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COMING NEXT MONTH

The November *Publish* plan is to take a look into the subject of self promotion for publications and what options are out there. As always, we will also cover the people, information and issues that are influencing the community publishing industry.

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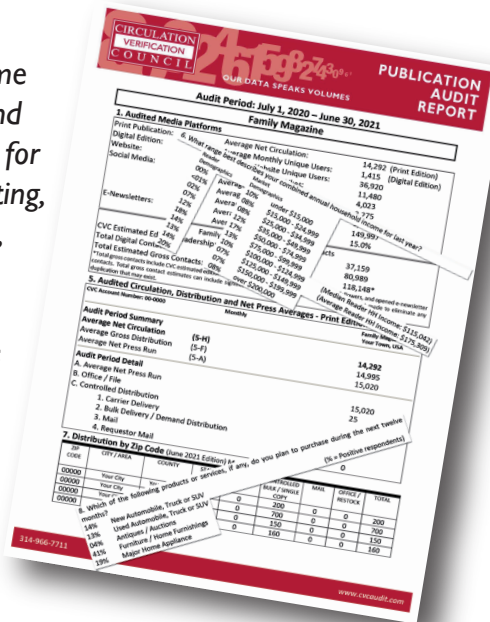
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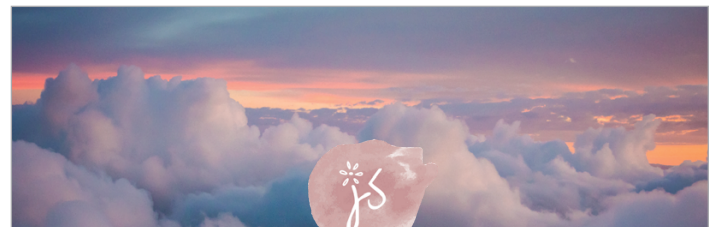
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STAFF DEVELOPMENT COURTESY ACP

VIRTUAL TRAINING AND RISING STARS PROGRAMS ARE HERE TO HELP



JOHN DRAPER
ACP PRESIDENT

For the ACP staff and its board of directors, your publication's success is our top priority. Now, we all define success in our own way based on our personal or corporate goals and objectives. However, I think we can all agree that any definition of success would include a certain level of profit, business sustainability, and providing impactful advertising and/or content for our advertisers and readers. Sounds simple, but as publishers we all know this takes a lot of work and at times some help.

To make these 'simple' things happen it takes many things all working in concert. At the top of this long list of success attributes is good leadership and a knowledgeable and professional staff all working with dedication to produce quality products and services. We believe ACP to be one of your partners in helping to build this strong leadership and a knowledgeable and professional staff. We offer a number of member benefits to make this happen.

VIRTUAL TRAINING

In the month of September, we provided eight virtual training sessions over a four-week period. These sessions covered topics for management, sales, graphics, and editorial staff. If you were not able to take these in, or have staff within your organization that missed out, you can access them through the 'members-only' section of our website at www.communitypublishers.com. If you need the password please reach out to Douglas or Cassey at the ACP office.

For your sales professionals we recently launched the On Demand Training Center. In partnership with the nation's top sales training provider, Power Sales University, we offer a robust training platform built to boost your sales. In addition to the Power Sales University classes, you can access industry-specific sales training created by ACP's The Learning Institute (TLI) and our dean, Rob Zarrilli. The On

Demand Training Center can also be accessed through the ACP website. We have posted a short video to walk you through the registration process.

RISING STARS

Another program that ACP offers as we work to write your success story is the Rising Stars. This program directly attacks this top priority of building your professional staff. The program offers outstanding young professionals an opportunity to garner training at our Conference & Trade Shows, then builds on this throughout the year. Ongoing participation will allow for attendance at future ACP events.

In short fashion, here is how it works. We collect nominations of talented young professionals from member publications. If selected, these individuals are provided a 'scholarship' to attend our 2023 event in Charlotte, North Carolina. ACP will fund up to \$500 for travel and cover the lodging and meal expenses. At the event, Rising Stars will be provided industry-leading training, attend sessions specific to the Rising Stars program, and create relationships with other young professionals.

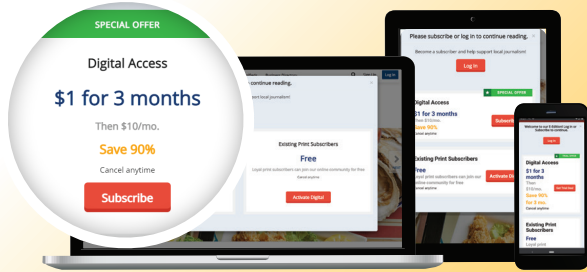
After the conference, growth and skill development continues. Each month the Rising Stars maintain their peer connections through participation in a focused Zoom call. This affords them the opportunity to remain engaged as we digest industry topics and assigned training/discussion lessons.

Participation in the program starts with a nomination process that is now open. If you have a promising employee who is age 35 or under, I strongly suggest you nominate them as a Rising Star. Nomination forms are available on the ACP website.

These are just two avenues ACP has created to help you succeed. We offer much more and look forward to working with each of you in helping you achieve your success... no matter how you define it. ■

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BY DOUGLAS FRY

Years ago, before society became enlightened, there were a few things that could mark a person as being “different.” Things such as a stutter, crossed eyes, imperfect teeth, left handedness, or even (shudder) being pigeon toed. As a young man I had the latter. Yes, I was pigeon toed. For you younger readers, that meant that instead of my toes pointing forward when I walked they pointed at each other. As I sauntered down the sidewalk my toes alternately mocked each other as they passed. “Look at Douglas’ toes they are pointed the wrong way. They are going West/East instead of North.” Toes are cruel that way.

Apparently, there wasn’t a lot available to the medical community to fix pigeon toedness. Today the condition might be repaired with probiotics, orthotics, or maybe even endodontics. But back in mists of time, when I was young, the only remedy was “corrective shoes.” Calling them “shoes” was generous, like calling a short person “vertically impaired” or a balding person “follicly challenged.” In reality one couldn’t even call them shoes. They were more like work boots designed by the Marquis de Sade.

I had a pair. The design was such that it forced ones toes forward. They worked like orthodontic braces do today, they relentlessly pushed and squeezed my toes and metacarpals so they were eventually all

CLOD HOPPERS

pointing in the same direction. But the execution of these torture devices was most challenging for an 8 year old. My corrective shoes were made from the most stubborn cow ever born. The leather of these boots was about an inch thick, about the same color as a cow pie, with a height that crept toward my calf, and a sole that was as inflexible and dry as a sixty-seven year old man. These boots were so uncomfortable and ungainly that I fondly gave them the name “Clod Hoppers.”

When my elementary classmates had races during recess I always joined in. However, my anvil-like boots held me back. When “GO!” was shouted most kids burst from the line and I was left in the dust straining to lift my heavily laden foot from the starting line. That’s not to say I didn’t finish the race. I always did. It’s just that someone has to come in last. That seemed to be my lot in life, defining the left tail of an elementary school foot race Bell Curve.

