

Boost Your Exposure And Build Your Credibility

With Podcast Interviews



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Boost your Exposure and Build Credibility with Podcast Interviews

Many people have listened to podcasts but they may not know how they work from a business owner's perspective. Podcasts have been around for a long time, in internet years. However, business owners, especially those new to online business, are learning earlier and more quickly about what a valuable tool it is for building an audience base. One of the ways to use this technology to your business advantage is by giving and hosting podcast interviews.

What is Podcasting?

Here are the basics. You are probably familiar with RSS – Really Simple Syndication. It is the method for distributing podcasts to your target audience. When you hear something you like on a blog, those audio files can be automatically delivered to you when you subscribe to the feed.

But what are podcasts exactly? The word is an amalgamation of broadcasting and iPod. Most podcasts are mp3 files so they will play on any type of music playing software. Instead of a song, what you hear is similar to a radio show. Because of RSS feeds, you don't have to search for your favorite type of podcast beyond the initial discovery. From there, you can always catch the latest recording when it becomes available.

Podcasts are like radio shows created on the Internet. They are often recorded in an interview type format with at least two people talking. Some are personal commentary by the blog host. What sets them apart from actual radio broadcasts is the lack of commercials and other extraneous information. What you get are the broadcasts and nothing else.



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Podcasts are an alternative to commercial radio. You get all the information you want and none of the stuff that you don't. You can play and replay it as often as you want and share with others when there is something of interest.

Listeners can tune in to blog personalities that they love to hear. If you like their website, blog, or business style, then a podcast is a great extension of who they are. Best of all, you can take them with you wherever you go. Unlike radio, which confines you to your car or a certain location, podcasts can be downloaded to your PC, Mac, smartphone, iPod or other music-playing device for ease of use. It doesn't matter if you are at the gym, doing housework, on your morning commute or just relaxing in the back yard, your podcasts are ready to queue up and play when you are.

Podcasts are designed to engage listeners with similar interests. You may find a podcast on gardening, prayer, starting a home-based business, child rearing and so much more. If you can think of it, there is possibly at least one person hosting a show about it. If not, you've just found your new business niche.



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Communities are built around podcasting programs. As a podcast host, you can bring together an audience with targeted interests who would benefit from getting to know each other. Through these connections, your business benefits as well as the individual lives of your listeners.



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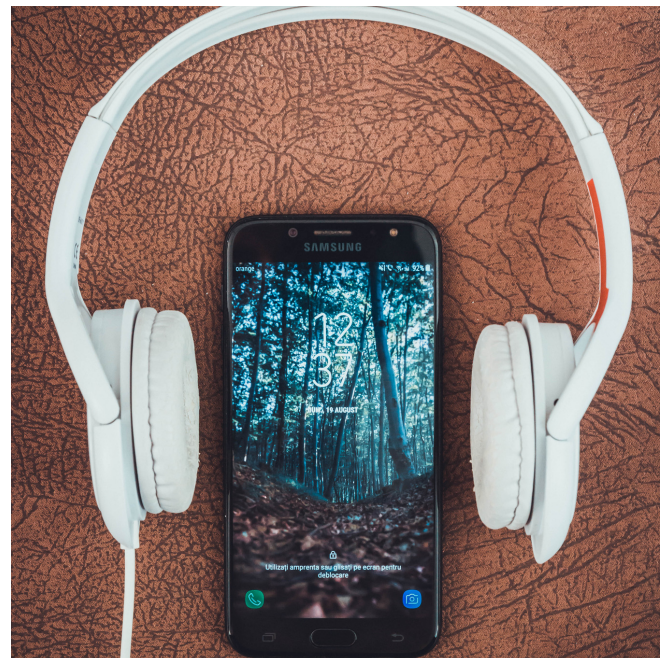
Why Podcasting?

