

Former Blue's Clues Host Launches Alive, a Podcast About Growing Up

Steve Burns, the beloved original host of Blue's Clues, is back in front of a camera and microphone with Alive, a new podcast from Lemonada Media that premiered Wednesday.

Two decades after he left children's television, Burns now aims to take the sensibilities of his old show—curiosity, calm, and connection—and grow it up for an adult audience.

The title itself is a reflection of Burns' newly mature approach. He was moved by the viral reaction to a 2021 anniversary video where he reconnected with fans.

"When people discovered I was still alive, they were happy about it," Burns said. "That connection seemed to endure, and this podcast is my way of continuing it."

A homemade ethos

Alive feels unlike most podcasts on the market.

Burns records largely from home, handling not only the hosting but also writing and composing original music. He wants the show to feel handmade, invoking the aesthetic of public access television and the intimacy of a childhood friend.

Episodes feature unexpected structural choices: long silences, open-ended questions, and interactive listening moments where the audience is invited to reflect. Burns sees those pauses not as empty space but as "active silence" that allows listeners to feel like participants.

Arielle Nissenblatt, founder of the consultancy EarBuds Podcast Collective, said those pauses could resonate deeply with adults who once watched Blue's Clues.

"It lets listeners stop for a minute and feel that comfort wash over them," she said. "You get relaxation and thoughtfulness without fully tuning out."

That meditative quality makes Alive stand out in a market where podcasts are often designed to maximize pace and efficiency.

"Some people want to learn something new, others want to recap the news or get entertainment," Burns said. "This is about being together in the weirdness of life, not about racing to the next fact or joke."

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Lemonada's role

For Lemonada, Alive represents both a creative bet and a commercial opportunity.

Chief executive Jessica Cordova Kramer described the partnership as "full on," with Burns serving as executive producer and creative visionary while the network provides infrastructure, marketing, distribution, and sales.

"Steve is beloved across so many sectors of society, and his show is talking about universal experiences—failure, dying, finances—that marketers want to engage with," she said. "Our job is to package that in a way that feels authentic to him and valuable for them."

Founded in 2019, Lemonada has grown quickly into one of the most prominent independent podcast networks, now boasting more than 100 shows.

The company has built a reputation on socially conscious

storytelling, with titles that span mental health, politics, and culture. Its in-house teams handle everything from production and social distribution to sales and branded content campaigns.

Advertisers including ZipRecruiter and BetterHelp have already signed on to Alive, while interest is also coming from financial services firms, meal kit companies, and wellness brands. Those sponsors see alignment in the show's themes of middle-aged resilience and everyday problem-solving.

The bet is that Alive can deliver not just one-off buzz but sustained listenership. The challenge for Lemonada will be to ensure Alive isn't just a short-lived experiment but a repeatable franchise, according to Nissenblatt.

A bet on video

While Alive is rooted in audio, Lemonada sees it as a video-first property.

The network has seen triple-digit growth in video consumption across its portfolio, and Burns' TikTok experiments—short clips where he simply asks “What's up?” and then listens silently—have already shown viral appeal.

That momentum reflects a larger industry shift. The line between podcasting and video has blurred as creators increasingly think in terms of multiplatform distribution. A show might have an RSS feed, a YouTube channel, and a TikTok presence simultaneously, each feeding into the others.

For Alive, the plan is to distribute full episodes via podcast apps while using YouTube and TikTok to surface shorter, visual riffs.

Episodes will run weekly, with a plan to publish around 30 across the first year, broken into seasonal arcs. Burns retains full control over guest selection, balancing celebrity

interviews with everyday voices that underscore the show's ethos of human connection. Guests include Jamie Lee Curtis and Tig Notaro, as well as a hospice nurse with whom Burns has a frank conversation about death.

For the generation that grew up with Blue's Clues, Burns' presence offers a dose of nostalgia and continuity. But Alive is pitched just as much at listeners who never watched the kids' show, framing its host less as a former TV star than as a companion navigating adulthood.

The aim of the intimate feel is to tap into one of podcasting's defining strengths: parasocial connection.

Listeners form one-sided bonds with hosts, often feeling like they're in conversation with a close friend. Burns subverts that convention by deliberately inserting silence, turning the format back on the audience. Instead of passive consumption, listeners are invited to pause, think, and participate.

That inversion, paired with Lemonada's marketing muscle and sales infrastructure, positions Alive as both a creative experiment and a commercial play. For Burns, though, the motivation is simpler.

"I just want to make something that feels real and respectful," he said. "This isn't about nostalgia. It's about being alive, together, in all its weirdness."

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