This story is not a sad one. It has a happy ending. After an interminable number of years the time finally came when my parents took me to the local shoe store to get shoes that weren’t designed to stunt my social life. In fact, I was allowed to try on a pair of PF Flyers. Most of you won’t remember what those were; think Air Jordans. When I slid those black, low top canvas wonders on my feet I

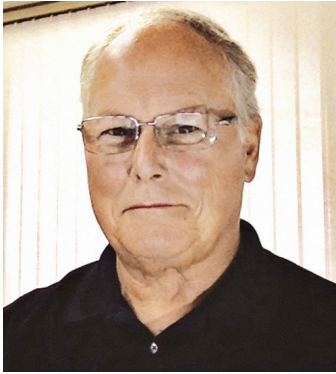
was transformed. I could not believe how light they were, how springy the soles were, how luxuriously comfortable my feet felt. I bounced around the shop, alternately sprinting and stopping to hear the SQUEEK as the shoes gripped the linoleum floor. Those shoes were magic! Instead of a stubborn cow, these shoes were designed to perform like the most energetic Cheetah!

My parents bought the PF Flyers for me on a Friday afternoon and I don’t think I took them off all weekend. I couldn’t wait for school to start again on Monday to run recess races. When we lined up for the inaugural running of the PF Flyer Express I was primed and ready to show them what a forward pointing set of feet could do. I burst from the line and was amazed to see what the track looked like without people ahead of me. The end of that school year and the ensuing summer was a most magical time in my young life. The training of my toes and comfortable shoes made all the difference.

You know that with every story I tell there has to be a moral somewhere. This article is no exception. In our professional careers we all have to wear Clod Hoppers at some point. We all want to get out there and be the best in our fields right from the start. But we have to be trained first, just like my feet. Whether it is entering the podcast business, learning best sales practices, participating in company training, online coaching, role playing, or office mentoring you will benefit in the long run by doing your best to learn and develop early so that when the race actually starts you will blast forward like a gazelle, a cheetah, or a 5th grader.

The reality is that you will be training for the remainder of your life. Just make sure you’re wearing the right shoes. ■





BY LOREN COLBURN

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO JUMP!

Do you think of yourself as a person who is willing to try new things? A person who welcomes changes as an opportunity to improve and grow? A person who is open-minded? I think most of us answer in the affirmative when asked those questions. But is it the reality, or is it how we want to perceive ourselves? That is the difficult thing to answer.

I like to think of myself as an open-minded, change embracing type of person and who can easily cite numerous things in my life and career that support my line of thinking. Why, I'm the guy that walked away from a successful 33-year career with a company that I had worked my way to the top of only to strike out at 56 years old into a whole new career path managing an association for community publishers! If that isn't change embracing, what is? I'm also the guy that over a 10-year time frame, changed almost every aspect of what the association did in order to drive needed fiscal conservation. That can't possibly be a person who is driven by resisting change, right?

I'm convinced we can all look at our experiences and find things that support the perception of ourselves we want to believe in. But is that self-perception the reality or the product of our own thinking? If I step back and look hard at my day-to-day life without applying any bias, I see far more support for the case of a person who likes a world that is dominated by familiarity, sameness and uniformity. I'm really that person who finds a comfortable pair of shoes and buys two more pair in fear that they won't be available when I wear

this pair out. I buy Nike golf shirts because I am comfortable and confident of their fit and quality. I always order the same dish at my favorite restaurant even when I say I'm not going to because my inner voice won't allow anything else. I NEVER rearrange furniture because I like it just the way it is. I start each day with the same routine, at the same time, in the same order and that makes me feel good rather than bad. This does not describe a person who invites or embraces change. So why do I strike out on a new path sometimes and work so hard to maintain

“ Our hope is the information provided in this issue will increase the success of those who incorporate podcasts as part of their communication product offerings.



the status quo at other times? Here's my theory – it's all about maintaining the comfort zone. I embrace the comfort level provided by sameness and familiarity. When that comfort level drops toward the uncomfortable level, I am quick to look for a way to reestablish the contentment that has been lost. That search is driven by a need to fix or improve the situation and not just to reestablish the way things were. The conclusion inevitably dictates some type of change to restore the new order and eventual familiarity, and those changes are quickly embraced.

My focus is driven by how well things work. When they work well, there is no need to change things, as I do not believe in change for the sake of change. The key is to be sensitive to when things stop working as well and to start the analytical process early on to solve the issue. If we put off addressing the slide in comfort until the wheels come off, the correction and damage left behind is much more significant.

Carol Toomey reminded me recently of an old analogue about putting frogs in boiling water. The story goes that if a frog is put into boiling water, it will instantly leap out. But if a frog is put into cold water that is then slowly brought to a boil, the frog will not be able to detect the gradual change until it's too late to react. I'm not sure there is any truth to this old tale, but the metaphor is profound. If we take too long to recognize the gradual deterioration of a given situation, the consequences get considerably more im-

pactful the longer you take to acknowledge and then fix the problem.

So, what does all of this have to do with Podcasts? It's about seeing both the gradual shifts as well as the rapid transitions in communication options today's consumers have at their disposal. It's about recognizing and being uncomfortable with the fact that other people are offering product options to your customers that you could be offering them. Podcasts are one of those communication options and are significantly different than our traditional ink on paper product offerings. Nonetheless, it is part of the changing environment we see facing the community information industry as indicated in "The Survey Says" this month. A growing number of the US population 35-54 years of age have become monthly podcast listeners, currently 43% (up from 37% in 2021). Podcasts are an option that some publications will embrace and succeed with, some will try and walk away from before they get the wrinkles out, and some will not see as viable for a variety of perceptions.

Our hope is the information provided in this issue will increase the success of those who incorporate podcasts as part of their communication product offerings. They are different than what we are used to, but they are an opportunity worth considering. We don't want you to be frogs that aren't aware of the changes in your surroundings before it's too late to react. Not to mention Podcasts also fit well with the concept that "If it's free, buy it!" ■

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STARTING A PODCAST: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

BY SAM TETRAULT

This post was originally written and posted on Speakerflow.com: <https://speakerflow.com/starting-a-podcast-the-ultimate-guide/>

Welcome to the era of podcasts! With more people turning into podcasts than ever before, now is the best time to start your own podcast. Even though starting a podcast requires relatively little equipment and know-how, there are still things you need to know in order to launch.

Luckily, you're in the right place. Though there are over 850,000 active podcasts. This number might sound intimidating, but it's shockingly low compared to the number of blogs, social media accounts, and so on. This means it's easier to stand out and be heard as a podcaster than on other platforms.

Audio content is more convenient for everyday listeners than ever before. Many people don't have the time to check in with your blog regularly, but a podcast is something that fits naturally into their daily routines. You can build an audience, create additional income opportunities, and position yourself as a thought leader in your space. Plus, because your audience hears your voice, it's more personal. It's like having a direct line of communication with your biggest supporters.

If you have passion and expertise, starting a podcast might be right for you. No matter what type of podcast you create, there's a space for you to be heard. Ready to take that next step? Here's the ultimate guide to starting a podcast. Our expert advice makes it easy to start your podcast off right, no matter your experience level.

DEFINE YOUR IDEAL LISTENER AND WHAT THEY NEED TO HEAR

First, you need to do some planning. While it's tempting to jump right in by recording your first

episode, a bit of preparation goes a long way. You want to make sure you answer these key questions before you begin:

- Who am I serving with this podcast?
- Who do I want to attract with this podcast?

