

What's the Future of Podcasting Tech?

A conversation with Mike and Izabela of Music Radio Creative

Matthew: Well, folks, welcome to Podcraft. Bit of pressure on me here because I don't often do the intro to Podcraft. It's always Colin. But we had to fire him after his embarrassment last time. We couldn't get him on for about half an hour, so had to get Mike and Izabela back for round two. How you doing?

Mike: So good. It's good to be here, Matthew.

Izabela: It's great to be here.

Matthew: I mean, we just had so much to talk about last time around. Didn't mean we had a really good conversation, but it felt like we couldn't go on forever that day. But there was a lot more to talk about. So thanks again for taking the time and coming back. I should clarify that I've sacked Colin. He's away in, is it south by southwest or some show in America I didn't get invited to?

Izabela: Oh, no. But I just wanted to say it's always actually a pleasure to chat with you, Matthew, and with Colin, of course. And it's just always very natural flowing conversation.

Matthew: So it's, I mean, like I said, lots to catch up on. First and foremost, a good place to start. Isabella, just before we hit record there, you were saying that since our last conversation, you are back on the podcast and horseshoe suggested on the last episode you might have been. So what's going on there?

Izabela: I am so actually, I went into a conference in the States social media marketing world and I actually came back so inspired. I was like, that's it. I've got to get back into having my own voice. And actually just realizing that I have accumulated over a decade of experience in the podcasting space. And actually, for me to talk about it is just such a natural thing. But I don't feel very natural in the sense that I'm very self conscious of how am I sounding? Is this good? Is this bad? So I just wanted to get into the podcasting to actually get myself back comfortable about talking about it so that I can start sharing my knowledge. So yes, I have started restarted rather my podcast, audio unicorn. And I am talking about specifically podcasting for business because I think that there is a very different approach potentially if you are looking at it as a marketing tool. So I'm kind of combining my business marketing knowledge and podcasting knowledge together and sharing all the little things that people should know when thinking of starting a business podcast.

Matthew: Cool. Obviously we'll put links in the show notes to that as well, and it'll be great to check out for the listener. Going back to the topic, last time around, we were talking about the ten year period, the 20 year period, et cetera. So I was keen to find out a bit more. You guys were doing content around podcasting ten years ago, potentially longer, especially around the topic of actually creating good sound and audio. Mike, obviously a lot's changed in that time, but what are some of the biggest changes that you've noticed in that period?

Mike: That's a great question. I think in the last sort of ten or so years, I've been doing it longer than that because, of course I worked in radio before getting into podcasting and seeing the great big studios with mixing desks and racks full of gear and then another rack for broadcast. And then we kind of like in the early days, I suppose, took that over to podcasting, particularly those who wanted a good sound. I said, well, you want to get yourself a DBX two eight six s. Ideally, maybe you want to get a few other of these units. And what these are for people listening who don't know. They're like big chunky metal units that go into a rack. They're about 19 inches long. They've always been known as 19 inch. I'm not just working in imperial for the sake of it there. And they would improve your sound through a series of analog bits of kit inside, so things to change the sound in real time. I always enjoyed that. I thought I managed to get a great sound. But then in recent times, in the last three or four years, we've seen a number of manufacturers, including Road and Mackie, although technically now they're both the same, creating amazing mixing consoles specifically for content creators and podcasters as well. And what they've done is they've managed to take all of the best parts of the analog world and put it inside one unit. So you can have your compression to make sure all your sound levels are consistent. You can have your EQ to make sure your voice is sounding better. And you can do that all inside one single mixer that sits on your desk. And I think the thing we've seen as well is the portability of this and the ease of setup getting better and better with, particularly companies like rode, making presets for all the popular microphones you might want. So if someone's using a short SM seven B, then of course the rodecaster Pro has a preset for that. So we're getting more and more to that stage where things are being done for us. And of course, in the age of AI, as I think we've touched on before, and I'm sure we will again, this is only going to get more interesting, meaning all of those confusing bits that many of us struggled with, like plugging things in, getting the

right sound, are now being solved by tech and computers and the big companies, of course, who are making the kit for us.

Matthew: Yeah, I mean, you make a really good point there as well. I used to term, back in the day hesitantly, but it used to be like we had to as podcasters. We used stuff that was made for musicians. And then five, six years ago, I'm sure it was Rodecaster who kind of pioneered this. With the rodecaster, let's make a podcast specific device. And obviously, like you've said, mike, we've got a lot of different options on this front. Now I've got a pod track P four from Zoom. You talked about the DLZ creator, I think it's called. We see a lot of these. Now, if you're a podcaster, I know some of these devices are expensive, but you can go out there and buy podcast equipment that is actually podcast equipment. You're not resetting a musician's set up for your own needs, aren't you? So I suppose that signified that the market was now big enough to support products like this.

