in. To be fair. The audio processing in particular is machine learning generated. So if you chuck in your recordings, whether they're uploaded from elsewhere or whether you do a call recording right inside Ality, you can do that like we're doing just now, Matthew, record your call right inside Ality. Either way, those recordings get processed, they get leveled out, they get made to sound great, polished up, noise reduction, his reduction, all that kind of stuff. And then aspire the other side into the editor directly so that you get it all cleaned up, all polished, so that when you're editing, it all sounds great. And of course, Alto can do your editing, helps you with your editing as well in terms of offers up a podcast specific editor, which you can then build your episode. The other things we do for it as well in terms of AI are adding music so the music is added automatically, transitions are added automatically. So going from the music into the voice and then processing it all and adding in your ID, three tags, all the metadata. So there's quite a few things

automated through a bit of machine assistance in there. So on the theme of AI, and of course, we've got hosting in there now as well as well these days. So it's an all in one platform to make your podcast from recording to editing to publishing. If you are going to try it out, go over to Alito.com. That's Alitu.com. You get a seven day free trial and create a first episode. All right, let's get to the content. Matthew so how can we use AI to our advantage? What's your first one?

Matthew: Yeah, well, shout out to an article on the site by Katie. You'll find it at the PodcastHost coma. So that's pretty much a written version of this episode. So you could dig in everything and see the examples and stuff like that, that Katie's put together. The first thing I actually wanted to mention was script creation, because first of all, Katie, when she put this article together, had actually asked Chat GPT, what is AI in podcasting? And it answered in the context of podcasting. Artificial intelligence refers to the use of computer algorithms and machine learning techniques to automate certain tasks or processes relating to creating, distribution or analyzing podcasts. It's about what they do that, isn't it? And this is supposed to replace us.

Colin: Cohen yeah, exactly. It might replace an academic from a university lecturer.

Matthew: Yeah, imagine that was your normal chat as a podcast.

Colin: Yeah, but that's exactly it. You can make it do things in certain styles. So to be fair to Chat GPT, it is smarter than that. You can say, like, write a friendly, simple explanation of AI. That would be fine for a seven year old, and it probably could make a much more summarized version. So, yeah, it's cool, though. It's good to see that being able to come out.

Matthew: Yes, it's mainly to do with the prompts and the input, isn't it? Because further down here, one of the other things I wanted to look at was Katie had asked it to write a script for a podcast about UFO sightings in Scotland. And it's written the script, which is cool, but what you've got here is the announcer and then the host. You've got the host dialogue and then you've got the guest dialogue and the host dialog. So obviously you're not going to use this, because if you've got a guest on, you wouldn't be sending them a script saying, by the way, here, the things that you'll be saying, you would obviously need to prompt it to do a script for a monologue show, a solo show, unless you're doing a fiction podcast and you wanted some dialogue. But, yeah, it's quite cool to see this, but it's totally not usable.

Colin: Yeah, maybe we should read that out at the end. Matthew and you could put a little bit of music behind it or something so people can hear it. We might tag that on the end of the episode. We'll see how we go. The list of stuff that I think you can use it to really help you with. I think the biggest one really is to start with, this is something that came out in the census data yesterday too, actually, Matthew, a lot. This is tying in one of the things that were one of the biggest struggles for podcasters was coming up with episode ideas. It was topic ideation, like just coming up with what am I going to talk about on the next episode? And that's something that Chat GPT can really help with, can't it?

Matthew: Exactly, yes. Again, the art is in the prompt, so you might or I might and I have done this, go into Chat GPT and just say, give me five topics about podcasting. And there are obviously things you've thought of before or covered, but you then hone in a little. So you're like, give me topics about podcasting, give me unconventional topics about podcasting, or even better, give me topics about podcasting for people who have just started but are really struggling to get a foothold in the medium. So the more you give it, the more nuanced the output is going to be, isn't it?

