Podcraft Season 17
Episode 12: Listener Q&A

Colin: Hey folks, and welcome to another episode of podcraft. podcraft is the show about podcasting, everything from launching your show to monetization and everything in between. I'm Colin Gray from the podcasthost.com. Join by Matthew. That's always how you get on, Matthew.

Matthew: Yeah, not too shabby, not too shabby. How's yourself?

Colin: Yeah, not too bad, not too bad actually. It's absolutely pelting down with rain outside. After two or three weeks of our summer, we've got a bit of warmth, a bit of dry, and now it's back to Scottish winter, so it's all good.

Matthew: All the beasties have moved into the house. It was a really dry June and then it's been a really wet July and I've just found like moths, flies, spiders ever since. It's like Noah's Ark for insects in the house.

Colin: It's just pets. You've got lots of pets now. It's good. Some to look after, some to keep. You don't have a lot of stuff to do, matthew having a little kid and all that kind of stuff. You need more things to look after.

Matthew: Yeah. Can you start eating them? Me and Brooke, we'll just start eating insects. I don't know to what end we'll just start doing it.

Colin: It's protein, it's the new way. We're not like to eat big animals anymore, we have to eat little things, insects. It's the way. Crickets. You need to get the crickets to move in. No, I'll take that as a no cricket. Protein bars for Matthew. All right, this time around on podcraft, we have got delighted to say we've got quite a few messages and quite a few voicemails actually. So we've got some ammunition for the next probably a couple of episodes at least. But I will say up front, we're always willing to take more. Always delighted to take more. So if you do have a question you want to send in your own voicemail, send it in to thepodcasthost.com Voicemail. That's thepodcasthost.com voicemail. And you can leave us a message and we'll answer it on a future episode.

Matthew: Yeah, on the next one too. We'll have to do a prize draw as well because we promised an Amazon voucher for that.

Colin: Indeed.

Matthew: I think we were joking about what kind of dice we're going to roll. We got a few in, so it's going to be as it stands, I don't know, a D twelve maybe?

Colin: We've got at least a d twelve. If we can get it up to D 20, that would be amazing. Send us in, that'd be cool. We actually got most of these thanks to a request I put out on our Indie Pod community. So thanks to Indie Pod community members, I put out a little call and they rallied and sent in a bunch of questions. So that's really cool to see if you're not a member of our community, do pop over there. We've got a big sort of big community there nearly 2000 people now, all chatting away about podcasting, helping each other answering questions. A range of free courses in there, too. Some of our courses that are in there can do with absolutely no charge going in there. Learn, develop your podcasting skills. So if you want to join up, hop over to Indypod Thepodcasthost.com. Indypod, thepodcasthost.com and Indie Spell. I-N-D-I-E. All right, Matthew, shall we go on with the first question?

Matthew: Yeah. Buzzing at Ivan.

Colin: Let's do it. This is from Matt Hepburn. Let's see what Matt is asking.

Voicemail: Hey there, Colin. It's Matt Hepburn here. So, quick question for your episode, how would you recommend the best ways to amplify a podcast that you've recorded and published? What are the best ways to get traffic? Would love for you to include any type of paid type of aspects here as well. And is there any way that you can leave some examples? That'd be great, thanks.

Colin: All right. Nice. Like it nice and specific. Good work, Matt. So how to amplify an episode, specifically, Matthew, and thinking of paid efforts as well, you've done at least a couple of articles around this, haven't you? What about some of the kind of sponsored methods or advertising methods even? That's what I'm thinking of. What are you thinking?

Matthew: Yeah, well, just say up front, I got wrong footed there by the ambiguous use of the term amplify, because we're talking about audio technical question, right. It's a promote, so just for clarity, in case any listeners a bit slow like me, we're talking about promotion here, the amplification of the message rather than the waveform. And before he'd even mentioned the word paid, immediately my thoughts went to Overcast. We ran a campaign on the Overcast listing app probably three or four years ago now, con, and I was really impressed with it. So we've got a review of how we did that online. Was it podcraft? I can't remember now. Do you remember much about the campaign?