Mike: Yeah, totally. And we've seen also the likes of focusrite hop on board. I mean, they've always had a popular audio interface for plugging XLR mics into the computer, but they created specific kit for podcasts as well. So like you mentioned, Matthew, companies like Zoom and I think Tascam as well have hopped in in one way or another. Most companies even say a big one like Harmon with their AKG umbrella, gave a nod to the content creators with the invention of the Lyra. Now a few years back. That's a USB microphone from them. Bayer Dynamic worked on the Fox, which has been great for creators. So I think it's definitely a very recognized area. And if I'm to really fill the truth of this, I think it's the future. We are all going to be creators in the future, and I hope that what AI will do in the future is democratize the ability for anyone in the world to create great sounding audio, great content online. And I look forward to that.

Matthew: Obviously we could dedicate a full episode to gear and equipment and stuff like that, but I just had one or two last few things to talk about on that front because I've just finished reviewing the opportunity to take a look at the sure SM seven Db, which has got a built in preamp, really cool, not so cool price, but was looking at that and the road nt one fifth generation which has the 32 bit floating in there. So we are seeing lots of new technology that has all these extra capabilities. And paradoxically for me, what I've noticed when looking at specifically the NT one fifth generation, it seems to me that you could only access the 32 bit floating if you're using it via USB and USB mics. You haven't often installed drivers and stuff like that, especially if you've got a laptop like I do. So it's almost like paradoxically for me, the USB mic has now become the more complicated option because if I get an XLR mic, my interface is all set up and I just connect it and go. And now it's like I get a USB mic, I'm like, oh, I need to install this driver or that driver. And there's always a knock on effect on something else on the computer, always messes with something. So this is purely like anecdotal to me, but I just wondered if you any thoughts on that front at all?

Mike: Yeah, I think the temptation is to overcomplicate things for all users. And I know Isabella will have something to say about simplification of technology. I still think as a creator today, even though I did a big job a few years back now, I got rid of all my analog gear and replaced it entirely initially with the rodecaster, which I still love, by the way. But now, currently I'm using a Mackie DLZ and those are all great bits of kit. And I have managed to minimize a lot of the equipment in my studio, but I think we can go further. And I look at some of the amazing content creators online. Like one of the YouTubers I watch a lot is a YouTuber called Fireship who makes tutorials about computers and code. And he did a behind the scenes video and he's literally just sitting in his bedroom with a little desk and a computer and a USB mic and that is it. And he's creating videos with like millions of views a time. He pops one out and that is his setup. Very, very humble. And I think we really can aspire to that. Isabella, I'd love to hear your thoughts. Know, minimizing equipment because we did a recent rejig of your studio, right? And you were just amazed with the nest of wires, the snakes of wires, and you were like, why have we even got that wire? What's that for?

Izabela: But that's the thing though. There is so much that has changed in the last two years alone that actually really, if you haven't reviewed things in your studio a lot of things are probably already redundant in there. So we've looked at my setup and yes, there were a lot of wires that went out because we had like hardwired stuff for our live streaming. And I'm like, nope, I don't want any of this. And now I was very attached to my DBX unit and I was like, no, Mike, don't take this out because this is making me sound good up until the point when I started to have terrible problems with it. And it's just like it was introducing some weird hiss on the chain. And I'm just like, this is not good. And Mike is like, just try the rodecaster without anything else. I'm like, okay, let's do it. And he just plugged it, selected the mic I have, which is sure SM seven B, and it just works and it sounds really good. Nothing else needed to be tweaked or changed. And I'm like, I love this. This is what I needed. So it's simple. There isn't a need to overcomplicate things. And I think, just going back to your initial question, Matthew, I think that, yes, manufacturers have overcomplicated things a lot with USB microphones in attempt to add a lot more features in. But I think that as creators, we should

remember that that is the job not of the microphone but actually of your audio interface. And in the end, if you want superior quality audio, you should have interface and condenser microphone rather than a USB microphone because you will get a better sound. There is just no way around it. And I think that's the key takeaway point from that.

Matthew: With your new show, Isabella talked to us a wee bit like you've talked about your microphone there. What software and stuff like that are you using?

Izabela: So at the moment I keep it very simple. So Mike knows I'm a complete technophob. So when it comes to introducing different things, I'm just like, just take this easy on me. I really don't want to overcomplicate the process. So it's super simple. I've got Rodecaster Pro two plugged into my, sure, SM seven B and I record directly into Adobe audition. At the moment, I haven't done any episodes where I interview people yet, although I am going to do that and I am really not sure which platform to go for as I hear people with problems on every one of those platforms. But it will likely end up being either Squadcast, Riverside, or Zencaster. Just one of those three, but super simple like nothing else.

Matthew: So you're just doing solo episodes at the moment. Then how have you found mean you'll had experience of doing that before anyway, weren't you?

