



STARTING A PODCAST

A QUICK GUIDE TO STARTING A PODCAST

Introduction

Starting a podcast is one of the best investments in yourself and your business. It is rare to find an opportunity to create high value content at a relatively low cost. Here in Rhode Island we say “it’s not what you know, but who you know”. A podcast is a great way to grow your network and, in turn, your brand or business.

In today’s world, it is nearly impossible to get someone’s attention with a cold email or phone call. Most people don’t answer, trying to avoid the ever present car warranty scheme. So how do you stand out from the crowd? Well it’s simple, provide genuine value at no cost whatsoever to the consumer, while having no expectations for the outcome. This strategy boils down to giving more than you get. However, giving compounds over time and often leads to big breakthroughs. Some good books to reference when getting started are [Crush It](#) and the sequel [Crushing It](#) by entrepreneur Gary Vaynerchuk.

On a podcast, you allow a person to come on and talk about a topic or tell a story and in return they get a great opportunity to market themselves to an audience. Conversely, you get a guest on your show, a great connection, and future opportunity for collaboration. Your audience gets to learn the story behind a brand and a new product to explore. It’s a win, win, win; your listener wins, your guest wins, and you win!

Gear and Software

After going out and purchasing an unnecessary amount of gear and spending hundreds of dollars on stuff I don’t need, I understand the daunting task of setting yourself up for success. The following comprehensive list will save you money and a headache. Follow the “KISS” principle, the simpler the better and the less opportunity there is for something to go wrong. Below is what we suggest when starting out. These items allow you to record from your “home studio” or take the show on the road. It all depends on what you are aiming to do.

In the Studio

“Home studio” is a relative term and in reality is most likely a spare bedroom, kitchen table, or even your morning commute. Whatever it is, having the right equipment for the job will make any location a perfect spot to record a podcast episode. I personally have recorded an episode on the beach with my good friend Brian from *Raw Elements Sunscreen* and founder of the *Waterman Eco Challenge*.

Basic Audio Setup

Laptop or Desktop:

Any desktop or laptop will suffice. I personally have the best luck with a 2021 Macbook Pro. Make sure you have an external harddrive or upload your data to the

cloud for safekeeping and as a backup should something go wrong (I learned the hard way).

[Recording Kit:](#)

This is a great kit and is easily the best bang for your buck. When I'm ready to record I set mine up and plug in my laptop and I'm ready to rock! Everything you need including the microphone, headphones, and boom arm is included, so your worries are minimized, one less step to stress about!

[Software:](#)

This is an ongoing exploration for me because there are pros and cons to any software. I am presently settled on Zencastr software for a variety of reasons. When I started the show, Zencaster didn't exist and now there are several softwares that have come out similar to Zencaster. I like it because it allows you to record your audio and video while simultaneously converting it to HD, resulting in fantastic quality audio and video without the extra leg work! It is super easy to use and is very similar to a Zoom meeting which people are fairly familiar with nowadays.

I am impressed with the development in software in the time since I started my podcast and am excited to see what new programs come about from here forward!

Let's Get this Show on the Road

Taking the show on the road is a great idea and creates a cool backdrop if you choose to video record the show. Typically it adds a personal touch to the show. From my experience, the conversation flows a lot better, and the discussion is a bit more natural. This setup can be more expensive, but is good for in person interviews whether it's at your house or across the country.

[Microphone/Headphone Combo:](#) made by Audio Technica, commonly sold on Amazon.

This is a no joke setup when it comes to audio equipment, hence the price. Ultimately you get what you pay for, so the cost is well worth it for the future of your show. This setup keeps the guest's microphone directly next to their mouth and prevents it from moving around, ensuring excellent audio quality. Keep in mind that most people have never been on a podcast before so recording a conversation and holding a microphone can be very uncomfortable for guests. The Broadcast Stereo headset setup takes that worry out of their mind and will likely put them at ease. Keep it simple!

[Audio Interface/Recorder](#)

Now that you have the microphone, you need a device to capture the audio. In comes the Zoom H6. This is a great piece of equipment and is easy to use and set up. It provides four inputs, allowing you to record three guests and yourself simultaneously. It can either be plugged in to power or go fully mobile using a few AA batteries. All content is saved on a SD card so uploading your audio to a computer is a very easy process.

Audio Accessories

These are a few other things you will need to make your setup work the way it should. I learned the hard way when, after getting everything in the mail, excited to start, I found myself extremely disappointed when a few wires and dongles kept me from recording my first episode.

[Headphone Dongle](#)

The dongle allows you to connect the headphone portion of the headset to the Zoom H6, giving you the ability to hear the person in the headset while speaking with them. If you need to hook up more than two headsets you can purchase this dongle instead

[Headphone Adapter](#)

Unfortunately the headset requires a 3.5mm to 1/4 auxiliary adapter so you will need this in order to go from a typical auxiliary port to a 1/4 port.

