

## Podcraft: Season 20

### Promotion & Growth Tactics of Successful Indie Podcasters

**Colin:** Hey folks, and welcome to Podcraft, one of the longest running how to podcast series on the planet. I'm Colin Gray from thepodcasthost.com. And in this season, we're talking to some of the best independent podcasters in the business. On our last episode, we heard about the systems, the workflows, the processes that enable our podcasters to publish consistently. And now that the content's taken care of, it's time to put our growth caps on and talk all things promotion and marketing. This is an area where a lot of creators fall down. We can be guilty of really not tooting our own horn. I mean, granted, focusing on creating a brilliant show first and foremost is the right approach, but if nobody knows about it or has any way to find it, then you're never going to reap the full rewards for all your hard work. And that's a real shame. So let's see what we can learn this time around from our indie pod legends, starting with Viki of bring your product idea to life.

**Vicki:** So at the moment, I promote all my episodes across all my social media channels. Like not just once, a couple of times per week because I have a weekly show in my Facebook group. I do tend to do lots of Instagram Stories because I get a lot more engagement in stories than I do on the grid. So I do a lot of stories per post. I have an email list that's fairly, yeah, it's growing, it's still fairly small, but what's really great is it's really engaged. So I get a lot of, I get, you know, a really high open rate, click through rate for my, my email, I guess because over the years it's, I kind of feel like it's probably got to the point now where it is people who are on there because they want to know what podcast episodes there and they're genuinely interested in that. And that is what I do. But I feel like that isn't enough. I feel like the content is quite, I think this year it all needs a bit of an enhancement. So this year, for example, I don't mind sharing what I'm going to do. I'm going to start sharing more snippets from the, from the, from each episode. So rather than doing static sort of image posts, I'm going to be sharing snippets of the video because I think that's actually much more interesting than saying so and so said this is actually to share videos of people actually talking and maybe looking at some different sort of video sharing platforms as well. But I think it's really hard. I think for me, the hardest part of having a podcast is the promotion side.

**Colin:** As we've learned throughout this season, struggles aren't something you'll eliminate after a certain number of episodes, downloads, or years. Here's Mur Lafferty of I should be writing the actual podcast.

**Mur:** I'm not very good at promoting it. Back in the heyday when we were all just making stuff because nobody had made that kind of stuff before, we were doing tons of cross promotion, all the SF podcast nerd people would just do. We'd throw trailers at each other and have each other on each other's shows. And that group has either, well, died is the wrong word, but you know, some people stopped podcasting and some people went on to something else and some people just lost touch. So I think that one thing is finding some sort of network or group just to at least start promoting within these circles would be a good step for me. But that's all like more admin stuff. And admin stuff is where I get bogged down. So some days I'm just lucky. I could sit

and talk at a mic and then put it out and be done. But I know that that's where one way I fall down and I need to work on that.

**Colin:** Back to Vicki now. And how does the promotion she does today compare to what she was doing in the early days when I first.

**Vicki:** Launched a podcast, it would be like one or two social media posts saying, I've got a new podcast episode, and that was about it. I wasn't using fact stories, probably weren't around them. I wasn't using LinkedIn at all, like, because actually LinkedIn is somewhere else. I'm finding useful to share podcast episodes, particularly if there are insights in there that people might find useful. I did have an email list, but it was much smaller. I think I was still emailing, but I wasn't using the blog either. Actually, that's another thing I should mention, is that for lots of podcast episodes now I've been doing blog posts. I'm trying to do more blogs because I find that's just another way for people to find the content if the podcast links to the blog and the blog post links to the podcast episode. So, yeah, I think this, this year, as I keep, as I keep saying, my goal is to think hard about what I'm doing and rather than doing perhaps more promotion to do a better job of it.

**Colin:** Let's find out a little bit the things that have worked for Gabe from the board game design lab.

**Gabe:** Throughout the years, it was a lot of posting the, the links, you know, in these Facebook groups, on these forums related to board games and game design. I would always ask the guest, you know, to tweet out the link, to email the link, if they had an email list, like, you know, do you mind helping me out with kind of posting to your following, your community? And so that definitely helped. Early on, I would do giveaways again. Like I said, I launched the show with a big giveaway, and then I would do giveaways from time to time for other stuff, whether it be like a gift card to a board game, like an online game store, or it'd be more games from specific designers that had been on the show. So giveaways worked, you know, not, not doing an iPad, not giving away an iPhone, because, like, you're gonna get a bunch of garbage subscribers. So doing giveaways, that actually made sense for my audience, my community, that was, that was helpful to a certain degree. I never really did ads again. Facebook ads were very different. You know, it's very different now than it was even just a few years ago. And so when you're talking seven ish, eight years ago, when I was really kind of getting started and figuring it out, it's just different. The ad space was different. But yeah, those are things that kind of worked.