Advertising and marketing are composed of several different types of media. Content is still king when it comes to driving traffic, building brand identity, and inspiring loyalty, so you begin here. But, as you know, content can take many forms beyond the written word. Every article and blog post you write can be used to boost your exposure in different ways. That is where podcasting comes into the picture.

Here are some very compelling reasons why podcasting needs to be your next addition to the advertising and marketing plan for your business.

1. It's free

Who doesn't like "free?" Most podcasts are recorded at home and not at studios, like radio shows are recorded. As long as your computer, software, programs, and peripherals, such as a microphone, are up-to-date, you can create a podcast. Because podcasts are primarily an audio file, you don't necessarily need to have video capabilities. However, visuals and downloadable items do add interest as well as value. For these reasons, you may want to make sure you have the tools to create these items as well. Once you've secured the necessary tools, you don't usually have to pay for them again, hence the "free" part.



2. It is more effective than guest posting

The latest tool for driving traffic and building credibility is guest posting on someone's blog. Through their network of followers with tangential interests, you can gain traffic and trust from someone who is already a known entity within your niche.

While guest blogging is effective, it can take a longer span of time to see the results you want. With podcasting, the effects are felt sooner. You can't buy this type of advertising anywhere else.

3. Bring your powerful message to life

Do you have something so say? Get your message out to the widest possible audience in one fell swoop. That is what podcasting can do for you. Depending on the audience size for that particular podcasting show, thousands and thousands will tune in and hear what you want to say. It's quite a heady and humbling proposition when you think about it.

4. Gaining trust

Isn't that what it is all about anyway? People want to back businesses that they can trust. No one wants to waste their time or money on products or services that promise but never deliver. It takes time to build trust. Maybe you already have the trust of a few (in business terms) right now, but appearing on a podcast places you within earshot of an audience that has already built a trust relationship with its host. By extension, they are affording you the same measure of confidence when they tune in for your interview.



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Trust is built quicker through hearing than reading. Both are faithful mediums, but when you can hear a person's voice, you get a sense of who they are and what they stand for. The next best thing is seeing their face.

5. Build business associations

There are other opportunities like JV giveaways, guest posting on someone else's blog and social media, but doing a podcast interview adds a new dimension to business networking. For that 30 minutes or an hour that you speak with the blog host, you are forming a new relationship. There are takeaways on both sides that can lead to further business opportunities down the road. Just like with the podcast audience, a picture forms of who this person really is. If it is positive, a bond has been created.

6. Less time consuming than hosting a podcast

People host podcasts because it's something they want to do. But, to take advantage of podcasting for business exposure, you don't have to start your own show. Guesting on shows is a great alternative with just as many (if not more) professional benefits. After the initial legwork and research (which we will get to in later sections), all that is required is the time it takes you to write your script and practice your delivery. More time goes into producing and distributing podcasts for the listening audience.

7. Drives traffic to your Site

The audience can find out more about you and hear more from you when they visit your website. When a trusted host offers them your credentials, your voice, and your contact information, people can search and find you right away. It also helps when there are freebies and discounts involved too.



8. Time shifting

No, we are not talking about traveling through time and space; although, that would be cool too. Time shifting is the concept of listening to a live show anytime you want. It's much like how TiVo and DVRs work today for television programs and movies. Not only do podcasts offer you the option to multitask when listening to them, they also give you the option of when you want to hear them. Organize them and listen to during a long road trip, when you do chores, or when you exercise. Because your time to listen is not set, they are always available.

9. Latest podcasting statistics

Statistics are always helpful to put you in the right frame of mind to appreciate certain business and technological trends. Here are some of the latest stats on podcasting. Most of the stats are courtesy of Edison Research. More people are listening to podcasts and they are getting younger – starting at the age of 12. Since 2013, monthly podcast listening has increased about 75 percent. There was a 23 percent growth from 2015 to 2016. As a whole, we are looking at about 57 million listeners.

