

Balancing Time, Workflow, & Content. The Nuts & Bolts of Podcasting

Podcraft Season 20

Colin: Hey folks, and welcome to Podcraft, one of the longest running how to podcast series on the planet. I'm Colin Gray from thepodcasthost.com. And in this season, we're talking to some of the best independent podcasters in the business. On our last episode, we heard about the rewards of consistency. You know, that sheer traction you can get from having a chunky back catalogue that new listeners can jump in and binge. But it's all well and good to say, go out there and create loads of episodes when you might be intimidated by the idea of creating just one. So this time around, we're going to explore the nuts and bolts of timeframes, workflows and content creation. Here you'll get real world examples of how long it actually takes to run a successful podcast and how it can exist alongside other channels like blogging or video. But the question of Timeframes is a tricky one. As Vicki from bring your product idea to life points out, it's really hard.

Vicki: Because I think the time spent on each episode is probably the same, but what changes is how long between thinking about an episode, perhaps speaking with a guest, and actually the episode being released. And that is because over the past few years, I've really tried to streamline my process for producing the podcast. So, for example, I only record episodes one day a week. I can be flexible. If a guest says, you know, I absolutely can't do that day, then I can be flexible. But I only have so many slots a day, one day a week I will take breaks where I don't record because I do actually find it quite tiring. I don't know about you, but, you know, like, I don't know why this is, but I do find having, you know, like an intense conversation interviewing somebody, it is timing for me. I wouldn't want to do more than two a day. So I don't. I used to, but I found like, for me to get the best conversations, I don't want to be having too many of them. So recording in batches like this. So I might have two or three weeks where I'm recording two episodes a week, and then I can I record the introductions for those episodes separately. So, because I like to reflect on the conversation before recording the introduction, I then send all the files to the editor in one go because they also prefer to work that way. Rather than getting one a week, they much prefer to sort of have a batch to go with and then, you know, the actual process of uploading them and creating a social media post. And I do have help to do this now. Again, it's really good. If it's something we can do in advance, schedule a couple of episodes in one go, get the show notes written in one go. It just. I found that for me and for the team supporting me, it's the best way to work. So, yeah. So, in answer, that's a very long way to say that each episode probably takes the same amount of time, but the time it takes to get each episode out really depends on sort of how far in advance I'm recording. So, for example, I didn't record any podcast episodes in December because I had a busy December. So I finished recording at the end of November, and depending when exactly November, I recorded the episode. Some of those will be going out in the next few weeks, some of them will be going out closer to the end of February.

Colin: Here's Paul from the fighting through podcast.

Paul C: Working out roughly, I would say, anything between ten and 20 times for each episode. It depends what material I'm working with, but now, because I bring in feedback from listeners and it's become more of a magazine and there's stuff coming from all over the place that I've got to feed in, and that all takes time to curate. And, you know, I've probably got one episode that's going to come out at some point that I've been working on for a few years, because I know I'm going to do it some time and whenever any material comes along, I'll put it in a folder and all that takes time. And then, of course, just fine tuning the website, you know, it takes you half an hour just to sort your file out, your completed file, convert it into an MPEG and put that up on through Libsyn or whatever. It all takes time, and that's all part of the process. So, yeah, for an hour's show, it wouldn't surprise me if I took at least 10 hours to get the thing out.

Colin: Kathi - Wild for Scotland

Kathi: It's really hard to say that because a lot of the episodes I produce are bubbling away. The ideas for those episodes are bubbling away in my head for a very long time before I actually get to implement them and produce them. So, for example, season five, which is about. About Scottish Waters, aired from September to December 2023. But the idea for it I wrote down a year earlier, in October 2022. So that's when the idea for it was born. And then it took a few months to actually figure out the scope of the season, the types of stories to include, who I could interview, you know, so that took some time, but then really starting to work on the season probably started about in May or June. So about half a year to produce ten episodes, recording interviews, recording on location, writing stories and scripts and things like that. But when I produce an episode for a sponsor, for example, we say it takes about seven to eight weeks, including the kind of back and forth for feedback and approval of copy and audio elements and things like that. So I would say around that one and a half to two months for an episode. Not working on it every day, but just giving it time. And sometimes you need to let an episode lie as well. I need to let a script lie and then read it out aloud again before I can record it. Because it does need some edits in the copy. So it does take time. And the more time you can give it, the better from my experience as well, especially with scripted narrative episodes. So, yeah, roughly that.

Colin: James, the Euro trip.

James: It's a tough question, actually. And I think when we sit down to record. Well, actually, let's work backwards. When we put an episode out, we aim to make sure it's no longer than an hour. Sometimes it creeps over that just depending on what we've done, we're usually sitting recording with one another for maybe around an hour and a half, maybe 2 hours, depending on if we. We might just have a bit of a chat beforehand and that sort of thing. But then that slowly morphs into a bit of a planning meeting anyway. And then say we do some interviews beforehand. We might have one or two interviews on the episode. So say an interview takes half an hour to record. Sometimes we might snip that down to maybe quarter of an hour or something. But then obviously we have to put in some research before that. So say we're speaking to an artist who is representing their country in the coming months. Then we want to sit down, look at their. Look at their history, listen to some of their other songs and that sort of thing. So that might be another half an hour just to

research an artist might be longer than that. Then the editing as well. Let's say the episode is an hour long. You might have to edit for maybe 2 hours, depending on what else, you know, what other imaging might be in there as well. So I don't know. I'm trying to tell you how long it takes without actually giving you an answer. Because I don't really know what the answer is. But hopefully some of those timings might give you an idea about some of the work that goes into it. Robert, I don't know. Can you put a number on that.