**Colin:** Gabe mentioned asking his guests to help him promote episodes, and that's a real low hanging fruit for podcast promotion. But of course, not all podcasts are interview shows. You can always mix up your format to include a value packed interview every now and again, though, even if you prefer to fly solo normally. Guest sharing, though, is something that's worked well for Vicki in the past. But as she explains here, there are certain caveats.

**Vicki:** I always find that when a guest promotes an episode as well as me, that makes a huge, huge difference. And I share that because I think when I first had the podcast, this might sound really silly, but in the first sort of six months, I don't think I asked guests to share episodes at all, which sounds daft. But as soon as I did, I can

tell from the downloads whether a guest has done much sharing or not because the ones who put it out to their own email list put it on their own social media, whatever it might be. You can see a real difference in the numbers.

**Colin:** Here's Susan from the Lush Life podcast with very similar experiences.

**Susan:** Definitely when the person you're interviewing shares your content, it's huge. That is really big. That's when I get the waves of people listening when they do, I totally see a difference between when someone doesn't do it and when someone does do it. And in fact, for people out there who are listening and, you know, are thinking about monetization or even working with people and without any monetization, it's really great to, and actually, a marketer told me this is even if you're doing it for free or you really want to have someone on your show, if you do an interview, show is say, okay, I want you on my show, but the transaction is you must share it. Here are the hashtags, and I expect you to share it like one Instagram post, one story and try and get them to agree to that, even if no money changes hands, because that is that sharing is so important for your listener base. Definitely.

**Vicki:** So at the end of the interview, I'll always give them an idea of when the episode will go out, and then I'll say, you know, please, can you share this? And I'll always explain, you know, the reason I'm asking is obviously they've given up their time to do that. And obviously I want them to get as big a reach as possible because I do genuinely think there's a benefit to going on people's podcasts. As I say, I do share the episode as far as I can, but I think anything that the guests can do to help is better. You know, it's a benefit to them as well as a benefit to me, because as I say, they're products businesses. And I really hope for every person I speak to, they have such, you know, they're doing such great things. I genuinely hope that everyone who comes on the podcast, listeners go to their website and buy things from them. I would love that if that happened for every time someone came on. And obviously, if they can help me to help people do that, that's great. So I do always ask and explain that, and then I will also send an email with the link and the artwork a few days before an episode goes live and again ask people to share that. And then when I send emails, obviously they'll be linked in the email. I'll tag them in all my social media posts. Yeah. And just basically do what I can to encourage people to also share the episodes. And most people do. I'll say those that don't. I'm never sure why. I don't know whether it's, I don't know, shyness or I'm not sure. But I definitely think that if you go onto somebody's podcast, it's really good to share because I think it's helpful for the host, but it's also helpful for you, too.

**Susan:** I know a lot of different types of podcast creators are going to listen to this, not just interview show, but if someone with an interview, you know, whoever is asking you to do it, make sure that they use it for something. I remember yelling, not yelling mainly, but just like taking someone to task. Should I say that you don't use it enough? You've asked me to create this. You've given me money to create this, and you're not using it enough. Like, go put it on newsletters. Come on, use it. You've bought it. Use it kind of, you know, and not just for me, but for, you know, it's some, it's a tool that you can use to promote a person, a thing, a place, you know. And I remember taking them to task. Use it more.

**Colin:** Here's Andrea from the savvy social podcast.

**Andrea:** Being on other podcasts, I think is one of the best ways I've seen to grow my show. Again, it's really hard to track this, but my theory is that people who listen to podcasts listen to podcasts, and if they listen to one, they listen to multiples, likely. And so that has been a really great way for me to grow my show. So if I'm on another show, show, if they ask me, you know, how can people connect? I always say listen to the podcast. I do think there's some stock in, whenever I do like a workshop, like I'm facilitating, I'm teaching, I always mention my podcast there as well, so people can find me there. And even like in person speaking and things like that, especially podcasting conferences. So I've spoken at Podfest, she podcasts, podcast movement, all of those people, you know, podcasters looking grow their shows also love listening to podcasts as well. And so that has always helped. So I always mention my podcast as a way to get people in. And then obviously I use social media a lot to grow my show because social media is my background. It's my bread and butter. I direct everyone on social to listen to my podcast. And so it's like the primary way for me to ask them to take a next step with me. Like, hey, if you just found me today, go listen to the podcast. You know, we have so many episodes to go through, so all of that combined has worked to grow our show.

**Colin:** Here's Alana from she well read.

**Alana:** There's a lot of things we want to do, but again, it takes a lot of time and effort not saying that we don't want to do it, it's just there's only so many hours in a day. Like, I know something this year that we're focusing on a lot is pr and getting, you know, more interviews and articles and like reaching out to other podcasts and doing episode swaps. Not episode swaps, trailer swaps and things like that, promo swaps. But I feel like the most regular thing we do is social media promotions.