Izabela: Well I actually haven't had experience of doing long form episodes on my own. We used to be always Mike and I and this is where I thought I need to find my feet in the solo episodes that are longer format and actually with the right amount of prep. I have found this really good. The first episode when I listened back and I edit my own episodes as well at the moment because I'm like I'm not giving it out to our producer until I know exactly what I'm after and until I'm happy with what I'm doing because I find that this helps me in improving self improvement if I listen back and I'm like oh, I did this or I did that. So the first episode I was definitely thinking like oh my goodness, so many. And I was just not happy. But then 2nd, 3rd better. And I am preparing each episode quite, in quite a lot of detail. So I find that quite easy to do. And then I find that if I have structure to talk about it's easier for me to gather my thoughts and record 30 minutes episodes. That's how long they are at the moment.

Matthew: Like we touched on software there. Mike, something I wanted to ask you about. I mean anytime I ever have an Adobe edition issue, which is often, and I Google it, it's always your videos that come up, which is brilliant. You've helped me through more than you'll ever realize with addition. But you also have created a lot of audacity content over the years. And taking a look at audacity recently, it's come on leaps and bounds. I mean you've got non destructive editing in there. There's just so many cool features. It still looks like the old and clunky audacity we know and love, but it's pretty powerful these days. In your view, how have Adobe edition and audacity evolved over the last ten years? Because not to load your answer, but it seems to me like addition has been fairly stagnant for a good five years now.

Mike: You're absolutely spot on. Yeah, you tell it exactly how it is. Adobe audition has not had any updates to it since. I can't remember when. I can't remember the last Big Adobe audition feature. Was it 2018?

Izabela: 2018 was the most, there were most significant changes back then.

Mike: Yeah. Now that's not to say that Adobe haven't been focused on audio, but all the audio upgrades and changes they've made have gone straight into premiere Pro, which is their video editing tool, which is all well and good, but there are definitely a group, I think, Matthew, maybe you're among them, of audition users who are putting their hands up and saying, hey, what about me? What about me? As an audio only creator, I'd love to have text based transcripts, I'd love to have speech enhancement using AI baked straight into, you know, I will say that message loud and clear to Adobe. Please listen to those audio creators and dedicate some time and resources if you're able to, to bring those features over. There's already amazing audio development. Adobe are not slowing down on audio development. In fact, just recently they announced that in research they are working on full dubbing and lip syncing of videos, very similar to the way the AI tool Hagen does it, where it moves the lips to the new language that you dub to. So Adobe are not slowing down on audio dubbing anything like just, we'd love to see it in audition. But on the other hand, looking at audacity, that is definitely a rising giant and it's one to watch now, it's questionable as to how far it'll go. I mean, the look of audacity I still think is very clunky and very basic. It's like open source software. It's like you're running out on like some janky Linux system, but it does a great job. And like you say, Matthew, it's integrated nondestructive editing, it's integrated real time effects in certain cases. And I think things really changed for audacity when the Muse group got hold of them, I think back in sort of 2021 or so. And they dedicated, obviously the Muse group is a for profit organization and they want to nurture it. And we don't know what their plan in the future may be, but I know they do a lot to do with music and stuff like that. So maybe there'll be some, I don't know, I'm just speculating here, but some cloud integrations or some kind of paid thing that will come with audacity. I think the hope is that it will always still be free and open source. I think that's the great thing about it. It has improved and I think

it's improved because of the acquisition by muse. So we'll watch that space. You know, while audition hasn't had any updates, we're seeing other companies. I mean, I know a lot of people use, is it journalist? Is it Heisenberg?

Matthew: Journalist Heisenberg.

Mike: I always think of Breaking Bad, something like that, and then of course there's blackmagic with their DaVinci resolve, which is obviously primarily, again a video first tool. But they got Fairlight in there. And I got to say in my experience Fairlight particularly the vocal isolation tool is actually pretty good and they're doing a good job there. But one trend I can see if we look at Blackmagic and Adobe is they are both focused on a video first piece of software and then audio comes as a part of that. So I do wonder, I sometimes think is that the grand plan? Would it just make sense to just bundle audio all into premiere and maybe lose audition in the future? It's quite possible, especially as the latest beta of premiere pro now has the audio fades. They seem to be bringing a lot of multi track stuff from audition into premiere. So I don't know, I have no inside information on that. But I do wonder if that's maybe a grand plan for the future.