Rob: I don't know if I can. No, I think you've. I think you've summed it up well. I mean, I think, you know, as with any podcast, and it depends kind of what you're covering week in, week out. But, you know, on location, for example, if we're recording an episode on location, I do find that is in some ways quicker because the format is probably more simple because you're providing coverage of an event, whereas when we're recording virtually, it is a bit more difficult to work out a format that works for us both. So we do have to put in the time and the hours. So I would say for a 1 hour episode. Regular. Regular episode. Not one of the special series that James mentioned earlier on. It's terrifying to actually say it out loud. What is it, maybe seven or 8 hours, I would say so maybe almost like a day's work. Effectively, when you add in cumulatively the sum that me and James would put.

James: Towards it, but then you think about it as well, and there isn't really a day that goes by where we aren't messaging each other, talking about the podcast, or talking about an idea that we've seen somebody do something, we think, oh, this could work. And then some of the social media that goes into it as well. So sometimes, you know, you're talking about it every day, whereas sometimes you can probably go a few days and not talk about something and it just sort of, you know, you can, you can still create a good enough episode. I mean, I remember sometimes you might see that an artist who has done Eurovision before wants to do Eurovision again, and they put a, you know, a simple post on social media saying that. And I remember, I think it was earlier this year this happened for a moldovan artist, and we saw a social media post and I thought, well, naturally we want to get them on the podcast. So I whatsapped their manager. The manager came back within two minutes and we got an interview set up for later that day. And I didn't really have to put much effort into that interview, for example, because we know who they were and they hadn't really given much detail out anyway, so there wasn't actually a lot to prepare for. So sometimes things can develop in the space of a two minute WhatsApp conversation, or sometimes it might take a couple of days or even a couple of weeks to prepare something bigger that we've actually got in mind.

Rob: But equally, like James just said, in terms of when we speak to each other basically every day about the podcast. And I would say, you know when we are in full swing, yes, we are probably talking every single day about the podcast but it does mean that when we get to the end of the Eurovision season it's a bit like me and James go through a divorce every year and I think we genuinely don't. We have probably like four or five weeks where we won't necessarily speak because I just think honestly I think we both just need that time to almost purge that year's like podcast and that year's coverage out of our system and to help kind of refresh and then go again.

James: I remember earlier this year I think yeah, we hadn't spoken for a good three weeks or something and then we decided to have a phone call and then he found out a lot of the things I'd actually been doing. I found out a lot of the things he'd been doing because we just hadn't spoken. But it's therapeutic in a way. It's good to sort of detach yourself a little bit cause you do need that bit of break sometimes.

Colin: Here's Alana and Samra from She Well Read.

Alana: Creation... okay. We did it by like okay a studio session's usually like an hour planning. We meet once a week. So that's what four weeks in a month so that's another 4 hours. So we're up to 5 hours and that's not including everything we do outside of our meetings. I'd factor in another 10 hours for that. So we're up to like 15 hours editing. It takes me depending on how long the episode is I'd say like two ish hours to edit. So we're up to like 1718 publishing. It takes like 30 minutes. Not even 30 minutes honestly. Like if I well at 30 minutes if I don't have like you know the description, the title blah blah blah. So I'd say like maybe 20 hours.

Samra: Yeah, round it on up.

Alana: But it's probably more like I've never really thought about it like that. That's quite a lot of hours on top of nine to fives, 40 hours work weeks and that's just for episodes. That's not if we do collabs. That's not if we're planning like sponsorships and like all the other things that we do.

Samra: Okay, wow, I'm putting in that work.

Colin: Let's hear from Susan of the Lush Life podcast.

Susan: Oh gosh, this is tough. So I interview for about an hour, I would say. I always think it takes about two days in total. If you calculate everything. What takes the longest time is the editing and doing the transcriptions. Those take a while, cause I want them to be really good. So sometimes I outsource them, sometimes I don't. It all depends. But that really takes the bulk of time is going through the transcription and then giving it to Ivo. We always have a week. I have to give it to him a week before it goes up. So I'd say about two days out of the week kind of takes.

Colin: dCarrie, Travel N Sh1t

dCarrie: I've shown up, sat down in front of the mic, having no idea what I'm talking about, and an hour later had an episode. Because why make it difficult? Like, I really think sometimes that we can be in our own way, and I don't want to say, decide to make things more difficult, but it can go from no prep time, just showing up and talking, and then it can go to weeks in advance. Like, okay, I've got tons of really, really good ideas that I have to find the perfect guest for. Or there are certain conversations that I don't want to have in a vacuum. A lot of my episodes are solo, but I also have a lot of really great guest episodes. And I find that the guest episodes are actually easier because it's so much easier to have a conversation with somebody than it is to talk to myself for an hour. And I also find that. That I would prefer to offer another voice or alternative opinions or even just alternative views on a topic for my audience. I don't necessarily want my voice to be the only one all the

time. So there are some episodes that take a little bit longer. A lot of things would be in terms of people's scheduling, where I'll pitch someone. And like, I recently pitched a woman that I found on booktalk, and she responded the same day. And let's say I found her content on Monday. I think I may have messaged her on, like, Wednesday. She responded Wednesday, and she scheduled for later in February. So that itself might be like a month or a two month window. And it can be. And a lot of it also is just, I made sure that the format of travel and shit was not going to be something that was going to need a lot of structure. I have conversations with people. I feel like a lot of times I go on trips and I just talk to people that I may not ever get the chance to talk to. And I walk away feeling so much more informed or so much more motivated or encouraged to do something just off of having, like, a ten minute conversation with my taxi driver in you know, in Costa Rica, and I feel like the episodes can be that. So I don't interview people, I just talk to people. It really just starts with an idea and it just depends on how much I develop the idea or keep it just to asking. Like, I'll usually come up with a solid three or four questions that I want to ask somebody. And I usually know that well before, you know, I want to have that conversation with them. So it doesn't really have to be a long process in terms of, you know, coming up with those questions or producing the show.

