

CITYWIRE

TIME TO



PUMP IT UP

REPORT



“

Social media, in the Cambridge Dictionary, is defined as; “forms of media that allow people to communicate and share information using the internet or mobile phones”.

Podcasting and short form audio are new-ish entries into the realm, but in some countries, they are more popular than more ‘traditional’ social networking sites. So we’ll be taking a closer look at podcasts in this booklet.

There are three sections to get your teeth into: **tips** (including some interesting stats), **trends** and **platforms**.



Laura Holland is Social Content Producer at Citywire, managing the company’s social platforms as well as coming up with new and engaging content.

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1. Tips

Maya Angelou was an incredibly talented poet, singer and story-teller who knew that what gave stories life was the voice that told them.

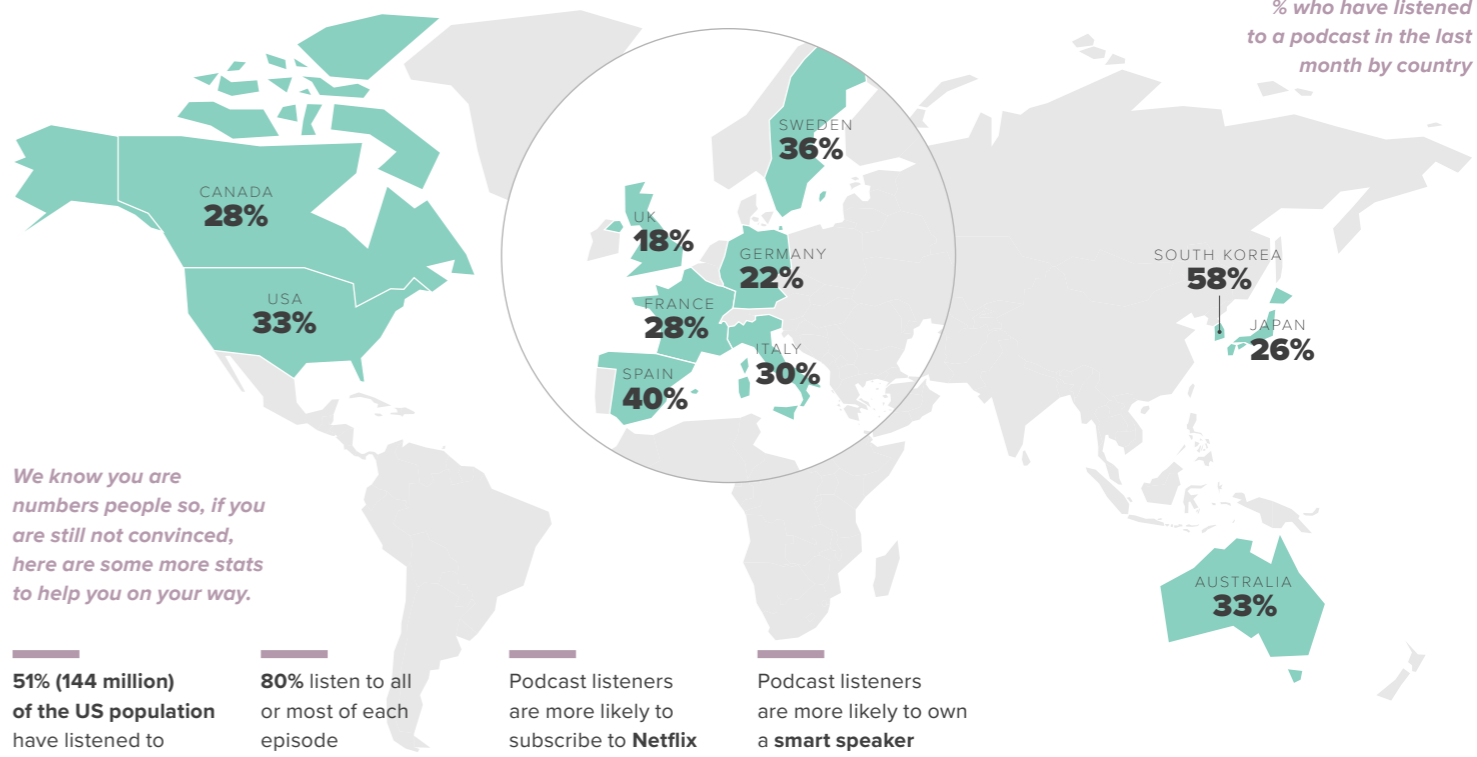
More and more people are now listening to podcasts. And some 49% of them are under 35. So if you are looking to target a younger audience, podcasts are where it's at.

