

Podcraft: What Podcast Microphone Should I Choose?

Colin: Hey, folks, and welcome to another episode of Podcraft. This is the show all about podcasting, from launching your show to monetization and everything in between. I'm Colin Gray from thepodcasthost.com joined by Matthew. How you getting on, Matthew?

Matthew: Yeah, not too bad, Colin. How are you?

Colin: Yeah, good, thanks. Excited to get into the tech, into the software, into all the resource. The stuff we say doesn't matter about podcasting, it's all about the content. But I mean, secretly we kind of love the gadgets, don't we?

Matthew: You say that I've just had the same stuff for like over a decade. I keep mentioning that we always go, yeah, I like the thought of being excited at this stuff, but I just keep the same thing and use it.

Colin: I'm kind of more the flighty one that tries every new thing. Although you do enjoy writing about it, don't you? You like finding out about it, but just not actually changing your setup because you're old.

Matthew: I have a reshot and I think this is cool and I would use it this way, this way, this way, and then I never do.

Colin: Yeah, you go back to your old stuff.

Matthew: Yeah.

Colin: Cool. Well, on this season we're going to be covering all of it anyway. Mics mixers, interfaces, software for recording, for editing, how to set up your podcast studio, all that stuff. And this is episode one of the season. We had a wee intro last week, but we're going to jump straight into it. All right? Microphones. I will mention up front, obviously, our content is always supported by our very own podcast maker app, our own resource, which is Alitu. Alitu does call recording, audio cleanup, editing and your podcast hosting. So you can do an all in one. Create your podcast in Alitu. We've been mentioning it a few times over this season, but if you want to check it out, you get a seven day free trial over@alitu.com Alitu.com. All right, microphones. So, first question. Matthew one of the big ones that always comes to us, USB versus XLR. What the heck are these acronyms? What do they mean? Jump into?

Matthew: Yeah, I mean, I'll say it's unlikely that the listener doesn't know what USB is if they're listening to this. Anything that you plug into your computer, USB and microphones are no different. It's very popular that you'll buy a USB microphone and it'll plug directly in that way. But if it's not a USB mic sorry, then it's probably an XLR mic and you'll need something else to plug it into. That's one of the main differences in what are you actually plugging into. But it goes beyond that, doesn't?

Colin: Well, I mean, you say everyone knows Matthew on the spot. What does USB stand for?

Matthew: Ultimate? I don't know. I don't know. Do I know that I'm going through my long term memory here, which wouldn't take long. No, I don't know that. I don't know.

Colin: I'm not entirely sure either. It doesn't matter. Honestly, it doesn't matter. But Universal Serial Bus actually rings a bell.

Matthew: I'm not sure I'm on the internet anyway.

Colin: You're right, it absolutely does not matter.

Matthew: It does mean that does mean that.

Colin: Universal Wind score okay, but you're right, the difference is just really what you plug it into, isn't it? And the fact that USB plugs right into your computer, which makes things really nice and simple, generally means it's just plug and play, it just works in whatever software you're using to record, whereas XLR is the how do you describe Matthew? It's like a round plug with three pins in it a big fat plug, isn't it?

Matthew: It's a good description. Yeah.

Colin: I'm not sure people, most people probably have seen one at some point or other. It's like the big fat cables that you see on a stage when you go to a gig or something like that. And it's designed for pro audio equipment, basically. It's a type of cable that tends to lend itself towards higher quality, towards less disturbance through other signals around, whether it's radio or electrical signals or whatever. Although that kind of depends on the cable too, doesn't it? We'll cover a bit of that later in the season around cables, but USB cables are perfectly good quality for what we do, and they plug right into the computer, require nothing else. And so really it's just simple. That's the main difference, I think, isn't it?

Matthew: Yeah. I would say we'll answer the question of I suppose that the listener might be wondering what's best? Not to skip too far ahead. The answer generally with all of these questions, all of these types of questions is it depends a bit, because it will depend on what you're plugging an XLR

into that will determine some of that quality USB mics. They tend to have everything they need built into them and they're just powering themselves off your computer.