Izabela: I wanted to add actually something on that note as like if you look at Adobe, it's obviously a giant, right, tech giant with a massive legacy in the space of audio video production. Photoshop is their big thing. I think that at some point Adobe has gone through major changes where they moved a lot of their teams over to India. So they've kind of centralized all the creative teams in there. And I personally think that companies like Adobe will struggle to come up with good sort of revolutionary content fast enough. Because if you look at new rising tech giants such as eleven labs, hey Gen, you know, all of those, they haven't got the legacy and weight of administrative problems that Adobe potentially has. It's like they can do things much faster, they are much leaner. They don't have to almost dig in deep into existing infrastructure they are building from scratch whereas adobe products are built on hardware software that has been there for decades. So therefore they are adding new parts to very old system, right? Whereas all of those new ones, they are starting from scratch and it's so much easier in many, many ways. So I think that there is a point in the world now where I think we may see a shift of power from the legacy really big established companies into the new startups. If they play well enough and fast enough. A great example is the script, how fast they've managed to get all the different features. You know Mike, you are talking about Adobe potentially introducing the same features as Hagen has, but they are only talking about it. It's like it already exists. So this is not new. So how long is this going to take to be brought in? And I think in the audio space. Sorry, we'll just finish quickly in the audio space. I think it is a shame that we do not have a really, like, audacity is great, but as you say, it's very clunky in the sense that it's also a legacy tool. It's not new. It's been there for a while. And I think they will struggle to potentially modernize it to be what it needs to be. And I think that there is that shift from content creator who used to be very much radio, very techy, very much wanting to do little tweaks to EQ this and that. And there is the creator of a modern day where you just want this to work. Do you want to know how to curve your EQ? No, you don't. You just want this to sound good and you want somebody to tell you that sounds good. That doesn't sound good. And I think that there will be a real shift in that. And the base of people who will kind of have the knowledge and know how to tweak really well, how to do those things like Mike, that need for those people will go down because the technology will give us tools that will effectively replace that.

Mike: Yeah, I'd love to come off the back of that, Isabella, and say, that's Adobe have both a strength and a weakness. They have the strength that they have the compute, the money and the resources, but the weakness that they're maybe not agile like other small companies are, but I would dare to draw a comparison. So first of all, I think you ended on a great point there, that if you were building an audio editor today, you wouldn't make it look like audacity and you potentially wouldn't even make it look like audition. You'd probably look for an interface more like Fairlight from blackmagic or more like even, dare I say, Reaper's interface. But with that said, let's draw a comparison here with the AI companies. And you look at know your Microsoft's and your Google's and they are competing head to head at the moment to come out with the best features. Apple is sitting there quietly saying, hang on, we're ready for the developer conference this year. They keep rumoring there's going to be some big announcements, so Apple will jump and they will catch up. And I kind of know companies like we can't take it away from descript. They've done amazing stuff in the space. But smaller companies like lean startups that say we're going to solve one problem like cleaning audio or removing background tracks right. If there's a good idea, it will be cannibalized eventually by the bigger companies, just as in the AI space at the moment with chat, GPT, we're seeing like millions of startups going on the back of that saying we can write your show notes, we can produce a script for a YouTube video, and all of the best ideas will get eaten up eventually by Microsoft and Google saying that's a good idea, it's got a lot of users, makes a lot of money. We'll now get our team pulling that into the product. So just as that's happened, yes, you're right, it's slower. Hey Gen, they were very agile. They had a great team who

were able to quickly get that limp sync product out. Adobe are now going to do it really, really well. And the same thing with the music generation as well. Adobe are working on that. Yes, there's a million startups like Mubert and Suno that are doing it as well. But I think again, Adobe are going to drop the bomb and say here's music generation right inside premiere that syncs up to whatever's playing on your video screen and it's going to be great. But I do definitely hear the struggle between big and small and lean and agile and monolith kind of thing.

Izabela: I think so. And also actually to add to that, if Adobe hasn't released any significant updates to audition since 2018, I think we may as well assume that product as good as dead. Because to me that just means that there is absolutely zero new development going in there. And as you say, a shift towards moving that into premiere. I'm under no illusion that will. If there is no significant update in six years, then will there be in the next year? There won't be. So it's like stringing on to hope that something is going to happen. It just won't. I think that we might as well start talking about the fact that it's going to be kind of merged in with premiere tools and that will be it.

Matthew: I won't keep us on Adobe forever, but one last note on them. I could be wrong on this, I might have just missed it, but they are one company and audio that didn't to me really seem to lean into the podcasting thing. I know every year we talk about podcasting is exploding and it's just always really grown all the time. But it did become more fashionable for companies to lean in on podcasting and specifically market themselves as a for podcasters company. Did Adobe ever really do mean? I've never really seen them mention podcasting very much. As much as they're a very good platform for podcasters, the only thing that.

Izabela: They did do is Adobe podcast. So there is the platform specifically designed for podcasters. So I guess they did, but it's like a web interface, so it's not linked into Adobe audition or anything else. Although it has been in beta for quite some time, I don't know whether it ever went out of beta. Mike, I haven't actually seen that.