The rise in podcast growth is largely due to shifts in how podcasts are consumed. Once they were restricted to computer listening. Now, they can be devoured on smart phones and tablet devices along with mp3 players and iPods. Because of that shift, people are more apt to “tune in” than before. They can enjoy at their leisure at a venue of choice. When it comes to listening, 69 percent of podcast listeners are hearing five shows or less per week.

Podcasts also need to consider the listening audience. One in four Americans listening to podcasts are in the wide age range of 12-54. To capture the audience on the upper end of the scale (right now just at 11 percent), technology needs to simplify the process of searching, finding and subscribing to podcast shows. Many older folks are intimidated by tech (unless their 10-year-old grandson can help them with it). Devices that make can simplify the process would bring in more monthly listeners who didn't grow up in the age of advanced tech.



Things to Consider Before Pitching to a Podcast Host

Now that you are more familiar with what podcasting is and how it can benefit both your credibility and your exposure to the right target audience, it's time to get down to what you need to know if you are going to turn being a podcast guest into a viable marketing strategy. We are going to ask a few questions that you will want to ask yourself and then examine the answers.

What can you bring to the table?

Unfortunately, most people who pitch an interview topic to a host are only thinking about what publicity they can get from the interview. The podcast host is essentially vetting you. Your mindset needs to shift. Consider what you can bring to the host's audience that would be worth listening to. Realistically, the podcasters are trading their names, reputations, and audience for you and your topic. New, entertaining, and viable content is always welcome to established audiences.

Along with this, consider how you can help the host and their business. Just because they are bigger than you don't mean that you can't contribute something helpful. The major contribution you can make is to take an interest in what the host has to say. You'd be surprised how many people don't take the time to learn about the podcaster's audience, voice, or platform before they make a pitch. It is quite disheartening to a host to entertain pitches from people who don't do the research or even follow them.

Take the time to become familiar with the podcasts that interest you. If the host has written a book, look at it. Listen to a few episodes of the show. Make some comments on posts relating to the show.



What is your claim to fame?

This is the time to toot your own horn. Have you written a book? Do you have your own podcast? If you believe the topic is something that would help/interest the guest audience, bring up the idea and offer to be the guest speaker/expert. Include your stats as far as book sales. If you have an online business, gather your stats for that as well.

For the host, a viable online business and a website with good traffic and participation means more listeners for the podcast show. As you are looking to boost credibility and gain exposure, so is the host. They can also win in this situation and rightly, they should.



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What type of listening audience are you searching for?

What is your niche market? The idea of guest blogging or being a podcast guest is to bring something new and supportive to the table. You may both be utilizing the same niche market for different types of products or services. Maybe the podcast shows you are examining represent an expansion of the niche you currently occupy. In order to find the correct podcast that will reach the right audience, it is necessary to do your homework and that includes listening to and becoming familiar with all aspects of the show.

What is your audience interested in listening to?

It won't make much difference if you do a stellar podcast interview and your audience doesn't tune in to hear it. Poll your current audience to see what types of topics interest them and match it up with the podcasts that will meet your needs.

Why you would be a good choice for an interview?

This question ties into your "claim to fame." If you have done podcast interviews before, by mentioning those interviews, you let the host know that you are in familiar territory.

Your background

Everyone wants to establish expert status in their field. Expertise is essential to business owners in gaining the trust of customers. Expertise can be demonstrated through social media branding, producing quality content on your website, guest blogging, and establishing yourself as a podcast guest on quality shows. Use your areas of expertise as the basis for the topics you come up with for your interview pitches.



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Understand the show's format

This is crucial. Each show has its own style that shows in the voice of the host as well as how they construct the program. When you are familiar with the format, you also know what questions to ask of the host and how to pitch your topic so they won't have a choice but to say yes to your proposal.



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A Sample Template for your Podcast Pitch

It's time to think about what you will say that is different from the tons of other emails that podcast hosts get for interview topics. This is a business proposition after all. Use the same care that you would in other areas of your enterprise. If you land the spot, it could be the first of many and lead to more opportunities in the future with this particular person or some of their partners.