Colin: I was going to say, I would suggest that in the olden days, like 10, 15, 20 years ago, maybe even longer, XLR would always tend to be better quality. Just because the mic, they would build mics like really good quality mics to be XLR compatible. Because they're assuming it's going to be plugged into really high quality gear, like a really good high end mixer or audio interface. But these days, the USB mics are great quality, aren't they? Just? In the last 1015 years, so many more great mics have been created. Quality mics that rival anything XLR, but that have a USB output. I mean, I think that's the case, isn't it, Matthew? So the difference is much smaller now, I think.

Matthew: Yeah, definitely. I mean, as computer technologies got better, as software's got better, it's natural that USB mics have got a lot better too. So, yeah, seven, eight years ago, I struggled to recommend USB mics back then, but I would have no qualms about recommending them now in terms of pricing, then I suppose it's fair to say there's not much in it price wise if we're just buying a microphone. It's the fact that an XLR mic, you can't just buy the microphone. You're going to need additional gear for it, aren't you?

Colin: Yeah, you need an interface or a mixer, for example. Yeah. Maybe you would argue that you do get cheaper USB mics. So I don't know if that's even the case these days though, is it? You've got the Samsung Q two U, is that kind of classic that we often recommend. It's like this \$60 to \$100 range does both XLR and USB. So you can get a really good quality handheld mic that can be USB for that kind of price. And you get a load of other ones as well. We'll go through a wee list of kind of USB mics that we like, but you get some great quality USB mics for under \$100 these days, so I don't even know if yeah, you don't tend to get XLR for less than that, though, do you, Matthew? Especially when you count in the rest of the gear. I guess that's the thing, isn't it?

Matthew: You're going to need to buy again, this is a subject for a different episode, but you're going to need to buy an interface or a recorder or a maxer or something like that. So, yeah, that quickly puts the price up.

Colin: Yeah. And you don't tend to even find them priced under there because people generally presume that an XLR mic, if they're making an XLR mic, they're making it really professional quality and therefore it tends to be 100, 200, \$300 or more. So, yeah, price wise, USB definitely saves you a few bucks.

Matthew: So is the fact that you need less to work the USB mic, does that make it easiest, the easiest option then? Is that fair to say?

Colin: That's usually what we see, isn't it, Matthew? It's like the kind of prime thing in having a sustainable podcast that doesn't take up too much time that you can just get it out every single week. One of the primary parts of that is just making it easy to record. And as soon as you introduce more things into your recording process, there's just more things that can go wrong. There's more things to have to set up, there's more things that can just be a bit off. Like, for example, how many times did you come into our studio back in Dundee, Matthew, ready to record? You just hit the record button and then realize that all the buttons on the RODECaster or the interface we were using at the time were just everywhere. Because it just happened that one of my kids had been in the studio.

Matthew: Yeah, I think I took a photo of it. Was that really old mix that we had. I took a photo of it, I just copied what it says on the photo. So, yeah, high tech guy? Me.

Colin: Well, it doesn't matter though. That's the thing, isn't it? It doesn't matter how much you know, it how high tech you are. If it has tons of knobs and switches, if there's two or three components to it, there's always a chance that one of the knobs is in the wrong place or it's been adjusted or something and you have to put it back again. And it's not even so much about tech, it's about volumes and stuff. So it's really annoying with the RODECaster. Sometimes when I'm recording videos, I record through an XLR mic into the RODECaster interface, which then goes into our DSLR camera here. But the levels on that are quite sensitive. If I go too high, then it peaks really easily, but if I go too low, the noise is too high. So I have a really specific area that it can record. But then the camera also has its recording levels too, so it can reset sometimes and it just screws up every single time. I have to go through this weird like 510 minutes check process where I check every single setting on every single device to make sure they're all at the right place. Otherwise if even one of them is a little bit off, it just messes the whole thing up. And that's what happens when you have more than one device involved. So just having a USB mic plugged into your computer generally gets rid of that issue. And there's no compromise these days. You get USB mics that are just as good quality as any kind of normal level XLR mic. So it's not like you're making a compromise in quality either, is it?