Colin: I mean, here's Daren from the 1% Better Runner podcast.

Daren: So on average it takes me to do one episode. It actually depends on a lot of things because I do this content stack approach, it does add a little bit more time, but it's actually not as much as you think. So if I'm doing the lazy, where I just do like a very blog listicle, top five things that brands need to do with their podcast, blah blah blah, or top. You know, I really, for the running one, I spend a bit more time, but for the brand podcast one, I actually just want to get more stuff out. I try not to polish it too much and spend too much time on it just cause I know that people definitely don't care about it. And getting my ideas out is more important than making it slick. Whereas my running podcast, I just want to spend a bit more time. Cause I like doing that. Like, I also want to make myself happy. So I'm like, let me spend extra 20 minutes making it sound slick. I'm fine with that. But the lazy one, I'd say four to 6 hours, depending on if it's an interview or if it's a solo cast, as someone calls it, or just me talking to the camera, that's probably four to 6 hours. And that's with lazy marketing where I might just let some AI stuff find the short clips. They're usually pretty average, sometimes bad, and I need to go in there and find the clips. But yeah, when I try to let AI write the blog post, they suck too. So I try to do a little bit or I just won't do it at all if I'm being lazy. Four to 6 hours, and then on the bigger end, it's nine to 11 hours, sometimes more. I'm working on one right now with a fitness brand and it's like kind of like my journey and my story with them and doing all these tests and protocols in the gym and you know, lifting weights and all this stuff. And there's a lot of my own b roll in my own footage. So that I realized it added a lot more time to it, and I wanted to interject my personal story. So that was more to nine or 11 hours. And I'm going to spend, I usually spend about 2 hours, one to 2 hours of that, 10 hours doing marketing. So about ten to 20% doing marketing, which is video podcast stuff. And on this one I'm probably going to spend a bit more. Cause I want to, like, I call squeezing the lemon, getting the most, squeezing the fruit, getting the most juice out of the fruit, and really letting it do what it needs to do on social media, because a lot of this stuff is very visual and there's a lot of grabs. So that's kind of like a real example. Long form content, the planning, one to 2 hours, the recording, 1

hour, the file sorting, 30 minutes. Editing another 2 hours, depending if it's video and audio, depending on how long the type of edits, and then it's 2 hours. So like, yeah, easily right there, 10 hours. Boom. So it's hard to make it less than six, 7 hours without it just being a Joe Rogan style. Hey, I recorded a thing and now it's straight up. And sometimes I want to do that. I just want to record it and put it straight up. And I have tried that. I have tried to just hack it, still make it feel polished, and just immediately publish it. But because I'm doing video that has added a little bit more time, not that much like I say, 20% more time, adding video, 30% more time, not three x more time, because I got my systems tight and because I do social media stuff. But again, like I said, it's all part of the holistic campaign, the episode campaigns. And it's not just this, just the audio that's going out. And if I spent 10 hours on just the audio, which I know some people do, I'd be like, like, I want to give it a chance to kind of float out there and reach, get its tentacles out there and reach as many people as possible.

Colin: Andrea, the savvy social podcast.

Andrea: So it falls into a few different buckets since I have team helping me. But from my input, usually my time is about an hour per episode. So the episodes are about 20 minutes long. So I spend a good 20 minutes taking notes. And usually I have ideas along the way because I talk about this so much in so many other places. So it's taking notes, thinking of ideas, outlining the episode, and then I'll sit down to record it. It takes about 20 minutes, 2030 minutes. And then I do review the show notes and things as they're created. So all in, it's about an hour, hour and 15 minutes of my time. It takes my video editor about five to 6 hours to edit a video. So it is quite hefty. But we do see that discovery platform being really well for us with YouTube in their SEO, and so we find that that helps. And then my audio editor probably takes her about 2 hours to edit the audio for a 20 minutes episode. And then the writer, it's a little hard to pull out just the podcast because while he's writing the show notes, he's also adding to our we have like a digital data bank of social media, like potential social media posts. So not only is he writing the show notes and like the initial social media posts, but anything he hears, like a quote or a thought or like even just an analogy I use, he's putting into our database as well. But it usually takes him about 2 hours to do all of that as well. So a lot of time and effort goes into the podcast. But like I said, it is our main content avenue, and it gets repurposed in so many different ways.

Colin: As we've learned so far, there's a wide variety of timeframes, caveats, and other considerations here. But one thing's for sure, no matter how long it takes them, our creators always do the work and get the job done. Here's Andrea again, talking about the things she does to help get her show out on a regular basis.

Andrea: I try to be ahead as much as possible ahead of schedule, especially having a toddler and she's in daycare now. The toddler colds, they get me, they get me down and out, and I, there's been a few episodes where I just powered through, but most of the time, if I'm not feeling well, I don't want to record an episode. And so I make sure that I'm ahead enough of schedule to allow for that flexibility, and that helps keep me going. And then the other thing is, I feel like I've done it so much now that, and it feeds into so many other things that it feels like a requirement. Whereas YouTube, for me, even though I do have a YouTube strategy and I produce

YouTube videos, it's easy for me to go, well, there would just be no YouTube video this month because it's not heavily reliant on my entire marketing kind of ecosystem. Whereas the podcast, it's like if I don't produce a podcast episode, we have no main content going out. We don't have social posts, we don't have emails. We're not building out our content database. So so much relies on the podcast that it makes it easy for me to go, like, this is just a core part of what I do, so it makes it easier to keep going as well.