From there, think of your audience. What information are they looking for? Your podcast should be focused on a particular niche or audience. There aren't many podcasts about everything and with good reason. Most people don't want to listen to someone rambling about their thoughts unless there's some kind of point.

Instead, narrow your interests and expertise down to a specific niche. Consider what topic you could talk about for many episodes (50+). This shouldn't be so broad that it can't appeal to your audience. You might choose to expand to similar areas later on, but you should clearly define your ideal listener and the content they want to hear.

For example, if you're a marketing expert, you might choose to narrow down your niche specifically to video marketing. You can create endless topics around the umbrella of video marketing, so this is the perfect example of a niche that works for a podcast. Not sure where to begin? What gets you excited? What topics can you go on forever about? This is where your passion lies, so find your niche there.

***Pro tip:** To make sure you have enough ideas under your niche umbrella, brainstorm a few right off the bat. If you're struggling to come up with a full list (10+), this might be too narrow of a niche or not the right fit for you.*

LOOK TO YOUR COMPETITORS FOR INSPIRATION

Next, look to your competitors. While you don't ever want to copy someone else, you shouldn't be afraid to find inspiration around you. Do competitive research to understand where there might be gaps in your industry already. This is a great opportunity to stand out.

For example, at SpeakerFlow, we have a super casual, radio-style show featuring two hosts and one guest. In the speaking industry, we're the only podcast that uses a casual format like this. Because we stand out, we don't get lost in the sea of speaking-focused podcasts. Just like when you're releasing a new product or service, it's essential to do some market research. You wouldn't release something without knowing there was a demand for it in the first place, right?

Competitive Research Checklist

Not sure where to begin? It doesn't have to be complicated. Follow these market research steps below to size up your competition in an actionable way:

- **Competitors:** First, identify who your main competitors are. You can do this in any podcast directory by searching main keywords. For instance, you could search "video marketing" if we use the same example as before. This will help us find the top-rated podcasts in that niche.
- **Check their content:** From there, listen to a few episodes and read descriptions. What's effective about their content? What could they do better?

- **Marketing:** Next, consider how these podcasts are marketing to their audience. Are they posting on social media, do they have a newsletter, or are they paying for ads? This is good to know when making your own strategy.
- **Reach:** Are these podcasts well-connected? Do they collaborate with others in the space, and do they appear like real thought leaders?
- **Reviews:** Lastly, read through competitors' podcast reviews. You'll learn their strengths, weaknesses, and areas you can shine through.
Pro tip: Identify 3-4 podcasts in your niche that are doing a great job. After listening to a few episodes, decide what makes their podcasts successful and what you could do better yourself. Are there any topics you could dive into deeper? Or are there any new perspectives you could bring into the discussion?

DESIGN YOUR PODCAST EPISODE COVER AND BRANDING

Third, it's time to create branding elements. Because your podcast is an extension of you, it should also be branded similar to any existing website, blog, and social pages. By creating a clear, consistent voice, you develop an identity that's easy to recognize.

While you should make your podcast branding similar to your personal branding, don't overcomplicate it. When it comes to your podcast branding, less is more. The key things you need to get started are cover art, a logo, and intro music. Your cover art, in particular, is the first impression of your podcast. A reported 62% of new listeners¹ are more likely to listen to a podcast if they like the cover art.

When designing your branding, pay close attention to the requirements of podcast platforms. For instance, Apple Podcasts requires your resolution to be 3000 x 3000px. Designing your podcast cover art in multiple

sizes will make promoting easier later on. You can use a tool like Canva, Photoshop, or hire a professional for your podcast branding.

Lastly, steer clear of imagery that's overdone. Things like microphones, pop filters, and headstones are overdone. It's similar to putting a picture of a camera on a movie poster—it's unnecessary. Instead, stay consistent with your branding and use your colors and imagery to your advantage.

Pro tip: Your podcast cover art and branding should make it clear your niche and topic within seconds. This is your first impression to listeners, so make it count. Consider testing a few different cover art options to see what gets the most listens.

“Many people don't have the time to check in with your blog regularly, but a podcast is something that fits naturally into their daily routines.”

PLAN THE TASKS NECESSARY TO PRODUCE A PODCAST EPISODE

Fourth, you'll soon discover that producing podcast episodes is about much more than recording. There are a lot of steps that go into creating each episode, and these can get overwhelming if you're not careful. We highly recommend planning out everything in advance so you have a built-in system from the start.

At SpeakerFlow, we use the project management tool *Asana*² to automate our production tasks. While each podcast might have its own steps, feel free to copy our process. Here's what we include in our production system:

- Plan episode outline and interview questions (if joined by a guest)
- Send an email saying “Thank you” and “Who else would you recommend to be on the show?”
- Write episode title, description, and show notes
- Make video thumbnail, podcast episode cover, and featured image
- Commission MP3 + Video
- Commission transcription
- Schedule episode to your podcasting platform of choice and YouTube
- Schedule to your website
- Push website post live
- Send email to your guest after it's live and share the URL from your site

When these are built into your process, it's much easier to keep track of everything. As you become more comfortable with podcasting, they'll feel like second nature. You can create templates for guest emails, website posts, and more. It's all about working smarter, not harder, but don't let the small things get left behind.

Pro tip: Learn as you go, adjusting your strategy to meet your newest challenges. This is also a great opportunity to outsource tasks to an assistant or professional podcast manager.

PLAN YOUR GUEST LIST AND WHEN YOU'LL MEET TO RECORD

Next, it's time to plan your guest list. Alternatively, if you don't plan to have guests, you can take this time to plan out a few episodes instead. Guests are a great option if you want to create something engaging for the listener, but it's up to you and the style of your show.

You can use a tool like *PodMatch*³ to find guests for your show, or you can create your own list off the top of your head. Consider those in your space who you think would be a good fit for your audience. Bonus points if you already have a connection to them. Once you feel comfortable, reach out.

PODCAST FEATURE

You'd be surprised how many people are excited to get invited to speak on podcasts. It's a compliment to their expertise, and it's an opportunity for them to promote themselves. When sending a guest an invite, it's a good idea to recommend a few topic suggestions to do the planning for them.

When you have guests who have agreed to record, it's time to find a time that works for both of you. A tool like *Calendly*⁴ makes it easy to plan these things without the back-and-forth emails. By setting interview times in your calendar, your guests can select the time/date that works best for them. Lastly, follow up with your guests before the recording to make sure they're ready and know what to expect. It's normal for them to have some nerves before going on air, especially if they're new to podcasting.

Pro tip: *To find guests who are likely to jump at the opportunity to speak on a podcast, look for people in your space with new products, services, or content. By letting them briefly promote these tools in exchange for being a guest, many are more than willing to help (even if your podcast is brand new).*

IDENTIFY THE TECH NECESSARY TO PRODUCE YOUR PODCAST

Now, we need to take a moment to discuss the technical stuff. While you don't need to splurge on expensive equipment when you're first getting started, you do need some basics. Contrary to popular belief, you don't need fancy, studio-grade equipment to start your podcast. Consistency and content are far more important.

Here's what you really need when starting a podcast:

- **Hosting:** Your show needs to be hosted somewhere online for podcast platforms to syndicate it. Our recommendation is *Libsyn Studio*⁵, but there are many other options, such as *Buzzsprout*⁶. Don't over-complicate your decision—you can always switch later.

