

WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD A **BUSINESS PODCAST**

(AND HOW THE EXPERTS DO IT)

INCLUDING PRO TIPS FROM:



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A short e-book by

**THE
CONTENTDIVISION**

*A guide for businesses and individuals who want to start
a podcast but don't know where to begin.*

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Are you ready to commit to an

AUDIENCE?

Podcasts are booming, and it's a medium that shows no signs of slowing down.

But among your favourites - be they tips and tricks from the business world, murder-mysteries playing out in your ears or even the best ways to cook a fruit cake - are just as many terribly produced, irrelevant and sales-driven products that simply don't resonate, cut through or even get a single listen.

The stats around podcasts are captivating. In Edison Research's The Podcast Consumer 2017 Report the company found:

- The Podcast listener remains an affluent, educated consumer— and one that is becoming increasingly more likely to gravitate to ad-free or ad-light subscription experiences.
- Subscribers tend to have been podcast consumers for longer than non-subscribers, consume more podcasts, and are more likely to use their smartphone as their primary podcast player.
- The audience for podcasts continues to be predominately 18-54, and leans slightly male.

Done properly with a laser-like focus on the needs and wants of your audience and a commitment to original, high-quality content, a podcast can drive a modicum of high-value actions from people you may consider to be your ideal customer. And they build trust and authority.



What is your purpose? It's the first question you need to answer.

In this e-book, we've put together a step-by-step guide to building your business podcast, including expert commentary from some incredible podcast hosts who have done it for themselves and for businesses, proving just how lucrative the medium can be.

But before you begin you need to ask yourself:

Can I commit to an audience?

Am I ready to do something extraordinary?

Because there are a tonne of ordinary, by-the-numbers podcasts out there. Yes, you can get it on to iTunes, but if no one is listening was it ever really there?

STEP 1

Start with an idea and a strategy

The single most important step in adding any new digital marketing activity in your business is strategy.

There is no point doing anything if it doesn't contribute to your digital marketing or business objectives. Ultimately, if you're considering adding a new content product – that's what a podcast series would be – you should already have clearly defined marketing goals that support your overall business objectives.

But even if you have those, it's important to go through this step to check that a podcast is indeed the right thing for you and your business, and also understand how you will measure its performance.

Start by putting together a one-pager podcast strategy. This will also help you to identify what kind of podcast content you should be creating. Use the following questions or headings of a similar nature:

Why am I doing this? Are you considering a podcast because someone in your organisation told you to, or is it because you see a gap that could be filled with this kind of content? Identify the why of the podcast and what your objectives are.

Who is my audience? Does your audience even listen to podcasts? Hopefully, yes! If you don't know, ask them. Make a detailed audience persona to identify their interests, daily habits and activities to give you a picture of your listener.

How do I talk to them? If your audience is a group of highly qualified engineers, your tone of voice and content is going to be very different to a podcast that teaches farmers how to move their cattle. Nail your voice and your audience will reward you for it.

How can I help or inspire my customer? Dig deep into the mind of your customer to identify what their biggest problems are. Ideally you want your podcast to add value by problem solving or giving them information that allows them to do their job better.

Does this idea already exist? There's a lot of stuff on the internet, but that doesn't mean you can't do it better or put your own content tilt on it (the thing that makes you truly different). Do your research and make sure you're not recreating an existing podcast series. Find an angle that's different and it will resonate.

PODCAST PRO TIP

Jay Acunzo

Keynote speaker and host,
Unthinkable



"Keep in mind the Golden Rule of Podcasting, and you'll create a far better show than the competition: Get them to the end. Podcasting is a linear medium. You have two options and two options alone as a consumer: Hit play or hit stop. So YOUR job as a producer/host is to make sure they don't hit stop. Structure your show's format. Practise being a good interviewer, not a lazy, meandering, whatever-comes-to-mind interviewer. Use music, narration, segmentation, anything it takes. Just get them to the end."

Success is building a committed audience that listens to you every week because you give them something truly unique

What does success look like for you? I'll tell you. Success is building a committed audience that listens to you every week because you give them something truly unique, entertaining and valuable.