Colin: Here's Daren on staying consistent.

Daren: I have ADHD and probably a touch of obsessive compulsion. I call them open loops. And I don't like when things are, you know, the loop is here and it's like, eh, it's like, no, close the loop. Close the loop. So I have become so obsessive and anal about processes and systems and schedules and routines and habits and batching, batching, batching, batching. So I record a lot of video podcasts. Even though my setup is pretty much the same, it does take me about 1015 minutes to get my camera sorted, to get a couple things going. And I do kind of, like, I clean things up a bit more. So I'm like, look, if I'm gonna do all that, I'm gonna have my teleprompter here for my script and my outline. I'm like, I might as well record three of them. So I try to record, like, depending on time, once a month, I'll record three or 410 to 20 minutes solo cast episodes. Or if I record with a guest, I'll be like, all right, let's record three episodes in this next. I got you for two, two and a half hours. Let's record 330, 45 minutes long episodes. So I'm all about patching, and then that allows me to do every single stage in a batched way. So I've now recorded. So now I'm going to file manage all four of the episodes that I've recorded. Cause that's a whole other brain. I call them hats. You got to put this hat on. You got to put that hat on. And then it's like, all right, now I'm going to do the. I'm going to go through and do what's called dialogue editing is what I call it, where I find all the points that need to be edited out and, you know, technical edit and editorial edit. So I'm gonna do that for all the episodes. Okay, now I'm gonna do my editing, and I'm gonna do this editing for all the episodes. So I would just kind of, like, go through with batches. And again, having, like, this day is for this. This day is for that. That works extremely well because this is very different. Than short form content, you know, Instagram, TikTok stuff. Even though I'd say for that too, you probably wanna record, you know, once a week or once a month, ten little short videos, record all of them, and then cool. Now I'm going to edit them this day. And now I'm going to get ready and do my captions descriptions this day I'm going to do my thumbnail this day. It's kind of the same thing, like all content. I mean, it's like assembly line anything. It's way easier to start something and do a whole bunch of other things. Why when you make a t shirt, does it cost \$150 for one t shirt? And then it's dollar 25 if you order 50 t shirts, because they set up the whole printing press and it's like, you get the shirts in, it's someone's time. It's someone's time and resources. So you might as well do one thing that you have your brain set on in that time and then try to knock out, if you can, multiple episodes versus the other way, which I used to do, trying to do everything all at the same time. And it was like, okay, now I recorded, okay, I'm gonna do a little bit editing today, but before I edit, I now have to do file management and, oh, now I need to get this. I'm tired. Okay, next day, let me start editing. I'm doing. Let me edit all the parts and then do the. And it's like, no, just do them all in sequences. But you have to figure out what that looks like for you. And that's hard. That takes a while. Cause everyone is different. And yeah, there's ways to do it, but you gotta see

what's out there and then try for your own. And trial and error, where it's tempting to just try to do everything all at once because you're like, that's easy, but it actually is the sloppiest, slowest way. And you're not gonna be consistent. Going back to your original question. Also, having an evergreen style show helps because that helps with the batch processing. And I think even if you had a 24 hours news cycle, you could do batch, batch production, and batch recording. If your content was based on like, breaking news, breaking news, you got to come out with something every 24 hours. But not too many podcasters do that. It's quite the people that can do that already have system set in place, I feel. And yeah, podcasting is probably not the best medium for a DIY podcast. With a little budget, the people putting out a podcast every day about breaking news. Like, that's usually a media company that has a proper team doing that. And yeah, I have a strong opinion that everyone looks at Joe Rogan and they see the run and gun style recording and publishing. You record it and publish it straight, that's fine. But I just feel like it's not the best because that's hard to replicate and stay consistent unless you, unless you, Joe Rogan, unless you do certain types of content, you have access to celebrities and there's so many other factors. Whereas if you just want to put out good information from people and help them, then usually that stuff can last a few months to a few years. So you can record something and then three months later put it out and that's fine.

Colin: That's great advice from Daren and can work brilliantly for some. But remember, there's rarely any one size fits all answer in podcasting. Here's Susan talking about why batching isn't a good fit for her own content.

Susan: Oh, gosh, no. I could never interview a lot of people in one day. In fact, even two in a week is a little just taxing for me with everything that I do. And I really do a lot of research on the person beforehand, and I just, my brain can only handle, I think, at least one a week.

Colin: So I hope you're enjoying this podcast, and if you're keen to try doing this yourself, creating your own podcast. We created a tool called Alitu many years back now designed to make it as easy as humanly possible to make a podcast. It's got call recording in there. You can record solo, and then it automates a lot of the technical stuff. You get all of your audio cleaned up to make it sound sweet, and you get your theme music and your transitions added in automatically. Plus the editor allows you to edit your audio in the easiest way possible, podcast specific. And it's got text based editing in there, too. So you can edit as if you're editing a word document. Then finally, hosting, you can publish your podcast to the world right inside Alitu using our own hosting, or you can connect to many of the most popular podcast hosts out there. So it just makes it super easy to go right from recording to editing to publishing all in one place. That's what Alitu is designed to do to save you tons of time and a good bit of money bringing everything into one place. So if you want to try it out, go over to [Alitu.com](https://alitu.com). That's alitu.com, and you can use the free trial to see if it works for you. Now back to the show. And you might remember in the last episode we heard from some of our podcasters who take a seasonal approach to help them stay consistent. One of those podcasters is Kathi of Wild for Scotland.