- **Recording:** You can record your podcast directly from your computer or smart device, but it's helpful to have an audio or video recording tool like *Zencastr*⁷.
- **Microphone:** Of course, you need a microphone. Your computer or smartphone likely comes with its own built-in mic, but this isn't usually the best quality. An inexpensive microphone (\$30 – \$50) and pop filter are more than enough when just getting started.

“Listeners and monetization are important, but that's not what makes or breaks a podcast. It's all about consistency and staying true to your passion. If you're authentic with your audience, your listeners come naturally.”

- **Headphones:** If you're recording, you need a pair of headphones to hear your guests and yourself without outside noises getting in the way. Again, these don't have to be expensive.
- **Quiet space:** Though you might not think about it, you definitely need a quiet place to record your podcast. This should be a space that's free of echo, outside noises, or feedback.
- **Editing software:** Lastly, you need somewhere to edit your podcast. Many of these are free, like *Garageband*⁸ or *Audacity*⁹. It's easy to get caught in the details of the “best” products or tools, but don't let that hold you back. It's

always better to get started than to have the absolute best things right away. Remember, you can always upgrade later. In fact, expensive equipment could hold you back by being too complicated or time-consuming.

Pro-tip: *Your office or home can make the perfect podcast studio with a bit of tweaking. Choose a small, carpeted room (like a closet) to create your own mini-sound booth. Alternatively, you can purchase an inexpensive recording shield box.*

RECORD EPISODES IN ADVANCE WHEN POSSIBLE

With that in mind, have you ever heard of “podfading?” This is when you start a podcast, but then you lack the momentum to keep it going long-term. Slowly but surely, the podcast fades into obscurity, never to be listened to again. It's estimated that *more than half*¹⁰ of the podcasts started will fade within two years.

How do you combat the dreaded “podfading” phenomenon? Preparation, preparation, and more preparation. When you record episodes in advance, you're always ahead of your posting schedule. The majority of podcasts fail because they lack preparation, clear organization, and long-term commitment from the start.

As soon as you fall behind, it's easy to lose motivation to keep pushing forward. This is especially true when your podcast is new and still doesn't have a large listener base. When you're getting started, understand that podcasting is often a bigger time commitment than you expect. At SpeakerFlow, we build time for this into our schedule. For example, we always record on Fridays, and we record multiple episodes at once.

While this might seem like overkill, it makes all the difference. We can bulk schedule weeks in advance, meaning we're never scrambling to post an episode on time. When it comes to starting a podcast, consistency really is key. With 38% of *podcast*¹¹ listeners listening regularly

each month, you want to make sure there's always fresh content to look forward to. It's always important to be a bit ahead if you can. This is especially true in the beginning.

Pro tip: *Because a lot of preparation goes into each episode, set a specific time of the month aside for recording, a time for editing, and for scheduling marketing materials. Doing everything at once is a one-way road to burnout.*

END EACH EPISODE WITH A CALL TO ACTION

Next, your podcast episodes should have more than substance. If you're trying to *position yourself as a thought leader*¹², you need to make a memorable impact. You don't want your users to finish listening and then never think of you again. Instead, you want them to take real action.

By incorporating a call to action in each episode, you encourage listeners to become leads. Your podcast (like other social channels) is on the top of your marketing funnel. Your goal is to get them engaged in your brand, interested in taking some form of next step. While they're unlikely to be ready to make a big purchase, they should be interested in your brand.

There are a lot of actions you can ask listeners to take:

- Read your show notes for a freebie or special landing page link
- Follow you on social media
- Head to your blog for more information on this topic
- Subscribe to your email list
- Learn more about a product/service

This doesn't have to be complicated. For example, something like this is more than enough: "If you're interested in learning more about marketing your newest product, go to yourdomain.com to read more." You want to capture their attention in the first place and build from there.

Lastly, how often should you include a call to action in your podcast? Every. Single. Episode. It might feel weird repeating a call to action at the

end of each episode, but it's a must. Not every listener will listen to each episode. You might miss making an important connection because you skip your call to action in a specific audience. You can include your CTA in an editing template that's pre-recorded, or you can make a fresh one each time.

Pro tip: *Consider your goals before recording each podcast episode. What are you trying to achieve, and how can your call to action bring users closer to your goals? By keeping this in mind, you ensure your CTA doesn't go to waste.*

DON'T GIVE UP EARLY IN THE PROCESS!

Finally, don't give up. Podcasting isn't always easy. It's incredibly rare to have overnight success, so don't go in expecting instant gratification. Slow and steady wins the race. Because there are more podcasts right now than ever before, it's normal to take some time to carve out an audience in your niche.

What wins at the end of the day? Consistency. Like with any form of content, it takes time to nurture your project and build your skills. Your comfort level grows with each episode, and soon it feels like double nature. As you can see from the guide to starting a podcast above, there's a lot that goes into creating successful episodes. From having the right tools to making the best publication schedule, it's okay to learn as you go.

Listeners and monetization are important, but that's not what makes or breaks a podcast. It's all about consistency and staying true to your passion. If you're authentic with your audience, your listeners come naturally. Like any part of your brand, it might take some time to develop your voice and who you're talking to. Just don't give up, especially not right away. It can take weeks or even months to find the right stride.

Need more podcast inspiration? Listen and subscribe to SpeakerFlow's *Technically Speaking*¹³. This is a

podcast by experts in the speaking industry designed for anyone striving to take their business to the next level, no matter where you're at. From there, the next steps for starting a podcast are entirely yours to take. ■

SpeakerFlow is the first technology consultancy for professional speakers. They leverage cutting-edge technology with decades of sales, marketing, and operations expertise to create your optimal business experience. Look, they get it! As a speaker, you want to spend more time on stage and less time running and managing the business. Let SpeakerFlow help you save hundreds of hours per year and get the perfect technology stack in place that works for you rather than against you. Interested in booking a free strategy session with them? You can do that here: <https://speakerflow.com/strategy-session/>

References:

This post was originally written and posted on Speakerflow.com: <https://speakerflow.com/starting-a-podcast-the-ultimate-guide/>

¹ https://www.buzzsprout.com/blog/10-tips-create-awesome-podcast-artwork?referrer_id=52989

² https://asana.com/referral?gspk=YXVzdGluZ3JhbW1vbjM2NQ&gsxid=d9tCkDjMbNiU&utm_campaign=austingrammon365&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=GrowSumo

³ <https://podmatch.com/signup/speakerflow>

⁴ <https://calendly.com/>

⁵ <https://www.libsynstudio.com/>

⁶ <https://www.buzzsprout.com/>

⁷ <https://zencastr.com/>

⁸ <https://www.apple.com/mac/garageband/>

⁹ <https://www.audacityteam.org/>

¹⁰ <https://www.amplifiimedia.com/blogstein/2018/8/22/how-many-of-the-550000-podcasts-are-actually-active>