But if the objective of your content is awareness, what metrics will you use to measure its performance? Some key metrics for podcast measurement are: downloads, subscribers, feedback, leads, sales. But it takes time to build an audience and iTunes will never let you have the full gamut of metrics (maybe)

So tread carefully with your expectations on what you want it to achieve. And remember: your mentality will trump marketing metrics. Get the mentality right, and the metrics will come.

STEP 2

What's your style?

There are so many different podcast formats floating around, many of which may work for your business.

But remember, your audience rules so knowing what they want should lead your podcast's style and frequency.

Put yourself in your customers' shoes: Do they spend a lot of time in the car, or maybe on planes? Would they be tuning in to listen every morning on their commute to work or putting it on for a wind-down before bed? (This can also guide your voice.)

Answering these questions will help you to work out the time, style and frequency of your podcast. Consider the following podcast formats:

- **Interview – Example: Entrepreneur on Fire**
- **Interview with commentary – Example: Unthinkable**
- **Single-host discussion – Example: Startup by Gimlet**
- **Dual-host discussion – Example: This Old Marketing Podcast**
- **Long-form documentary – Example: S-Town**



WHAT'S YOUR FREQUENCY?

Entrepreneur On Fire is daily, others such as Unthinkable are weekly. They have seasons. You need to make a good decision on what's realistic for your audience and you.

Will it be daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, bingeable (a pre-recorded series that goes live all at once)? Set realistic timeframes around production and your audience.

PODCAST PRO TIP

Chris Titley

Host, Morgans 40 Under 40 and Morgans Startup Series



"Don't be afraid to ask what you actually want to know and learn about the guest – this is where authenticity comes in. Think about the interview as a fun, informal chat as opposed to a scripted Q&A."

STEP 3

Recording and producing



So now you have a solid idea, a plan for talent and content, and how you will measure it – time to hit record.

What you use to record and produce your podcast really depends on your budget. Here's what you need and some of the tools available.

Somewhere quiet to record This sounds like a given, but it can really make or break the quality of your podcast. Find a room with low echo and sound travel that you can record crisp audio for your podcast.

Podcast run sheet Even if you're recording on your own, it's important to have a plan for each podcast. A well-produced podcast usually starts with a pre-produced pre-roll (theme music, sponsor message or similar), podcast introduction (the name of your podcast and its host and guest), two blocks (discussion points), conclusion and a pre-produced post-roll (this could be a call to action to subscribe to the podcast on iTunes or on your website). You may even have a block for your advertisers in there.

Microphone To record your podcast you're going to need at least one microphone and recording device. The hardware for this can be anything from an iPhone to a mini studio setup using

a mixing desk, computer with recording software and individual microphones. It's up to your needs, your budget and how far you're willing to go. The Blue Yeti USB microphone is a popular first choice for many podcasters who want to keep it simple.

Audio recording and editing software There are a tonne of options for audio software, and many people start with Audacity, a free open-source program that works on Mac and PC. But you can use a smartphone app (the Rode Recorder is quite good) or you can get more involved with something like Adobe Audition. This is also where you will fine tune and edit your podcast. Consider adding a tailored or prerecorded introduction so people recognise your podcast as soon as it starts playing.

PODCAST PRO TIP

Josh Cobb

Host, Real Estate Pros and CEO of Steps



"Find a way to interview people who would most likely be your customers. Make them the hero of your show, and use it to start a valuable relationship."

STEP 4

Publishing and distributing

Time to release your podcast to the masses.

