

Easy

PODCASTING



Tips and Tricks

Christian Bloggers International

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Introduction

When people talk about getting their message to the public, usually the subject of podcasting comes up.

Have you ever wondered why?

There are several obvious reasons.

The first, and maybe most significant, is that podcasts are easy to fit into busy, over scheduled lives. Between work and family obligations, most people have very little extra time. It's hard to read long blogposts. It's also difficult to sit for lengthy videos.

Podcasts are different. People can listen to a podcast on their busiest day. While driving to and from work. While doing housework or other chores. They can listen to podcasts while doing any menial tasks.

Thus whether you choose to produce long or short messages, you can be certain that your audience will find the time to listen.

Second, podcasts are popular because they are fairly easy to produce. Sometimes people are shy about appearing on camera for videos – and they are nervous about writing blogs – but they find speaking to be an easy technique. With a few tools and tips, quality podcasts can be produced and published for an eager audience.

So let's see how you can add podcasts to your plan for distributing your messages.

Chapter One: Common Terminology

In this first chapter, we are going to talk a little bit about what podcasting is and go over some of the common terminology. To get a better understanding of how it works, we need to start with the basics.

If you have a teenager, you probably know how important their earphones are to them. They nod their heads to mesmerizing beats with smart phones attached as they travel with you to family gatherings. They are listening to digital music downloads – sometimes from their iTunes accounts.

Podcasts are similar. They too are digital audio files and they too can be downloaded from iTunes or other digital file providers. Many times podcasts are available as a series, with new installments that are delivered to subscribers automatically.



Many ministers and speakers have their own app developed so that all of their sermons and talks can be downloaded for later listening.

In a similar way, if someone subscribes to your podcast, they can have each of your programs appear on their devices ready to be enjoyed.

As mentioned earlier, podcasts are very popular because many people would much rather listen than read an article or watch a video. With a podcast your target audience will be able to listen to your pre-recorded

"internet radio show" at any time. As you provide content on topics of interest to them, they become faithful listeners.

Podcasts are available via a service known as RSS. Basically, an RSS feed is the technology which sends the latest files to a feed reader. Then the reader opens the file for your listener to enjoy your message or program.

Sometimes the technical aspects of what happens in podcasting can be confusing, so don't get bogged down in all of that. Most modern devices we use with ease – without knowing the science behind it all. Podcasts will be the same way, if you just know how to make a few connections.

In addition to having your podcast accessed on major platforms like iTunes, you can embed it on your own website as well as on the websites of others so their audience can listen to it too. Many people have their blogs presented as podcasts and in writing.

Once a podcast is recorded, it can be broadcast to a growing audience in several ways. It can be listed in directories so it can be discovered by people searching for your topic of interest.

Later we'll cover a variety of ways you can grow your podcast audience.

Now let's go over a few of the most common podcasting terms, so that when you create your own podcast it will be a little bit easier.

Some Podcasting Terms

Podcast

A series of recorded audio programs, usually published on a regular schedule, such as once a week.

Podcatcher or podcast client

Software which detects each new podcast you publish and delivers it to your subscribers.

RSS (Real Simple Syndication)

A way to share files with your target audience, or allow others to publish your content, or syndicate it, at their site. It's the technology which takes your podcast and sends it out.

Aggregator

An aggregator, or RSS aggregator, collects RSS feeds. It will deliver podcasts and other content you subscribe to. Some good examples of aggregators are Happy Fish, iTunes, and Juice.

Channel

A channel is a series of podcasts. Think of it as a radio station that can be listened to any time by people who subscribe to your channel.

Metadata

Metadata is some important information about the podcast, so it can be discovered by readers and search engines. It will usually include title, recording artist, file format and so on. It will also include keywords which alert listeners to your content.

When you search for your topic, your metadata and keywords will help search engine find you and your program.

MP3

MP3 (MPEG-1 Audio Layer-3) is the standard format for podcast files. The format compresses the data into a very small file while still maintaining sound quality.

ID3

ID3 is a "metadata container" that allows information to be added to MP3 files. Usually items like track title, artist, album and track number are placed within ID3 "tags" that identify the type of data. It helps your podcast get discovered in locations like iTunes.

iPod

The popular digital audio player from Apple. The word "podcast" comes from the combination of the words "iPod" and "broadcast".

