

Podcraft, Season 17

Episode 5

Colin: Hey folks, and welcome to another episode of Podcast. This is the show all about podcasting, helping you to create a successful show. I'm Colin Gray from the podcast host and joined by Matthew, as always. How you doing, Matthew?

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

Colin: Yeah, not bad. It's sunny outside. It's like a spring in Inverness, which means things are blooming. And it's only like usually June by the time this happens. So we're a bit early. It's quite nice.

Matthew: Yeah. Got my rabbit out on the grass this morning. She's making us start on the mowing program. She's not great, to be honest. Too flighty. I think she likes to keep like tufts of grass that she could hide in. When buzzards fly over to a regular, there's a bit insight. And sign up to my rabbit podcast and we'll get more content like this on the go. I don't have one. For what it's worth. I made that.

Colin: What does that tie? You can tie into today's topic. You can put like a GPS tracker on your rabbit and see if.

Matthew: He.

Colin: Or she yeah, she see if she is mowing every bit of the law and you can see her track across the grass, how she's exactly she's doing it all. That's what we're talking about today, isn't it? GPS tracking for podcasting. Now, I know absolutely nothing about this, so this is all yours, Matthew. I'm just going to kind of ask the dumb questions, I think. So what's this all about?

Matthew: Yes. So I suppose to kick off like, season 17 of podcast, we're doing a kind of theme, a loose theme of podcast in 2023. And we've talked about kind of futuristic angles. We've talked about chat, GPT and AI. We've talked about drones. And I thought Lindsay's latest article on the site, which you could find@thepodcasthost.com GPS, I thought this was a nice one to tie into it too, even though, like GPS, Audio and Locative Media, as it's known as, this isn't a new thing at all. It's comfortably over ten year old technology. But I think it's still like there's loads of opportunities around it and it's not fully been embraced and utilized by podcasters. So we'd like to dive into that on this episode and talk a bit more about how you might be able to benefit from it in your own podcast as well. But I have a wee definition written down of Locative media column. Would you like to hear it?

Colin: Yeah, go for it. Go for it. Define it for me.

Matthew: Okay, so Locative Media, it's basically using technology to create interactive experiences that are tied to specific physical locations or places. So think of it as a way to explore and interact with your surroundings using your phone or any other device. So if I'm doing like a Locative Audio tour or playing a game, a Locative Audio or GPS game, I'd be using an app or software on my phone and I'd be walking around an area, and each time I arrived at a certain physical location, I'd get a GPS trigger and audio would start playing on my headphones. So if that's a tour, it might just start describing something to me, it might start educating me on what I'm looking at. Or if it's a game, it could kick in and say, now that you're here, your next task is to go here and do this. Does that make sense?

Colin: Yeah, that sounds good.

Matthew: Yeah.

Colin: So it's like the kind of old museum tours you used to get, you're wondering about and you come across, like, number three and it starts telling you about Egyptians or something.

Matthew: Exactly. I'm too tight to pay for those, so when we go to a museum or a castle or that, they try and give you the and it's like, I don't know, 50 pence, you never pay extra. I could read the information for myself and I never do. I just look at stuff and I'm round it really quickly because I just want a cake.

Colin: Yeah, of course. That's all museums are for, isn't it?

Matthew: Let's get a coffee cake.

Colin: But no, but I mean, it's such a good idea in terms of how to make a really interactive how to make a really engaging podcast. Like, I've thought about this a few times when I used to live in Edinburgh for quite a while, and obviously there's a whole ton of stuff you could do. There historic sites around the Royal Mile, wandering up and down, and I never knew you could actually get stuff to trigger, like, things to play at certain areas. So this is really cool. Are there any examples of stuff like this people might have heard out there in the world?

Matthew: Well, my memory is hazy because of the amount of beer that I tend to drink on a weekly basis, but did I not remember you getting into the old Pokemon Go thing with the kids back? And I looked and it was 2016. That was big.

Colin: Yeah. When it first came out, Alastair was quite into it. So, yeah, yes, we played a fair bit. It was a good way to drag kids around on a walk around the countryside because they were searching for Pokemon on the way.

Matthew: Yeah, that's a famous example of this sort of thing. This located media thing wasn't just audio, obviously. There was a visual aspect, too, wasn't there? Because you held your phone or tablet up and you could see the physical Pokemon. Is that right?

