



The seven steps to podcasting

How to take your podcast from idea to the air in seven steps

If you've clicked through to this article or downloaded this as a PDF then it's clear you want to know how to podcast. I was once like you. Scouring the internet because I had an idea for a podcast but I didn't know how to get started.

Well I'm here to guide you through the next seven steps and take you from idea to published podcast.

I'm not here to tell you that you'll make money from podcasting, although many people do; I'm here to walk you through how to actually get your podcast online in seven simple and easy steps.

The audience growth and money making will be up to you but often the secret to success is simply getting started.

Before we start I want you to think about why you're doing this. Do you have an opinion you want to voice to the world? Do you want to interview interesting people? Do you and your friends have hilarious and informative conversations? Are you an expert on a particular subject? Are you looking for an interesting hobby?

You can't get into podcasting for the money to begin with. Most podcasts start off small and can take a year or longer before they operate as a business. If you have patience and persistence then it can become a money-making venture, just don't expect it from day one.

Now the house-keeping is out of the way, let's get into it!

1. Find your target audience

I'm sure you've heard of target audience before and I've used it here because it's a common phrase. But, we're going to be diving a hell of a lot deeper than what most people think of as a target audience.

You want to picture in your mind the type of person you want listening to your podcast. Are they university educated? Did they play sport growing up? What industry do they work in? How old are they? Are they married? How long is their commute to work?

All of those questions will help you niche down and work out who you want to market your podcast to.

For me, I based my target audience on myself given I started my podcast because I felt there wasn't a podcast tailored to me. My target audience is a 23-year-old male, university educated, watches a variety of sport, played sport growing up, has an interest in health and fitness, has about an hour's commute to work.

Why does all that matter? Because it will help when it comes to knowing what content you're going to offer. My episodes range from 20-40 minutes in length – no longer no shorter – in order to suit a work commute. They also include an education aspect and interviews with experts, coaches, trainers and athletes. Essentially my podcast gives you the science behind sport. It puts the "Brain" into "Power". You'll learn something you didn't know about the sporting world in each episode.

Now it's over to you.

Design your target audience.

2. Design your podcast content

Now you know your target audience it's time to design the content that will suit them. This is where you decide on a timeframe and the format you'll be using.

Are you producing bitesize chunks from 5-15 minutes? Maybe you want a little more detail, so you go 15-45 minutes? Or maybe you like the long format like Tim Ferriss or Joe Rogan and you're looking at 45 minutes and longer?

Pick your length and stick to it so your audience gets used to it.

Now, how often will you publish an episode? Daily? Five days a week? Three days a week?

The frequency you publish can be directly tied to how quickly you grow. Hosts such as PodBean, Libsyn and Apple Podcasts often use episode downloads to promote shows. The more downloads, the more chance you'll be on the front page. That being said, only choose a frequency that you know you can commit to. If you start at five days a week and then drop off, your listeners and subscribers will leave. It's often easier to start with fewer episode per week, get a workflow down pat and then step it up from there if you want.

What format will you be using? Will it just be you? Will you have a co-host or two? Will you be doing interviews?

Again, pick your format and stick to it. The most successful podcasts either have co-hosts or have interviews. Audiences like thought-provoking or entertaining material and those formats are the easiest in terms of producing that content. If you're flying solo it's a lot harder to produce that kind of content each episode. I chose an interviewing format because it suited my background as a journalist and it meant I didn't have to coordinate to be in the same location as a co-host.

So, those are your three content keys:

1. Length
2. Frequency
3. Format

3. Establish your hosts & online profile

You've now got the basics to be able to set up a website and social media accounts. You will need, at the very least, a website, host and Facebook if you want to grow your podcast.

Why you ask?

A website in particular gives you a place to provide all your content and allow your audience to have direct contact with you. Your website is also a good way to attract guests if you are completing interviews. Quite often a guest will want to see previous episodes and you can provide them a link to your website.

A hosting service is the way your podcast goes out to the world. You'll want to set up a host on a site like Libsyn or PodBean and then link the RSS feed to an Apple Podcasts/iTunes account. You only need the one RSS feed and you can then use that RSS feed to link your episode to a range of different hosting services. Keep in mind though that Apple Podcasts won't accept your podcast RSS feed if you haven't loaded a show, so you can leave the Apple setup alone for now.

Social media accounts help you reach a wider audience than just those who use podcast apps. Facebook's paid ad function can allow you to target the specific people you want to access your podcast and it also provides a way for you to stay in touch with your audience. Other social media such as Twitter and Instagram also provide a way for you to communicate with people in different mediums. Facebook however is your key as the majority of web traffic these days comes through Facebook.

For your website I'd suggest WordPress. I've used them for a number of my own websites and they are affordable and very easy to use. They also provide a range of free templates so all you have to do is add in the content. You don't have to build a website.

This is also a good chance to have your logo designed. For this, I'd suggest Fiverr. It's the same site I used for my logo which cost me \$40. It's very simple to use and you set the specs and are in total control of who you choose to use as a designer on the site. Make sure to have your logo designed to iTunes specs which are between 1400x1400 pixels and 3000x3000 pixels.

4. Record an introduction episode

This episode doesn't have to be long and it's just a quick summary of what your podcast is about. The purpose of this is so that new listeners can understand what your show is about. Keep it short and sweet and perhaps include a quick introduction of yourself and why you have an interest in your subject matter.