Colin: Yeah, no, I think so, yeah, I think we ran podcraft. We promoted podcraft and we did we saw a decent uplift, didn't we? Like, it wasn't in the thousands, but it was definitely it felt worthwhile for sure, the amount of money we put into it. Yeah, definitely remember that.

Matthew: Yeah. The thing I like about it, as I've said on a lot of episodes before, is like 100% of the people you reach are actively looking at their podcast, listening up, like they're in their podcast listening up. They're primed, they're ready to listen. So within two clicks, they could be literally listening to your show. They could even be subscribed or following your show. So it's just if you've got an advertising budget, I can't think of many places better to spend it than on ads either. In Overcast, you could do it podcast addict, you could do it in a few other listing apps as well. But really good way to spend your advertising budget.

Colin: Yeah, I totally agree with that. Absolutely. Yeah. It's a nice way to place nice way to place it somewhere that's just primed for action, for sure. I was just bringing up our article on it actually, because I was going to try and read out some of the platforms, but I think you've got a couple there. Yeah. You've got Overcast, you've got PocketCasts offer it as well. Podcast addict. Pod bay what's? Player? FM Pod Bay, is that a player as well? Matthew I don't know if I come across that one, actually.

Matthew: I only wrote the article, I couldn't answer that question.

Colin: Cool. Yeah. Pod Bay is an option as well. Yeah, I think it's a player here. Yeah, as well. Cool. But yeah, that's perfect. And of course, Spotify as well, one of the big players, you can play adverts on Spotify these days as well. They've got their Spotify ad studio and you can create an audio ad in there, 32nd Audio Ad. So the player stuff putting in Overcast and Pocket casts and stuff like that, that's generally a text ad, isn't it? Matthew?

Matthew: Yeah, it comes up as a little banner at the bottom and you just click on it. Yeah. Takes you to your show in their app.

Colin: Yeah. Which I like. I do like that a lot actually. It's the fact that if somebody's looking for something to listen to that pops up, make it really easy for them to action it. But then you've got places like Spotify where they've got their nerve. Spotify Ad studio, you record a 32nd Audio ad, so your voice may be a bit music, you do a little pitch for your show and you can get that played on a whole bunch of podcasts on Spotify. Any podcasts that opt in to that advertising method, you'll get played on their shows. There is some targeting, so you do get to target by niche, by category, that kind of stuff. But from my memory, the targeting isn't like hugely specific, is it? Matthew, have you played around with the Spotify advertising?

Matthew: I had a play with it a couple of years ago. Yeah. I don't know, to be honest. I'd go with the other apps, I really would. And again, your Spotify power users, I think they generally pay for it so they don't hear the ads. Yeah, I don't know, I'm not disregarding it completely, but if I was going to spend money on it, I would go with one of the podcast apps rather than Spotify. Get a lot of music listeners and stuff.

Colin: No, got you. The counterargument to it is I would suggest that if you do do a kind of more audio ad and by the way, Buzsprout do this as well. Buzsprout has a nice dynamic ad insertion method where they've got a sponsorship set up too, so you can sign up as a sponsor on Bud sprout upload 32nd Ad and they'll place that within some of their shows as well. So that's another option for this too. But if you do have that audio ad, the argument is that with a 32nd ad you can get more of the power of podcasting is the personality, it's the style you as a host, isn't it? So you can get a bit more of that across. I think if it's you actually reading it out and it's on a podcast itself. But the counterargument to that, again, is like you're saying, Matthew, the action is so obvious inside overcast or pocket cast, people just click it and they hit play. Whereas if you hear an ad during a podcast, they work well. But there's also the fact that you could be at running, you could be in the car, whatever, and somebody has to actually remember your show. But if you do a good enough pitch, hopefully they remember. So that's an option as well. Matt, I'll mention as well the only other one that's worth mentioning there, I think, or one of the ones that's worth mentioning there is paid ads just on either Google Ads or Social as well. It's the kind of classic PPC version. But Facebook ads, Twitter ads, LinkedIn ads, all on Social, see which one your audience hangs out on can be really effective. Or Google Ads as well. So targeting certain searches. So, I mean, if you have a good idea of who your audience is, then these platforms can really help you target like Facebook has huge amounts of targeting in there. So if you're running a fly fishing podcast, you can get in there and you can actually find people that have specifically said, I'm interested in fly fishing. And you can also combine that with a filter that says people who've also said they're interested in podcasts. So you can say podcast and fly fishing, good target for me then let's put an advert in front of them. So, yeah, especially if you're kind of more of a less of a worky one, potentially, and more of a kind of fun entertainment podcast or just a hobby podcast. You can get people in the right kind of frame of mind on social media. And the