Kathi: The thing that made it the easiest for me to be consistent is to do themed seasons. Not to put the pressure on myself to produce a new episode every week or every month, but really thinking about a season, making a plan for ten episodes that

are all somehow related and then just producing those. And then that way the listeners know that they will get ten episodes and then they'll have to wait again. You know, I'm setting up the expectation for that to be the case so they're not disappointed. And it makes it more manageable for me to pick episodes to know how many, you know, how much money do I need to produce the show on the one hand, but also how much time do I need to set aside? How many weeks will I be busy with this and then plan that into my daily life and into my business schedule as well? So yeah, the themed seasons have been the single most important thing for me to produce the podcast until this day. So for three years, I don't think I would still be doing it if I tried to do a new episode every week. And then I think, you know, other people do an episode a month and that's, if that's what works for them, that's totally fine. But I think for me, I quite like the short, burst, focused amount of weeks and months that I work on the podcast. Everything's related, and then I can move on to a different project until I get back to the podcast in a few months to time.

Colin: Another seasonal podcast in our midst is the euro trip. Here's James talking about how they get back on the horse after a break.

James: We usually take a break over the summer for one or two months, and then we kick start with a couple of special series. So one called the contest on me, where we do long form interviews with people involved in the contest. And then we do another mini series called Rewind, where we look back at a certain edition of the contest from years gone by and try and uncover new stories and try and tell the story of the contest in a way it hasn't been told before. And then really from Christmas onwards, it's at least one episode a week. Then we've got our, our Melfest Monday series that we do on top of that. And then there's always a handful of bonus episodes in there as well, so if you're lucky or unlucky, depending on who you are, you might get three episodes from us a week. But it's always at least one episode from basically August all the way through to. To me, really.

Colin: Here's James's co host Rob on the other ways they collaborate to keep things moving along.

Rob: So we always have, well, as most podcasts should always do, I have a set release day. So given that we have a set release day, we always have a set recording day as well, which kind of helps us structure our week when it comes to planning an episode. You know, we know what deadlines we're working to, we know what timeframes we're working to. Ideally, we will record on a Monday if the episode is going out on a Wednesday, which means we can be as up to the minute as possible. So hopefully we won't miss any. Any news that we would otherwise ideally like to talk about in the episode. Although it does definitely tend to happen once you kind of get in full Eurovision season. And there is a lot of news out there. So, yeah, we record on a Monday, always a set recording day, I think, really does help us stay consistent, and we are both pretty good in terms of me and James, of sitting down and setting aside time if we know that it is one of us to edit that week. Because, as I say, we do have our kind of pre assigned weeks as to who is editing the podcast that week. But you also almost now sounds like I'm going against all of my advice, but you also have to be flexible to be consistent because, you know, if there's a week where it's my week to edit and James had edited the previous week, but I go to James and say, oh, I'm really sorry, something's come up I can't get out of, then the

other person has to be flexible enough to be like, oh, well, I can do it, I can take it, I'll edit it that week and then I'll do a double editing, you know, two weeks in a row or something. Like, there's a lot of give and take and you have to be flexible because if you're not flexible, you almost end up restricting yourself to the point at which the content suffers.

James: Yeah, I think on top of what Rob was saying about that flexibility, it's about knowing your own. Your own, I don't know your boundaries, but perhaps I'm looking for a better word than boundaries, but knowing what you can actually achieve if you're working by yourself or if you're working as a duo like us or as a larger team. Obviously you want to aim for the stars, but you do really have to rein it in sometimes. And we definitely have. I'm sure we've had grand ideas and had to bring them back down to earth a little bit because we know it's just not achievable with what else we've got going on, you know, jobs or family life and that sort of thing. Because obviously it did start as a passion project and has grown a little bit, probably further than we thought it would have done. So just knowing what actual scope you do have, if you've got a few hours spare here or a day off there, but making sure you do actually have time to do what you want to achieve with the podcast without, without giving yourself far too much work on your plate.

Colin: Audio is, and always has been the primary medium in podcasting, and it's powerful enough that you can have incredible success by doing audio and nothing else. But some podcasters also publish written and video content to good effect, and they set it up in a way that doesn't demand too much extra time either. Here's Daren.

Daren: How hard it is to define what a podcast really is now that it's taken this multimedia identity in a way. And this is where I start getting existential and I'm like, but I mean, a podcast is just content and, you know, depending, even if you do it, people have done blog interviews, people have done video interviews since the beginning of time. So, like, an interview is just someone coming up with questions, doing research, and then it just depends on the medium. It just so happens to be people talking without video, but now it's video, and now it's a blog, and, you know, it's just all these different things, and now it's social media, and social media, like, it all just comes back to, I have information in my brain, and I'm trying to put it in your brain in a valuable, effective way that you can remember it and then think I'm valuable, and then I can extract value from you. And that value can be laughs, or it could be trust, or it could be money. You know, a lot of people think value is money, but it could be so many different things. So that's the thing that keeps surprising me about podcasting, is that I think it's the most malleable, flexible content medium because it starts at writing and you just put a video camera in front of your microphone or in the studio session where you're recording someone. And now it's three things. Whereas video, usually you have the boom mic. So you have to have the mic, someone up, and the video, if you just do a video interview, the audio quality is like, meh. And obviously a blog, you have to have audio there. You have to have video there to like, you have to set that up. So the fact that the podcast actually is this special kind of a superhero of all the content pieces, I find that surprising that I landed in the one that allows all my random generalist ADHD to bounce around sort of curiosities. It allows it to actually flex all of them, and they all can shine in a way. That's the fun, crazy answer. But another one is, it really doesn't matter. What you do is another thing that surprises me. It's who you affect and how you affect them.