**Colin:** Social media is an obvious tool for promoting and marketing your podcast. Many of our podcasters are using social well, and we're going to hear some great tips, techniques and tactics just shortly. But it's really worth mentioning that you don't need to use social media at all if you don't want to. In fact, we have a full guide to launching and growing a podcast without owning a single social media account, which you can find over at [thepodcasthost.com/race](http://thepodcasthost.com/race) that's race. The [podcasthost.com](http://podcasthost.com) race. And of course, there's a lot more strategies to come on this episode that don't involve social media too. For most podcasters, social is a part of their marketing strategy, but certainly not all of it. Here's Kathy of World for Scotland.

**Kathi:** So on a regular basis, we use social media to promote new episodes and also our newsletter to tell our audience about new episodes that are coming out with social media. I particularly focus on audiograms and just teasers of the episode, trying to give people a taster of what's coming up on the feed, because I think once they hear a minute of it or half a minute of it, it's much more likely that they'll switch over and actually listen to the full episode rather than just seeing an image or something like that. We kind of mix it up a little bit. We try and produce a few different types of social media posts throughout the week when we have the episodes going. And then I also have my second account for General Scotland Travel, which kind of complements the podcast, or it's much bigger than the podcast audience. So the I try and promote it on both in different ways and tell different types of audiences about new episodes. But something I always try and do is to do trailer

swaps, episode swaps with other podcasters, and just use that network of other people who do similar things or slightly related things to promote each other's shows and not be too much in our own bubble. I think social media is a great tool to reach people you already know, but you know, to reach new people, you kind of have to do different things. I submit shows to podcast newsletters. I participate in threads on Twitter or X, I guess, about new podcast episodes people should listen to. And, you know, all of that builds that momentum of reaching different people and different audiences.

**Colin:** Kathi talks about collaboration and cross promotion, which is a really great way to grow your show. As Andrea succinctly puts it, people who listen to podcasts listen to podcasts. A couple of great tools for finding shows to partner up with are rephonic and Podchaser, and we'll put links to those in the episode show notes. As for Kathi, which tools and tactics does she deploy for her own collaborations?

**Kathi:** There's a great platform called Tink Media, who have a database, essentially, for podcasters who are open to trailer swaps and guest spots and episode swaps as well. So that's one I use a lot for, to find new people and to find different podcasts to collaborate with. But then I also look at what other podcasts are related to myself. So in my case, what's out there in Scotland? What's out there in the travel niche or the kind of cultural, environmental niche? So finding different shows in those different areas that are related to the topics that we cover on our podcasts. So it's a lot of research in terms of just looking at podcast apps and seeing what I can find and what I like as well. Listening to podcasts, what's kind of up our street, and what do I think our listeners might enjoy as well?

**Colin:** Two podcasters who are having amazing success on social right now are Alana and Samra of she well read. As for the platform...

**Alana:** I think we can both agree it was TikTok. Yes, definitely. Just doing the work. Cause Lana said one thing, we are in our TikTok bag, and she was not lying. She said, come over, we're recording 20 in one night, and then we won't have to worry about it. We're stacking it up, we're scheduling it, and it's crazy how consistency really is key on TikTok. So that changed the game, definitely, right?

**Samra:** Yeah. Really figuring out TikTok, which is something that I'll say that I specialize in. I'm actually growing a whole side business around it, which not just TikTok, but content creation, period. I'm working on a podcast, content consulting business, shameless plug. But, yeah, that was something that, like Samra said, I really pressed her on us getting on TikTok just because I was seeing, like, all these people, like, you know, gain all these followers and all this traction. I was like, well, let's do it. And so it was really understanding the platform that was, like, learning curve for us was figuring out how it works, how to talk to it, how to use it for our advantage. And the TikToks that sent us over the edge, or quote unquote, made us go viral were the ones where we were being like, okay, this is who we are, and this is what we're about. And these are the type of people we're looking for. Kind of like the, like, get to know me type videos by using trending sounds and audios. But, yeah, so all of our, like, the ones that always do really well on TikTok is the ones where we're like, hey, are you trying to get back into reading? Well, we're a bite sized book club podcast, blah, blah, blah, blah. And then people were like, tell me more. So, yeah,

that's definitely something that brought us a huge wave of listeners. And as far as replicating, if somebody out there is interested, hit me up.

**Colin:** Another podcaster doing great things on social is Daren from the 1% better runner? Daren is a walking, talking, content stacking case study, and he's got some valuable advice for folks who want to get the best out of their social media efforts.