Matthew: No, definitely not. And I suppose on one side you've got the fact that USB mics are really good these days and are the easier option and are probably the cheaper option. On the flip side, there's some podcasters out there that aren't just recording on their own or remotely, they're wanting

to have other people in the studio with them. And one of the most frequently asked questions we've had over the years is how can I plug in two USB mics and make them work together? And that's a complicated topic, it's not impossible. And in the show notes you'll find a link to a few options available to you there, but it's not advised. If you want to have two people or more in the same room, I would go XLR. If you've not bought anything yet, I would definitely go XLR for that.

Colin: Yeah, totally. So we'll talk about that again, we'll get back into that'll involve we'll talk about a couple of XLR mics in this episode and then we'll talk about digital recorders in the next episode. And they're kind of sometimes the easiest way to do that, like a couple of good XLR mics into like a zoom digital recorder. That can be one of the easiest ways to do that. But equally a mixer like the RODECaster or other ones as well could do the job. All right, anything else on that, Matthew, or jump into the delightful interesting subject of condenser versus dynamic.

Matthew: Yeah, just as you thought that you'd picked a thing and went for it. And there's this other thing that pops up, this other question. Do you want it reminds me when I was out in California a few years ago, ordered a breakfast out in California and see the amount of questions you get asked about like eggs. I didn't know there was so many ways to cook an egg. So it's a bit like this. You think you've chose one thing and here's another question. Condenser versus dynamic. The way I sum this up is it's how a microphone is built and how it functions? Do you think that's a fair enough glib assessment of it?

Colin: Yeah, for sure. It's all about the internals, isn't it? It's the type of the way that it captures that audio. So, yeah, for sure.

Matthew: And condenser mics, most USB mics, I would say are condenser mics. And really, again, there are always exceptions to these definitions, but the way I often describe condensers is that they're a bit more sensitive and nuanced to pick up vocals, whereas dynamics, they could be a bit more rough and ready. The trade off being that a dynamic microphone is typically a lot harder and condenser microphones. We talked about the MXL 990 recently and how the fact that that just sat in a cold room and it died just because it got microphones. And as well, that sensitivity maybe picks up the nuances of your voice, but it's also picking up a lot in your room that you maybe don't want in your recording as well. So that could be an issue. So these are things that you need to consider as well. But I would say anecdotally I would say most podcasters these days that I know are using condensers and I think that's because most of them are using USB dynamic. You mean that's anecdotal I use a dynamic.

Colin: You said condenser there, but you mean dynamic, I think.

Matthew: No, I would say most folks are using condensers.

Colin: Really? Which one?

Matthew: Yeah, well, the yeti. That's a famous condenser. The snowball.

Colin: No, you're absolutely right. Yeah, sorry, I thought you made a little mistake there. But you're absolutely right.

Matthew: I don't make mistakes, Colin.

Colin: Absolutely. I will learn one day. Yeah, no, you're absolutely right. Actually, I would suggest that most podcasters should be using dynamic mics, but you're right, a lot of them use condensers without even thinking because of the popularity of the yeti, the snowball. If we're thinking about, I tend to summarize it just a very simple trade off. Being dynamic mics are great in just about any setting, as in they don't pick up the background noise, the reflection, the echo, all that kind of stuff. And they're perfectly good at picking up your voice as well but you do lose a little bit of that nuance, a little bit of that depth potentially, although to be honest I've never barely heard a difference. No, I'm truthful and then condensers, theoretically pick up more of that dynamism dynamism dynamism of your voice, the depth, the warmth, all that kind of stuff. But the trade off being that they pick up every little echo, they'll pick up every little background noise, that kind of stuff. And they can die at the drop of a hat. Well if you drop it particularly, but even just if the temperature changes too rapidly with some of them as we found. Okay, so what next?

Matthew: I suppose one last thing on that Colin. Is there a what's the cheapest question here? A valid what's the cheapest question? I don't think there is to be honest. I think there's just so many mics out there that you can't say you'll traditionally get a dynamic cheaper. Am I right on that?

Colin: Yeah, I think so. I don't know, I think maybe again, in the past you'd have found dynamic mics were generally a little bit or you could find a dynamic mic on the cheaper end. But I think you're right, these days it probably doesn't make much difference. You get cheap condenser mics too right, okay, polar patterns, we're going to jump into that.