People I know that follow all the rules, that you're supposed to do this, supposed to do that, supposed to do that. They don't move the needle. Their podcast does nothing. And then there's brands and companies that break all the rules, don't know what they're doing, and they crush it. And I'm like, what are you doing that's working? And I like, early on, I tried to do what this other brand did. It was one of my clients. I was like, I'm going to do that. I failed. I was like, how did she do that? And she just, it just worked. Like, there's a level of, I'm gonna call it magic that, you know, you have the right product, the right service, the right content at the right time is gonna serve the right audience, and they're just ready for it. And if anyone else would have tried to do that at that time or at a different time, it wouldn't have worked.

Colin: Vicki ran her blog before she started her podcast, and having that existing bank of written content was a brilliant launch page to create podcast episodes from.

Vicki: The blog still does exist, but it's completely different now. So now the blog and the podcast kind of are more linked together in the way that if I do a podcast episode that makes a good, would make a good blog post, I'd also do a blog version of that episode. And it also works the way that you alluded to earlier, whereas I was definitely going back over my original blog post and saying, you know, which of these would make a good podcast episode? Not so much now, because I'm nearly four years in now, and the blog has kind of evolved, as I say, beyond that. And I feel like now the blog more supports the podcast. But in the early days, it was definitely the other way around, where I was taking a lot of inspiration for episodes from blog posts that I'd written that had been popular in the past because I kind of felt if it worked well as a blog, and obviously I could deliver it in a way that was interesting, it would potentially work well as a podcast episode as well.

Colin: Andrea was a youtuber before she was a podcaster. So how does she differentiate between the types of content she serves up in video versus audio?

Andrea: So, initially, there wasn't a lot of difference between how I created content on video versus audio. But now my audio conversations tend to be more on strategy, less on tactics and how to's. So while I may talk about how to get more engagement on Instagram, for instance, I'm not going to share my screen and show you a way to do that, which I would do on video with audio, I may describe it, but I'm keeping it very high level and just talking through examples and things like that. And so for me, audio is more about the storytelling and the strategy, and video is more of the tactical and the implementation of that strategy.

Colin: And here's Andrea's wider take on the relationship between audio and ready for I.

Andrea: Think my personal use of podcasts definitely clouds my opinion because I don't watch any podcasts on YouTube. Like, I the, if you use the app on your phone, you can't even close out of the app. You have to keep it open, which is annoying. So, personally, I listen to podcasts on the app. I'm Spotify is my app of choice. But even Spotify now has the ability for you to upload videos, and so you can see the video podcasts in the app, which, again, I'm not a huge fan of it, but if people like it, great. But from a marketing perspective, I can see people watching our YouTube videos, not as many, not nearly as many as our podcast. So our YouTube videos probably

get maybe 500 views per episode. Maybe. Probably when it first launches, it's like 100. But we have some dedicated people over there who like watching the show. And anecdotally, people say they find us on YouTube. So that's really where YouTube kind of fits into our video podcasting strategy is. If someone's looking for, let's say, Instagram strategy for 2024, they land on the podcast, right in the description, we say, go listen in your favorite podcasting app. And so while they found that video and they watched it there, I do feel like from a user journey perspective, they're going to the app again. It's very hard to track that. I basically just have to ask people, but anecdotally, several people have said, we found you on YouTube and so that has helped as well. And then outside of that, we repurpose so much because we repurpose the video clips. To me, that's the biggest use of the videos, is repurposing the clips to social. I just don't. I don't know how many people are sitting there watching YouTube interviews, but I know, like, you know, take like a Joe Rogan, for instance, the three hour episodes. People watch them. So, hey, everyone's different.

Colin: I guess one of the biggest takeaways of this season so far is the importance of consistency and sustainability. You need to pick your battles and manage your resources carefully. With that in mind, here's Kathi on our own video and YouTube experience.

Kathi: So I have used YouTube in the past to create video versions of the podcast. It's a bit tricky because what I would love to produce is a video version of the podcast that just shows videos, actual videos of the places we feature. But in terms of the production and making that a reality, to have long enough, or footage that is long enough to do that, our episodes are a minimum of 25 minutes is just a lot of effort, and I would have to revisit quite a lot of places to create those, to produce that footage and to film that footage. So we have used YouTube in the past and I've made kind of on canva again. It's one of my favourite tools, I think I use a lot. We've created slideshows that show faces and show the faces of our interview guests or pictures of the destinations. But to be honest, I don't think. Well, looking at the stats, it hasn't actually made a big dent in the amount of people that listen to our episodes. So I've stopped doing that again. I did it for about two seasons and those videos are up there and people can watch them. But I think the experience is actually not that much different from listening to the audio version or watching it on YouTube. So I've actually not dabbled very much in the new podcast systems on YouTube either, or using YouTube shorts. That's definitely something I would like to try more of, but it's not something I've done a lot of yet. I think it's about time and resources, to be quite honest. I do a lot of. I have an editor I work with, but I do a lot of the marketing and content production myself, and there's just a limited amount of time and resources to do these things. So, yeah, unfortunately I've not done much in that direction.

Colin: Yet back at the beginning of the episode, we talked about timeframes. A lot of this stuff is hard to track because it's pretty intangible, and none more so than the act of formulating, documenting, developing ideas. So back to Kathi, now, who tells us about her own systems and processes.