Colin: Yeah, it was augmented reality. So you could walk around, you could either see you could make it so that everything appeared on the picture of the real stuff around you. So you'd be looking through your camera, essentially, and they'd overlay Pokemon, and I can't remember what they call poker stops and all that kind of stuff over the picture. So, yeah, it did both because the GPS would tell you're in a certain place and it knows that a poker stop there. So, yeah, I guess that it could play stuff based on where you were. And it would show stuff in the camera too, obviously not in our context, the visuals, but the audio would happen too.

Matthew: Yeah. So there's pikachu on like the high speed rail line and you go on there as if we just went through a high speed rail line here in Scotland. And you'd be perfectly safe lying on a railway line all day. For what it's worth, he's going to take that advice as gospel. I had some experience of doing this sort of thing back and I was looking again 2015. So Robert and I, who I work on with a lot of audio drama content, we were approached by a company in South Africa called Voicemap in 2015 and they were interested to speak to us about doing some voice tours for them because their main, like their bread and butter is factual audio tours. So people are taking audio tours with them, like you're saying, Colin, go around Edinburgh, let's learn about history and stuff like that. You'll find them in all cities if you download their app. And we got talking to them about like, let's use this technology, but let's do fiction. So we got to work creating a couple of tours in Edinburgh that were totally fictional. One was the Royal Mile and another in the Newtown. And basically it guided the listener around and we made up we stories. So they're going around and one was like, they had a time travel thing. You've been chased by these agents, you had to steal a painting and take it back to the future. And it was really fun to put together. We sort of done the audio up, music and sound effects and stuff like that as well. So it was a really cool project to get involved in and opened my eyes to to this kind of technology. And like I say, that's eight years ago now, I think a classic, like, very early example. Were you ever familiar with zombies? Run?

Colin: Yeah, totally. I came across that, yeah, worked really nicely actually. It was a really good little app. Really persuaded you to run if you had a good set of headphones on. It was terrifying.

Matthew: Yeah. For anyone who's not heard that, it was basically a running app. But it was telling you zombies were chasing you, wasn't there? There was more to it than that. But that was like the sort of crux of it.

Colin: That was a basic principle. Yeah, you're running along and you're jogging. They're saying, all right, okay, we can't see him just now. And then suddenly there's a moan and a scream behind you. And they're like, right, sprint quick, keep going. Get around the next corner. And then they would say, you can slow down there because you've escaped it. So it's just a way of getting you to do interval training, basically, but with a better story behind it. It was really cool. That would be based on this kind of thing, I suppose, wouldn't it? So it'd be based on distance as opposed to location perhaps, but similar kind of approach.

Matthew: Yeah, I think possibly the early iteration wasn't GPS or maybe I don't know if they ever involved GPS or if it was just a distance thing, but definitely in that same sort of ballpark idea of taking some metaphysical location, giving you some media around it and putting you to work located media as well. I was looking through Lindsay's article. She actually linked to another article from back in 2011. You know, when you get like a new technology, there'll always be someone, usually somebody like me who comes along and it's like, this is actually rubbish. So someday back in 2011 said that this was all nonsense. But I disagree. I really disagree. I think it's still totally underutilized by podcasters and I think there's quite a lot of good opportunities as well, I suppose. Colin, a lot of listeners are going to probably be thinking at this stage, this isn't for me because I don't do a local podcast. Do you think that's a valid point or do you think there's more to it than that?

Colin: Well, I think there could be a lot more opportunity in local podcasts than most people think, especially if you can actually put a bit more interactivity around it like that. I mean, there can't be many places around the world that couldn't benefit from a little bit of tourism content, for example, or even, I don't know, there must be a lot of ways to build this into more traditional growth strategies as well. Do you think that's the case or is this maybe only for big city people or people in really popular areas?

Matthew: Yeah, there are obvious examples of people who maybe live in extremely remote places where this just doesn't make any sense relevant. Yeah, I think most people aren't too far from a decent sized town or city. So some of the reasons to pull us back a wee bit, I guess some of the

reasons I think that this is underutilized by podcasters. I suppose a lot of people, they simply haven't thought about it before and that's the purpose of this episode is hopefully to help you decide or to help put this in front of you and help you make a decision. But people might also think about the technology. They maybe have thought that that would be a cool idea, but just aren't really aware of the tools to go about doing it.

Colin: To go about, well, that was it. That was me seven years ago. Yeah. Whenever I was thinking about it, midset 2010s for sure. Just didn't know you could do that at all.