other one, obviously, Google Ads, maybe more of the kind of solving a problem. So maybe if it's more work related, more coaching, mentoring, teaching, that kind of thing. If somebody types in how to make a podcast, then we could be using Google Ads to actually show up podcraft because we're a really good solution, we hope to that question and it lets you target really specifically set your own budget. You can say I'm only going to spend one, two, three pounds a day, kind of thing, or go higher if you want to. So we played around with that a little while back, didn't we, Matthew? Actually, it just been me because I think it was a mountain bikes part podcast I tried it with do you remember that?

Matthew: Yeah, I remember it getting I was mentioning the article yeah, cool.

Colin: Yeah, I found that worked quite well because it was kind of more of a hobby one. So people are browsing on social media. You can put in that targeting and it can be quite effective. So, yeah, don't discount traditional PPC as well. Okay, let's jump on to the next one then. So next up we have James, james C. Taylor, who's a really prolific member, actually. He posts a whole lot of really helpful stuff. So appreciate your contribution to the community, James. Let's see what James is asking. See how we can help.

Voicemail: Hi. James C. Taylor from inside at Biologics. And my amazing woman. Now, I know the best way to motivate an action from someone is to focus on what's in it for them. But when it comes to getting people to subscribe to my shows, what is in it for them?

Colin: Nice question. Nice sound effects as well there from James.

Matthew: It's a good question. Yes. Obviously, we've sought out what's in it for them and listening to your podcast, but you're asking what's in it for them if they subscribe or follow your podcast. The simple answer really is that they can just set it and forget it. They don't have to make a note to come looking for your podcast every week or whatever. However your episode schedule is, it's just coming to them, isn't it? So it's just like Friday Morning James's episode drops. I don't have to go and hunt for it anywhere. I'm just getting it delivered to me. So it's totally low fraction, isn't it? I would say that's the big benefit for the listener.

Colin: Yeah. I think often you play on a bit of the FOMO here, like say something like, so if you've really enjoyed this content, make sure you don't miss an episode, you don't miss any of the help that we can give you to help you succeed in whatever it is that you're trying to do. Make sure you subscribe and every episode will come straight to you without you having to find it. That kind of thing. I think it's something like that, isn't it? Yeah, but I think it does play. It is worth emphasizing that that is completely based on you being able to sell the show with the benefits, like, what's in it for them to actually listen to the show in general as well. So making sure you've got your message down around like, what is the problem you're solving with this show? How do you solve it? What's your unique angle on solving that problem for you? And if you've got that down, if you can say that in 1015, 20 seconds, like, here's what I'm solving for you, here's why I help you hugely in achieving your goals as a listener, then that is the push, really, to subscribe, because it's like, yeah, don't miss a minute of that. Don't miss any of those tips because all of them are going to help you so I think it's really heavily tied into that as well, isn't it, Matthew?

Matthew: Yeah, for them, it's saving them time and brain power. They don't have to come looking for you. You're just going to drop under their app whenever you release them. So one win for everyone.

Colin: Yeah, indeed. I think that's why I say on YouTube, we're playing around with YouTube, try to get more subscriptions there. And that's why I've been saying it's like, don't miss a bit if you've enjoyed this. And it's kind of asking that question up front, like, did you enjoy it? If you got value from this, then make sure to hit that subscribe button so that you don't miss a thing going on from now. All right, who we got next, Matthew? We have Floyd. Floyd another prolific member as well, posting a lot of stuff. So great to have you in the community too, Floyd. Let's see what Floyd's asking.