As of June 2019, there are over 30 million active episodes for people to listen to across all podcast platforms (we'll look at these in a bit more depth later).

'WORDS MEAN MORE THAN WHAT IS SET DOWN ON PAPER. IT TAKES THE HUMAN VOICE TO INFUSE THEM WITH DEEPER MEANING'



MAYA ANGELOU
American poet, singer, memoirist and civil rights activist



We know you are numbers people so, if you are still not convinced, here are some more stats to help you on your way.

51% (144 million) of the US population have listened to a podcast

80% listen to all or most of each episode

Podcast listeners are more likely to subscribe to **Netflix** or **Amazon Prime**

Podcast listeners are more likely to own a **smart speaker**

Source: Statista The State of Podcasting

GET YOUR BRANDING RIGHT

Branding is more than a nice looking logo. You also need to think about:

1. Who your audience is

For this, think about the people you want to talk about your podcast; consider demographics, interests outside of your topic, location etc. Once you know what your average listener looks and thinks like you'll be better equipped to think about...

2. Your tone of voice

Thinking about your tone of voice is key in attracting and maintaining your audience. Informal and laid back? Or more business

orientated? Whichever way you decide the key is to ensure it's consistent; you don't want people to think 'I don't get it'

3. Your design

You do actually really want a thumbnail that catches your listener's eye while they are scrolling through the many other podcasts on a platform. Your design should also reflect your tone of voice and the audience you want to attract.

Unless you absolutely thrive under intense pressure, then the best advice we can give you is to plan your content ahead of time.

Create a content calendar (use Google Docs or other calendar templates) and plan out the topics and trends you want to talk about for the next six episodes. But be flexible so you can react to important news as it breaks.

PLAN YOUR CONTENT

TAKE CARE WITH THE FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

Those two words don't exactly inspire excitement or intrigue I know, but you'll thank me for it when you get into the swing of producing your podcast on a regular basis.

Having a set format and structure of how you create your podcast means that a) the audience knows exactly what to expect from your show (people love routine) and b) it makes it easier for you when you are preparing the dialogue, intros and outros.

There are a few different types of format to consider, including:



CONVERSATIONAL



INTERVIEWS



SOLO SHOWS

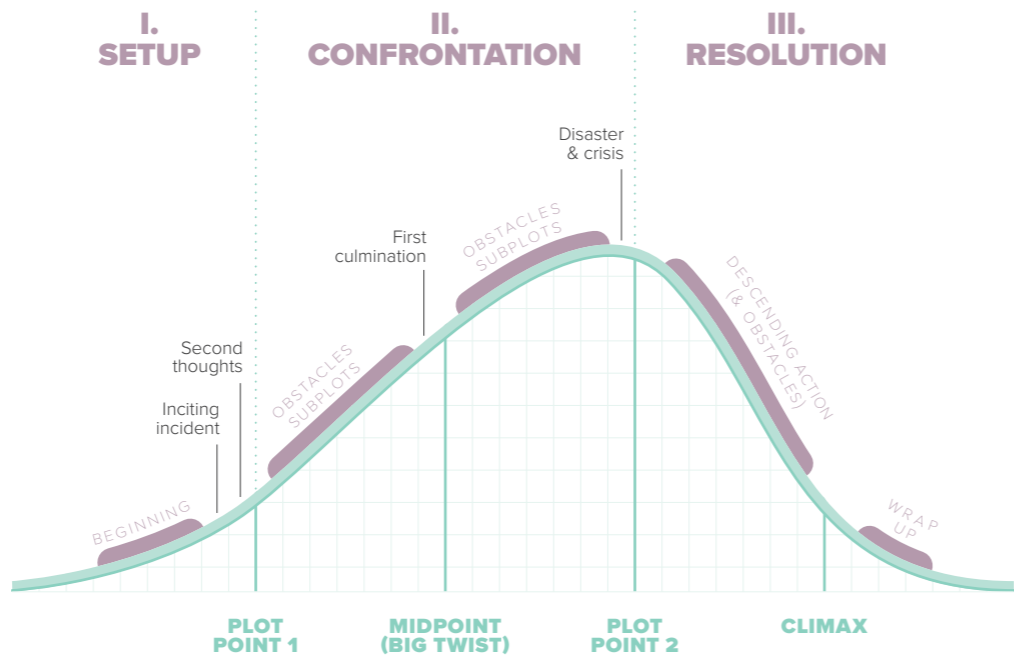


EDUCATIONAL

For the structure of the podcast, it's best to attack it the same way you would attack a film or book - in other words, have a beginning, a middle and an end.