Juice

Juice is a free program that automatically downloads new shows when they become available, and synchronizes them with your iPod or other digital audio player. Formerly known as "iPodder".

iTunes

iTunes is Apple's multimedia store and software, which will allow you to access a range of content such as music, videos, TV shows and podcasts. Sometimes these items are free; sometimes for purchase. iTunes links to a directory of podcasts and acts as a podcatcher by allowing users to subscribe to podcasts and by delivering them to their player.

When you upload your content on iTunes, metatags for it will be created, making it discoverable to those interested in your topic or niche.

Podcasting is Easy

Podcasting is relatively easy for anyone who wants to learn how to use it to get their message to the masses. To get started you'll need access to a web server where you can upload your files for your listeners to access.

It's also a good idea to register a domain and sign up for a hosting company to build a website. This will make it easier for your listeners to find and connect with you.

You'll also need a few other tools to help you get started. We'll be talking more about those in the next chapter.

Chapter Two: Tools

It's time for your second lesson in the Easy Approach to Podcasting. In this chapter we're going to talk about some of the tools you'll need to create your podcast.

When it comes to starting your own podcast, there are several podcasting tools you shouldn't do without. These aren't absolutely necessary, but will make your job easier and will enhance your listener's experience. Let's look at the most important first and then the "nice to have if you can" ones.

A high-quality microphone

You can usually buy a good mic for less than \$100 on Amazon. Some prefer headset microphones, while others like a desktop microphone such as the ones you would see in radio stations. The best type of microphone is a USB one that plugs into your computer, because it assures high-quality sound without the need for any special audio interface.

Many professional podcasters are biased toward Yeti mics. But there are some good less-expensive choices by Fifine and others.

Just make sure that you have a good quality sound and not much background noise.

Podcast cover art

People will judge a book by its cover, and therefore a podcast too. You will be listing your podcast in online stores and directories. The cover art you choose will also often be visible in aggregator windows. Each site will require a certain image size.

You may feel comfortable designing your own cover. However, if not, you can get a professional to design it. You will want to consider your logo, website color scheme, and/or niche that the podcast is going to be about.

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Since the art will show up in a very small size in directories, make sure that it isn't "too busy." Too much detail can be ineffective on aggregator sites.

You can find talented artists on Fiverr.com, who will charge \$5 and up for their work. (Hint: Look at their star ratings and reviews before choosing one).

Podcast file hosting

This item is really important. Your files will be big, and even more importantly, they will be erratic unless you host them in a proper location. You need a host where your files will download smoothly or be played live without lags or jumps in the sound.

There are several choices for quality sharing of your audio files. One of the best choices for unlimited uploading and sharing of your podcasts is PodBean. You will find many podcasters use and highly recommend that service.



RSS feed reader embedded at your site

Once you've uploaded the files to PodBean, you can enable your visitors to listen to them on your website - using some form of reader or widget. Once you upload your content, you will see an embed code for each track, and for the channel.

An audio editing program

The main program used for audio editing is a free open source one called Audacity. It will help you edit out any mistakes you make when recording and also enable you to add music at the start and end of the podcast and more. Record your show in Audacity, clean up the file and you are ready to publish.

Theme music

You can get free theme music for the start and end of your podcast from royalty-free music sites such as <http://freemusicarchive.org>

A great title for your channel

A catchy title is an important element. Create a title that makes it clear what your podcast is going to be about. You want your title to generate excitement for your niche audience to listen to your messages.

Teaser copy for your channel

Your teaser copy should also entice your target audience, telling them what to expect from the channel. Use catchy phrases and some keywords to draw them in.

Catchy podcast (track) titles

Some people just number their podcasts, but this is a mistake. The naming of each episode gives you a chance to offer a descriptive, keyworded title that will show up if someone searches the iTunes store for a particular topic. If you are talking about three different items in your hour-long podcast, incorporate all three words into the title in some way.

Teaser copy for each podcast

You should write enticing copy for each podcast as well, using keywords and making it clear what topics are going to be discussed. Make it sound exciting - something they would not want to miss.

Express Scribe Transcription Software

Either offer your script online to gather search engine attention, or (if you have interviewed someone, for example) use transcription software.

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Express Scribe has a free and paid pro version. Post the transcript under the track for each podcast you create. You can find out more about it here: <http://www.nch.com.au/scribe>.