Even today, long after I launched my podcast I still get the odd download on my podcast introduction.

This is the information I would include in your podcast introduction:

- a. Your name (Don't forget that, some people surprisingly do)
- b. The name of your podcast and a quick summary of what it's about
- c. How often your episodes will be posted and roughly how long they will be
- d. Your interest in the subject matter
- e. A little bit about your background and why you're doing it
- f. Your website and social media accounts

5. Get your equipment together

When you initially start podcasting the temptation will be there to buy the best equipment on the market. However, it's probably best to resist that initial temptation. The reasons here are twofold;

1. The majority of podcasters stop around episode 20. What's the use of having hundreds of dollars-worth of expensive equipment if it only gets used for 20 episodes?
2. There's plenty of time to gradually improve your equipment. Podcasting equipment isn't disappearing from the market and most of the time you can have new purchases at your door within a week of buying them. So, if you want to upgrade, it doesn't take a lot of effort.

What should you initially start with? That depends on the format of your show. If it's just you, then even the headphones you get with your phone will do the trick to start with. Provided you're in a quiet room, those headphones can produce surprisingly good quality.

If you're interviewing people over Skype or over the phone then you'll need a call recorder or Skype recorder. For those interviews ensure your guest has some headphones and is in a quiet room.

If you're recording with someone else in the same room as you then I'd suggest two, separate, one-directional microphones. One-directional microphones will ensure only your microphone picks up your voice and vice-versa. You don't want it to be echoing. You can plug those microphones into a mixer that's plugged into a laptop or you could plug them into your phone and join the two audio tracks together in editing.

Speaking of editing, I would suggest the audio editing software, Audacity. This piece of software is easy to use and, best of all, it's completely free. There are plenty of other softwares out there, but if

you're looking for something simple, free and gets the job done then Audacity will do that.

I also mentioned a mixer. A mixer is an interface your microphones and headphones are plugged into. It will allow you to hear the podcast as you're recording and change things like volume as well as ensure you pick things up like background noise and any audio issues well before it comes to the editing stage.

If you're not sure where to start, Google is your friend here. There are plenty of cost-effective solutions online. I personally wouldn't buy hardware over the value of \$300 when starting out, simply because that feels like a solid investment without me ending up too much out of pocket before I've even started.

6. Start recording

You should already have your introduction episode in the bag. Now you've got your equipment together and you can start recording. Depending on the frequency of your show I would give myself two months between starting to record and launching.

Why? Because you'll need that time to learn how to use your equipment and edit your episodes. Editing can sometimes take several hours per episode and you don't want to be rushing the process. You'll also need to prepare web content and show notes.

Depending on your format you may also need to be scheduling interviews with guests and allow for missed interviews, recording issues etc.

When I launched, I had six episodes recorded, edited and loaded. My show is published weekly, which meant I already had a month's worth of content ready to go when it came to launch day.

7. Lead up to launch

You've spent two months recording, editing, writing and uploading to your hosting service. Ensure that about two weeks prior to launch you've applied to iTunes and you've loaded your introduction episode into your host. iTunes will only approve your podcast if there is an episode it can pull through from your RSS feed. Apple can take up to two weeks to approve a podcast so give yourself plenty of time. That being said, they are usually approved in 24-48 hours.

Contact your guests that you've already interviewed, if that's your format, and let them know what date their episode will be going out. One of the best ways to begin growing an audience is to have your guest share their episode to social media.

Ensure you have three episodes lined up for launch day. Three seems to be the magic number as it gives your new audience a taste of your show without making them feel overwhelmed.

Start ramping up your social media. Begin to get active on your pages and build interest. You may want to post some excerpts of your show on your accounts as a way to get people interested and make sure you're popping up on their newsfeeds. Keep in mind Facebook's algorithm means business pages will struggle for a large organic reach when starting from scratch so it's important you involve your family and friends as well as invest in some boosted posts to reach a larger audience.

8. BONUS TIP – LAUNCH DAY!

I've also got a bonus tip for you. Here's how to handle launch day.

Get all of your content set up and running on your website and hosting services. Post your website links to your social media accounts. Not everyone uses Apple Podcasts and not everyone uses Libsyn or PodBean. Directing your audience to your website where you'll provide links to all the places your podcast is hosted will let them choose.

If your website allows, embed your podcast directly into your site. That cuts out the middle man and also helps with your analytics as you'll be able to see who is staying on your site, what they're clicking on and if they're listening to the show.

If you have guests, let them know their episode is live and send them a web link to share. Include a thank you note, but don't demand they share the episode. Here's an example of the emails I send to guests once their show has aired:

"Hi _____ thank you for taking time out of your schedule to appear on my show, it was fantastic having you on.

Your episode is now live and you can view it here: (Insert website link). If you would like to share the episode via your social media channels it would be much appreciated and you can do so with the above link. You can tag the show via @BrainandPower.

Thank you once again."

Don't expect every guest to share it, although don't be afraid to ask again if they say they are and they haven't done so. I've had a couple of guests forget and they end up posting it later in the week.

If you don't have guests then you'll need to work a little harder. Instagram and Twitter are great at the moment for spreading your

work due to their hashtagging ability. Quite often you'll reach people outside your circle simply because you use the same hashtag as them.

There it is, the seven steps to podcasting, plus a bonus step. For any questions, in-depth explanation or coaching, you can contact me at brainandpowerpodcast@gmail.com, or on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)