**Daren:** Social media definitely helps, but you need to understand how social media works, and I would say to kind of piggyback on that, treating your social media content as separate content and not just as a promotional tool. So a lot of people, they go, oh, I'll promote it on my social media, or make a social media account for their podcast. And all they do is promote the episodes, and they just go, here's the album art. Go listen to the episode. Everyone link in bio. And it's like, ooh, that may have worked back in 2015, 2016 Instagram, but now it's so hard. And obviously, you have to have video, you have to have all these different things. So it's like, you need to start thinking again, more like a brand marketing exercise, how the content can just be its own piece. Like, this 62nd short clip from your 60 minutes episode can live on its own and make people feel like they watch something that was worthy, and they go, that was cool, and then do that five more times in the episode. And then hopefully 10% of those people go and click the link in bio, or go to Apple Podcast and punch in your podcast name. So that's how I promote, and that's how I think is the most effective right now. Again, thinking about it, every piece of the marketing puzzle is also part of the podcast and is a part of the episode. So I call them episode campaigns internally with my, with my team, because if you just go audio episode out. Okay, now, social media and YouTube video, and if you start thinking about it separate, it makes extra work for you. And also it feels like they're like not talking to each other, whereas they, it's like they're, they have their individual characteristics. The short form pieces, the quotes, the blog piece, the newsletter. What else is there? The YouTube video, they are their own, standalone, but it's like they are part of this cycle, this circular economy in a way that feeds itself.

**Colin:** Here's Samra now with her own thoughts on being more deliberate and tactical when it comes to social media.

**Samra:** Well, I mean, one thing that did work for us was kind of honing in on what platforms we wanted to be our, like, active platforms and shouting those out each episode to try to help people remember and just have it etched in their brain. We are on all platforms. We focused on something that we named the titty. So that was a nice little fun acronym, I guess you could say, where, you know, basically the T and the I and the T and the y all stand for like a different platform. And it's been interesting, I think, trying to see, like, what, because ideally we're not posting all the same content on all this, all these different platforms. Like, I'd love to be at a place where we know what works on each platform, and I think we kind of do, but again, like, taking that time to distill, like, what works best here and then doing that for this platform and then what works best on, you know, somewhere like YouTube, which is very, it's very different than, you know, an Instagram or Twitter. Like, the way people interact with things is different. And, you know, shorts have been added, and so that's a whole new, you know, it's always changing. It's definitely something that you have to just adjust, pivot, keep moving forward on. But I think that it's a lot easier when you start with one or two or three or four that you can just, like, be consistent

on before you expand and try to try to do every single because there's always going to be another platform that pops up. So yeah.

**Colin:** And while Alana and Samra are getting brilliant results from social, that doesn't mean there aren't some platforms that just haven't worked for them.

**Samra:** I mean, I don't know if, like, the Facebook group was, like, supposed to grow our audience. It was really supposed to strengthen our audience. But we. I mean, I think there was a hope it would grow a community or help, you know, push it along, something like that. And it just did not take off at all. And that was, again, like, kind of going back to one of the earlier questions where we realized, like, okay, our audience is not on Facebook, so they are not going to be involved in something that, like, they're not actively already using, if you know, that type of a thing. So we have to cancel that. Do you need that to get cut? Yeah. And I think it was. I think the initial thought around the Facebook group was like, we saw so many other shows doing it, so we were like, let's do it, too. Yeah. And then kind of. Yeah. And again, realizing that not just because it works for one show doesn't mean it's gonna work for our show. And this is something that, I mean, I don't know if it's, like, at us or just, like, in general, but I just think about Solange's song or whatever, where she's like, do nothing without intention. And it's like, sometimes you can have the intention and the universe God has other plans. Like, maybe that wasn't it, but also, like, maybe your intention wasn't fully thought out. Like, maybe, you know, had we thought a little harder. I mean, now it's something we're aware of, of, like, where is our audience? You know? But at the time, that comparison was, like, nagging in our ear of, like, okay, well, this is how you do it. Like, this is what everyone's doing, so we need to do that. Kind of led us astray. And, you know, we put all this time into Facebook groups, and, you know, just really wanted it to work. We're, like, texting our friends, like, go like this. Go comment on this. Like, help us. But, you know, just. So, anyway, taking the time to think about stuff, like, before you go and, like, just doing a little bit of that legwork beforehand, I think, ends up saving you time in the long run. Oh. And then also just straight up asking your audience, like, what? What do they want to see from you? That's something we started to kind of implement. Like, after each season, we would try to get, like, a survey out and see what people liked and what people didn't. But, yeah, I don't know. It's always. It's kind of an ebb and flow.

