



Does Your Podcast Pass These 11 Success Checkpoints?



What does it take for a podcast to succeed? Charley Vallher offers 11 criteria based on his podcasting experience and the work his Valher Media team's done on other people's shows.



Charley Valher

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 694. And we'll be talking all about podcasts again. And I say that because in Episode 693, we talked about [how to get 1.2 million podcast downloads](#). So we're going to continue on that theme because I think podcasts are a thing. And I brought along my special friend, Charley Valher from [ValherMedia.com](#). Good day, mate.

Charley: Hey, James, thanks for having me on the show.

James: You love your podcasting, don't you? Like absolute podcasting nerd I'd say, in a nice way, though, you know, not to take anything away from nerds.

Charley: I like to think of myself as a connoisseur more than a nerd. I'm definitely very into it. I'm all in on podcasting.

How many microphones?

James: Sometimes when I do a podcast, people ask me how many surfboards I have. But I'm going to ask you, how many microphones do you have?

Charley: You know what, you've asked at a very interesting time, because I just happened to purchase some more. So in the room with me right now, I've got about eight.

James: It's funny, I'm going through some stuff. I've got a couple of boxes of my old tech gear, and there's some sort of Sennheiser wireless remotes, there's a Rode PinMic, there was an Audio Technica Lavalier mic, there was an older version of a Rode SmartLav. And I'm thinking, wow, you do accumulate this stuff over time. And these days, of course, [I'm running a much simpler tech scenario](#), I just have a USB Rode plugin mic. And I'd take a backup recording. But I think a lot of people focus on the tech side of the podcasting. But that's not what I want to focus about today after we get past the inevitable tech discussion because I think that's a trick, you know? People can spend a lot of time and energy on it but it's not really where the biggest payoff is for a podcast. And I think you've got some interesting data, because you've been establishing newish podcasts for a few of your clients and partners. And I'm really interested to know how you go about it when you're starting out. What sort of considerations would we have in mind when we're new to podcasting and we want to get maximum traction? And I'm assuming it's not just from having a few microphones.

Charley: Well, isn't that just a great question? So I'll go even deeper here. The reason I actually have eight microphones at the moment is I know how much people are into the tech. And what I actually do is a podcast growth strategy for my podcast is I'm giving away some microphones, some podcasting microphones, as a prize. So those eight microphones aren't naturally for me to use. Although I like them a lot. They're giveaways so that I can actually grow my show and have it turned into a bigger audience and bigger monetization. So looking at things like that, you really have to view it in a different light. Now, the other side of it is a couple of our shows, we have some quite large shows, I won't name them at the moment, but they're doing some astronomical numbers. And one of the things that makes me laugh is both of them are on \$100 microphone.

James: Perfect. So you've actually taken the hot topic that everyone is interested in, and you're using them as giveaways to attract in your perfect audience. Now, that's at [ValherMedia.com](https://valhermedia.com). I'm going to mention that in case someone fancies winning a microphone, head over there and see what Charley's got on offer. Why don't we talk about just for a brief moment, what are you actually doing for your clients? Because that's a good starting point.



Making podcasting hands-off

Charley: Yeah, it's a really good starting point. So I built the service we have at Valher Media out of my own personal need. I wanted to have a podcast, it's something that I've really enjoyed for a long time. But I wanted to get a lot of leverage out of having a podcast, because people may not understand how much is actually involved past just recording the audio or getting the guests, the editing, the show notes, the images, the video if you do a video show like mine. There's quite a bit of work behind the scenes in making it all come together and then publishing it and promoting it. So what I wanted to have is like I loved the actual making of the content like we're doing now, I really enjoy interviews and talking with people but past that point, I really didn't want to do very much at all. I wanted to have a lot of leverage. And I think if you're a business owner, all that little stuff behind the scenes, the grunt work, so to speak, is not how you should be spending your time. And it's not how you're going to get a big ROI out of podcasting. Your value is better spent in other areas. So that's the service I aim to build. And that's what we do at ValherMedia. We want to make podcasting as hands-off, we want to take care of the promotion side of things. And we also want to help with the promotion and marketing side of things.