Colin: Yeah, the more specific you get for sure. And you can say things like what are the questions that people ask first when they're trying to choose their podcast and gear? Or what are the questions people ask when they are trying to learn how to edit? And it will come up with a bunch of things around that. So, yeah, I think it's even more so probably with wider topics like if you run just a general business podcast or something like that, you're like, what's the sort of trends these days in business that we can talk about today? And it will come up with a whole ton of ideas. So, yeah, I think that's a really big one. Just be able to come up with what the current trends are. This is one of the things I'm discovering, Matthew, that playing around with it one of the things that it's really, really good at. It might not be really good at pretending to be a human, although it's getting better, but it is really good at summarizing what humans say. Like, have you tried chucking a transcript in yet from one of our podcasts?

Matthew: I think I did. Yeah. I think I did and asked it to write show notes and it totally misunderstood. Wasn't great. But again, I'm sure there'll be ways.

Colin: Around it all about the prompts. Yeah, well, it worked well for me. I checked in because we're still on the kind of free beta versions and stuff, so there's limits. So I couldn't put in a whole half hour transcript, but I put in a transcript, I put in maybe 1000 words, maybe a five minute section and it summarized that really, really well. So Chopped popped it in and it just wrote me, like, a couple of paragraphs that summarized everything that we were talking about. So that's the next one. So it's Show Notes that come along with your podcast, like being able to actually like, this is the other issue

that people always have. Like the biggest question, how do I create Show Notes that don't take hours to make? Because we're talkers, we're not writers, but there's so many benefits to having really good written content that goes alongside your podcast. Whether it's the discoverability, like, the SEO benefits of having an article that summarizes this topic that makes you so much more discoverable, because people are going to Google and typing in a question, and then suddenly your podcast episode Show Notes could show up quite legitimately in text search. And what happens then? People see it, they get a better value, they see a player there, they press play, and then they're suddenly sucked into your podcast and become subscribers of the show. But it works for listeners that you already have as well in terms of generating loyalty and engagement. Because if you have really good Show notes, people listen to your episode. You can say, go and visit our Show Notes to look over the summary of this. If you want to revisit the content, if you want to see some tasks based on it, and you can get AI or Chat GPT type tools to create those summaries those tasks, let's say. What are the next steps you would recommend people take based on this chat that we just had? And it actually comes out with that it'll tell you what they think, what Chat GPT thinks a summary is of what you should do next. It's bonkers.

Matthew: Yeah. And I think it's worthwhile caveat as well that all this stuff should be used as frameworks or drafts, but you should never really just be getting the output and copying and pasting it and WordPress and publish. You've got to put your own spin on it. You've got to put your own words in there. And you definitely need to fact check it too, because one of the things that you can definitely use it for is like your top level research. It will give you a lot of good facts or figures or research with the right inputs, but it's capable of just making stuff up. And it does like if you ask something in a certain way. I mean, in the article that Katie's done there, it's been asked, tell me about was it a massive dinosaur shaped custard cream factory in Glasgow? As far as I know, this thing doesn't exist, but the AI just runs it and says, yes. In fact, what does it say? Let's read it out.

Colin: Yeah, go and tell us. So curious.

Matthew: Tell me about the huge dinosaur shaped custard cream factory in Glasgow. The huge dinosaur shaped custard cream factory in Glasgow is a popular attraction in the city. The dinosaur is made from steel and is over 24 meters tall, making it one of the tallest structures in the city. Inside the dinosaur is a factory which produces custard creams in a variety of flavors. Visitors could get a tour of the factory and learn about the production process, as well as taste the custard creams. The factory is a popular attraction for both tourists and locals and it's a great way to learn about the production of a traditional British biscuit. So that sounds convincing, doesn't it? I'm I'm booked up to go for a tour.

Colin: Well, the only the only reason I'm not convinced by that is that I know that custard creams don't come in all sorts of flavors. They are just custard.

Matthew: Yeah.

Colin: Unless that's the only unfeasible part of that.

Matthew: Unless you consider the bourbon a custard cream. But it's not, is it?

Colin: It's not so suburban.

Matthew: Yeah. So again, this points to the fact that you need to check it. Like, you can't you can't take anything that says at face value. I've done one before. Again, it was experiment. I was like, Tell me about the best Scottish podcast about podcasting, because I was like, Well, I mentioned podcast and I come up with these ones and I was like, I've never heard any of these. And I Googled them all and none of them exist. But it was really convincing that I ended up that went into detail. This is the host, this is what they cover. So I said to Chat GPT, none of these are real podcasts. And it said, I apologize. I was giving you an example of what these podcasts might be like, but these are real. So I think it kind of mocks you a lot as well.