**Colin:** Here's Rob now from the euro trip.

**Rob:** So when we started the euro trip, we were very no frills with promotion, and I think it was probably as simple as me and James both had a Twitter account, and we would post that there was an episode on Wednesday, and the euro trip itself already had its own Twitter account from back in the day when I did it as a student radio show. And I think it probably had about as many followers as you would have people around your dinner table at Christmas. Like, it probably had about twelve followers or something like that. But gradually, we have made a real concerted effort to improve our, our social content, whether that be to promote questions or prompt rather questions out there that aren't necessarily linked to the content that we're doing on the podcast. So, you know, we might ask questions like who was your favorite Eurovision winner? Or what's the one song that you think should have performed better in the contest? And that is still engaging an audience. It's getting our brand name out there, but it's not necessarily intrinsically linked to the podcast. But equally,

if we do get some really good stories from prompter questions like that, then we can discuss them on the episode and that then almost becomes content that we can take onto the podcast. So, you know, it started off as just being on Twitter. We're on Instagram now. And then James looks after our TikTok as well. We've got, we set up an inbox so that people could send us emails, which is really useful because again, it's just another way that people can get involved and interact with the podcast. And it does just sound much better when you are able to be on your episode and say, so and so has got in touch from Canada this week, and it does make your podcast sound huge. You know, the listeners might not be the same as, you know, the top ten podcasts in the UK, but you are able to, to sound like you have a really impressive kind of scale of audience when you are able to say, oh, this listener's in, as James said earlier, Sweden, Brazil, wherever it is, international. But I do think you do need some form of social presence out there.

**Colin:** Gabe, board game design lab.

**Gabe:** Because I do topical shows, it's not, hey, let's sit down and chat for 3 hours about anything. No, it's, every episode is very hyper specific, hyper focused on a certain topic, and I'm talking to an expert on that topic. And so now I get a lot of people listening to anything and everything. You know, if they're designing a worker placement game or an area control game or something like that, they're going to go listen to those episodes. They might not be as interested in the episode. I just launched, you know, last week about crowdfunding or publishing or marketing or something like that. That's not where they're at. It's not that they don't care. They're just not in the thick of that. They're in the thick of these seven other episodes. And I tried to make every title easy to find. Easy to search, right. I know a lot of shows, they try to be clever, you know, they try to be funny, they try to do these creative things with their titles, but then nobody knows what the heck the show is even about. Like, what is this episode even about? I don't know. And it's impossible to search, impossible to find later. And so I wanted to make sure that every episode I did was specific in nature. That way it was evergreen. Anytime someone is working on something that relates to that topic for the next decades upon decades, they can go back and listen to that and they'll still find value.

**Colin:** SEO or search engine optimization is a really underutilized podcast growth strategy where instead of you having to go out there and find listeners, you make it so that it's easy for them to find and come to you. Well, how? Because in an ideal world, they type in their question, their struggle, their need, and it pops your show or your podcast website up in search. Here's Paul of the Fighting Through podcast.

**Paul C:** My key strategy is search engine optimization, keywords. And I always feel that work you do on search promotion is free because it's just your labor. You're not paying anybody to do search, and it's free forever. It's always out there. Whereas with like, if you do a social media post, it's here today, gone tomorrow, and forgotten. And to elaborate on search, it's about making sure that whatever your keywords are, which represent your show, in my case, it's ww two, for instance. So I try and make sure that WW two and one or two other words are always represented in my show title, my show summary, episode title, episode summary, and then any extended show notes or transcripts. You've got to methodically go through the whole lot before you put that episode up to make sure your keywords are represented. Because then

when people search through Apple or Spotify or Google for the website or whatever, you're giving yourself the best chance to be found. I do research amongst my customers. I just have an ongoing survey on my website which people stumble upon. And one of my questions is, how did you find the show? And I think without exception, every single person, and this is a few hundred responses, every single person says, I found your show through Spotify Google, Apple search or whatever, and nobody says, oh, I found you on Twitter. So that drives me to continue always to focus on search. And if you put my keywords in like the likes of Apple, I'm usually in the top three for the keywords. So, you know, I feel therefore I can't do much more than that.

**Gabe:** Thanks to, again, being in a small niche and thanks to SEO, that, again, I did a lot of good things on my website and didn't mean to, but I rank on the first page of Google for almost everything you can type into that relates to board game design. I accidentally named my show the board game design lab. And so if someone types in board game design, I mean, that's basically the entire title of my podcast and my website and my YouTube channel. Again, not on purpose, but it worked out that way. I would have been more intentional back then, but, you know, at the same time it's like, oh, that worked really well. I would do that again. And so it's easy for people to find me now through all they have to do is search and word of mouth. That's another thing. As the community has grown, I can't tell you how many people every single day are brought into the Facebook group because they were invited by someone else. And I know the same thing is happening with the podcast and with the email lists and because I put out a weekly newsletter and I basically, I go around the Internet and I've got a whole bunch of websites and blogs and YouTube channels that I follow and I go through every week and I take in the best information, put it all together in a Monday morning email and put it out there to people where it's like, I'll go look at these 100 websites so you don't have to. I'll find the seven best things for you to check out this week related to game design. Here's some game design contests that are coming up. Here's my video that I put out. Here's the podcast that I put out. If you missed that, the links are in that newsletter. And so all of those things working together, I don't, I don't really do a ton of promotion as far as, you know, sponsored ads or, you know, trying to get out there, if, if the podcast had a bigger ceiling. And I think that's another thing to think about when you're in a smaller niche, smaller industry is how high is the ceiling? Like the ceiling for board game design and board game, board game design podcast is pretty low. It's not like a Joe Rogan it's not like Tim Ferriss, where the whole world is kind of potential, right? If you could translate it into other languages or whatever with a small niche, the ceiling is a little bit lower. And so you kind of have to be, again, more intentional about not overspending. It's like how many, how many people are there? You know, like how many people are in your industry and listen to podcasts and care about what you're doing? Like, it's just that number gets smaller and smaller and smaller. So I think you can kind of over promote to the point where the market is saturated.