Another site is <https://Temi.com>. For a small fee you can have your audio files transcribed into writing.

Starting your own podcast does not have to cost a lot, but it does require some organization to make it look professional and worth listening to.

So let's move on. In the next chapter we will be talking about how to grow an audience for your podcast.

Chapter Three: Grow Your Audience

Now you have your podcast up and running – and available for your audience to enjoy. So who is going to listen? That's our next topic.

This chapter is all about how to grow an audience for your brand-new podcast.

Once you've decided to create a podcast, the next main concern for most people is how to grow an audience for it. Your growth and marketing plan should actually be built right into the podcast.

Let's digress a little and take a look at the subject of keywords.

When you are looking for something online, you go to a search engine and enter what you are looking for. In the same way, when you go to a podcast store (such as iTunes), you enter the subject you want.

For instance, you might enter *Internet Marketing* or *Gardening* or *Christian Parenting*. The reason the right podcast is found is because the podcaster has entered appropriate words in their titles, their descriptions, or their keywords.

So you might want to entitle your podcast *An Amazing Morning*. But who in the world will be searching for that? So it's a good idea to keep search terms in the back of your mind so that people looking for what you have to offer can find you.

So looking again at some items we have already discussed.

Give Your program a strong, interesting name

It needs to appeal to your niche and be *searchable* on sites and aggregators.

Spread the news on Social Media

Tell everyone in your social media accounts about your new podcast channel. Each time you create a new podcast, post about it on your social media pages. Encourage people to share the posts with anyone they know who might also be interested.

Post on forums, discussion boards and in groups

Post information about your podcast on niche-related areas of the internet. Forums and social media groups where your target audience will congregate are good places to discuss your podcast.

Mention your podcast on your blog

Embed your podcast feed into your site. Also, give a post page to each podcast you create. Add a transcript to attract the search engines. Include a call to action or subscribe button.

On your blog, you should also have a podcast subscription page.

Volunteer as a guest blogger

When you guest blog, you give free content to one or more blogs related to your niche. You can mention your podcast. They will usually give you a link back to your blog. Let this link point to your podcast subscription page.

Volunteer to be a guest on other podcasts

Often podcasters can help each other by being a guest on each others' podcasts. Grow your audience in this way, and you will get a chance to point your URL to the listeners who like what you have to say.

If you are invited to be a guest on another podcast, offer a guest spot in exchange, and ask the guest to share the URL once the podcast has been created. Or, offer them a copy they can use as is on their podcast feed once you have finished editing it.

If you don't feel that you are ready for "high-profile" blogs, find some others who are starting – just like you. You can help each other develop your audiences.

Networking is a key to success in all phases of internet marketing.

Help a Reporter Out

The HARO (Help a Reporter Out) website allows you to list yourself as an expert in your niche. Your biography can list your podcast. If you are interviewed and used as a resource for a journalist's story, you will have another important item to add to your bio.

Issue a press release

Tell the world you have a new podcast with the help of a press release. Chances are that journalists interested in your niche, are looking for interesting information to pass along to their readers. They will be happy to pick up your story and share it.

There are both free and paid press release distribution services which can help you spread the word.

Growing your audience for your podcast does not have to be an uphill struggle if you follow these tips and tricks. Use all you've learned and you should soon have an ever-growing audience of eager listeners.

As with all things online and in life, be patient – and flexible. When you see something works well in your niche, use those techniques again and again. When you find that something doesn't work well, stop doing that and put more energy into what works well.

Now it's time to take a look at some common mistakes of podcasters.

Chapter Four: Avoid These Mistakes

We have been discussing ideas to incorporate into your podcasting plans. In this chapter we are going to talk about some of the more common podcasting mistakes you should avoid.

When we learn from other people's mistakes, we save ourselves from having to learn those lessons the hard way. So let's take a look.

Many people start podcasting with passion and enthusiasm, only to lose interest a short time later. Then they abandon their channel. Or, they work really hard, but can't seem to grow their audience.

Here are some of the most common podcasting mistakes to avoid if you want to create a popular and successful podcast.

Mistake #1: Not knowing their niche

If you don't know your target audience, you won't be able to create content that really speaks to their problems and interests.

Your audience is looking for answers to their problems. Find what their problems are and solve them. You will grow a faithful audience.