Colin: Yeah, so maybe that's part of the prompting as well, is like, tell me, give me a roundup of real podcasts that actually exist which cover blah, blah, blah. Yeah, you're right. I think that's the thing everyone's wrestling with just now, isn't it? How much do we trust it? Where is it drawn its data from? Because it could be drawn its data from fiction. Like, it could be crawling the web and finding fiction and thinking that there is a natural place called Mordor and there's a natural guy called Sauron that has a big flaming eye in the sky because it's written about so much. But, yeah, there's a lot of problematic bits. But, yeah, I mean, I think you're right. Like, top level research. Like you're researching a topic the same way you would type it into Google and start reading articles. You can just type that into Chat GPT and start making some notes, but you always want to double check, like you would with a Google search. Like, you find a website and it tells you something. You want to go and find a couple of other sources that confirm it to make sure that it's correct. So I think it is a great start and it gives you tons of good data, but you're always going to want to do your own diligence and yeah, you're absolutely right. Like if you're if you're creating show notes, you want to write your own. We intro that's human and you and your voice and stuff. But then the kind of rest of the summary

could be chat GPT generated and save you a lot of time getting that kind of I think it's a way of getting past that blank page, isn't it? Like, how terrifying is that blank page when you start writing or start planning or whatever, it's just a way to get some of those prompts in there that gives you every step forward, isn't it?

Matthew: Yeah. Because almost all podcasters are not writers. They're not coming to podcasting because they want to write. So show notes are a necessary part of podcasting and if that's another barrier that can be smoothed off by AI, then it's a good thing. But like we're saying, it should be used in the right way. This is a draft, it's not creating the finished piece for you and it never should be.

Colin: Yeah. An example of that is the part you mentioned already, Matthew, something where both neither of us are very good at is social media. Like, Chat GPT can be really good for giving you prompts for that as well. Like, say, paste in a few hundred words from your transcription and say, give me two or three tweets that summarize the content in this section. And it will give you a few ideas. And you can say, write it in a humorous way or write it in a serious way or write it in a way that's got gravity or something. So you can start to tailor it. And you'll still need to change it a little bit to be in your voice. But again, it's getting past that blank page and giving you a wee bit of a head start when you're creating this stuff.

Matthew: Yeah, the social posts, I've heard examples of people like your Saint Colin, they'll just paste the blog post in and say, write me a tweet, and I've heard it's very good. The unfortunate part of that is that you then go on Twitter and use Twitter and interact with people who use Twitter. What about guest idea? Generation con? We've had tools that do this over the years, various different tools. But do you think the AI is a viable option for this?

Colin: Yeah, I love this one, actually. This is a really good one and you can use it for a few different in a few different ways. You could type in, give me an idea of ten podcasts that talk about this topic, or ten podcasts that have talked about this type of thing and then I'll tell you them all and then you can look at the hosts and say, these people are obviously experts. Maybe they'd want to do like an interview swap or they'd want to do a co hosted episode that appears on both of our shows. Could be a great way to get a good guest. Also some promotion that way too. But equally, you can do not podcasts and you can say, like, who are the top ten experts or top 20 experts in this field and make it quite specific. Say people who have if you're quite an academic podcast, you could say people who have PhDs and this or that. Or if you're not, you could say, tell me the top 20 comedians that play in the Austin, Texas area. And it just gives you lists of people, doesn't it? Just find these people for you that you can then try and contact.

Matthew: I love that some of them might not be cool.

Colin: Well, again, I think that's just being specific. Tell me ten real comedians that currently play in the Austin area. I think a lot of the problems that have come up so far are just because we're just really early in learning how to coach this thing, this tool, how to use this tool in a way that achieves our goals.

Matthew: One other aspect to this column, we've dabbled with this already. So we like a reborn game. You're an RPG game. So we thought we'd have a bit of a laugh and try this out for sort of doing an RPG fiction experiment, didn't we?

Colin: Yeah, talk about making stuff up. So we decided to try and make a fiction podcast day. I'd been playing with it. I think you had as well, just telling it. What was some of the silly stories that you asked it to write?

Matthew: Oh, God, I was putting all sorts in there, none of which I think I could repeat on this podcast.