Matthew: Yeah, I think it's worth touching on again. Another thing that when you buy any microphone it's going to have at least one polar pattern. This is quite simply like the area that the microphone hears sound from. So we've got some diagrams that you'll be able to look at and they sort of show a

bird's eye view. It's good to describe this as almost like lights or lasers, isn't it? Like we see a bird's eye view of the microphone and we see the little lines or areas highlighted in which it's sort of picking up the sound. So you could get an idea of where I position this and where I talk into it and how I might move around the mic, how that might impact when I'm on mic and off mic, if you like.

Colin: Yeah, totally. So our kind of classic is what, cardioid?

Matthew: Yeah, almost all mics are cardioid, aren't they?

Colin: Yeah, unless you're getting someone pretty specialized. So the one I'm using right now, I've got the Rode podcaster in front of me right at this moment. Good dynamic USB cardioid microphone. Which means that when I'm on mic, as in I'm right in front of it right now, about six inches in front of it, it picks me up as strongly as it possibly can. But if I go around the side, then suddenly I start sounding potentially a bit quieter or a little bit more off mic, and then I come back on mic. So it picks up more from the front than it does from the sides and more from the sides than it does from the back. And that's the idea. It just is a little bit directional, so it picks up less of the background noise. That's the purpose behind it, really, isn't it, Matthew? It's like just to be a bit more selective about what you pick up.

Matthew: And then you get a few more extreme variations on cardioid, like super cardioid hypercardioid. They're just zooming in a bit more on one particular area and then that continues to the point where you've got the shotgun mic, which is like literally a laser, like you point at cardioid. Yeah. So they're good old shotgun mic. And then on the total flip side, you've got Omnidirectional. The mic isn't biased towards anywhere around there, it's just hearing from everywhere, which sounds like that would be the best option, but it's not, because it's not got that focus. This is maybe the setting somebody's going to have their yeti on. Sitting on the kitchen table, nine of their friends round are recording a podcast about films. And in theory, that should sound fine, but it doesn't. So Omnidirectional as well is also interestingly. It's used on lavalier mics, those little mics that hang on to your jerseys as well.

Colin: Indeed. Yeah, most of them, yeah, for sure.

Matthew: The Rivet and world of polar patterns.

Colin: Indeed, indeed. So, yeah, generally you're looking for cardioid, for your settings, for your context. If you're a podcaster going to put it on a stand in your desk or whatever, the only kind of difference is, occasionally you might want a shotgun mic. If you're recording in really particular settings, like, I don't know if you're at an event or something like Amethyst, if it's a loud surroundings you're in, like a busy expo hall, you're trying to record somebody there, you want to cut down as much of the kind of surrounding noise as you can while still getting a little bit of the atmosphere. And a shotgun mic is about as good as you can get for that, because you can point it directly at the person's mouth, pick up much less of the background, just the person's voice. Again, trade offs. There's always trade offs. The trade off being that if you don't aim it really well, you can find the person going off mic, even if you point it just a few inches left of their mouth. So you have to be pretty good with it. You get people whose whole job is that, don't you, Matthew, on movie sets, somebody whose job it is to be able to point a shotgun mic directly at somebody's mouth. It's like a whole skill that people develop. All right, anything else? Simpler patterns? I don't think there's anything other we really need to cover, is there?

Matthew: No, we've covered the top level. Again, there's always going to be follow up resources in the show notes as well. If you were so excited at that little introduction to polar patterns, you could spend as long as you like looking at the diagrams.

Colin: Yeah, absolutely. And I'm I'm making this up right now. And here Matthew, so you can tell me to ***** off if you like, but let's do A-Q-A-I would say we should do A-Q-A at the end of this season, eh? So if people do have questions, if there's stuff that we haven't covered, we'll try and go through these. We could spend hours on these episodes, really, the amount of detail that we could go into. But if you do have any questions that come up during this season on any of the gear, any of the software that we cover, then send them into thepodcasthost.com Voicemail and you can leave it there. But we'll put that link on the show notes as well. So just always just go to the show notes, you'll find everything you need and you can leave us a question there, too. All right, talking of Q A, here's a question we get all the time. Can you use a built in mic on your computer, Matthew? Like, if you've got every laptop these days has got a mic built into it, you've got a phone with a mic built into it as well. Is that good enough for podcasting?