Matthew: Yeah. So we've got a list that will run through shortly of tools that you could use apps that you could use as well. Maybe it's just that people are too busy focusing on the more traditional growth strategies out there in podcasting. Which is fine, but Colin, how many times do we hear somebody saying if they're complaining about their shows growth, like, I've tried everything and you'll fire, like, ten things back at them and they've tried almost none of them. You do come across that a lot, don't you?

Colin: For sure, yeah. This is like a kind of extra length beyond that as well, because it's not anywhere close to traditional. I think there's probably so little competition in this kind of area that if somebody did put the effort into it, especially if I mean, imagine if you're living in New York or something like that, how many millions of people visit that place every year? Same with Edinburgh where we did you did your one. I was thinking about one as well. You've got millions of people every year coming to visit those places. That is a huge audience and I don't know, is there an argument around the longer term, like, hopefully with a podcast, you grow a long term audience. What do you think about ones like that, like tourism type ones? When it comes to growing an audience longer term, do you think you can hook people in and get them to listen to something over time? Or does that mean, like, if you do an Edinburgh and you hook some people in, you have to start creating other cities as well? What's the kind of longer term approach, do you think?

Matthew: I suppose with your podcast, there's two schools of thought, isn't there? Like, you do something that's very aligned with your podcast topic. So in a perfect world, you're doing a local history podcast, and that works really well because you create something that's basically your podcast but on location. Or you take the classic example we use is like General Motors or General Electric. Who is it that did the message?

Colin: Yeah, anyway, yeah, go for it.

Matthew: A big company. A big company did a fictional podcast miracle.

Colin: General company.

Matthew: Yeah. So, like, you do a podcast on something, but here's a city near me, I'm going to go there, I'm just going to create this quite memorable fictional tour and then at the end of it, I'll just mention my podcast. And worst case scenario, just loads of people go through this and enjoy it and you make like a pound, 50 a time if people download it. If you're using something like voicemap, worst case scenario, you've just created a good bit of content.

Colin: Yeah, true. And sometimes we talk about the idea of monetizing your podcast, don't we? And a lot of people are running like, let's go to the knitting example, monetizing a knitting podcast. And maybe it's kind of difficult to make a lot of make a good earning out of a knitting podcast, but one of the monetization methods is actually just utilizing those skills that you've built, making the show, whether that's producing somebody else's show or maybe producing something for your local tourist industry, go out and make this. Use those skills that you've developed around presenting, around speaking, around content design to actually make a local tour. And because of the interactivity, obviously that is kind of above and beyond. So actually it's creating something that's interactive and it's more valuable. As a result, you might be able to charge good money for it. So, yeah, maybe it's not even part of your own podcast, it's just something separate you create to monetize those skills.

Matthew: Yeah, definitely. We invest in equipment and we learn how to use it and we work on our setups and get this good audio like you're saying. I think that's what attracted us to back in the day when we realized that that was an option. We learned skills and we learned how to make quite immersive sound audio. And the thought of taking that on location and making it available for people walking around in the real world was just really cool. And I don't know, once every couple of years I think we get 50 quid. It builds up and you get a wee 50 quid payout and you get a couple of pints from it. But yeah, a much bigger city than it and we don't advertise it at all. I go to places like we're really close to St. Andrews. There's obviously somebody doing a lot of stuff with voicemap in St. Andrews. And I'll always see on the lampposts there's a revoice map, those card things that folk cable tight like Lampposts, he or she's advertising their tour and they've got a QR code. So again, that's a really easy way for me just to if I wanted to take one of these tours, I think I would just like, scan the QR code and it would probably make me download the app and then I would just take the tour. So that's something

that's made a good effort of advertising this. So if you really pushed it, I think you could get a lot of folk taking your tours or playing your games or whatever.

Colin: Cool. Okay, so it's not for everyone for sure because you need to have something local that more than a few people would be interested in. But there's definitely a few different ways you could use it, whether it's tying it into your own show somehow, if there is a local element to it or an event element to it, or a location element to it, whatever it is. Even if you're a history podcast and you just do it once or twice a year because you go and visit some historical monument, like way away from where you are too. So, yeah, there's ways to tie it into a show in many different ways, isn't there?

Matthew: Yeah, if you think about any special events, holidays, festivals, there might be a series of gigs or concerts going on in your area, you know where you live better than anyone else. And podcasters are creative folks. I guess a lot of people will be weighing up right now, what's in my area? What could I do? What could I tap into? And there'll always be opportunities there, I would dream. Then you could start to look at really sort of inventive and out there ways. Like, I like the idea of you could create something quite mysterious. Like, maybe you've got quite a compelling poster. And again, you go down the QR code route. You could almost guide the person. You could paint it as like a competition, like scan the code and let's take you on a week. Or if you could figure out this cutler stuff, you might win something. So there's all sorts of ways to use this technology to create something really cool.