**Paul C:** There are all sorts of theories about how to get yourself up on the rankings on Apple, et cetera, et cetera. And one of the the things at the moment is there's a theory that in the algorithm, the more subscribers you have, then the better you'll perform in the rankings. And I've always kept that in my toolbox, as you know, as one element. But the other week I did an episode where I made a plea to my audience to say, if you aren't subscribing, make sure you do subscribe, because it

helps me. And within about ten days, suddenly I was number one in the Apple ranking for my keywords from having been number. I've been number one before, but normally I'm sort of two, three, four, and suddenly I was number one. And I don't know if it was coincidence or whether it was genuinely because maybe just a handful of listeners had subscribed and that tipped, tipped the balance to promote me higher than everybody else. So that surprised me. So next time I do an episode, I'll be making a similar play.

**Colin:** I hope you're enjoying the series so far and that it's fueling your desire to create or grow your own podcast. As we know full well by now, two of the biggest barriers standing between podcasters and their own success stories are editing and time. And if you have that in your mind, please do check out Alitu. Alitu is our podcast maker app. It includes call recordings, solo recording, includes automated audio cleanup. It has a full editing platform in there, really simple and built just for podcasters, including text based editing and audio so you can refine the details. It also includes now magic filters which takes out filler words automatically, your rums and your ras, really cleaning up your whole audio recording in just seconds. And then finally includes hosting too, so you can publish all in one platform. Go over to Alitu.com dot. That's Alitu.com and you can get a seven day free trial to see if it works for you. Of course, all that time that you free up by saving time on editing, you can put that into promotion and marketing, just like we've been talking about on this episode, really, that's what gets your show out there into the world. All right, now back to the show. And one of the oldest ways to promote or market anything is to run paid ads. Here's Andrea on her experiences.

**Andrea:** So I think Facebook ads is one of the things we tried that it worked and it didn't. So we ran Facebook ads to specific episodes. Every year I pull my top, like, most downloaded episodes really to inform, kind of like what to talk about next. What was, what was really worked really well. But we run Facebook ads to those specific episodes and measure downloads on those specific episodes. And first of all, tracking is absolutely terrible. Like, I have no way of knowing if those people listen to multiple episodes, if they actually subscribe. Like, we just have to kind of look at the bigger picture. And we do see increase in downloads on those specific episodes. But overall, it doesn't really seem to have a massive impact on overall growth. Like, our growth is fairly steady and there's no huge spikes from paid advertising. And I spent quite a lot trying to use paid advertising. So Facebook ads, Instagram ads. So that's something I'm always like. I'm always hopeful that it works, but it never fully works the way that I want it to.

**Colin:** Here's Paul Thornton from the joy of cruising.

**Paul T:** A couple of times I have paid to advertise on Facebook and on Instagram. You know, you get a lot of hits, but it's impossible to know how effective that is. There's just no way to measure effectiveness. Although, like I say, the podcast is growing. And so I just think that the combination of all the things that I do add up to helping it grow.

**Colin:** If we go back once again to Andrea's words of wisdom, people who listen to podcasts listen to podcasts, then it makes sense that paid ads might be at their most effective when advertising inside dedicated podcast listening apps.

**Paul C:** The one thing I have done which has garnered quite a few extra subscribers has been I advertised on overcast about five years ago and that actually worked. Marco, the guy that runs overcast, he has a very transparent platform in terms of, you know, if you spend this amount of money, this is what I expect you to get. And he gives you good statistics that show what's happened, which is unlike some of the providers, he's good. And I got several hundred extra listeners as a result of that at around it varied, but say two pounds per subscriber, which looking back now, because I think I've just started another campaign with overcast and it's certainly, it's going to be more expensive than pound two per subscriber. And when you consider doing that, you've got to say, well, what is the payback? Is it just the virtue of having a load more subscribers and it costs you money? Is it a vanity project or is there a payback in terms of x downloads and y impressions on advertising for which somebody will pay you pound 20 per thousand downloads and you've got to work it out.