Matthew: Yes, that's a good question, and the answer is like yes or no. So Dev and myself, dev, who's been doing some brilliant gear reviews on the site, tested this recently and created an article around it. And I thought I'd jump in as well and just do some testing of my own, some sound samples. So I took the built in mic on my laptop, the built in mic on my phone, the setup that I'm using now, and I think the built in mics on the zoom H five, which I don't consider built in mics in this sense because

that is literally a recorder. So I was just wanting some comparison. And what I found was that obviously I'm happy with my main set up and the zoom sounds fine in the right conditions. The built in mic on the phone, I've got like, this old iPhone. It's not fancy, it's pretty old, but the built in mics on that I was really impressed with when I listen back. Whereas the built in mic on my laptop I thought sounded absolutely terrible. I would never record with that. But obviously there's so many different types of laptop out there, I'd be very interested to hear a sound sample on a Mac. I've heard that the built in mics on them are very good. It's been a long time since I've used one, but you got one of those gone.

Colin: That's where I've often ended up with it. I've had a lot of PC laptops over the years. I've worked with a lot of them, too. I've never found a PC with an inbuilt mic that's worth recording with, even with pretty top end laptops, too. They just seem to not worry about it too much, they just put something in the works and that's it. But I've often said to people, like if it's a total last resort if you can't get them to use anything else, if they are on a Mac, then often the Mac inbuilt mic is actually decent enough, quality does the job. So it's funny you say that about your iPhone as well, like a kind of Apple Mac phone, or an Apple phone, I should say, has a decent mic built into it as well. So I think some of the more top end other phones, like Samsung phones, I remember I had a Samsung phone as well. That was a really good mic built in too. So especially if you just hold it like a traditional phone call, you just hold it up to your ear so you're nice and close to the mic. I think it can work, but it's not ideal, obviously, but it can work at a pinch. Yeah, for sure. So that's cool. Good to hear that's still the case. But yeah, if you're in a pinch and sometimes it's about making it easy for your guest as well. People that aren't very technical, they might not have if you can say to them is your option to record on a PC laptop or just to hold your phone to your ear and get them to use their phone, it's a good recommendation.

Matthew: You could try both too. You could go in, you could do the recording through the laptop, but say, could you just open up your recording app and just set your phone down and at least it will give me an option in editing. I could use the slightly better track in the mix.

Colin: Yeah, totally cool. Okie dokes. Shall we get to the actual recommendations?

Matthew: Yeah. Tell me all about your setup, Colin. What are you using these days?

Colin: I'm actually a total it makes me seem like a bit of a Rode fanboy, but it's because generally I've tried a lot of mics over the years and the most reliable for me that tend to work for my voice, for my situation, are the Rode mics. So right now I'm speaking into a Rode podcaster. Rode podcaster is a USB mic, it's dynamic, like I mentioned, plugged right into my computer, really simple. I use it for podcast recordings like this, but I also use it just for every call too. It's on, remember. Is it a PSA one? Matthew the boom arm that comes with roads? I think it is, I think it's a PSA One boom arm and the shock mount you buy with that pack as well. And it just works really nicely. The other thing I'm going to set up is I've got a roadcaster. This is the one downside of roads.

Matthew: Matthew, you say road a lot, don't you?

Colin: The names, the names, they're terrible names. You've got the Road Podcast or the Road Procaster or the RODECaster Pro are the three things excuse me. So the RODECaster is their interface, mixer stroke interface. And I've got two Rode Procasters plugged into the RODECaster Pro, which is my in person setup. So we mentioned that in person setup. So people come into my office here quite often to the studio here and record stuff. And that's what I use for them. Because if we've got two of them on one desk again on two of those boom arms and they work a treat. The only other thing I might mention is the Samsung. I do have a Samsung Q Two U kicking about that I use with my Zoom recorder. Still great quality. What else have I got? I think that's probably all worth mentioning at the moment, actually. I used to love my MXL 990. I thought that was a really good value dynamic. Sorry, condenser mic. If somebody's out there wanting a condenser mic, they think it will make a difference to their voice. That's probably the one I'd recommend at the moment because it's great value, \$100 or so. And that's about it for the moment, I think. Matthew, what about yourself?