¹¹ <https://content.jaraudio.com/blog/podcast-consumption-stats#who>

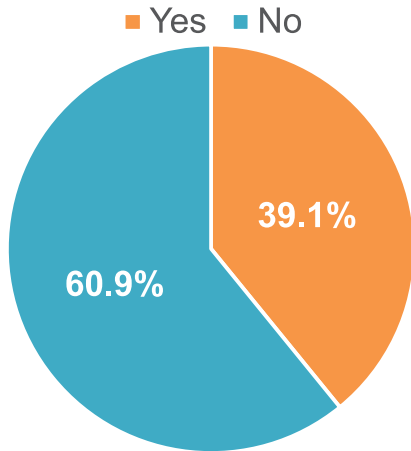
¹² <https://speakerflow.com/what-is-a-thought-leadership-strategy/>

¹³ <https://speakerflow.com/podcast/>

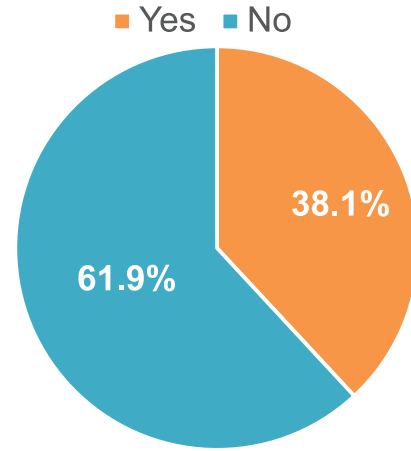
THE SURVEY SAYS...



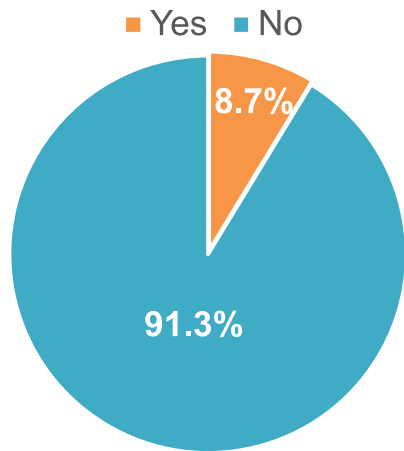
Do you personally listen to any podcast regularly?



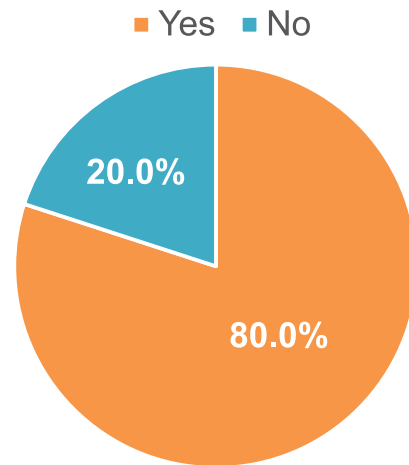
Are you considering producing a podcast in the future?



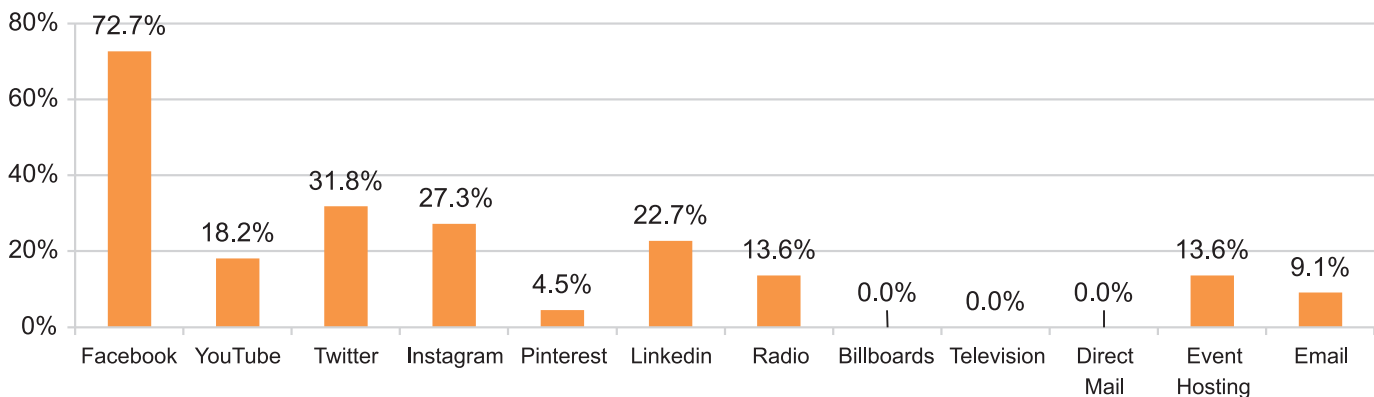
Does your publication have a blog component to your website?



Does your publication regularly promote the importance of "buy local" to your readers?

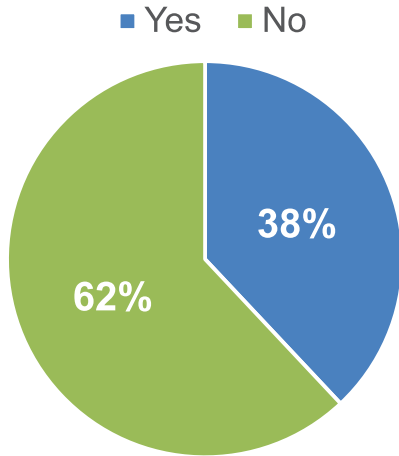


Does your publication regularly utilize any of the following to connect with your community?

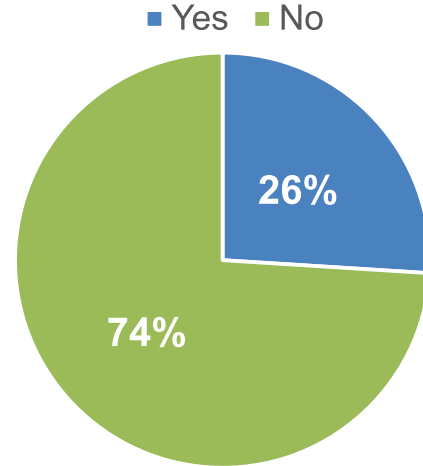


The statistics on this page are from Edison Research based on their national U.S. telephone survey conducted in January of 2022. For more information and additional statistics, go to the Edison Research Blog at: www.edisonresearch.com/the-infinite-dial-2022/

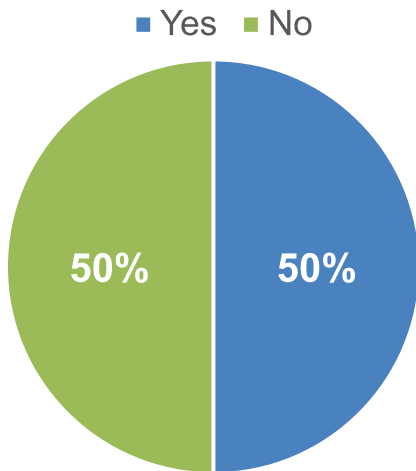
Those age 12+ in U.S. who are monthly podcast listeners.



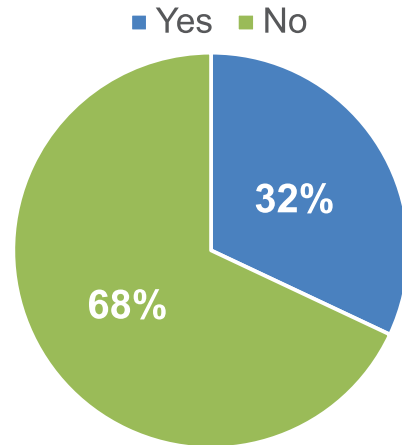
Those age 12+ in U.S. who listened to a podcast last week.