Mike: I think Adobe podcast is still in beta. So I'd say I could see Izzy, you were shaking your head as it's like, did Adobe lead into podcasters? But I really think they did and they have done and they recognize it. But I think with a big company like Adobe, they recognize they have a number of users and they've got to choose their strengths. Now, they've done that. A while back, I think it was Cooledit 3.0 before Adobe purchased the audio editor from Centrium. It had all kinds of midi instruments and things in there. And I think there's no secret that Adobe have said we are not doing anything like that. We're not a tool for musicians. If you want that, go to logic pro or fruity loops, that's absolutely fine. So that has definitely happened. So they're looking at speech based content creators, podcasters. I think radio producers and radio stations and spoken word audio producers are definitely still using audition to a certain extent, but they have to cater to a number of different demographics. They did make appearances at many podcast events, sort of pre COVID. I haven't seen so much of a presence since then and since the huge updates were happening. So since the sort of 2018 2019 era, I'd say I haven't seen so much. But there definitely is a focus there and I think any big company would be silly to ignore creators. Actually, as we were discussing this, I was just pulled something up on the screen to have a look. I know that YouTube, they are hugely invested in people who create video content because the creator economy is worth so much. And I've just found this article from Business Insider that says it's currently worth around \$250,000,000,000 and is predicted to double by \$2027 to \$480,000,000,000. So it's a huge area, video audio creators, online artists and writers. And for any company, big or small, to ignore that economy I think would be definitely a mistake.

Matthew: I've got some stock, well, I'd call them stock questions, that makes them sound crap, but I've got some interesting questions. I'll reframe that. And I think they could throw up some interesting answers. So if you're ready to go, I'll maybe start with you, Isabella, if that's okay, and ask you the question, what podcast related thing did you once believe that turned out not to be true?

Izabela: Do you know, this goes back a long time, so please forgive me, but I once believed that podcasting was just for geeks, which it was at some point, but it's definitely not anymore. But yes, definitely. But this is long, long ago. So we are talking back 2010, perhaps, maybe 2011. I just believed that that was like kind of a spin off from the old style CB radio. I don't know whether you've ever had anything to do with that, but that was like the place where people could just talk about anything and it's like. And somebody would listen. And I was just like, yeah, that's what podcasting is, surely right? But obviously it isn't.

Matthew: What about you, Mike?

Mike: Yeah, so this one might be controversial, but I once thought, and still to a certain extent think, although I think it's becoming less true, that podcasting is what is and was the last bastion of free speech and independent content creators home like, a place where anyone could get a mic, plug it in, say what they want, and reach their niche audience. But of course, since it's become more popular, that has been a good thing. But also potentially now the bigger companies have come in like such as

podcast one, which is floated on the stock market. I heart radio companies like that. Nothing wrong with them turning their attention to it. Many radio broadcasters, traditional stations, seeing the value in it and using it, and that's all great. But I feel like now, particularly when you look at top charts of what's ranking, you see more and more of the big broadcasters and the big syndicated shows showing up there and very little independent stuff like ranking in the overall top lists. Now, I might be wrong, you might correct me on this, but I seem to feel around 2011, 2012, when I was getting into it, I was seeing some of those real indie shows like Internet business mastery, smart passive income, the podcast Answer man, all showing up in top lists. That's how I think I found those folks. So, yeah, it's no longer true that it's the last bastion of free speech for the independent creator. It's been taken over by the big corporations. That might be controversial.

Izabela: That's controversial.

Mike: Yeah, it's been taken over. It's like a takeover from the, without us even realizing it. And now you still have the free speech. But there's a hundred other podcasts to sift through before you get to what you want. Although if you know how to use a search bar, might not be strictly true, especially with Apple doing transcripts. Know if something interesting is spoken about in a show, hopefully that can be found by mean.

Matthew: That's really interesting, because I don't know if I mentioned it last time, but our focus for the next season of podcast, which I'm very nearly about to release, episode one of that, and what we wanted to do was talk to a lot of independent creators who've done really good things. They've published, say, at least 100 episodes. They've maybe won an award or two. They've got stay in power, and they've built something from basically nothing. And a good place to look for these creators because obviously, I only know a very small amount of podcasts out there, as we all do. So looking around awards, who's been nominated for awards, et cetera, you could look in charts, too, obviously. And you're right, like a lot of these shows now, as great a show might be that's made by a network, that's not really who I want to speak to, because they had a head start. They've got audiences on other shows, they've got budgets, they've got full timers on this I really wanted to speak to. Here's a person who just had this passion or this small business, and they've built a podcast from nothing. And that's the conversations I wanted to have. And you're right. Like, ten years ago, it would have been easy to find those people, because almost all podcasts tick that box. But it's trickier now. Even you find an indie podcast. And again, not to take anything away for this person, but it turns out they're maybe an actor or they had a music career, and that means that they've got some level audience, and therefore they didn't exactly start at nothing. So it is tricky now to find those classic examples, isn't it?