Matthew: Yeah, I thought I was recording an Mi SM 58, but I've just had a relook there and it's the Samsung Q Two U. I'm using it in its XLR form going into the Focus. Right. Scarlet. Two. I two. That's a USB interface that I've had for many years and we'll obviously cover the interfaces in a future episode. But yeah, I'll pretty much always either be using the SM 58, the sure SM 58, or the Samsung Q Two U. The Q Two U is the slightly cheaper one. I reckon you're talking about 70 OD, 80, OD dollars for the mic alone, but for not that much extra. It's usually available in good little bundles where you get like headphones, you get cables, stands, pop shields, so there always seems to be good b deals with the Q Two U. The SM 58, on the other hand, that's a very famous indestructible microphone. There's a great video on YouTube of people just putting it through.

Colin: People try to destroy it.

Matthew: Very extreme use cases, like it goes in a microwave, it gets run over by a truck, it gets like barbecued, and they always still work. So I've not done any of that to mine and it still works. I have a two year old. Maybe that's the ultimate test.

Colin: Yeah, just use that as a toy. What would you recommend? So they're basically the mics we'd recommend at kind of consumer level. If you're spending under 100, you're probably going with a QTU. If you're spending between 102 hundred, you're looking at the Road podcaster or maybe something like Matthew set up with an interface in there as well. And an SM 58. What about above that, Matthew? We don't tend to use stuff at that level just now. We have in the past, but not anymore potentially because our setup is really good. What do you recommend beyond that? Like, if somebody does want to splash out and get like a real kind of professional quality mic yeah.

Matthew: The three money as no option mics that you often hear about are, well, the sure SM Seven B. I'm sure that's what Rogan uses, isn't it? So it's a really good mic. But that's helped a lot, too, hasn't it, that publicity?

Colin: Yeah, totally. Getting that kind of referral, for sure always helps. And I remember back in the day when we were kind of early days, starting out a bit more, there was the now, what's it called? What was the one that every kind of pro podcaster used back then? Hile the Hill PR 40.

Matthew: Yeah, you had to have one of it there. It was like the Holy Grail of microphones. I mean, again, decent microphone, but yeah, there was a real movement around it, wasn't there? It was like the end level game for a podcaster.

Colin: Yeah, totally. There's another range. Again, it slips my mind right now. Let me see if I can find it very quick. That always comes up and people often recommend them. I've actually never used one. Well, that's not true. I've tested a couple for reviews and stuff like that, but I've never used one. Long term.

Matthew: Is it the electrovoice?

Colin: It is. That's exactly it. Electrovoice range. Yeah. So the EV range is really good. They've got a whole bunch of them and that's the one that always pops up as well. Yeah. So I'd recommend that if you want to check them out. I think the thing is with those kind of mics, isn't it, Matthew, that you want to go to an actual music shop or something and try them out, don't you? The main reason for spending much more money on a mic of that kind of level is that it actually just suits your voice, like your tones, your frequencies the best, and if you don't find one that really kind of makes the most of your voice, then there's no point in spending that kind of money. Yeah, because it's the eye looking at our article, the Electrovoice re \$2450 or so, but an absolutely brilliant mic, if you can justify that cost, obviously.

Matthew: I might actually switch to that. We got one years ago, I reviewed it and it got sent out and I really liked it, as you could imagine, at that price, it's a very good microphone and I probably would have kept using it. And then within a couple of weeks, they emailed and they were like, we have it back now. They wanted it back. So I'm still stuck on, I say stuck on I'm totally happy with my set up, but I might have moved to that if we've got it for nothing. And I get what you're saying. Yeah. If you're going to spend a fortune on a mic, you do want to go and test it out first. That's not without its risks, of course, because if you go into a music shop and they would probably explain this to you, but you're going to be recording decent conditions in there, presumably. I'd imagine if they let you test a mic, they maybe have some sort of set up where it's a bit sound dampened in that. And nine tenths, a good sound is often environment and technique, it's not actually the microphone itself. So even investing in a brilliant mic, you might still sound really bad because you're in a poor sounding room or you're not using it very well. So there's all other considerations as well, isn't there?