**Colin:** Paul has some more words of advice for running paid ad campaigns, too.

**Paul C:** I think certainly on advertising on, say, overcast or anywhere else you've choose to advertise your show is to think, plan carefully when somebody either hears your advert. So this is me advertising to other people's listeners, if you like, but if they click on the link, what is going to happen? And think it through carefully so that when they click on a link, you get them as close as possible to actually listening to your show and maybe even subscribing at the same time, because if you take them through to a website which maybe isn't focused on that person, you need to take each step of the way and make sure it works properly. Because if you don't, then you'll just lose interest as the process carries through.

**Colin:** Paul's advice on where you send potential listeners doesn't just apply to paid advertising either. Here's Paul's namesake, mister Thornton.

**Paul T:** You know, some people give like the Apple link or the Spotify link, things like that. You know, a lot of the people who might be interested in this topic, they have no clue what Spotify is or what Apple podcasts is. So I just give them a regular URL, which is [www.thejoyofcruisingpodcast.com](http://www.thejoyofcruisingpodcast.com). And it takes them to a player, to my whole site. And so because everybody knows how to use a URL, just link to a website, but not everyone knows anything about linking to a podcast site.

**Colin:** Paul's a great case study of in person podcast promotion, too.

**Paul T:** The last cruise I was on there was a comedian and he was very good, and we ran into him. It stopped at like a private island. So I walked up to him and told him how much we enjoy the show. And I handed him my card and asked him would he consider being on the podcast. I've had a couple of stand up comedians. I like stand up comedy, and they're on most cruises. So I've had a couple of stand up comedians. So, so, you know, I have a card. I have cards and that helps me, you know, kind of, kind of have some conversations.

**Colin:** Paul's approach is really cool because it ties podcast marketing in with podcast creation. Here's something else Paul plans to try out in the near future.

**Paul T:** So I just got these wireless, what do you call them, lavalier mics. I got a set for Christmas. So what I'm going to do is do some recording on the ship. And a lot of times on like Facebook, you can, you can join groups that are, they call roll call groups that they're there for your particular cruise. So I can say to the people on, on that group, you know, hey, I'm going to be on this cruise and I'm going to, I'm looking to get some, some, some of your reflections. So I haven't done this yet, but this is what I'm going to do. So if you want to, you know, say a few words on the podcast, I'm going to be recording on the spot, you know, that kind of thing. So I think that my marketing, face to face marketing on a cruise ship is going to grow in the next, you know, year or so because, you know, I got these, these little Lavalier mics.

**Colin:** At the beginning of the episode, we talked about how making brilliant content alone might not be enough to maximize your reach. But as we're starting to learn from these case studies and their anecdotes, creation and marketing are not mutually exclusive. Here's James from the euro trip on how a particular body of content had a really positive impact on their visibility and their growth.

**James:** I'm going to go a bit Eurovision nerdy here, but it's just to try and set the scene for you. So for a lot of countries, they take Eurovision very seriously and Sweden is one of them. And to choose their artists, there's probably about 4000 artists to submit a song to compete and then around 30 of those get chosen to perform live on Saturday night television in Sweden. It's one of the biggest tv shows over there. It's called Melody. Festivalen and Rob came up with the idea of us doing a spin off podcast on the same feed as the Eurotrip normally, but to do a bonus episode every week while that tv show was on air focused purely on that competition because it's huge over in Sweden. It does get a lot of viewers in the rest of Europe as well. And he came up with the idea that we focus our attentions on an extra episode for six weeks, all on that competition. And I thought when he suggested that, I thought, that's going to be far too much work. We're not going to have time for it and we're not going to be able to achieve anything. But we gave it a go. We thought, we'll see what happens. And we started to do what we called Melfest Monday. So Melfest is a shortened version of Melody festival. And we did it every Monday to look back at the competition on the Saturday and to look forward to the next episode on the Saturday. And we. We weren't entirely sure what it was gonna be, but we ended up speaking to the artists who were competing, some of the songwriters, some other journalists who cover the event in Sweden. And it was. Nobody else was really doing that sort of content. It was a bit like when we started the Eurotrip originally. Nobody was doing that sort of content. And it was almost like one of the only places you could get english language coverage of this swedish tv show, which sounds very niche and it is even just in the Eurovision world. But for us to be able to do that, it gave people who loved that competition an outlet to listen to once a week, to get the behind the scenes gossip and to find some new stories about the artist and to get to know them a little bit more so that when they watched them on the show on the Saturday night, they would feel a bit more of a connection to them. And just the competition for them felt a little bit bigger and they felt a little bit more attached to. Although for us, it was a bit more work, we saw the listeners rise. Obviously, we

were getting listeners on the Wednesday, but we had to put in that extra work for the Monday episode as well. And we got not just our original listeners who would tune in on a Wednesday, but we also got more people and quite a lot of new listeners from Sweden as well. So obviously, even though they get a lot of coverage of it over there anyway, they were tuning into an English language outlet covering one of their favorite TV shows. So one of our biggest moments, really, was to launch that new series, which we've done three times now. So 21, 22 and 23. And, yeah, we get a lot more listeners and a lot of them, which was probably a surprise to us in the first place, a lot of them from Sweden as well.