- 1. Beginning.** This is where you introduce your listeners to the characters (you and your guest if it's conversational/interview style) and the plot (discussion topic). This is where you need to grab and retain the listener's attention.
- 2. Middle.** The middle part of your podcast should deal with an issue/conflict/problem, so depending on the topic at hand, this could be an issue you or your guest has had to deal with. Ask them perhaps what happened, why and what they did next. This is where the story telling element of podcasting comes in and is the meatiest bit of your production.
- 3. End.** The resolution of the plot, a nice round-up of how issues or problems were resolved and other key takeaways from the podcast itself. This should be the information your listeners hang around for so make it worth their while.

Here is a great diagram to illustrate the journey.



Source: Philipp Trübiger

BE CONSISTENT

I'll grant you it's not a sexy word, but it will get you results.

There is no point putting all the effort into branding and research into your audience if you are not going to be uploading content consistently.

The best podcasters have a set day and time when they release their show. To be able to be consistent you again need to PLAN your content out. Many fail because hosts/producers have simply not had time to record the shows. The audience will melt away fast.



‘What we need is a good opening sentence. Something that will smack the reader right between the eyes, and then take him on a virtual rollercoaster ride of self-awareness and discovery’

FRASIER CRANE

in the US comedy series Frasier, portrayed by Kelsey Grammer

2. Trends

STORYTELLING GOES LARGE

The days of ‘does what it says on the tin’ are over, people want to know the stories behind things now.

With financial planning for example, your objective is to make your listener the star of their own financial story.

Good storytelling should make your listeners feel connected to you and your brand, which ultimately will drive them to become an impassioned ambassador for your business.

Communities are making a comeback. Building a thriving community will help your brand grow tremendously.

It may seem like this trend has come out of nowhere, but it’s been building up to this point for a long while, from Facebook groups dedicated to genealogy to fandoms on Tumblr.

Now big brands are taking the essence of what a community means and implementing as part of their overall brand strategy. It is no longer what companies can get from customers; it’s about what added value companies can give to their customers.

COMMUNITIES GET MORE IMPORTANT

The rise and rise of short-form podcasts or Flash Briefings



Short-form voice will also be taking off thanks to home smart speakers (think Amazon Echo and Google Home). Sales of smart speakers have been consistently high in the US, but the UK and the rest of the world are catching up. As they do, we'll see demand grow for short-form podcasts.

Flash Briefings - which last from one to 10 minutes - can be set up on the Amazon Echo while short-form podcasts have a similar length.

Both are ideal for people who want to listen to short, to the point episodes in their home. This is great for daily news updates or specific campaigns you may have running.

NICHE GETS BIGGER

Broad subjects have a habit of becoming oversaturated very quickly. It doesn't take very long for the novelty of a lifestyle Instagrammer to wear off.

However if you have a very specific subject that you are passionate about and stick to, you will find that you hit a really good, highly engaged audience.

Before you dive into the niche you are passionate about, be sure to check out how many competitors are ploughing the same furrow and how big the demand for your topic is.

3. Platforms for podcasts

Every podcast needs a platform so people can find it and listen. There are hundreds of different platforms to host your podcast on. Here are three of the most popular:

SoundCloud

What

SoundCloud is one of the largest music streaming services in the world. Offering users both free and paid membership (so you can get rid of the ads), it is available in desktop, app and mobile format.

Why

One of the main draws for SoundCloud is how it allows you to embed across social media platforms and websites.