Colin: That's it exactly, isn't it? Yeah, you go out and you spend that and you're almost certainly going to get a condenser at that price. That just tends to be the case, like the condensers or the high end mics, because they want to get the most from your voice. But equally, that just means you're going to have to build a proper soundproof studio to make the most of it, otherwise you're picking up every old sound from anywhere. So, yeah, good points, but we'll talk about that, we'll talk about studios. If people do want to invest more into that, that'll be later on in the season. I only have two more other questions for you, Matthew. One is one that popped up a lot back in the first ever gear survey that we did. I'm thinking about it. We should do another one of these soon, Matthew, but one of the ones that popped up surprised me a little bit was the Road Nt One. I had never used it, but I think you've reviewed it, is that right? Or did we get somebody else to review that one? Have you come across that one?

Matthew: Let me just on the fly, check various things.

Colin: Yeah, it's a really well reported mic. It surprised me by popping up a lot in that gear survey. I'd never really heard of it before that. That was like, I don't even remember five or six years ago, never really come across it. And then suddenly it appeared in our gear survey a lot like there was dozens of

podcasters in that survey were using it. So great way mic, \$250, you get a shock mount and a pop filter with it as the kit. So all you have to do is buy the boom arm. So definitely not low budget at 250, but I think that is one of the kind of much higher end, but slightly less pricey. As in that Electrovoice is like 400 and \$5500, whereas the Road Nt One is kind of half of that price. But again, it is a condenser.

Matthew: Interestingly, with the Nt One, you can get the Nt USB, which, funnily enough, is a version of it in USB, and then you've got the Rode Nt USB minis. They're quite unique in that. Like, we talked about using USB mics at the same time and Rode actually built a set of USB mics that you can with their software use, which is cool on the one hand, but on the other hand that was solving a problem or trying to solve a problem for people that already had USB mics. I don't know that many people will be going out there to buy new.

Colin: USB mics to do two or three just to do it.

Matthew: I did test it and it is a good set up.

Colin: They're cool little mics. I like them actually. They're really compact, they're pretty solid feeling like they're quite kind of I'm not sure if they are metal but they feel almost like metal, which is cool. So yeah, they're great little mics. And the last question I have for you, Matthew is the Blue mics, the ever popular we've not mentioned a Yeti as a recommendation, we mentioned a bit earlier and it's little brother the Snowball as well. What's your thoughts on them these days?

Matthew: First things first, I heard a rumor or this is like a vague this makes great content when we're trying to tell people facts and stuff like that but I think I sort of heard something recently that Blue were rebranding and they were going to be called some mouse and I've got no more facts or anything. Again, I am on the internet.

Colin: Well, okay, I'll give my opinion first. I think the Snowball, I think universally we think the Snowball is just not a good buy. It's not great quality, it picks up so much of the kind of background, it's not even great on your voice. So generally avoid the snowball. There's much better USB mics at that price level. The Blue Yeti is a funny one, really popular, has always sold so well marketed well, it's just included in all sorts of reviews. It's fine. It's decent. If you use it right, like if you use it as it has the omnidirectional settings in there, which are pretty horrible because they pick up everything around you. But if you have it on cardioid setting, you have it in a reasonably quiet room and you put it on maybe a boom stand to get it closer to your mouth rather than kind of leaning over it on the table, which a lot of people did. It can sound fine, it can sound decent. But again, I would say there's probably better quality mics at the same price level. Does that reflect yours, Matthew, or have you got a different opinion?