Kathi: I have a notebook, which is always on my desk and with me on my trips. So if something comes to me, then it either goes in the notebooks or in a notes app on my phone. But then, because I work with an editor and she also gives me feedback on

ideas for new episodes, I do use Google Drive quite religiously for everything in my business and everything in my life. To be honest, I have spreadsheets for probably every aspect of my business and personal life. So Google Drive is a really good place for me to start folders and documents with ideas for new episodes or new seasons, lists of potential interview guests or things like that. So I do tend to write these things down, and then I forget about them. And then when I feel like I need to start focusing on the next season, I go back and I'm like, oh, yeah. Sometimes I start two documents half a year apart from each other, and they say exactly the same. And then I realize I've already had this idea and then I know I need to do it because clearly it's a good idea. But yeah, I wish I had a much better system. But yeah, Google Drive is probably the best I can come up with.

Colin: One of the downsides of being creative in a field that you're passionate about is that you can start to feel like you're drowning in a sea of unexecuted ideas. Here's dCarrie on how she handles this.

dCarrie: I'm a note girl. I am absolutely a note girl. Let me see if I can find how many notes I actually have. I currently have in all icloud 1765 notes, and then in just my notes folder, which, because I have no organizational skills, which is wild. Like, I'm really good with highlighters and post its and making things look pretty. But when it comes down to it, I am really shit at organizing. And then I've got, like another 1241 notes. So I've got a. I've got thousands of notes, and then I've got a ton of voice notes. I've probably. I'm looking at in this moment, six journals, six notebooks in one pile, another four in another pile. I write everything down. And there is no system to it. It's a mess. It really is. But what I have found that has started to make that all make more sense is notion. Now, I am still new to notion. I'm not the greatest at it, but it allows me to have a little bit of let's make it pretty while also. Okay, well, let's make this make sense because I'm a very in the moment kind of girl. So if in the moment episode ideas is the title I'll use for a folder, but then a month or two later I want to go back in and find what those episode ideas like. I'm going in to write something down now I'm calling it production ideas or show notes. And so, like, I'll name them so many different things and they'll be all over the place. So I really do struggle with the planning of it all, if you will. But notion has slowly been kind of helping me in, you know, keeping it in one spot and being able to kind of access the ideas a little bit more cleanly. And I haven't really gotten together the relations and connections and all of those little fun things that the software allows you to do to kind of build on your storage and your making things make sense. But for now, just having it all in one app is a lot better than me having a pile of dozens of literal post its, my notes on my phone, and then twelve notebooks of ideas. So it's a lot. And I don't, again, I just have to not beat myself up. It is what it is. What are you going to do? Are you going to sit and be mad that you've got thousands of ideas that aren't going anywhere? Or are you just going to maybe go through the dozen that are in one notebook on a given weekend and maybe put them into notion or all right, so I've got a ton of shit in notion. Let's make sense of what's here in front of me and see what we can do with that. And a lot of it has really just been being gentle with myself. My brain works just in a lot of different ways for a lot of different tasks, and we're all responsible for doing a lot of stuff in life. So it's kind of like my job is hard enough, the nine to five. Why am I going to make what is supposed to be fun for me not fun for me? So at that point, I kind of just have to give myself the nice voice and it's like, it's okay, girl, you'll be fine. You're always fine. And you can be fine later. Let's just

start with one idea. I don't want to let myself think that there is a magical someone else that will come into this travel and shit world that'll make it better. I can figure out how to do that on my own because I'm me, and this show is a reflection of me. And I think if more of us kind of just, hey, you're okay. You're doing an okay job because this is your, this is your fun space, then we would be able to turn our creative endeavors into actual businesses that we'd want to stick with as opposed to, you know, going the business route and letting it be a really great, successful business that we hate. That's one thing I refuse to do. That's not going to happen with this.

Colin: The biggest barrier facing podcasters since the medium began has always been editing and production. And as Mur Lafferty has been in podcasting from just about day one, she's had to get through a fair bit of editing in her time. But that doesn't mean it's always plain sailing.

Mur: I've gone through phases. I've gone through phases of this is what I put out. And if I worried too much more about it, it probably wouldn't come out at all. So this is what you get. And then there are times when I do have the attention to go through and get rid of ums. And ahs are okay, but for me it's pauses, which I guess is just another um. Just, it's a silent um. And I try to clip those and sometimes I'll make a note. If I remember to make a note during the recording that I've gone on a tangent or the dog has started to bark or the stream has gone down, then I can cut that out. So right now I'm in more of a tighter production kind of thing. But I have had episodes where it's just like, here it is. I managed to get the theme music on it, so that's what I got.

Colin: Live streaming has helped Mur consistently record episodes. As she explains here, the big bottleneck is still the editing of them.

Vicki: Oh, it's huge. It's a huge bottleneck because if I can remember to do it during the stream, I try to do half a podcast that is purely me talking, and then the other half is me interacting with chat to get questions and them kind of drive the topic. And the whole episode goes out to the supporters on Patreon and my newsletter. And the more concise, tight one goes out to the podcast feed. So I'm really doing two episodes for every episode and knowing I have to do those two edits and produce the shows and make sure that the right show notes get on the right one. And posting it all is just where everything just grinds to a halt. I hate it.

Colin: Here's Paul from the joy of cruising on his own editing struggles.

Paul T: That has been the toughest part of podcasting, because I'm learning things. I use, I have a Mac, so I use garageband to edit. And, and, you know, here I am a year in, and I'm learning some, some, some tips and tricks with garageband almost every time I edit a podcast. I wish that I knew all of these things a year ago. You know, editing is very labor intensive. I have to edit because I have a lot of uhs and ums, things like that. I do very little editing of my guests. Now, lately, I've had an added dimension to my editing because I got picked up about several months ago, I got picked up by a radio station. So they air my podcast one day a week on this radio station, and they give me an hour slot. And so most of my shows are less than an hour, but sometimes I go over an hour. And if it's a really good show or a show that I really want to be played on the radio, because I kind of can pick what's on the radio, I

will edit it down to an hour just so that it will fit on the radio show. Now, there are other shows. Like, I have one on, I have one on Monday, and it's an hour and 15 minutes. So I can either choose to give that to the radio station as an hour and 15 minutes, and they'll just, you know, they'll play it for an hour, and then the next program will come on, or I can just decide, well, I won't give that one to the radio station. So. So, since I got on radio, I do edit out content. You know, I edit out some of the guests input more so than I used to, but I try not to do too much editing of the guests, but I do a lot of editing of me. But, yeah, it's very much, it's very labor intensive and very trial and error.