Carefully construct your email. This is your first impression. To that end, ensure that you have the correct email address that will get your message directly to the podcast host themselves. Google them if you have to. This is another reason to make sure that you visit the website. Podcasts that frequently perform interviews probably have guidelines for submitting pitches. Follow them to the letter.

Next is your subject line. Clearly note in your subject line the reason for the email. For the reader, there should be no question as to the reason for the email. Be concise. Stick to ten words or less. The subject should be something like Podcast interview pitch topic. The title of your pitch shouldn't mince words. Instead, it should summarize the story that you want to tell their audience. Stay on topic and on task.

Introduce yourself to the host. This is where you talk about who you are and what you do. What is your business enterprise? Give a synopsis of your background that correlates with your pitch and how you can help. Don't forget to include a link to your website and/or blog so the host can check you out if you pique their interest. Introductions are always good especially if you are pitching cold.

Demonstrate that you have listened to the host's podcast. Mention a particular episode that meant something to you. Show how their past shows have led you to believe this topic would be a great idea for an interview for their audience.



List the helpful content that you can provide to their audience. These are your “takeaways.” Everyone wants good quality content. One way to demonstrate that your idea is not just another fluff piece is to list specifically what you want the audience to know when they finish listening to your interview. What should the audience be able to accomplish once they have heard your information? Make sure that what you provide will add value and not rehash info everyone already knows.

What are the incentives for the host? Sure, they will be doing a great service to you if they have you on the show, but what is their takeaway? Offer to promote this interview on all of your social media outlets as well as links on your website. Just to make it easier on them, include your stats: audience stats, number of active email subscribers, unique visitors, etc. discuss the type of content that your audience typically reads. List podcasts you have guested on before and perhaps a link to those interviews.

What would you do if the host says yes to your proposal? That’s the intended outcome here. So, just in case, make sure that you include the relevant information that they would then need from you: picture of yourself, a bio, link to your blog and/or website and social media pages. A link to your calendar makes scheduling the available time to talk easier.

Where can they reach you if they like your pitch? Contact information for your potential host includes but is not limited to email address, website address, telephone number, mobile number, etc. Add a sincere closing. From start to finish, this pitch is personal. You intend to influence their audience for the benefit of both business enterprises.



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After pitching your interview topic, you may receive an email confirming that it was received. This doesn't mean that the host is adding you to the lineup immediately. Wait for the "I'm interested/Can we talk" email. Give it at least a couple of weeks. If you still have gotten an email from the host, send a quick follow up email to let them know that you are still interested in appearing on their show and look forward to hearing from them soon.

We are going to be optimistic here, since we are in business. When (we did say when) the host agrees to have you appear on the show, it is proper etiquette to follow up with a thank you after the interview goes live. At this time, you may inquire about other podcasting opportunities that may come available.

Each pitch is different but most include these criteria somewhere in the lineup.



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How to Find Guest Podcasting Opportunities

The first thing to do is some research. Make a list of possible podcast targets. You can do this in a couple of ways. First, do you know anyone who has a podcast that would fit in with the needs of your target audience? It is easier to pitch to known business associates or to get an introduction from a friend or business partner. Introductions are better than cold pitches but that doesn't mean that your cold pitch won't meet its mark. It is also a question of technique and finesse.

Many podcasts are available on iTunes since Apple was one of the first supporters of podcasting. This will take some work, as the podcast directory is not the best here. You can look them up by subject name or keyword to find out the owners of these podcasts. Once you have the name of the podcast, you can Google it to find out the contact information for the owner/host. Another way to find viable podcast shows is to set up search parameters that include your "keywords + podcasts."

Businesses are starting up that specialize in putting podcasters and potential guests together. Enterprises like Podcast Matchmaker take the guesswork out of finding and booking guest spots. Most of the work can be done yourself, but it is a good way to maximize your efforts once you begin to appear on podcasts and gain a positive reputation.