Colin: Yeah, I was going to say it's.

Matthew: Certainly capable of taking any details and just run on with it and making mental stuff.

Colin: Yeah, I was trying it with a few things for the kids, like saying, tell me a story about a girl, an eight year old girl whose brother falls into a portal and she has to go and rescue him in this fantasy land. It's set in a fantasy land that's ruled by an evil baddie. Make up what kind of baddie it is. And then tell me how the girl rescues her brother. And then it just spits out this big story and some of the details are lacking. So it says like, so the evil wizard lives in a castle on a mountain. And I say, well, tell me about the evil wizard. What does he look like? And then it says, oh, the evil wizard is this. And I'm like, okay, tell me about the baddie. And they're like, oh, the baddie was a big dragon. And I'm like, I don't really like a dragon. It's a bit cliché. Tell me, can you make it someone else. And I was like, okay. So a giant centipede defeats tries to defeat the girl and the boy. I was like, yeah, that's cool. So, yeah, it's like you can keep digging in and making more and more detail to make a story, which was really cool. So, yeah, like, what was your idea then about the podcast that we've just kind of started making because it was similar, but we put a bit of a spin on it, didn't we?

Matthew: So we basically tried to gamify it slightly. So I got out to create fantasy Environment, like a low fantasy environment, and started to ask, it put us in a situation. What are we facing right now? So I think the first thing that came up was we had to fight an ORC or run away from them. But the way we were working, it was, okay, let's have four different outcomes here. Make it really easy, moderate or difficult. Or one of them was just let us enter our own custom instruction in so that it would give us an opportunity to speak to these characters in our own words. And it was pretty cool. Like, I really enjoyed it. I think we did it for about half an hour. I think we ran away from some orcs and then we ended up falling in a cave. And we were in a cave. We met a monster who became her companion. And it was really a messroom. I was getting really into it. And every time it would come up with stuff as well, if there was, we bite inconsistencies. You could immediately start questioning. You were like, you're saying this now, but what about this? And it was coming back and saying, oh, I'm really sorry. I never thought of that. So it would readjust slightly or it would just totally make stuff up. Remember we kept asking, what else do we have in our bag? And I think it was like Mary Poppins bag in the end.

Colin: Fantasy bag. Yeah, it was really cool. I really enjoyed it. I think there's so much we can do with that. And I think that's an example of how we're using AI to help humans do something even more entertaining or funny or just fun, really. We're not replacing ourselves, but we're using it to make something that we want to do better or more interesting or whatever. So I think that's the kind of thing I'm getting to with this. There will no doubt be downsides around the whole thing, but I think being able to do something like that, it's just crazy. It's just so much fun and there's so many options as well. I think that's the thing over the next few years as well, that there are so many creative people in our industry, like, people that have created the most amazing things with no kind of outside help. So what can those people do and what can they think of doing with these new tools that just open up all sorts of possibilities. So that's my hope that we'll see some really cool stuff come out over the next couple of years based on this, including our crazy Choose Your Own Adventure podcast. All right, should we tie up with that, Matthew, or have you got anything else to say?

Matthew: No, I think that's all. Like I say, dig out our fiction podcast.

Colin: Yeah, go and check out oh, sorry. I was going to say go over to thepodcastwhos coma as well for the article that Katie wrote on this and a bunch of examples in there. And I'll just say as well again, Alitu, a bit of AI in there if you want. AI to help you with your audio cleanup, noise reduction leveling, all that kind of stuff. Plus adding in your music, your transitions, exporting the files. You don't have to worry about any of the ID, three tags, file formats, any of that paper, and get it all published right from call recording, right through to editing and publishing. Then go over to Ali, give it a shot. The easiest podcast maker out there from start to finish. Go to Ali. I can't even spell it now. It's got an AI in it. Alitu.com. And you get a seven day free trial to give it a shot. Create your first episode. All right, have we got a plan for the next episode, Matthew? I don't think we have at the moment, do we?

Matthew: Let's pretend we do. There are some really exciting about the future that we're going to discuss.

Colin: Something very good, safe following. Stay tuned. Perfect. All right, thanks, folks, for listening. I hope you enjoyed a couple of episodes on the future of podcasting, and we'll see you in the future next week. Talk to you then.