Voicemail: Hi, Colin. Hi, Matthew. Floyd Kennedy here from am I old yet? I find myself stuck in the middle of a conundrum with trying to grow my audience. Like a lot of audio fiction, it doesn't fit easily into any of the audio fiction categories. Maybe it's a drama that sees the funny side, or maybe it's a comedy with serious undertones. It's not certainly not laugh out loud funny. It just makes you smile. The protagonist is an old woman. So is it just for old people? Apparently, the over 60s are the smallest category of people who listen to podcasts. And according to my analytics on Apple and Spotify, the majority of my audience at the moment is between the sort of 25 to 40 something age group. So what does that mean? Am I stuck in a self sabotage loop? I've tried, believe me, I've tried all the pod, the marketing advice I've ever come across, but it doesn't seem to apply to this kind of niche genre. So am I, as I say, stuck in this self sabotage loop creating entertainment just for myself and my lovely acting team? Well, they tell me they enjoy being involved, so we're having fun. We'd love to spread the fun. Can you?

Colin: No, Floyd got cut off there at the end. But I think we've got the point of the question. That's really good. What do you think, then? Matthew says your area of expertise, audio drama. How do you promote an audio drama?

Matthew: Yeah, I didn't realize I had an area of expertise. It's great to hear. So, yeah. Hi, Floyd. We met at the London Podcast show. It was lovely to meet you. And like Colin saying, thanks very much for sending the question. And fiction podcast, it's a funny animal, isn't it? It kind of sets almost outside your conventional nonfiction shows. And some of the rules that apply to podcasting in general are a bit different when it comes to fiction podcasting, especially when it comes to finding an audience. I definitely wouldn't say you have any concerns with the age of a protagonist? Meaning that it's going to struggle to find a demographic out there? I don't know that that's a valid concern. There's loads of examples and films and TV shows that we could look at to show that that's not necessarily the case. You're kind of asking like, where does this fat? Where will the audience come from? Maybe, and unfortunately, in my own experience, a lot of fiction podcasts, it's almost this war of attrition. Just the ability for your show to outlast other shows because you stick at it. That sounds really horrible and negative, but this is a show that just keeps going. Maybe it doesn't even have to go that fast. Mine's infamously the speed of coastal erosion, but it keeps going. So if you stick at it and keep going, you will pick up audience over time. But maybe in the short term you might want to look at, I dare say that your cast are involved in other shows or that you've got friends and audio drama that are involved in other shows. So maybe just look at some short term reciprocal favors, if you like, where you're going to play a trailer for somebody's show on your show and vice versa. Or you get maybe a small group of years that are going to promote each other and just try and sort of share that audience out of you and that might give you those short term gains as well. But it really is just a case. You're having fun, which is the main thing. So just sort of keep doing it. Any thoughts?

Colin: Yeah, I don't think that's a negative thing to talk about consistency, to talk about longevity. I think The Long Game, that was something that came out of our indie Pod census as well. Like the manifesto that we've just published, we'll pop that a link to that in the show notes. But a big part of that, one of the pillars, one of those ten pillars that our team came up with was playing the long game. It was something that really came out. The fact that it's not a small thing, just getting a show out every single week and if you enjoy it, if you're having fun, that is a huge part of that, just getting that out every single week and they went out in a long term. I was going to say copromos as well there. Matthew, I think that's one of the things that works really well for this, isn't it? Like finding other shows that are happy to do a reswap because nobody listens to just one audio drama. I remember when I first started listening to them on your recommendation, like I ended up listening to 510, 15 different shows and found a lot of them through those co promos or that word of mouth. So I think the other thing I don't know. You tell me if you think this is right. Matthew creative shows like this that are telling a story and they're less kind of obviously self promotional, seem to be much more of a candidate for getting in communities and talking about it and being able to tell people about it yourself. Like, you get in there in a community and say, here's a show I created, tell me if you like it. Whereas if we do that for podcraft, it's kind of more the teaching, mentoring ones. It's kind of more you're promoting yourself, almost. Is that the case? Do you think that works?