**Colin:** And Kathi of Wild for Scotland has had similar experiences.

**Kathi:** In season four of the podcast, I did something that I wish every episode could be like this, essentially. I thought about it. I dreamed big and I thought, what would I want the podcast to sound like if I had complete creative control. Well, I have complete creative control, but if I had the time and the space and the resources to produce something that is creatively on the level that I would want to produce, and I made one episode like that. I did an artist's residency over the summer, and based on the artist residency, I wrote poems, and I collaborated with another artist on the residency who's a musician, so she wrote music for the piece, and we produced an audio poem, essentially, or a series of audio poems. And we did something a little bit different. I think it was very bold. We put it out there. People really loved it. We won an award for it. We just reached a whole load of people who might have not been interested in the podcast because of the premise of it, who thought maybe, oh, storytelling, I'm not that interested in that. But then the poetic side of it really came out, and I think it's still similar to what we do in regular episodes. It's just a bit more production effort, I think. And of course, the resources to create custom music or bespoke music for it as well, we couldn't do that in every episode, but we're still striving for that level of content or that level of quality with every episode that we produce. And I think that episode just showed people what is possible and what we're aiming for and what they can get out of it. And off the back of that episode, I did another thing that I think brought a lot of people in, which was to interview myself. So I actually asked my editor to interview me as a guest rather than having someone else on. And I think the combination of showing people what is the highest level we could possibly achieve with the podcast and who are the people behind it, that really drew people in, and I think convinced, maybe even people who might have not otherwise listened to the podcast that it's worth listening to it. And yeah, we gained a lot more listeners in that time period, and many, many of them have stayed with us since then. It's been about a year since that episode came out, or those two episodes came out. And I think while I'm not able to produce that level of poetic music, combination quality every time, just knowing that that is there and we can actually do it if we just had the resources for it, gives me the motivation to produce even better content and to go after those opportunities and to keep producing the episodes. And that passion, I think, is what then lets us reach new audience members and listeners and convince them to stay with us. We got a lot of feedback on social media and by email. But we also managed to get other podcasts to share the episode. We did some episode swaps off the back of that. We got an award for it in a climate creative challenge, which was incredible. And the feedback from the jurors and the judges on that was also really, really good. And I think we're still getting feedback on it, even though it's been quite a long time since we've been

published that episode. It's that because it's so different, it's something people really go back to and find in different ways than maybe the rest of the podcast.

**Colin:** So what advice does Kathi have for those of us who'd like to try something similar?

**Kathi:** Once you kind of start settling into a routine, it gets very scary to do something different because you don't want to put anyone off or surprise your accustomed listeners by doing something that they're not used to or they didn't expect. But I actually think we can challenge our listeners a bit more, and we should be confident in our own vision enough and bold enough in our skills to challenge our listeners and produce something that we think maybe just goes a little beyond what they had expected. And I think that that's really important, to not be afraid to do that and produce something just slightly different than normal and following your vision and your dream of what you really want to do. Which sounds very cliché, but yeah, I think that not being afraid of challenging your listeners a little bit would be my top tip in that sense, you've.

**Colin:** Been listening to Podcraft, brought to you by [thepodcasthost.com](http://thepodcasthost.com). No matter what stage you're at, we've got guides for you over there. If you want to start your podcast, go to [thepodcasthost.com](http://thepodcasthost.com) start. And if you're at growth stage, it's the [podcast host.com](http://podcasthost.com) promote. Now, on the next episode, we'll build on what we've learned today by diving a bit deeper into the complicated world of social media, specifically when it comes to engaging with that community of listeners who already know and love your content. We'll also learn a few things about running an email newsletter to complement your podcast. One of the best ways to grow that, and we're going to look at how interview podcasters can still present themselves as authorities on their topic when all the expertise in their episodes are seemingly coming from guests. That's another value packed program that's coming down the pipe really soon. So please make sure you've subscribed or you're following us on your listening app of choice so that the episode is delivered to you automatically the minute it's published. Finally, if all these stories and tips from our indiepod legends have you chomping at the bit to get started with your own show, then be sure to grab a copy of finally start your podcast, which is our book covering every single step you need to take. You can find that over at [the podcast host.com/finally](http://the podcast host.com/finally)