Matthew: No, I agree with what you're saying. Yeah, that one of the big issues with the Yeti is people just using it wrong, isn't it? We talked about polar patterns, there's lots of different polar patterns on there and often you'll just find somebody's got the wrong setting or they're not talking into I was going to say the speaky bit. We're doing an episode on what? Microphones and the science of microphones and I was going to call it the speaky bit. Yeah, they're not talking into the speaky bit, they're talking into the wrong bit. You've been listening to podcraft. Sorry, I got distracted because I was.

Colin: On this Blue fact finder about the branding now.

Matthew: So on the R's Technica website, it says this is an article from a couple of months ago. Blue microphones branding is going away after 28 years. So I think they're just going to be called the Yeti and the Snowball. Props to the writer of this article for spelling mikes M-I-K-E-S which is arguably the correct way to spell it, rather than M-I-C-S. Is that not maces?

Colin: Maces.

Matthew: No. M-I-K-E-S. Yeah. As Bill Bryson argues, mike's should be spelled that way because you wouldn't write Bi CS for bikes. It's a very good point, but I've just written that too many times to change it. Maybe we'll do a search replace on the site.

Colin: Nice. Cool.

Matthew: Anyway, that was very off topic.

Colin: Yeah, indeed. All right, so what are we going to finish up with Matthew?

Matthew: So I suppose in summary then, entry level mics, would we be daft not to stick the Samsung Q two U in there?

Colin: Yeah, I'm behind that all the way. Samsung q two u.

Matthew: And then what about your kind of mid range improver model?

Colin: I would go with the one I have right in front of me right now, which is the Rode podcaster. I think it's a great USB mic, mid level, good quality. Yeah. You anything different?

Matthew: No, I would run with that. Yeah, definitely.

Colin: Cool. Premium, premium. People just have all them money in the world. What are they going to throw at?

Matthew: Yeah, we did mention those three. I'm better about the electrovoice because I had to give it back. I would still go with it. I would still go with that. What about you?

Colin: Yeah, I hear more recommendations for that than anything else. Yeah. And I'll trust your judgment since you tried it out. I have not. So yeah, go for it. So the Evre 20, is that right?

Matthew: Have I got the right and it comes with its own speaky bit?

Colin: Its own speaker, like a separate speaker. Nice, I like that. Okay, cool. Well, that was microphones. Nice. Good. To kick off the equipment episode, I'm going to tie it up by mentioning our tool Alitu again as well. If you have bought yourself a nice new microphone, make sure you create a good place to record it into. Alitu can record straight from any USB mic you record into. You can do call recording in there, you can do solar recording to do all your other clips and it does a lot of the automation for you as well. So it does all your audio cleanup. So if you've recorded with a dynamic sorry, a condenser mic or a yeti or something like that, you've got a bit of background noise in there. Alitu can clean that out for you. You just upload it or record straight in and it'll do that. Audio processing, all that polish up for you also does audio editing. So you can get in there, you can edit yourself in Alitu, piece it all together, adds in your music, your transitions, all of that kind of stuff automatically, too. Designed, really, to make it simple and easy and save you a bunch of time as well. And, of course, hosting. We've got hosting in there, too, so you can actually publish your podcast to the world, so you can try it out for seven days for absolutely free. Over@alitu.com that's, alitu.com, give it a go and let us know what you think. All right, Matthew, should we tie it up? Should we do our links again? If you want to go over to the show notes, where do they visit?

Matthew: Yeah, go to forward slash techseason. That's all one word. What about the main resources page?

Colin: Where could they find main resources? Yeah, so if you want to get a recap of the info, go over to forward slash tech season. But if you want just a full list of all the gear that we recommend here at the podcast host, go to forward slash resources and I'll take you there. Perfect. All right, Matthew. Thank you. Good to talk through some gear. Be a get geeky. Be a get geeky. Bit geeky again for a little while. Anything else to sum up, Matthew, before we jump out?

Matthew: Absolutely nothing. I've made enough of a fool of myself this time around.

Colin: Excellent.

Matthew: Let's see what tomorrow will bring.

Colin: There's always more opportunities to make a fool yourself.

Matthew: Always.

Colin: Every single day. All right, thanks out there for listening along. Hope this provided you some good information about choosing your first mic or upgrading the one you've got. We'll talk to you on the next episode.