Matthew: Yeah, I think that a lot of audio fiction and audio drama creators, other creators, and to an extent listeners, find it really interesting to look behind the curtain and find out how these things are made. They want to hear about the latest record and they want to hear about writing scripts and stuff like that. I think that whole community, even if they are, quote, unquote, just listeners, they still find that interesting. So there's a lot of opportunity there if you're able to create some extra content. It wouldn't even take much because you're just documenting work that you're doing anyway. But that is another re angle to sort of put the show out there and make people aware of it.

Colin: Yeah, that stuff works really well on, let's say, social media or shorts or if you do any of that. Floyd I'm not sure if you do much on social or YouTube or anything like that, but that kind of media works really well there. But even little clips as well. If you record online with your co hosts or your actors, you get some clips of them, the flubs, the outtakes, that kind of stuff. Always quite entertaining stuff. I think the only other thing I would say is you're talking about that age demographic and the fact that you feel almost it should be targeted at the over sixty s. And whereas that's a smaller segment of the podcasting ecosystem, I would suggest it's quite an underserved segment of the podcast ecosystem as well. There's not a lot of do you know what? This is just gut feel, this is just kind of knowing the industry. I could be way off on this, but I think the number of shows run by people in that kind of age demographic are on the lower end, lower numbers, and therefore they're less targeted towards people at that age. So playing on that might actually be in your favor, like if you actually promote it more to people like that. We were talking earlier on to Matt about the promotion side of things. Targeting people in certain age demographics on social media, Facebook or anything like that,

could actually be something that's quite effective for you if you have any budget for it. But equally you can find communities that are free to participate in that, let you do that kind of promotion to the same kind of people too. So it might be something to play on. I'm not sure, but be good to hear progress, certainly. All right, Matthew, we're nearly on the half an hour mark. Do you think that's enough for this week or do we head on for some more?

Matthew: I think we could squeeze in one more, couldn't we?

Colin: One more. Go for it. Okay, one more. So, 1617. What have we done? 18. So this is the next one. And this is from Michelle Harris. Let's see what Michelle has to say.

Voicemail: Hi, Colin. This is Michelle Harris from the Conversing Nurse podcast. And I am happy to say that I am celebrating my one year anniversary next week. So I have been very consistent in my episodes. And what I would like to know is how to get more engagement. I'm always asking for feedback. I have questions on Spotify after every episode specific to that episode. Like, what did you like about this? What did you think about this guest? What do you think about this nursing specialty, all of that stuff, and I don't get any feedback. I have a voicemail capability on my website and I'm always directing people over there. I don't get any voicemails. So I know it takes time as an indie podcaster, but how do I get more feedback? Thank you.

Colin: All right, Matthew, this is a common question, isn't it? How'd you get more engagement?

Matthew: Yeah, it was just last week, was it not? Last week? We were talking about the fact that we'd got two voicemails in and we were begging for more.

Colin: We feel your pain, Michelle.

Matthew: Exactly. So first and foremost, this is very difficult. It's really difficult to get people to reach out, even if they're big fans, quietly big fans of what you do. It's good that you're thinking along the lines of being specific in those questions. I'm just wondering how specific, because you might have just been paraphrasing yourself, but what did you think of this guest? I would say, is that a specific enough question? Could you maybe go down the line of, so this guest mentioned this thing, whether it's a controversial subject or some do you agree with this thing that they said? So it's just honing more in on just going beyond the what did you think of this guest? Just trying to get a bit more specific. Might give you that wee bit more success here. What do you think?

Colin: I was totally my mind as well. Yeah, again, like Matthew said, Michelle, you might have been paraphrasing, you might have just been summarizing there. But yeah, just saying, what did you think? Tends to be not effective. So, yeah, try and get really specific. Pick out a couple of topics or pick out quite a specific question related to that topic and put that afterwards. I wonder about incentives. What about incentives, Matthew? We're offering, obviously, a prize draw at the moment for voicemails. So if anyone sends in a voicemail right now. We put them in a prize draw, roll our D 75 by the time we get enough, and hopefully do you think that works?

Matthew: I don't know. I think these things are great to try if you can, but I wonder of how many voicemails we got in, how many of those were like, I really want to win that voucher.

Colin: Well, I think actually, the recent sex, none of them, because I think they all just came because I asked in the community and I asked for feedback and they all came because of that. So I never even mentioned the prize drawn that, so yeah, I don't think it was to do with that.

