

Networking Through Podcasting: The Key to Professional Growth

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Entrepreneurs are no strangers to the benefits of networking. Relationships are where a lot of our business and personal connections are formed and fostered, and they are an integral part of our growth. This is especially true for entrepreneurial podcasters, as learning how to communicate effectively and grow our brand through networking is a key component of our business.

Without taking measures to improve our professional growth, our brands and businesses become less relevant amidst an increasingly competitive landscape. However, by learning how to best utilize your podcast's platform and following, you will be able to observe just how much of a networking and connection-building vehicle your podcast can be for you and your business.

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Networking and podcasting go hand-in-hand

Networking, much like running and hosting a podcast, is extremely personal. And, both require one valuable skill: listening.

Unlike using automation tools, sending cold emails or unsolicited requests on LinkedIn to connect with other professionals, podcasting is frequently used as a less formal method of establishing brand presence and credibility with other influential industry leaders. Instead of attempting to reach out and network with others one at a time – or even generating massive lists of potential networking contacts to send your marketing material to – your podcast itself can be utilized as a gateway for additional networking opportunities.

Think of it as building your own community of listeners which can extend to a professional network. Be sure to review your content as frequently as possible in its quality, credibility and integrity. It's like a digital business card that gives your listener and potential client, colleague or person in your professional network front row access to who you are.

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Unlocking opportunities through podcast networking

Regardless of whom you wish to network with, the underlying goal of networking through podcasting is to connect with other professionals. Once that connection is made, both parties can find mutually beneficial ways to help each other (and your businesses) grow. The most obvious way to bring each other value is to have each other as guests on the other's podcast, if both parties have a podcast platform, of course. Here's the thing with having someone else from a professional circle on your show – you now are linked to their professional network.

For podcasters, the ability to attract high-profile guest speakers is perhaps the most important opportunity networking can provide. Bringing them onto our show and interviewing them with impactful, meaningful questions not only helps establish

credibility for our professional brand, but also provides invaluable opportunities to grow our audience of listeners by creating free word-of-mouth marketing. In today's digital age of marketing and automation, a personal recommendation and introduction go a long way.

For instance, let's assume your podcast aims to help listeners learn personal finance skills. By successfully networking with industry CFOs through showcasing the value of your podcast's brand and messaging, you create opportunities to host them on your podcast as guest speakers for interviews. The value this brings to your listeners will help propel your podcast's metrics. Additionally, if those guests recognize the value of your podcast, they might give you a shout-out, further generating credibility with more potential listeners and rapport with other professionals who may decide to interview you on their own podcast; all of which is crucial to improving your professional growth.

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Building rapport supports your professional growth

When networking through your podcast, being straightforwardly transparent and honest with your connections is just as important as it is with your audience of listeners. People are far more likely to pay attention to your brand and its content if they know you are genuine and the value you provide can help them, which is key in establishing rapport to drive the professional growth of you and your brand.

In utilizing your podcast as a networking tool, researching the contacts you're seeking connections with will not only allow you to better understand how you can help them, but also showcase your genuine desire to create value. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable in these events. Vulnerability is a key

factor in establishing rapport with your network. It helps them better understand your aims and goals for forming connections with them, along with making them far more likely to open up to you, in turn. Achieving this will create more impactful, engaging content for your listeners as well as further opportunities to network in the future –be it with a particular contact or even other professionals in their own network.

Each of these elements is a pivotal driver to your continued success and professional growth. The more clearly you understand your own value, how that value can help others and the ways it can be used to establish broader rapport with others in your network, the better poised you will become to grow as a professional podcaster and entrepreneur.

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