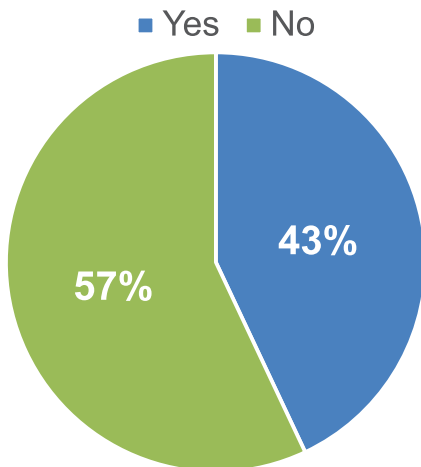
People aged 12 - 34 in U.S. who are monthly podcast listeners.



Age 18+ who have ridden in or driven a car in the last month and listen to podcasts in-car.



Americans age 12-34 with radio in their household.



Weekly U.S. podcast listeners average number of episodes listened to last week.



WHAT EXPERIENCED PODCASTERS HAD TO SAY...

To help publications that might be considering adding a podcast to their product offerings, we thought it might be helpful to get input from publishers that are currently producing podcasts. We reached out to several of our experienced podcast publishers with a few questions related to their experience and the following are their responses and links to check out what their actual podcasts contain.

When did you start your Podcast?

Greg Bruns, Arcadia News: June, 2020 – in the early days of Covid. After watching our profits drop for several months, we needed to do something else or it felt like we were just waiting to die.

Hans Appen, Appen Media: We started our very first podcast in 2018.

What was your main objective when you started your podcast?

Greg Bruns, Arcadia News: We wanted to try a new medium to tell our stories. With that, a new way to reach readers, find some new readers – and some new advertisers.

Hans Appen, Appen Media: We were looking to support newsroom efforts by giving them a platform to do more than they could in print.

What type of content does your podcast focus on?

Greg Bruns, Arcadia News: Interviews with unique and interesting characters from our neighborhood. We've featured local business owners who completed a large building remodel right when Covid shutdowns began. An Arizona Historian, a long-time feature columnist from our daily

paper that writes for us now, a local chef who has also found great success in our community.

Hans Appen, Appen Media: We have done podcasts around a whole range of topics, but the most successful seem to be on politics, music/entertainment, and quick news bites.

What have you done to monetize your podcast?

Greg Bruns, Arcadia News: We created “spec” ads for our best customers, with their permission. They were included as a sponsor for a couple episodes, but they didn't end up investing, so we moved on to the next one. I don't know if spec ads were the best way go. It may have been better to seek out a previous advertiser or a local sponsor who is known for investing in digital/alternative methods.

Hans Appen, Appen Media: We have tried several methods of monetizing our podcasts but have had the most success with selling sponsorships.

Have you been able to make your podcast a profitable product?

Greg Bruns, Arcadia News: Not yet...

Hans Appen, Appen Media: Some of them, yes. Others, no. It all depends on how hard your sales team can push it, how easy you make it for them to sell, and prospecting to attainable sponsors.

In what ways does your podcast support/promote your print publications?

Greg Bruns, Arcadia News: The interviews are done by our editor and publisher, adding another

“connection” to our readers. We do mention different stories and upcoming stories that will be in the print publication.

Hans Appen, Appen Media: It shows that Appen Media is a progressive media organization that is not bound by the stereotypes of print news. We meet our readers and our customers where they are – no matter the platform.

If you could give other publishers one piece of advice about starting a podcast, based on your experience what would that advice be?

Greg Bruns, Arcadia News: Quality over quantity. Keep listeners coming back by giving them something interesting that isn't too long. There's so much competition to capture people's attention today. In podcasting alone, there are 2.4 million out there – give them a good reason to come back (and share your episodes with their friends!).

Hans Appen, Appen Media: Just do it. It is low cost/low commitment, and whatever monetary gain you see in the short term will be gravy for the intangible benefits your company will receive.

The QR codes will take you to the podcast pages for each of the publications we included who are currently producing podcasts. Their examples may provide an excellent resource for ideas or directions that might work for your publications to add a podcast product that will expand and promote your company, your complete product line and your understanding of the need for diverse communication options for today's businesses. ■

ACP Member - Sample Podcast Reference

Appen Media Group

Alpharetta, GA

Host Site: Libsyn.com with links on AppenMedia.com

Download Format: mp3



Arcadia News

Phoenix, AZ

Host Site: Libsyn.com with links on ArcadiaNews.com

Download Format: mp3



El Clasificado

Norwalk, CA

Host Site: Spotify

Download Format: download unavailable



**The Community Publishing Industry's
Largest Conference and Trade Show**

Presented By The Association Of Community Publishers

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE



20^{acp}23

CHARLOTTE



CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW



MAY 11-12, 2023

HILTON CHARLOTTE UNIVERSITY PLACE

Dealing with life in the fast lane gets more complicated every year - come to Charlotte in May to learn and share with other people who are doing what you do!



CUSTOMER RETENTION RATE

Number of customers
in starting time period
(week, month, quarter) = X

Number of those customers
in following time period
(week, month, quarter) = Y

**Y divided by X =
Customer Retention Rate**

Tracking this for your publications or individual salespeople provides some key indicators:

- ➔ If the overall numbers indicate a lower retention rate, you may want to examine if response rates are not adequate for a good return on advertiser investment. If that is the case, you may want to:
 - ◆ look at things you can do to increase readership (contests, pro-

motions, advertising outside your publication for new reader development

- ◆ look at lost advertiser ad copy for the following to make sure your team is coaching the advertisers correctly:
 - Is there a legitimate offer for an immediate benefit or reason to learn more?
 - Is there an explicit call to action?
 - Does the ad convey a clear message?
- ➔ If one salesperson is significantly lower than the others, you may want to look into what this person does differently or not as well as their peers?
 - ◆ Do they oversell advertisers on size rather than frequency?
 - ◆ Do they accept ad copy that does not include the necessary elements?

- ◆ Is their customer service lacking?
- ➔ If one salesperson is significantly better than the others, what are they doing that the rest of the team needs to be doing? Can you get them to coach the rest of the team in those areas?

Don't be afraid to ask advertisers who discontinue their advertising with you why they made that decision. It's not always an easy conversation to have or one that provides feedback that will please you, but the information is invaluable in making improvements that will get this metric headed in a positive direction. It is critical you don't take any negative responses personally but take them as constructive feedback regarding an area you need to address to assure that other advertisers don't feel the same way. ■

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Shopify - Blog Article

How to Start a Podcast in 2022: A 13 Step Guide

By Michael Keenan

A straightforward, step-by-step guide to help walk through starting a podcast. Everything from concept to completion is covered and presented with significant support information and resources.



Wavve - Article

14 Podcasting Technology Tools To Make Your New Epic Show

By Jeff Dolan, CEO of Wavve

This article walks through 8 technology tools needed to create a professional podcast as well as 6 technology platforms to effectively promote your show. It makes a great case for creating and promoting podcasts has never been easier.