No matter who you come up with as far as choices, always investigate the guest interview policy and booking procedures for each podcast. As we stated before, follow these instructions to the letter. They are there for a reason and can weed out those who are not serious about appearing on the show.

Now that you have gathered your list of choices from various sources, it is time to thank them. Creating a spreadsheet could be a valuable tool for viewing your choices at a glance. Criteria could include listening stats, social media stats, search rankings, relevancy to your business, publishing frequency, brand match, interview guests, size of their podcast, etc.



How do you know these hosts? Do you interact with them personally? Are they a friend of a friend? Rank them according to the number of degrees of separation between you. What is their podcast following? Depending on the number of listeners, some podcasts are ranked as a larger draw than others. A podcast with 10,000 listeners will have a larger reach for you than one with about 1,000. That doesn't mean that both are not beneficial, but you are just getting started here so you want to influence the most people you can.

Start from the top of your list. Record all relevant contact information so you can simply go down the list when it comes time to send out pitches. Unless they are just not a good fit, each name on the list has potential value.



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How to Be a Stellar Guest on Podcasts

Here are some points that will make you a great guest on podcasts. This information is great to know so that you aren't caught unaware during your big moment.

- **Don't cancel** – Once you have set up a date, keep it, unless you are on your deathbed.
- **Get ready early** – Start preparing and checking things at least an hour or two before show time.
- **Secure your audio equipment** – Pre-interview talks with your host will reveal what is needed for the interview to take place. Ensure that you have a good phone connection, an excellent microphone, updated computer software like Skype, etc. Check and recheck that all is in good working order. Don't forget the sound check.
- **Have your notes handy** – You have been practicing and now you are ready. Just in case you need to refer to your notes, keep them nearby in bullet format for easy reference. This is not a speech so you won't need to concentrate on these notes the whole time.
- **Choose a quiet room** – Extraneous noise is a distraction and can easily be picked up by sensitive microphones. Prepare a room with a door that can be closed.
- **Keep answers insightful but brief** – The host has an agenda and an entire show to get through. Speak slow but clearly. Don't elaborate unless asked by the host.



Mistakes to Avoid as a Podcast Guest

Yes, you can flub up a podcast audio interview just like a video one. Here are some mistakes to avoid that can also help with the jitters.

- **Don't let nervousness get the better of you** – Practice does make perfect. This will help you avoid stammering, rambling, and the frequent uhhhs.
- **Always offer freebies** – What does the audience get out of your interview? Well, besides useful information, they also need some free stuff. Be sure to mention this and give the host links to these landing pages on your website ready for immediate use.
- **Lack of interview promotion** – Once the interview is scheduled and set, get busy on your social media outlets. Let everyone know so they can tune in to you live or download it for later listening. After the podcast goes live, add links on your website and social media outlet to drive more traffic to your website.

So what have you learned today? Hopefully the primary takeaway is that podcasts are an emerging medium for driving traffic and building credibility. As a podcast guest, you can boost exposure for your business, your website and gain a larger following in general. As always, quality will rule the day so choose wisely when searching out podcast guest opportunities.

If you would like Sheila to book you on relevant Podcasts please email her at sheila@sheilagalligan.com or check out www.sheilagalligan.com.



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Who is Sheila Galligan

Sheila has helped hundreds of coaches, authors, speakers, and entrepreneurs GO BIG by showing them how to simply learn and leverage the expertise of others; to grow their visibility, community, and revenue, though the power of interviews, since 2012.

250 global experts have been personally interviewed by Sheila (also grew list to 7,800 within 18 months) and has helped launch and manage Virtual Summits for top speakers such as Lisa Sasevich, and Alison McKenzie. Sheila has booked herself on 60+ podcast shows in 2019 and shooting for 100+ shows in 2020.

Sheila is the Founder of Go Big Global, Summits Simplified, and most recently Podcast Get Booked - podcast booking agency. www.sheilagalligan.com