Colin: Yeah, I love the idea that you guys come up with the fictional tour. Like the fact that you don't actually need to be that interested in history. Like, you're a storyteller. That's what we do in podcasts, isn't it? Or storytellers. And there's so many different ways you could come up with something that's even just a little story that you make up around a place or an area or something like that. I think that's really cool. A lot of people can do that, I think.

Matthew: What would you do up member Ness? And if you were taking something, did you think anything?

Colin: I mean, the classic would be a good end of Loch Ness and find some clues for Nessie, see if we can find the monster finally. I'm sure there's plenty. It will places like Cold and Battlefield and lots of places where big battles have happened. And you could go and you could go and find some of the ghosts of the area, interview them for the show, see what it's like at the battlefield, what the place was like at the time. Yeah, tons of stuff around here, for sure.

Matthew: Down here, I do shopping trolleys and ponds.

Colin: The story behind this shopping trolley that's been there for two years, this trolley.

Matthew: Is from Prestos, which I don't know when did that stop existing?

Colin: I like the idea of putting around an event or something like that as well. Like the fact that cities change at certain times of the year, or places change at certain times of the year as well. Like going back to Edinburgh as an example as well. The festival comes on every year in August, and the city just totally transforms. So if you had a festival podcast located podcast, which people come back to this. So there's an idea around the kind of regularity of it we were thinking about, like, can you develop long term listeners around this? Well, some people go to that festival every single year, and so they might listen to a show that actually toured you around the venues, the different shows, all that kind of stuff that happens on a regular basis. That's a yearly one. But I'm sure there's festivals, events that happen more regularly than that as well. So I don't know if that's some way to create something more creative that still draws you back on a regular basis.

Matthew: And there's scope for collaboration too, I think. So, like, you might say to yourself, well, I'm here in this town or city, so what? But if there's other podcasters, maybe in your niche or maybe just podcasters that, you know, around the world, you could maybe get them involved too. Where are we all in the world? Let's put a pen in that. Okay, let's create something each and let's all share that content on our shows. Let's let everyone know that this is available in various continents around the world and you could almost create a sort of network effect around it too.

Colin: Yeah, definitely. Yeah, that's really cool. It's like you create your own bucket list of places to visit people that start to follow the show. They listen to your tour of Edinburgh, but then they listen to your tour of Paris, then they listen to your tour of Tokyo and they actually follow you around the world. That'd be pretty good building a wee community around that, wouldn't it?

Matthew: And just thinking through the various topics and niches that folks podcast and you can imagine the opportunities. Like, if it's a sport, podcast history is particularly good for this. I think culture, education, kids stuff would be really good. Science, pop culture, true crime. Even if you want to get a bit grizzly, here is a scene of I dare say there almost certainly will be a Jack the Ripper type one and stuff like that.

Colin: Yeah, you're thinking of thinking of that. The idea of people following your own cities around the world is quite kind of extravagant. Maybe that costs quite a lot of money to go and do. There's not

many people can do that on a regular basis. But if you live in a big city or even just you live in a state in America that's reasonably populous, there's probably plenty of locations you could find where things like that happened that you can kind of describe it and walk people through the scenes and yeah, true crime, that's pretty grizzly. But people are into that, eh? I mean, similar for like, you talk about culture, there events like if you're into art, you go to art exhibitions. Like you live in any kind of populous space, whether you're in the city or not, you'll travel to go and visit these things, like maybe go and see a musical or something like that at the local theater or and travel a bit further afield to a bigger theater. Like being able to sort of create some kind of locative media around those spaces. Like even the one in Inverness here, Eden Core, it's got loads of little sites that you can see near that theater. So you can go, you can talk about the shows themselves, you can tour people around the theater itself, but then a little local area too. Like here's a couple of restaurants and cafes close by to get something deep that are before the show. Or here's a little site, a statue, tell you a little bit about it. I think there's loads of opportunities no matter what kind of niche you're in, I think, and I think one of the important things to remember here is that it is a bit more work to do it this way. There's a bit of software required and maybe there's a bit more planning required, but it doesn't need to be every season. Doesn't Matthew, it could be just like you do a special edition season once every couple of years. Like this that really kind of creates a bit hype or draws people in or just creates something a bit special that you can talk about and promote much more easily. So it doesn't have to be on the regular, does it?