You might want to ask people to tell you what they need and want. Listen closely. Sometimes they don't know what they need, but you might spot it when listening.

Mistake #2: Not scripting their podcasts

Some people think they can just hit the record button and rant about anything.

NO. Don't do that.

You need a beginning, a middle and an end to your program. At the beginning, you will have an introduction and a few warm-up statements and information. The middle of the program will be the meat in the sandwich, so

to speak. The end of the program will be a summary, closing statements, and at least one call to action (CTA).

Which brings us to:

Mistake #3: Not having a call to action (CTA)

People are looking for you to tell them the next step to take. When you give some directions at the end of the podcast, you're doing just that.

Tell your audience what you want them to do after hearing the podcast. It could be "like" your page on Facebook. It could be to share or subscribe to the podcast. It could be to take advantage of your great special offer at your website.

Remember, they are looking for you to instruct them on their next step. If you just leave without that, you will not be as effective.

Mistake #4: Not setting a goal for each podcast

One of the main reasons why many podcasters don't include a CTA is because they have not set a goal for the podcast in the first place.

What do you want to achieve? More traffic? More subscribers on your podcast channel? More sign ups for your email list? More sales? Something else?

You can't create a clear CTA and measure your results if you don't set a goal from the outset.

Your goal shouldn't be the same all of the time, but you can have certain goals which extend for weeks or months.

This is a place where careful planning will help. You could create a content calendar which lays out the type of messages or content you will be bringing over the next month or quarter. Then you can plan your CTA's to align with that plan.

Taking these steps will make your project easier on yourself. Following this plan also causes the podcasts to flow in a more logical way.

Mistake #5: Trying to do it all yourself

Uh-oh. This is a big one.

Many people want to be a one-man show and do everything themselves, but more successful people realize that they need to delegate some tasks. Doing it all yourself puts too much pressure on you.

Ask people who know about podcasting to help with the technology side.

Make a list of people you would like to have on the show as guests. Think in terms of those who have an interest in your subject – and look to those who have more experience than you. When you bring their expertise to your audience, you increase your own authority.

As you look for others to include in your project, you will enjoy it more – and so will others.

Mistake #6: When interviewing someone, not preparing the questions ahead of time

If you have a great guest coming on, make the most of it by writing the questions out in advance and giving them a copy prior to the podcast. In this way, everyone will feel less nervous and the interview will flow more smoothly.

You don't want to catch them off guard. And you don't want to ask questions which might offend them. Give your guest the courtesy of being prepared for your show.

Mistake #7: Not having the right equipment

You don't have to have the most expensive equipment.

Yet you need a high-quality microphone, such as a USB one that can record through your computer. If you are going to have guests in your studio area, you need to make sure your setup can handle more than one microphone.

Mistake #8 Not having the right recording software

You need a high-quality file that will be pleasant for your audience to listen to, without a lot of stammers, mistakes and long pauses.

Audacity is the industry standard and is easy to use.

Mistake #9: Not checking your recording level

It's really frustrating if any file has been recorded at such a low level it can barely be heard. So always do a full audio check before recording.

Mistake #10: Not using the right hosting for the files

Podcasts are usually recorded in MP3 format, which compresses them down to about 1/12th their usual size while still retaining quality. However, trying to host them at your site can lead to uneven download and buffering rates. You could have pops, gaps and a slow experience.

To fix that problem you may want to consider subscribing to a service like PodBean or SoundCloud which offer unlimited hosting of files of any size and a superior playback experience.

Mistake #11: Forgetting to name and tag your podcast with keywords

Attract the right audience by using the right keywords in your title and description of each podcast.

Mistake #12: Using a homemade image

As we discussed in the last lesson your podcast should have a professional-looking graphics to make it look more professional and help attract regular subscribers.

So there we have it.

A list of common mistakes made by podcasters. It's good to pay attention and avoid falling into the same traps.

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By taking the time to avoid these mistakes, you will be setting yourself apart as a quality broadcaster. That will help get you on the fast track to having a popular and profitable podcast.

Now, are you ready to make some money?

Chapter Five: Make Money

Turn Your podcast into a Money Maker

In this final chapter, we're going to talk about how to make money from your podcasts.

