

# Audio Is Experiencing a Boom. Should You Be a Part of It?

Podcasts have been experiencing a boom over the past few years. Their appeal lies in the fact that subscribers can listen to your information while completing other tasks, such as driving, exercising or preparing dinner at home. This is unlike a blog post, which requires readers to focus all their attention on a computer or mobile device while remaining relatively stationary.

Much like blog posts, podcasts do require time, planning and organization. They also require the extra expense of some affordable, basic equipment, such as a microphone and editing software. Let's go through the process of how to get a podcast up and running.

## Planning Your Podcast

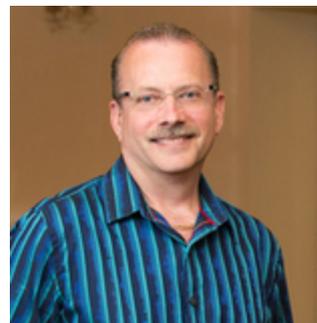
A podcast is very much like launching a blog in that it is not a one-and-done project. Instead, it is something that has to be done over a period of time. (That said, there are podcasts that run for a specified, limited number of episodes, much like a mini-series. However, this post concerns the more-traditional open-ended style of podcast.)

Another parallel to a blog is that before you start a podcast, you have to determine an overarching topic, as well as the frequency in which you will post new recordings. Will your podcast fall into a news format that gives weekly or monthly updates in your area of expertise? Will it be an interview-style podcast, possibly one in which a series of special guests bring different perspectives to a chosen topic? Will you do the podcast solo, or will you have a cohost? How long will each podcast episode be: short, 10-minute episodes or longer, more in-depth recordings? Who is your audience, and how will that potentially influence the appropriate length?

Even after you have determined your topic, frequency and format, there is still a lot of planning to do. Determine your release schedule, and mark it on your calendar. If you have a cohost, make sure you are both committed to the schedule. Schedule time before your recording date to prepare your content or talking points. After the recording session, factor in time for editing, as well as inserting the intro and exit tracks. This activity, known as your production schedule, will help you meet your target posting date.

## Preparing Before You Record Your Podcast

Your podcast should have a consistent intro and outro that bookends each episode. These short segments might consist purely of audio sounds and music, or possibly a voiceover. This standard podcast feature helps your listeners recognize your podcast — it's a central component of a podcast's brand. These recordings can be done using an



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audio professional or in-house if you have the technical capabilities and talent. Numerous online stock sound libraries provide access to hundreds of sound and music recordings for a monthly fee, or you can purchase sound or music shorts individually on certain sites for a one-time fee.

Along with the [audio branding](#) of your podcast, you will also need to have cover art, much like a music album. The cover art is a visual element that appears with your podcast when you post to places like iTunes or Spotify. It serves as the face of your podcast. Make sure to be [consistent with your firm's brand](#) by using firm colors, fonts, logo and any other brand elements outlined in your firm's brand style guide.

Before you start recording, invest in a microphone. I recommend finding one that can connect to your computer via a USB port. A quality microphone, which can be found at a reasonable cost, can help reduce unwanted noise during the recording process. You also may want to purchase some accessories, such as a stand, windscreen or set of headphones.

## Recording & Editing Your Podcast

If you are doing your podcast solo, without a cohost or guest, then the process is much simpler. You record to your computer; edit the raw recording as needed (taking out pauses or removing sections to tighten the episode); and add in the intro and outro. Recording and editing can be done using software such as Garageband (which comes standard with the Mac operating system), [Adobe Audition](#) or [Audacity](#). (The latter two both work on Macs and PCs.)

When guests or cohosts are offsite, you can use [Skype for recording remote interviews](#). The easiest way to actually record the remote audio (or video) is with [Ecamm Call Recorder For Skype](#) (Mac only) or Pamela (for Windows).

If you want better audio quality than Skype or a way to record audio remotely for more than two people, services like [Ringr](#) are excellent. They are designed for [remote recording](#) and podcast interviews, and they have apps that enable guests to join from their phones. The advantage of a service like Ringr is that, when you are done recording, you'll have two separate tracks that you can edit separately before combining them into one master track. Like the solo option, once you have your master recording, you can easily edit in the intro and outro.

## Launch Your Podcast

When you have your final audio file, it is time to launch the podcast. Are you hosting the file on your firm's webserver or are you going to use an external host? Do you plan to post to places like iTunes or Spotify, which gives you a wider audience reach?

Once you have determined where the file will reside, you need to market the podcast. Using both your own social channels as well as the firm's is a great way to get traction.

## Consider a Podcast Transcript

Having a transcript of your podcast is an excellent way for search engines (like Google) to “read” your podcast episodes. They also give your audience a way to look up something within the episode quickly. You don’t have to launch with episode transcripts, but it’s an add-on that will set you apart and help people find your content.

## Create Show Notes

Show notes can be full transcriptions, simple summaries of episode contents or full-length blog posts tailored more toward reading than listening. Some people choose to do a combination.

Podcasts can be a great alternative to breaking through the noise of blog posts. Leave me a comment below, or email me, Alan E. Singles, at [asingles@jaffepr.com](mailto:asingles@jaffepr.com) to tell me about your recent blog post or podcast experience.