The Podcast Host - Article

How to Start a Podcast: Your Lightning Fast, No-Sweat Guide for 2022

By Colin Gray

This article presents a more detailed walk through the implementation process for starting a podcast. It also includes links to more information on each step if you are looking to do a “deep dive” on any of the 20 aspects this article covers.



Shopify - Blog Article

Make Money Podcasting: 6 Monetization Ideas for New Podcasters

By Evan Ferguson

This article does a good job explaining some of the different options for monetizing podcasts. Things like affiliate marketing and custom merchandise may not normally be considered but are explained here as thought provoking options.



Forbes - Article

Eight Ways To Monetize Your Podcast

Another walk through the basic ways to add revenue generation to your podcast. This is a short, to-the-point look at sponsorships, partnerships and a few other simple ways to generate revenue.



Podcast Insights – Article

How To Make Money Podcasting: 11 Ways To Monetize A Podcast

By Ross Winn, Founder of Podcast Insights

This article covers all of the basic covered by the other articles but takes it a step farther. It makes a case for coaching and consulting, crowdfunding, online courses and more. It shows some interesting statistics on what the top podcasts generate in revenue as well as audience numbers.



Riverside – Article

Best Podcast Equipment for Any Budget (2022)

By Riverside.fm Team

This article recommends equipment for everything from microphone and headphones all the way to cameras (if recording), audio mixers and recording software. Convenient links to the technology discussed makes this an excellent resource for beginner podcasters.



The Podcast Host – Article

Best Podcast Equipment & Setup for Beginners & Pros Alike

By Matthew McLean

This article gets a little more into the technology side and what they recommend for different level users. Solid information with some great information links if you need more options and information. This goes as far as to offer some “sound” advice on setting up the room you use for your studio.



WIRED – Article

Here's the Gear You Need to Start Your Own Podcast

By Parker Hall, Associate Editor of product reviews at Wired

There is a ton of information here backed up by pictures and links to the products discussed. The listing at the close of the article that links different YouTube videos that offer tips on recording phone calls, using Audacity, and much more.



Popular Science – Article

Best podcast software of 2022

By Chad Radford

In true Popular Science format, this article the pros and cons of all the most popular podcast software and an explanation on why they recommend it. They also include more technical information than I needed but might be very useful to a more tech savvy reader than I am.



A Member Benefit of the Association of Community Publishers (ACP)

OPEN MEMBER NETWORKING SESSIONS FOR PUBLISHERS

Bring your questions, find your answers!



4:00 PM Eastern - Every Other Thursday

Watch for your registration invitation in your email on the preceding Wednesday to sign up!

If you're not receiving the invitation emails or want to join ACP, call the ACP Office at 877-203-2327 or email cassey@communitypublishers.com.



Keynote speaker Holly Hoffman presents private workshop to the 2021 Rising Stars group

RISING STAR



ACP RISING STARS PROGRAM OFFERS GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

ACP's commitment to our membership is to provide resources, benefits, and information to help make your operation more profitable. There is a rather lengthy list of items and programs that ACP has put in place to make this happen.

The Rising Stars program has been on this list for 13 years now and is certainly a member benefit that can reap big rewards for any community publication. The rewards come in the way of key employee development. The program offers outstanding young professionals an opportunity to garner training at our National Conference & Trade Show, then builds on this throughout the year. Ongoing participation will allow for not only attendance at one of our in-person events, but involvement in ongoing training and initiatives for the industry.

Here is how the Rising Star program works. ACP collects nominations of talented young professionals from member publications. If selected, these individuals are provided a 'scholarship' to the next national conference. The Bill Welsh Foundation in conjunction with ACP, provides up to \$500 for travel and covers the lodging and meal program expenses for conference attendance. At the event, Rising Stars will be provided

industry-leading training, sessions specific to the Rising Stars Program, and the opportunity to create relationships with other young professionals.

Both before and after the conference, growth and skill development opportunities take place on an ongoing basis. Each month the Rising Stars develop their peer connections through participation in a focused conference call. This affords them the opportunity to deepen their engagement as we digest industry topics and assigned training/discussion lessons.

With ongoing participation, a Rising Star can be invited to attend an additional national conference, depending on conference frequency and timing. One highlight of conference attendance is the opportunity for a Rising Star to accumulate significant credits toward TLI certification as an Associate Advertising Executive.

As a member benefit, it is hard to find one that offers as much to an individual and the publication alike. Whether pounding the streets in sales, developing graphic arts campaigns, instituting digital initiatives, or covering local news, the Rising Stars program offers leadership training to all facets of publishing while allowing young professionals an opportunity to participate in their industry at a national level.

ACP encourages members to take advantage of this great benefit by nominating your young professional for selection into the program. It exposes them to all the best this industry has to offer, encouraging a vision of growth and optimism to build a solid future in community publishing.

These individuals should show the promise of, and a commitment to, impacting their publication and the industry in a positive manner through professional achievement. Nominees must actively work in the community publication industry for a member of ACP and are required to have been employed for more than one year. Nominees must not be older than 35 as of December 31, 2022.

The nomination deadline is December 15, 2022. Recipients will be notified of their selection and the details of how their training opportunities will begin by January 31, 2023. Nomination forms are available from the ACP office or online at: www.communitypublishers.com/rising-stars.

If you have specific questions, you can contact the ACP office or ACP board member and program chairperson, John Draper at jdraper@pipestonestar.com.

THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Leadership Institute is a structured, industry specific sales and management training program sponsored by the Association of Community Publishers.



**OVER THE LAST
15 YEARS**

2,457

INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS
HAVE PARTICIPATED

15,979

CLASS CREDITS HAVE BEEN
AWARDED

140

CERTIFIED ADVERTISING
EXECUTIVE CERTIFICATIONS
AWARDED BY ACP

103

DIFFERENT CLASS
CURRICULUMS PRESENTED

BY JIM BUSCH

“ A podcast gives you an arena to show your expertise and passion of your niche. Your enthusiasm and speaking prowess also adds an authoritative air to the subject that the written word cannot express.

WebProNews

I recently passed my Biblical “sell-by” date of three score and ten years. This means that I was born about 40 B.C., four decades “Before Computers.” When I first heard the term “podcast,” I thought it was some new fishing technique. Actually, I wasn’t far wrong; podcasting is just another way to go fishing for the attention of an audience. One of the basic rules of fishing is that you need to bait your hook with something that will make your target audience want to “bite.” In the case of podcasting, the bait is information, something the audience wants to know. Any fisherman knows that you have to match your bait to the fish you want to catch; flies for trout, spoons for bass, etc. Fortunately, as publishers of local papers, we have a “bait bucket” full of expertise that our local audience is very hungry for. We are the absolute experts on what’s happening in our communities. We are experienced at collecting local news and organizing it into easy to understand and informative stories. Podcasting just gives us a new way to tell those stories. The human voice is our original means of communicating with one another and it is still our most powerful method of sharing ideas. This is why we still jump in our cars and go out to visit our customer’s businesses. A one on one conversation is a far better way to connect with someone than even a superbly written letter. If done properly, podcasts are a way to hold one-on-one conversations with our audience on a grand scale. The secret of successful podcasting is delivering content that people want to hear in a way that makes it easy for them to digest. In podcasting, “content” means more than “just the facts ma’am,” it also includes the emotional content of our message. When we are recording a podcast, we need to pretend that we are chatting with our best friend. We need to inject our enthusiasm into the conversation and tell interesting stories. When we deliver information the audience wants to hear in an engaging way, our audience will anxiously await your podcast and won’t want to miss a single one. ■

AMATEUR VS. PROFESSIONAL



BY JOHN FOUST
GREENSBORO, NC

What sets advertising amateurs apart from professionals? Let's examine some key skill areas.