Many people publish their podcasts for free, and that is good for marketing purposes so you can get your name and brand in front of a wider audience and sell more products and services. But there are also a number of ways to make money directly from your podcasts.

The following are some Money-making techniques and tips.

Tip #1: Offer Affiliate Marketing Products

Sell products for others in exchange for a commission. Make sure they are all related to the niche you are working in. Incorporate each item into the podcast with a short review if you wish. It will help keep your podcast fresh - with interesting content on a regular basis - while helping your audience. And making money too.

Tip #2: Write a book and publish it

Write a book related to your niche and publish it on Amazon as a Kindle electronic book and through their CreateSpace service as a paperback book. Give your listeners little samples of what you talk about in the book and instructions on how to buy it. This should get sales for the book and prestige for you as an expert in your niche.

You can learn more about writing and publishing your book by going to <https://OurCBI.com>.

Tip #3: Feature some Podcast ads

Set a price for a 30-second to one-minute ad on your podcast. The price can be based on how many subscribers you have to your channel, such as a penny per subscriber per show. Consider giving your advertisers even more of a mention if they are willing to buy ads regularly (such as a month at a time).

Tip #4: Recruit Podcast sponsorships

Find companies associated with your niche who might be willing to sponsor you by paying for the running costs of the program. They might get a mention at the start and end and a detailed two- to five-minute spotlight on all they have to offer their customers.

Consider doing an even better deal by having them on for interview. You could even give them a regular spot if they are willing to sponsor your program for a month or more.

**Tip #5: Build your mailing list and sell products to your list**

Increase the number of subscribers to your email list by giving your audience a chance to sign up from your podcast. Then you can offer a range of affiliate and homemade products to them.

Tip #6: Create products for your audience

It's easy to create digital and even tangible products for your niche once you have your finger on the pulse of what their problems are and what they are willing to pay to solve them. Show that YOU have the solution they are looking for, and they will buy online via the internet and your emails. Create the product, launch it on your podcast and in other online venues, and see how many sales you can make.

Tip #7: Create services for your audience

Membership sites, coaching programs and consulting packages can also meet the needs of your target audience and relieve their pain points. Monthly memberships can help you steadily earn a predictable income. From your membership site you can launch new products and develop your customer base.

Coaching programs are becoming increasingly popular as a means of learning essential skills from the comfort of the student's own home or office. As long as you are a few steps ahead of complete beginners in your niche, you can set up a coaching program.

Consulting varies from person to person, but it usually involves focusing on a certain trouble spot in a business and offering a range of solutions. Some consultants are very hands-on and will implement the solution themselves. Others will offer an outline and suggestions for free and paid solutions that will work.

These are just a few ideas for making money with your podcast. As you brainstorm about the needs in your niche, you will be able to come up with more ideas.

The best plan is to start somewhere and try at least one of these methods. See how it goes. Then move on to some of the other techniques.

This tweaking method is the best way to establish what you want to continue – and what you want to drop.

Conclusion

Of course, this e-book is a quick overview of the podcasting process, but we have hit some highlights to help you get started. Let's review what we have covered.

First we looked at the technical side of setting up your podcast, along with some common terms.

As with any undertaking, there is a new vocabulary which goes with the project. So we covered some common terms and their meanings.

Then we went a little further and talked about the podcast setup. There are some common tools which are required for successful podcasting. Then there are some additional tools and services which aren't necessary, but which enhance the mission.

The third phase of our overview centered in on marketing your podcast. There are some tried and true methods for increasing your audience. We discussed some of these methods for doing that.

Next we took a hard look at some common mistakes podcasters make – and how to avoid them. When I think about this topic, I am reminded of the saying:

A wise man learns from his mistakes

An even wiser man learns from the mistakes of others.

That wiser man is the one we want to be. If we learn from the mistakes of others, we will be ahead of the game.

Finally, we opened up the possibility of making money from your podcast. There are many ways to monetize your podcast as you build your audience. As you continue in your mission - tweaking your plans as you go, you can develop a very lucrative business with your podcast.

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I hope that this information has whetted your appetite to develop your own podcast. If so, you will be joining the thousands who are making the world a better place by delivering their own valuable content to others.

And in the near future I hope to see you on iTunes!

For more information about your podcasting, blogging, book publishing, or other means of getting your message to the world be sure to go to

<https://OurCBI.com>

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