Mike: You're right. It got popular. I remember even listening to the comedian Jimmy Carr saying he was given an option by his agent at one point. It's like you can either write a book or start a podcast. So he chose write the book, which, of course, was a mistake. We all know that. But yes, it's hit that crucial popularity inflection point hasn't.

Matthew: Yeah, right. Let me dig out my next magic question. We'll go back to you, Isabella. This is about growth, audience growth, which will be interesting. Now, you're back to day one on your podcast almost, and grown a new audience. So what have you tried in the past for listener growth that didn't work?

Izabela: That's an interesting question. And I think that I've always had very limited success with social media promotion, as in, like, just, hey, here is the latest episode, listen to it kind of thing. The social media platforms don't show those posts to people. You want them to be seen. And I also feel like when you are browsing your social media, you don't necessarily want to be tuning into podcasts at the same time.

Mike: Right.

Izabela: It's like you are not on your feed because you're looking for the latest episode of a podcast. You're on your feed because of many different reasons, but definitely you are not going to all of a sudden plug your earplugs and start listening. So that just never worked for me. So I'm definitely in round X because it's not round two. I don't know which round it is now. I am definitely not going to be relying on social media platforms in that traditional method of sharing.

Matthew: What about you, Mike?

Mike: Yeah, in a similar fashion to what Isabella just said there, with social media, I found that know they're not necessarily pushed up in the rankings. If you're linking straight out to a podcast episode. I think if you are like a Jimmy Carr or famous comedian or actor, whatever, and you're bringing an existing audience, that can be extremely beneficial. But, yeah, I mean, I played about in the past with things like paid promotion on social media, but I don't think I'm very good at it. So that's probably my fault rather than the method. But yeah, I think the temptation is to, as they call it in marketing, I think spray and you, like, you put a load of money in, you target a wide audience. Like, I'm going to target the whole of the United Kingdom and then hope that out of those thousand people that see the ad, ten

people will subscribe. And of course, that's a false economy. So I think I could do better. I think that method could work if it was Uber targeted and a professional was setting those campaigns up. But that certainly kind of failed for me in the past. I think going back to Isabella's point, though, with social media, I don't know if this still works today, but I've heard things like, particularly on the X platform, formerly Twitter, you go ahead, you make a post, just a text post, and you say, hey, I've just started a podcast. Maybe you attach an image, and then the first comment underneath could then be a link out to your show. Same with LinkedIn. Post something valuable and then in the comments say, by the way, if you want to see the episode or listen to the episode, go here. I don't know, Isabella, if you can confirm or deny that's a tactic you've tried, if it works, it doesn't work. Really?

Izabela: I don't think it works that well. Unless you have really good engaged community, I don't think that works.

Matthew: Okay, digging out the old sheet again, Isabella, what common mistakes do you see new podcasters make?

Izabela: I think not persisting long enough. I think that people expect that the podcast is going to be an instant success overnight, like two, three episodes, and you should be seeing some great results. I genuinely don't think that's the case. And I think that preparing for a podcast to be kind of almost like a long game thing or just having a fixed plan where you are just like, okay, I'm going to have a season that contains X amount of episodes and I will do that. But definitely don't expect to have an instant success after first three episodes. It really hardly ever happens. And I see a lot of people who start get maybe to episode five and then backtrack and they're like, well, no, this isn't worth my time. I can hardly see any downloads and it's taking a long time. So yeah, just look at podcasting as a long term content creation investment rather than a short term game make.

Mike: Yeah, no, I definitely agree with Isabella on that. Know, persist, persist and be consistent. But also, I think a lot of people maybe don't even start their ideas because they're worried about it being perfect. They're worried about setting the bar too high. They see the quality of shows, whether it's from the BBC or NBC or whatever else, or even listening to someone like a Joe Rogan and thinking, well, I'm never going to be able to emulate that. You shouldn't try to emulate anyone or anything. Just be yourself, get a good piece of equipment, but most importantly, upload and publish, because that's how you can gain feedback. And it's a commonly said thing in the creator industry, but everyone can go back to their first episode or their first YouTube video and see how embarrassing it is. I listened to a podcast recently where the guest said, if you're not looking back at episodes you created a few weeks or a couple of months ago and cringing, you're not improving, you're in a comfort zone. So yeah, just get the stuff out there and don't be afraid to hit publish, even if you think it's not perfect.

Matthew: Yeah. There's a podcast that I found a couple of months ago now, and they've got well over 100 episodes. I've been bingeing them, as you do, and these guys, they do YouTube and audio only, and they're just so competent. They're just such good presenters, such good chemistry, really natural. And gradually I started working my way back to the point where I was like, I might as well go to one and then start going forward because I was constantly going back in time. So I got to one, and I know from what they've said that they had done content prior to this. So by now we're going back to 2019 and I notice they're still very good, but a bit more stiff, a bit less chemistry, and it's like, of course they got better, like 100 or episodes later. That's why they're very good at this. They've just done it a lot. So it's good just to notice that even the people we come across that appear to be very good, and they are very good, it's because they've got miles under their belt, don't they?