Other Suggestions

Taking the show means that you might be taking the gear to places typically unfriendly to audio gear. One thing I suggest is to have a pelican case dedicated to carrying the gear, so you don't risk damaging any of the equipment.

Video is King

When it comes to content, video is shown to produce a higher engagement rate and is a great way to produce content at scale. It also lets the listener put a face to the voice to further connect you with your audience. A great example is the Joe Rogan podcast, he has been doing video recorded podcasts since the inception of the JRE Podcast and it seems to have worked out very well! The setup is a bit more involved, but well worth the payoff!

Camera:

I use a SONY A7 II DSLR camera to record my episodes in 4k but it isn't necessary since most of the content you will use will be the other person talking, but it does give your show a more professional feel. However, using your laptop's camera or a webcam works just fine.

Cam Link:

If you do use a DSLR camera you will need a Cam Link to convert the video feed into a format that your computer can handle. There are ways to bypass this, but the cam link offers a pretty quick and easy way to get the job done. In my opinion, save yourself the headache, keep it simple, and buy it; It's a small investment with a big pay off!

Lights:

What's a production without some lights? Although not necessary, adding some studio lighting into the mix certainly helps upgrade your show's quality. Make sure to play around with the positioning of the lights to reduce the shadows, glare, and white space to really make yourself look good on camera.

Content Creation

If you are already reading this far in then you probably understand that quality content is how you build a brand. With that said, there are a few ingredients that must stay constant when creating content.

1. Quality

Having valuable quality content is key to engaging your audience. Truly caring about the message you are aiming to produce is what sets you apart from the rest. Are you slapping together some artwork or are you crafting a brand? Building a brand that lasts is something I learned from Michael Simms, founder of Hook + Gaff, whose watch company, although small compared to other companies, is so dedicated to quality content that his brand looks, feels, acts, and performs similarly to a company like Yeti or Trager.

2. Quantity

Take that old saying Quality vs. Quantity, and throw it away, because you need both to be successful. Fortunately if you plan ahead, you can easily produce valuable content at scale by creating Macro content, breaking it down into pieces, and using it as micro content. An example of this is recording the video portion of your show.

Let's say you record an episode for an hour. You now have one hour of marco content and 60 pieces of micro content to use and promote the show. It may be a bit of work to break out the nuggets and you may only get forty quality pieces out of that sixty. However, record an episode a week, create a thumbnail, grab some quotes from the show and a few videos and you will quickly find that you have more content than you can handle.

3. Consistency

Here is a big one, and most important in my opinion when it comes to developing your brand is staying consistent. This is something that most people struggle with and something I have struggled with in the past. However when you take the foot off the gas what happens? You slow down, plain and simple.

It's an Evolution

If I have learned anything from producing a podcast, creating a brand, and simply building something bigger than myself it is that this whole thing is one big evolution. The more you stick with it the more opportunities come forward and how you start is in no way how you will be in the next 6 months or five years from now. I give the example of my instagram profile, if you scroll down to the bottom you'll see that it looked nothing when I started like how it does now, and I'm certain that if I give it another year, it will look completely different. The same goes for big brands like Yeti, if you dive deep and scroll all the way back you'll find that they started out with iPhone photos, taken like you or I would when snapping a picture of a night out with friends. It goes to show you that its not how you start but how you finish.

Hosting Platforms

This is going to be a shameless plug because I am biased towards Waypoint TV, however there are many great hosting platforms out there, Waypoint just happens to be the best! In short, Waypoint at its core is the Outdoor version of Netflix, and offers a wide range of outdoor shows, documentaries, and podcasts. The podcast network hosts over 50+ shows and is growing by the day!

They offer an awesome hosting platform through Megaphone in addition to extended distribution channels, like Samsung Plus TV, ROKU, Apple TV, and other OTT (Over The Top) style platforms similar to Netflix. Not only that, but you can easily monetize your content without any additional effort by running MTM style ads on your show similar to the ones you hear on [Along the Keel](#) show from time to time.

On top of all the other advantages to signing on with Waypoint your show is associated with some of the best outdoor podcasts on the internet. This also means that you have up front access to collaborate, network, and get to know other podcasters in the same place. Whether it's asking a simple question or doing a show swap, building your podcast takes a village so why not join Waypoint community.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Waypoint podcast network feel free to reach out to me directly at zach@waypointtv.com. We are always looking for new outdoor podcasters and even if your show isn't outdoor related we are still more than happy to have you onboard.

Final Thoughts

There is nothing to be lost and everything to be gained when starting a podcast. Yes, does it take some investment? Sure, but that's true with everything, and nothing worth doing is easy, nor should it be! A podcast is an excellent way to network, build a brand, enhance a company, and, if anything becoming a better person.

Personally, the biggest lesson learned so far when creating my podcast and the Along the Keel brand has been to lead with value first and expect nothing in return. From there, everything will fall into place, and it will take a form that you had never intended it to be.

That's my two cents when creating a podcast, and if you have any questions, comments, or curiosity, feel free to reach out. You can email me at zach@alongthekeel.com; I'm happy to lend a hand!