Colin: And as much as Paul feels that editing can be a challenge at times, he takes issue with the suggestion that podcasters should. You'd skip this stage altogether.

Paul T: So I saw this one thread. The person said, I don't edit. I like things to be natural or something like that. And there were a lot of responses, and you wouldn't believe how many people were in agreement. And I just replied. I said, simply, I'm shocked at how many people are responding that they don't do any editing of their podcasts and maybe that they have a great show. I don't know. But all I know is I have gained traction, and I like to believe that it has a lot to do with the fact that I do editing and I try to make my program, you know, tight. So, yes, that is another common mistake that I see new podcasters make is to think that they could just throw things out there without editing.

Colin: If you feel intimidated by editing or fear it's going to take valuable time away from your content, there's a few ways around this. Some of our podcasters prefer to outsource editing so that they can focus on the stuff they love. Here's Kathi.

Kathi: So I actually found my editor before I realized I was going to do a podcast. She's been working in the podcast industry quite a long time, longer than me. And she had also produced her own podcasts way before I met her. And we met through, we were both listening to the same podcast, and we both submitted a voice note for an episode that they had opened up to their listeners. And because we were the only two people who lived in the UK who submitted voice notes, the host connected us and said, oh, you two should know each other. You know, you should meet each other and be friends. So we became friends and kind of kicked it off and we stayed in touch. And then when I started complaining about feeling useless during the pandemic and thinking about, oh, maybe there's a podcast idea in there somewhere, she encouraged me and she said, here's what you need to do. Just do it. Just go for it. So I edited my own first season, and then I said, never again, thank you very much. You can do this now. And so she's been editing the podcast since season two, doing all the sound design and also giving me production feedback and really being a big sounding board for ideas and partnerships and things like that, she's brilliant. So, Fran Tarowski, she's absolutely fantastic.

Colin: And here's Vicki now, talking about building a team around her podcast, which allows her to do the things she does best.

Vicki: So I work with a virtual assistant who was someone that I knew from a network out, and so she oversees the production of getting each podcast episode out. That isn't to say she does everything. It used to be a case where she would sort

of do the whole process, but now she outsources, you know, the social media and the creating the artwork and all the different aspects to the most appropriate people on her team, but she basically is responsible for from when the episode's edited, for everything that comes after that. And that, as I said, that was someone that I knew started to work with. Initially, I was just outsourcing. You know, can you do the social media for me, or can you help with getting the emails scheduled? And over time, I've outsourced more and more of the process. And the reason I started it was, it was a few years ago now, and I was kind of aware that we were coming up to the summer holidays. I think it was the first year I had two kids in school, therefore two kids home for the summer. And I was just thinking, either I've got to do a load of work to have all my episodes scheduled by the end of July, or I need some help. And that's what motivated me to get help with that. And then about a year ago, I started outsourcing the editing. Up until then, I'd been doing that all myself, but I decided to outsource that for a couple of reasons. One is that I don't enjoy it. I just don't find it fun. And the second thing is, I don't think I'm that good at it. And obviously, as the show grows and I get more listeners, I want to make sure the quality is good, because there's nothing worse than listening to a podcast where you're like, the sound quality's terrible. It hardly ever happens, does it, nowadays. But it's definitely happened to me in the past where I've listened to something and I'm like, that doesn't sound good. You know, the volume's all over the place, or whatever it is. And I fully recognize that I am probably not capable of doing that myself. So I would rather find someone who can do a really good job of that for me.

Colin: You've been listening to Podcraft, brought to you by thepodcasthost.com. We've learned a lot today about the timeframes and the workflows of making a podcast. And as we heard in that final section, editing and production can still be a roadblock, even when you're an established and an award winning podcaster. From years of experience helping people launch and grow their shows, we know that very few folks enjoy editing and even fewer feel like they have the time to do it properly. Well, that's exactly why we built our own podcast maker tool, Alitu. Alitu is designed to be the easiest way to put your podcast together from start to finish. It's an all in one platform that includes call recording, editing, audio cleanup, and publishing and transcriptions too, all in one place. So you can record and have it put straight through to your editing. Then you can edit either in text or in the audio waveform, or even a combination of both. I like to do a bit of top level editing in the text editor and then actually refine the details in the audio waveform. And then you can publish on Alitu's hosting or publish out to any other host that we link to, which is, well, most of them. So if that sounds good, go and grab a 14 day free trial with Alitu. That's over at Alitu.com. Alitu.com and see if it works for you. Up until now, we've learned about what it takes to create great content on a consistent basis. On the next episode, it's time to transition towards marketing, promoting, and getting that content out there. Our indie pod legends will talk us through their own podcast growth experiences, from how they got their first few listeners to what they regularly do nowadays to ensure they're always reaching new people. We'll hear about what's worked, as well as what flat out hasn't worked for them, and some of it might surprise you. But don't take my word for it. If you haven't done so already, be sure to hit subscribe or follow right there in your listening app of choice. That means the episode will be delivered to you automatically the minute it's published. Once again, I hope you won't want to miss it. Thanks, as always, for listening to Podcraft, and we'll talk to you again next time.