

How Important Is Defining Your Audience in Podcasting, and How Do You Find Yours?

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These days, it seems like there is a podcast for everything. No matter what you're into, there is bound to be a podcast that caters to your specific hobbies, interests or obsessions. New podcasters are joining the ranks every day. Perhaps you have thought about hosting your own show, but ask yourself what would your show be about, or who would listen to it? This is why, before launching your podcast, one step is to think about who you are talking to.

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The importance of defining your audience

You may feel overwhelmed when you first decide to start a podcast. After all, the world is your oyster, and you could choose any topic in the world to be the focus of your show. Defining your audience is key to a successful podcast.

Your chosen audience will set the tone for your podcast and define its parameters. It can be difficult to reign in the interesting subject matter if you go too broad. You will risk losing your audience, even though you were trying to cast a wide net and appeal to as many people as possible.

A podcast will be far more successful in gaining a dedicated

audience if the audience is well-defined. Not only will the specificity of the audience draw the interest of people who share your affinity for the topic, whatever it may be, but it will also set your show apart from the numerous other podcasts out there.

If you are starting out without a gaggle of social media followers or a strong influencer presence, having a defined audience is even more critical. Those bringing a built-in follower base to their podcast can afford to be more general in their topics. After all, the people who appreciate their authenticity and other content are more likely to tune in to their podcast, regardless of the topic. More likely than not, you'll be starting from scratch and will need to define who your audience is as well as what you're going to talk about.

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How do you define your audience?

As a podcaster and producer myself, I'm constantly looking for new ways to learn how to better define audiences or the best podcasting practices in general. I learn a lot from other podcasters and podcasting experts like John Lee Dumas and Kevin Chemidlin while also sharing what I've experienced as a radio broadcaster turned podcaster out of consequence (and choice, eventually!).

Once you decide you want to start a podcast, the next step is to identify who you are speaking to. But how on Earth do you find them? Many people know what they are interested in or are well-versed in, but may not realize their interests are too broad for a dedicated audience.

Here are some steps you can take to define your audience so you are aware of who you are talking to when you're recording your awesome content!

1. Know thyself

Yes. Socrates did have a point. Knowing yourself is really the starting point of this exercise. Why, you say? How can defining my audience and who I'm speaking to have anything to do with me? It has everything to do with you. Knowing what your podcast should be about takes knowing who you are as a person and a creator. What are your main interests? What subject can you talk endlessly about and not get bored? What is the idea that you cannot just put down, that keeps visiting you in your daydreams? Make a broad list of possible podcast topics and begin analyzing them based on your own preference, knowledge and credibility.

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2. Well-defined and narrow is better

Once you have your list of possible topics, you may want to consider narrowing that list down. Some ways to do this is to actually ask three people whose opinion you trust and who you know will be 100% honest with you. For example, let's say you want to host a podcast about starting a business. This idea is a great starting point, but "business" is a broad topic. Asking your trusted circle about what skills in business or unique perspectives you bring is a tool to narrow down your interests. I often ask my clients when they are about to launch, "What can you talk about so easily without having even to think about it?" For me, it would be comparing coffee from around the world and morning routines. I could talk about that every day, without even thinking about it – and without any coffee!

3. Defining your listener

I've learned so many ways in my training and my time as a producer to define your listener. Truth is, the very intention of defining who you are talking to brings you closer to who your community is in one way or another.

Defining your ideal listener avatar is like designing your ideal client avatar. Start thinking about this person's needs, what they care about and what would bring them value. As entrepreneurs, we do this on the daily when we think about our businesses and our customers, and this exercise is no different.

Think about where your listener would be when they listen to podcasts. Is it commuting, doing housework, or at the gym? Start to paint a picture of who your ideal listener avatar is so they feel like an actual person. For my podcast, The Ginni Show, my listener avatar was Sally. Sally was a late 20-something office worker who was in a 9 to 5 job and had a creative side hustle. She loved brunching with her friends, sharing ideas and inspirations and learning tools to create a life she dreamed of. She loved connection and learning and different ways to do this. Sally really helped me create the content for the first few seasons of The Ginni Show. While Sally was a great start for me, I realized I needed to be even more specific.

I took a masterclass with Kevin Chemidlin about defining your listener and growing your podcast, and he taught something really valuable. You can define your audience as "someone who is something and something." Saying that it's for female entrepreneurs is still too broad. However, defining your podcast audience using Kevin's formula as "female entrepreneurs who are returning to work after giving birth," is more defined. Using my example, I now define my audience as "curious spirits and dreamers who want to learn, grow and be

entertaining through stories of travel and adventure.” So, start to get really clear on your audience.

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4. It's about what makes you different

Lastly, you are the secret sauce to podcasting success. Your voice, opinion, and take on a topic will make or break your podcast. When defining your niche, think about what makes you different. Why are you the perfect person to address this topic? Listeners will be drawn to that unique energy that you bring to your niche topic.

Above all else, make sure the niche you choose is truly enjoyable for you. You will revel in the podcasting adventure far more if you look forward to taking on the topic. If you choose a niche where you don't find true joy, your enthusiasm for podcasting will likely fizzle.

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