Izabela: That's it. It becomes a second nature. And I think that once you have 100 episodes under your belt, it's kind of like you just do it without thinking about it. You can have a well structured conversation, well structured thought, and it sounds great because you are not thinking about that. It has to sound great. You're just doing it.

Matthew: Ok, final question then, Isabella. When was the last time something in.

Izabela: Podcasting surprised know, I'm not easily surprised. So I guess the last thing that happened was that whole thing with Joe Rogan when he was talking about controversial topics and there were talks about, oh, he should be in some way regulated or taken responsibility for what he's saying, et cetera. And I was like, oh, this is really interesting. This is really interesting attempt at in some way wanting to regulate podcasting, right? And I definitely didn't like that. I am all in for free speech and being able to talk about your own experiences the way you want to, as long as you preface it right. I think that's important. But that was the last time it did surprise me. Something in podcasting surprised me. I was like, whoa. Like, eyebrow moment of like, this is interesting, Mike.

Mike: Probably most recently, actually, since I started my new automated daily podcast. I did not expect that to get a significant amount of downloads. But actually what it's done is it's gone ahead and done that over time and continued to increase. So I've seen it go from maybe a couple of hundred downloads in the first month to nearly 5000 downloads in the last 30 days just purely by curating

latest headlines in AI every single day and publishing on an RSS feed. Yeah, that's definitely surprised me that if you pick a really good topic that you're passionate about and you can have staying power in, you can actually create an audience. There is an audience out there that's hungry. And the reason why that's an eyebrow moment for me is I have done zero promotion on that podcast. So the only way people are finding it is through the directories, through searching for the news terms and items that I'm mentioning in each episode. So they're finding it in Apple podcasts, in the other directories on Spotify because of that. And so I think that's maybe a positive note to sort of end that area on that. If you find a good topic that people are interested in, there's an audience for you. Without even going to think about how am I going to promote, how am I going to find an audience? There is an audience living inside the ecosystem for those who are willing to work for it.

Matthew: Great stuff. And I'll obviously get links to your show and Isabella's show as well for the show notes. But what is the name of the show then?

Mike: It's AI news today, and it's a human curated show because I curate the news stories. It's three stories every day. It's like an Alexa flash briefing. Basically it's two minutes, three stories every single day. And it's all generated apart from my choosing and curating the stories by AI. So there's OpenAI involved, there's upload to the host is all automatic and the voice is completely synthetic as well. It's a clone of my own voice. It sounds very realistic. I'm not sure if everyone would be able to tell that, but yeah, it's a testament to what is possible if you have the right idea and put something together.

Matthew: Does that go out just in English at the moment or is it going out in multiple languages?

Mike: Yeah, just English at the moment. But actually, if I were to pull up the. Let's see if I can quickly pull up the details on how many people are tuning in and from which country. I mean, they're literally tuning in from all over. I mean, there's United States, Singapore, India, UK, Spain, Peru. It's. Yeah, Philippines. It's worldwide. There are listeners from all over and they are solely finding that show through podcast directories. But I think it's a great idea, actually. Maybe there is a place where I can say, well, this is being done in English. It'd be quite easy, again, to automatically hook up an API that could take the english version, translate it to another popular language and put it out there. That's actually an extremely good idea. I like that. AI news today, Arabic and then exact copy of the stories. But just read in an arabic clone voice. That would be so cool.

Izabela: I think we should definitely do right.

Matthew: Keep us posted. Robot Mike makes his debut in multiple different countries. Definitely. Random question, just because you were talking about locations there just before we sort of get wrapped up, have you ever, over the course of your podcast in history, had an Antarctica download that, you.

Mike: Know, not that I've seen, but I think if I saw that, I would know and I'd be thrilled.

Matthew: Yeah. Have you never had one? Never had one. I'm always chasing it. I suppose I could just start a podcast about Antarctica and that might get picked up by somebody working out there.

Izabela: That's so funny.

Matthew: Yeah, always chasing it.

Mike: That'd be super cool. What is the most remote or crazy download location you've ever had a podcast from? I wonder if there's a download come from the Easter Islands or the Falklands or. I don't. St. Helena. Right. That's a small place, right? Nowhere.

Izabela: Am I allowed to ask you a question, Matthew?

Matthew: Of course, yeah.

Izabela: I would like to know, what do you think is the best hosting platform for podcasters in 2024? Who do you.

Mike: Alitu, of course.