1. Amateurs do most of the talking in sales appointments. Professionals do most of the listening. When they meet with prospective advertisers, they work to learn marketing goals. They concentrate on discovering “pain points.” And they learn about the results of previous campaigns. That's accomplished with questions – along with attentive listening.

2. Amateurs use puffery in ad copy. Professionals use relevant information. They stay away from empty claims and exaggerations like “unbelievable,” “fantastic” and “incredible.” Instead, they focus on specific features and benefits that mean something to readers.

3. Amateurs sell one ad at a time. Professionals sell campaigns. The best ads are not stand-alone sales, they are elements of bigger marketing campaigns. By taking the time to develop an overall strategy, professionals have a guideline to follow. There's no mystery about what to do next. They simply follow the plan.

4. Amateurs create spec ads before learning the prospect's needs and developing a marketing strategy. Professionals believe it's important to diagnose the patient before writing a prescription. I cringe when I hear stories of ad ideas that have been created without doing any homework first. Most of those ads are laughably off target.

5. Amateurs don't know the difference between image ads and response ads. Professionals know that distinction can make or break advertisers' expectations. Image ads are designed to create and strengthen brand identities, while response ads are designed to motivate consumers to “buy now.”

6. Amateurs see print and digital as separate entities. Professionals know that print and digital work together to project a cohesive brand image for their clients. In today's multi-media envi-

ronment, the companies with strong marketplace identities understand that everything must work together. Logos, type fonts, benefit statements, theme colors – they all play important roles.

7. Amateurs run anything their advertisers request, because they don't want to risk offending paying customers. Professionals know they're obligated to stand up for solid advertising principles (with diplomacy, of course). I've never seen a sales person's business card that listed “Order Taker” as a job title.

8. Amateurs wing their way through appointments. Professionals provide prospects with a printed agenda and follow it carefully. They know how to keep things on track. They stay away from running down rabbit trails that can derail a presentation. It's a matter of respecting the other person's time and making a professional impression.

9. Amateurs don't care about typography. Professionals understand that type has been called “the voice of print” for a good reason. They know that all upper-case type should be used sparingly in headlines – and almost never in body copy. They understand the nuances of serif and sans serif fonts. And they know how to use line-breaks to create readable headlines.

10. Amateurs think they know everything. Professionals are not complacent. They strive to learn more about their prospects, their market, their competitors, and advertising in general. There's truth in the old saying, “The biggest room in the house is room for improvement.” ■

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John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com

Graphic Hooks

By Ellen Hanrahan

hanrahan.ln@att.net © 10/2022

Vertical Type... Stacked letters have a history all their own. Traditionally, this method is found on many old theater and drugstore signs.

The practice dates back to the Art Deco period during the early 20th century, however, most graphic and sign designers will discourage the format and here are some of the reasons for that.

A real life example is the *Mineshaft* (a popular restaurant in my area) with vertical letters and it was on the side of a building—so hard to miss! Their logo and other print media never used the vertical format, but this was on the side of a building!

This topic does not come up a lot on the internet and it's more difficult when almost all the software programs offer this feature.

V V M M Readability is negligible as you have to look at each individual letter—you can't just read the word as a group, you are basically spelling it out.
e E i I All letters are centered (try using flush left—it's a nightmare). Even making the letters all caps doesn't help very much.
r R n N The problem is that our alphabet contains a variety of character sizes—skinny, wide and everything in between! And use of a serif typeface? That adds even more distractions and problems. Bottom line, we are not used to reading top to bottom for a single word.
t T e E There are times when you find that you *must* use stacked words, so here are some better options to consider.
i I s S Sometimes a small word, like the word "Sale" could be made to work. We deal with a lot of "Sales" in our ads, and never enough space so sometimes it may be a solution—not the best, but a solution.
c C h H You can make it easier to read by turning it into a fixed-width face. Capital letters are easier to read because the x-height is somewhat similar, so we will start there. SALE in all caps has letters that are almost the same.
a A I increased the type size so it is easier to read and created a box around each letter to create the illusion of a fixed-width area (see top of next column). The background is now uniform and creates a defined space for each letter uniting the group. A strong, simple typeface works the best for readability. Go as bold as you can and as large as you can.
l L



I've shown shades of gray in first two examples, but I think white type on the dark background (3rd example the screens are 70% and 100%) also adds a bit more unity by creating a more cohesive element and enabling

the group to be read as a "whole." This is where "negative space" is critical.

The aforementioned process would probably not work with longer words, (S A L E can still be read as a group) because readability should be easy, not contrived, not cute, not an impediment...so when in doubt—don't!

Another option...

OK... let's use the Mineshaft as an example. The customer wants the name of their business to be as big as possible and they want to place it in a one column ad. Fortunately, they only want a few words. What to do?

Not my best work but this ad is for a demo and I have to use vertical type! See how difficult it is to read the name and it seems to be a jumble of boxes and text. A lot of separation. "Mineshaft" in Helvetica Neue Black, 18 point with 11 point leading with -5 letter spacing.

The following may offer a better solution!

Rotate! To keep unity, I placed "Restaurant and Bar" under the name and moved the general text over just a bit. The name is easier to read. Same typeface, but it's 24 point. Leading does not matter because the other line is smaller, in reverse.

The direction to rotate is up to you, but generally, it will look better if the baseline is facing the edge of your interface, in other words where headline and text interact. I also did a little changing of the general text area and narrowed the entire ad to create more dimension. "MINESHAFT" is now easier to read... granted a little head tilt is necessary, but it will be easier to remember the name.

... and Another option!

Take a close look at the word itself... it can be "stacked" with the syllables, in this case "mine" and "shaft" (we got lucky!)

Keeping a similar look from the last ad, I just split the name and placed on two lines.

The general text remained the same in all three ads, just positioned a little differently. The size of the ads vary slightly due to space limitations but there's a bigger difference in the looks.

Back to Helvetica Neue Black, 26 point on 18 point leading with -5 letter spacing.

The Bottom Line

Which ad looks better? That's up to you and the customer, but vertical type is a beast to work with because it really hampers readability. The best scenario is not ever to use it! That being said, you may be forced to at some point in your career.

So go bold and see if you can add some unity by at least developing a visual fixed-width element.

Final Thoughts

Last Friday, I attended the ACP Fall 2022 Virtual Conference's Graphic Session on Lightroom Mobile, which was enlightening. My camera club met last Tuesday and the topic was "Creativity with your smartphone." Amazing insights into the "camera that is always with us."

At least I've gotten some ideas for making the images that we take a little more professional—and exciting!

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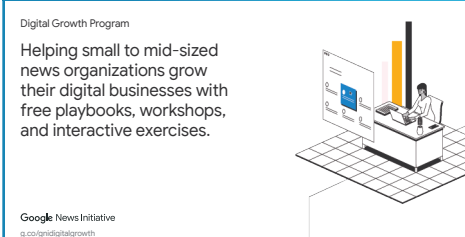
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