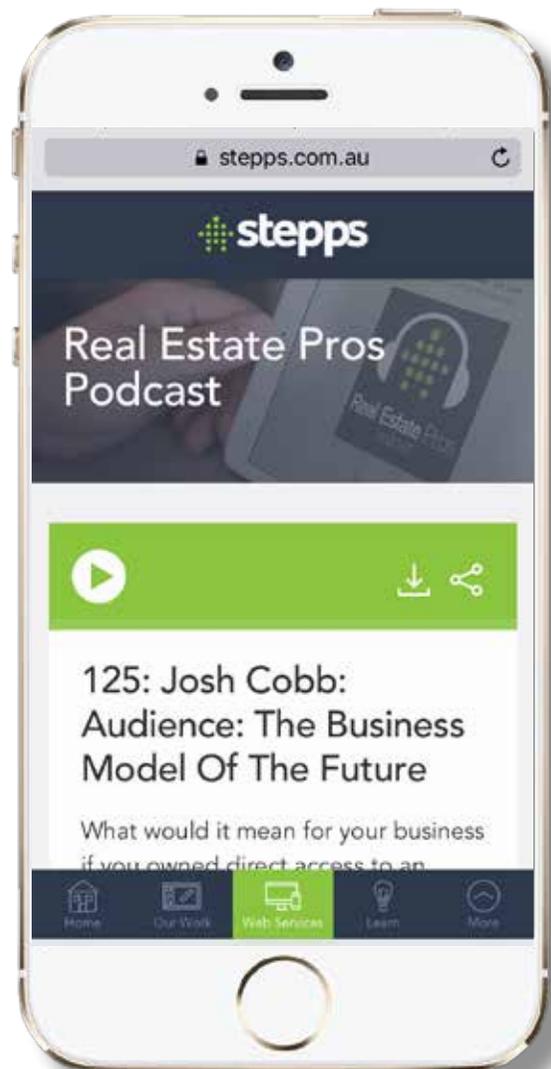
There's a few ways you can do this. With the audio file you've created in your editing software, you can publish direct on any podcast streaming platform.

You may also want to publish your podcast on your website (this is great for your website traffic and SEO). But be careful. Podcast files can be big and will put a strain on your website's loading times.

To make this work you can host the audio file on a site like podbean.com and add a stream to your website. Podbean also publishes your podcast to iTunes for you, which is extremely handy.

So what next? Sit back and watch the listens roll in? Not quite.

While your podcast will now be discoverable through your website and publishing platforms, until you have a solid subscriber rate, you'll need to push it out through your existing marketing channels such as social media and email. It's good to publish consistent podcast summaries and imagery with each podcast too so your audience can get an idea of what each podcast episode is about.



CASE STUDY: How a Brisbane brand drew in 42k podcast subscribers

THE REAL ESTATE PROS PODCAST, HOSTED BY JOSH COBB

When you fill people's eardrums with solid gold, amazing things happen.

Steps is a digital marketing company that focuses on advanced real estate websites. The company's podcast Real Estate Pros, hosted by its founder Josh Cobb, has been hitting the headphones of its now 42,000 subscribers every Sunday morning for a few years now. There's no secret to its success. It's simple, yet high-quality storytelling. And this:

- Josh picked a medium (podcasts) that matched his audience (real estate industry people) perfectly. They're always in cars!
- At the time, his niche had minimal players covering his exact topics. You have to niche down.

- The content. Super high quality, super relevant and deeply engaging. It helps solve his audience's problems, and doesn't push a sales message.
- He serialised it. It comes out at the same time every week, without fail.
- He leverages the audiences of his guests. They all share the podcast with their networks - a highly relevant group of people.

Josh says: "There's something special that happens when you have someone listening to the sound of your voice in their eardrums for 40 minutes each week. You get something from a podcast listener that you don't always get from a blog post - their full attention."

STEP 5

Reporting and pivoting

Surely now my fan base is about to explode, right? Nice try.

Podcasts can take upwards of 6 to 12 months to gain consistency and build an audience, and you need to give it that time if you want to see results.

But that doesn't mean you can't start measuring from day one and pivoting to help your podcast succeed. As mentioned earlier, there are many metrics you can use to measure the performance of your podcast.

It's important you constantly track these to make sure your content is resonating with your audience. These metrics can tell you if your podcast is too frequent (low downloads) or the wrong content all together (low subscribers).

Use this information to change the format of your podcast until you find the sweet spot for your audience. Your payoff could be anything from increased customer retention to monetisation or a whole new revenue stream.

SO WHAT NOW?

EDITOR'S NOTE, KURT SANDERS, THE CONTENT DIVISION

This is a basic roadmap intended to get you started on the road to podcasting, If that's what you want to do. But trust me when I say this is not an easy thing to do.

You can't start and then give up because you get two listeners per episode in the first month. Create something exceptional, don't be lazy. It's easy to fall into a Q&A format that dries out faster than a Mt Isa keg party.

Take your audience along for the ride, tell your story with twists and turns, climaxes and valleys. Make it truly unique, and you will be rewarded by your audience, which is a great feeling.



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