Matthew: Alitu has obviously got hosting. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that, or I'd be out of a job, the hosts that I use these days. So I've got a podcast on Red Circle, which actually was kind of not accidental, but I started a podcast there just to test out, and I liked doing the podcast and I kept doing it. And Red Circle is a cool host. I like the dynamic ad insertion. I know a lot of other hosts offer this, but I could create my own ads if I was doing a patreon or a question of the month, I could always have my back catalog populated with these ads, which is really cool. Captivate. I really like as well. Buzzsprout. Libson. To be honest, I can't really think of, I mean, transistor as well. Castos. I can't honestly recall having a bad experience with a host. I never really used anchor beyond just going in and just seeing the basics of it. But I think podcast hosting is in a really strong place. I think there's loads of really good companies. I'm curious to see where it goes in a couple of years because I don't know what the slice of the pie is going to be like to keep supporting all these companies, but I don't know. That's above my pay grade, certainly. But what about you guys? I know you were big on speaker back in the day, which is another host that I like.

Izabela: Yeah, that's it. So I'm asking because obviously, having restarted my podcast, I kind of want to do a lot more research into available podcast hosting companies. And actually what I would really like to find is kind of like really future focused company that is introducing maybe some AI integrations, maybe just a really easy interface, things are smooth. I feel like a lot of the, especially the big companies, still carry a lot of that legacy of making it very technical where it really doesn't have to be. And I really would like to find a company that just makes it super simple. Currently I am hosting with Lipsyn. I love the company. We do a lot of work with the team there as well. But I am not like, wow, this is amazing. I'm almost thinking like, I was with Anker before and I was like, I need to try something different. And I was almost thinking like, surely I have to pay for hosting just to make this serious enough. But I'm just like, I'm not getting anything that I didn't get when I had a free account with Anker. And I'm just like, what am I missing then I want to find a company that makes it super simple. I don't know whether this is Lipsyn specific as well, or whether all of them have it. There is definitely a lag from when you publish the episode to when it comes out on all the platforms. And I want this instantly. I'm just like, what do you mean? It's not on Spotify? It's like, refresh, refresh, refresh. It just annoys the heck out of me at the moment. But I definitely think, is there the best one at the moment that you can be like, that's the one that's really focused on making it simple, that making publishing as easy as possible. And actually, in terms of the visual aspect, looking really good. I hear a lot of good things about Captivate that has been mentioned to me quite a few times, but I haven't tried them yet, so I might give them a go next and see.

Matthew: Yeah, like I say, I've tested a lot of them, as I'm sure you both have as well. And I like it. It's one of them. When I get asked the question from new podcasters, just pick that one or whatever and get on with it. By no means diversity a podcaster or you're not doing so well with your growth, maybe move to this other host because I don't think that's really ever the cause of somebody not being able to grow their show. But I interesting to see how that landscape moves in the next few years as well. But like I say, join up with Alitu. I should have had some sort of bonus code or that, but I'm not trusted enough to be dishing out stuff like that.

Izabela: I will give Alitu a go. You see, it's like especially that I'm editing my own podcast. Maybe I should give to it.

Matthew: Certainly had more TLC than edition in the last five or six years.

Izabela: There you go.

Matthew: Cool. Well, it's always a pleasure, Isabella. Tell us your show again and where we could find it.

Izabela: It's audio unicorn. Search for audio unicorn. Whatever you are listening to your podcasts, you will find me. I'm the only audio unicorn around, so that's easy enough. And connect with me on LinkedIn. I'm at Isabelle Aspelt. I Z a B E I a russell. I'm on LinkedIn. That's a good place to connect with me.

Matthew: And of course, the MRC website itself. What kind of stuff can we find on there these days?

Izabela: Yes. So music radio creative is what is our company. Mike and I work on this together, and we help people with a vast array of different audio needs. It could be podcast intros and outros. We provide podcast editing service. We have presets for great sound. For Adobe audition audacity. We have over 200 voiceover artists that can record anything you may need. We also have AI voices. We make ads on hold messages, work with radio stations, DJs, the whole lot. So literally just like creative house for anything audio related.

Matthew: Massive thanks to Isabella and Mike for joining us once again on Podcraft. And I'll just give a final mention to Alitu as well. Obviously, we've talked today about editing software, recording software, mainly know about audacity. And the difference with Alitu is that it was built specifically for podcasters. So all the recording tools, editing tools, publishing tools, they're all podcast specific. So you'll get a free trial, test it out for yourself. Head on over to alitu.com. That's alitu.com. All right. At time of recording, I am on the cusp of having the first of our case study series episodes. I'm really excited to start pushing these out. So I would say within the week, we're going to have the first of those episodes and then we're going to have eight of them in total. And it's been an absolute pleasure to work on these, to put them together. All this different wisdom and knowledge and experience. So it's going to be a brilliant season. Make sure, of course, you're subscribed or following the Podcraft on your list and app of choice because you won't want to miss this. All right, that's it for this episode, though. Thanks once again for listening, and we'll speak again on the next one.