Matthew: No. And this content is usually pretty evergreen as well, unless some new governments going around knocking all your statues down, then you'd probably be fine if you've done something around that. So you could consider this like a self contained body of work that you've put out there and that's it. And if you never add to that at all, then it's still there, it's still available, yeah.

Colin: Cool. All right, so we'll look at the tools. Want to hear the gadgets? What is it you actually use to make these things?

Matthew: Yes, my own personal experience is purely with voicemap, but in Lindsay's post, which you could find@thepodcasthost.com GPS, she'll give you the full lowdown on some of the tools. But Cgomap sonic, maps and Echoes are three of the tools and I believe at least one of those has the capabilities for doing gamified stuff as well. So it's not always just about getting a tour. Like, I'm going up here, the audio is playing, it's telling me something. I think there is scope for creating games and stuff as well. I think the top one, Cgo map, I think that's a pretty premium one if you really wanted to create something, if you were maybe a company that wanted to create something like this, certainly voicemails and whistles. I'm assuming that business model is pretty similar to when I used it and that was just basically I don't know if it's a 50 50 split or a 40 60 or something like that, but you create the thing and you're splitting the price. But to be fair to them, they do a bit of marketing for you as well. And we weren't doing it for the money, we were just doing it for the fun at the time.

Colin: Indeed. But you still get a little learning from that every now and again.

Matthew: Like I say, every couple of years we 50 quids and well, the way things are going, that will get as a pint. But in past days we've managed a few pints out it.

Colin: Yeah, that's cool. All right, just to reiterate that then, if you want to go over and check these out, get more information, pricing, full capabilities, go over to theepodcasts.com GPS. GPS. And that'll cover it, I think, for the tech. All right, that's good stuff. That's been interesting actually. It's not something I've looked at at all, really, actually in implementing. It so good to talk through the ideas, Matthew.

Matthew: Yeah, it's just another idea. That's one of the themes of this season. There are lots of things that you could think about out there just to push sort of new boundaries with your podcast and there's untapped areas out there, there's new listeners that you could always be reaching.

Colin: I was going to say it's funny when you think about the theme of this is the future tech. It's funny when you think this does feel like kind of future tech, being able to use location, GPS, everything, to kind of locate yourself and play certain things. But like you say, it's been around for a long time. Future tech sometimes takes a while to actually establish and get used much.

Matthew: Yeah. I think it's just a case that the accessibility for the creator is much better now. There's just so many more options out there as well.

Colin: True.

Matthew: The season as well, because I've talked about the season there too. I'll just point the last night to thepodcasts.com podcast 17 where you'll find all the other episodes we've done this season so far too.

Colin: Yeah. If you're interested in AI or drones or any of the other kind of tech that we've been talking about to improve your show, go and check them out. And I'll just mention as well Alitu, which is our podcast maker app. If you've enjoyed this content, one of the ways we use to support it is selling

our podcast maker app. But it also it's all value to you in terms of making it easier to podcast. Alitu does solo recording. It can do call recording like Matthew and I doing just now. It can do editing. So you can actually edit all your mistakes in a custom podcast editor, does your audio cleanup, noise reduction leveling, all that kind of stuff. And it can do podcast hosting as well. So you can actually publish your show to the web. So if you fancy using that one app to make your whole podcast easier, go over to Alitu.com. Alitu.com. You'll get a seven day free trial so you can try it out. All right, cheers. Matthew, do we have an idea? Future talking future. Do we know what we're going to talk about next time around yet?

Matthew: No, because things happen so fast here in the future, we just have to react in the moment, don't we?

Colin: That's it exactly. Cool. All right, well, I'm sure we've got a couple more future episodes, at least in the can before we change season again, but, yeah, if you're out there, thanks for listening. I hope you've got some ideas from this I hope you've got some ideas from this whole season, actually, because there's a few things going through my head that we might try in the near future to change how we're podcasting. Just some new ideas around different types of shows we can create, so I hope it's doing the same for you. A few inspirational things. What about you, Matthew? What's your location podcast going to be this week? You're going to have to record something, aren't you?

Matthew: I'm sure we've done the shopping trolleys, we've done the rabbit thing. I'll have to find, I would say local pub crawl, but there's so few pubs. I'll have to have a good think about that. I'll get my drone, I'll get my AI chatbot and I'll get to what?

Colin: Flight around? Yeah, indeed. All right, thank you for listening. We'll talk to you next time.