Matthew: So do you think the fact that you did it in a community where a link is in front of somebody, because in normal times we're saying it at the end of the podcast, we're still relying on somebody picking up their phone or laptop and typing stuff? And the fact you've put a link in front of people, do you think.

Colin: That'S a classic problem? Yeah, classic problem, isn't it? Like, podcasting has the power to move people. It has real kind of engagement and power in that way, but often they're not at a computer or they're not able to do something because they're working out or they're cleaning the dishes or something like that, so it's tricky. Whereas yeah, maybe that's a good point in terms of can you find places, Michelle, where you can post the request for feedback, which is where people are at their computer and are able to do it right away? So I don't know whether you've tried to build engagement on social media anywhere or a community anywhere or anywhere. Maybe an email list? Like, do you have an email list where you try and get people to sign up so that they get those updates even? Like something as simple as making sure you're putting that link right at the top in your show notes in the app and making sure that it's clickable, so it's created in a way that when somebody is in their player, they can just click it straight from there, something like that. To make it super easy to hit that page. Maybe that's kind of a good way to go about it, potentially surveys as well. Matthew I think an actual survey, if you keep it nice and short, can be quite effective. Like, if you have a nice short link and just one or two questions that are, again, quite specific, they can be quite effective, can't they?

Matthew: Definitely, yeah. We've done a lot of content around surveys in the past, just asking a few questions, grabbing a bit of data, and you could yeah, again, people like to give you their opinions

when you make it as easy as possible, I suppose, for them. But people generally, once you do manage to get a hold of them, they like to talk.

Colin: Indeed, yeah. That's. The thing, isn't it? People want to give you their opinions. I think it's just about giving them the right prompt. So, again, being quite specific about the question, giving them the right place to do it, making it really easy for them to get to that. And it does take repetition. It does take repetition. It's like any call to action on a podcast episode. I often think you have to do three, four episodes. Like if you want listeners to do something, you need to repeat it over three or four episodes, if not more. If not like a couple of months worth of content to actually get them to take action on it. So keep at it. Michelle. There's no kind of super one easy answer to this. It is in a lot of ways, it's about that repetition, it's about doing those reps, getting them out there and really keeping asking people and building it up. So hopefully that helps anything. Any other thoughts on that, Matthew, before we tie it up?

Matthew: No, I was going to mention email list, but you'd mentioned that as well. Yeah, I think that's the best way to get text in front of folks, in my opinion.

Colin: Yeah, absolutely. I would say that's one of the best CTAs you can put in your podcast. One of the best calls to action. If you only have one thing you say, which you should really you should only have really one big call to action you put out there. Get them on your email list and send them more good content, more value. Tell them about the episodes, give them some side content, that background content. You know, that behind the scenes you were talking about with Floyd. That stuff works so well in email because they listen to the episode and then you can send them an email a few days later saying, oh, look, here's some outtakes, or here's some behind the scenes around how I created this episode, or here's something related to it. All that stuff works really well. So building that kind of engagement, that link, then when you ask for feedback, they're much more likely to hit it and actually give you that. All right, so we tie up the other end. Matthew.

Matthew: Yeah, that was good. Good mix of questions. Thanks very much, folks, for sending them in.

Colin: Indeed, indeed.

Matthew: Now that inbox is bursting full of audio files.

Colin: Yeah, but definitely send in more. Yeah, we can go more questions, thepodcasthost.com voicemail, and like I said as well, talking about calls to action. If you want to join our community, we'd love to see you in there. Lots of great conversation going on, lots of great people sharing their podcasting experience, helping each other out, feedback on questions and queries and stuff exactly like these Q and A's that are coming in. So pop over to IndiePod, that's IndiePod Thepodcasthost.com, and you can just sign up and join in. All right, Matthew. That's it. For another week. We've got two more voicemails in the can that we can answer the next time round or at least a couple of episodes down the line. Maybe we'll get a few more in between as well.

Matthew: Looking forward to that.

Colin: Good stuff. Thank you out there for listening too. We hope to see you in a future episode. We'll talk to you then.