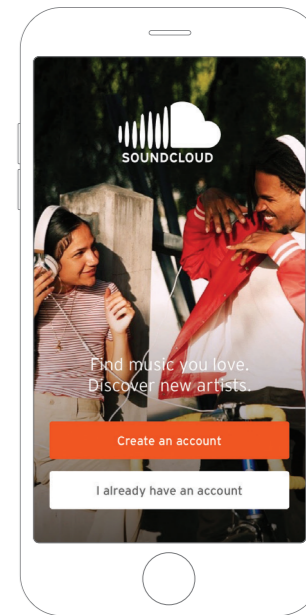
It's important to mention the cultural impact of SoundCloud too, as it has allowed musicians to get their music out there without the need for a record label. You may have heard Chance the Rapper

who has hit it big. To this day he has never signed to a record label or sold any of his music, because he doesn't want to put limits on it.

Don't let the heavy music aspect of SoundCloud put you off though - there are over 500+ business and finance podcasts on the platform and this is growing every day.

Numbers

SoundCloud has a basic analytics section so you can track how many people listened to your podcast, when and where they are, and which users listened to it the most. It will also tell you the most played episodes so you can work out which content works best for your audience.



Apple Podcasts

What

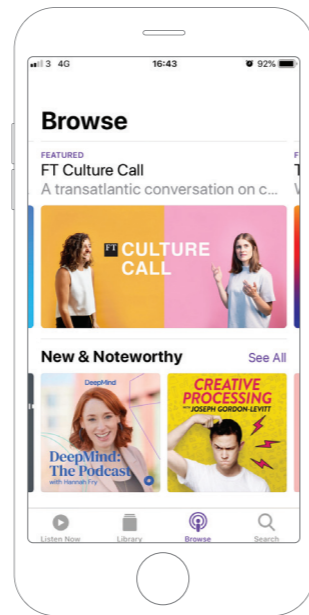
The Apple Podcasts app comes pre-installed on every iPhone so for a lot of people this is the default platform they use. It's free and users can subscribe to an unlimited amount of podcasts.

Why

Apple is really good for podcasting newbies - it has a great podcaster/creator section with help on best practice, marketing and mistakes to avoid.

Numbers

Apple's analytics are a bit more advanced, giving you total time listened, subscriber numbers and location. You also get the average time listened so you can see which episodes get listened to most. Listening duration is also there to help you work out when people switch off. Maybe they got the answer they were looking for early on in the podcast?



Spotify

What

Spotify is an amazingly popular music service that is now reinventing itself as a wider audio platform. This is why they have recently made the process of getting podcasts on the system pretty easy for anyone with an account.

Spotify has 100 million users for its paid for service and a further 117 million for its free ad-supported system. Subscriber numbers are growing at an impressive 32% a year, so to ignore this platform would be a bit foolish.

Why

What I like about using Spotify is its facility to share your podcasts onto Instagram Stories and other social platforms to give you access to a larger target audience.

Numbers

Some of the statistics available on Spotify include gender and age, which is obviously a great help in showing you who your audience is. The numbers also show your episode performance and even indicate at which points people dropped off, similar to Apple.

Given that you'll see most office workers sat at their desk with headphones in with Spotify on, I really do think this is one of the main platforms you should consider.

And finally... podcasting and voice may be new but radio has been with us for 100 years. So let's take some advice from a well-known and loved late broadcaster in the UK, Sir Terry Wogan, when he said:

'You are not talking to an audience, you are talking to one person - and they are only half listening anyway.'

Useful resources

- bit.ly/2j4vZTt - Podcast Insights - *Podcast statistics*
- bit.ly/2DKjbLv - Ofcom's UK podcast listening booms
- bit.ly/2kyh04W - Forbes - *Necessary tips for starting a podcast*
- bit.ly/2Q6dpVf - Pacific Content - *13 predictions for podcasting*
- bit.ly/2ITzw7O - Citywire - *Financial Planners need to be good at storytelling*
- bit.ly/2kkn9S8 - Forbes - *Why storytelling should be a priority for marketers*
- bit.ly/2IN4Rcu - Castos - *Podcast structure*
- bit.ly/2kltalo - Convertkit - *Podcast formats*
- bit.ly/2kKrNJ5 - Philipp Truebiger - *Three act structure*
- bit.ly/2IS6VzO - Blubrry - *Creating podcast media*
- bit.ly/2mgwDOT - Buzzsprout - *Apple podcast analytics*
- bit.ly/2kxPJ2B - Medium - *Using Spotify's podcast analytics*
- bit.ly/2J4JqNM - The Verge - *Spotify 100 million paid users*

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