James: So I suspect you guide your clients as to what type of formats and how you like to receive the goods. And then you bundle it up and edit and package it and then you also promote it. And I want to obviously extend into some of the promotion things that you found effective shortly. But how do you like to receive content? And is it anything different than what someone is going to be creating at home automatically? I mean, obviously, they're on a \$100 microphone. So that's a good clue. They're starting with that. How do you receive the goods?

Getting the goods

Charley: That's a really good question. So I mean, what's amazing is everyone kind of already has equipment that is fantastic, whether they realize it or not. So if you're doing maybe solo podcasting, quite possibly, your phone has an amazing ability already. And you might just need a little microphone plugin, maybe a tripod, if you're going to do video, and getting that recorded into your phone. And then using the Google Drive app to upload that is how we like to get it from a mobile. And that's a super simple setup. Now, if you are from a computer, you know, much the same, you know, not going too deep into the tech here, but that hundred dollar microphone or USB mic plugged straight in, and then we like our clients to record on something like Zoom or possibly even a Skype recorder can be really, really fantastic at capturing interviews.

James: So you're taking an input from a phone, or a microphone, or Zoom and then you start processing it from Drive. When it came to doing your own podcasts, how long, if at all, did you do that stuff yourself before handing it off to someone else?

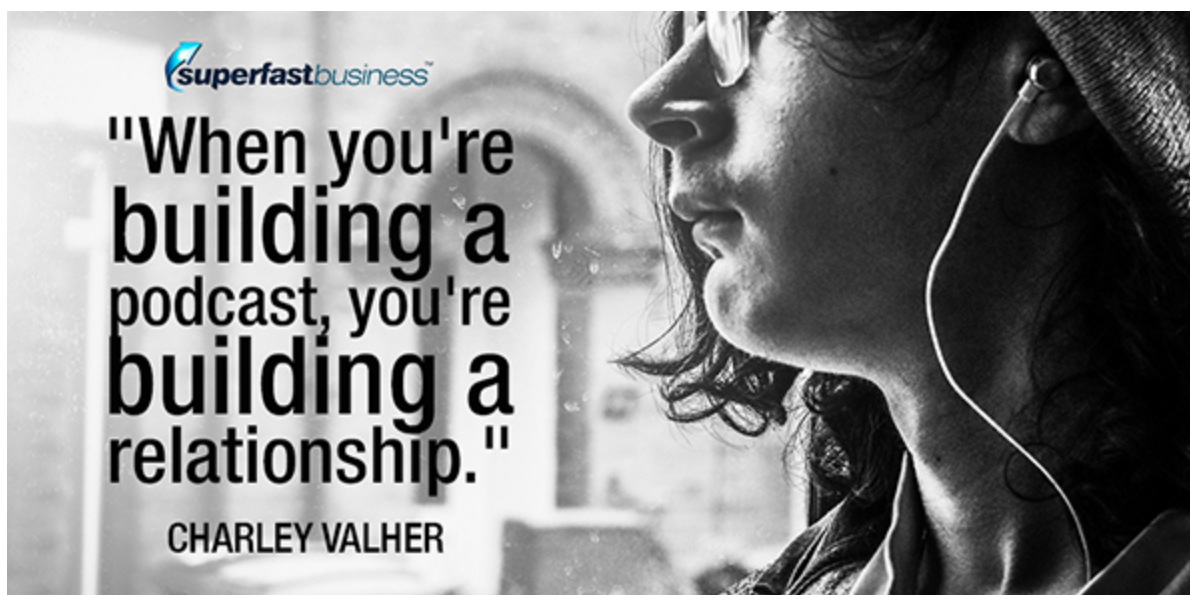
Charley: Well, I'm not actually skilled at editing or writing show notes at all. It's not an area where I delved a heap. I wanted to spend time with an editor who understands it, but I handed it off very early. Because I could see that the content creation and the thinking time in creating better quality content was where it was at. That's where I needed to focus and put my time and those were the areas where I perhaps couldn't get help as easily.

James: You might be a bit rare. I mean, I'm not good at editing or show notes. But I probably did my first 400 episodes. Maybe not that many but a lot, before I had someone in my team take it over. I falsely believed that it might be just hard to get someone to do it or that it was going to be mega expensive. And I just did it myself. But it was such a lot of wasted hours. I mean, if I did 400 shows, for example, that would be probably 800 hours of editing of my life that I can't get back. So I think a lot of people starting out podcasting do attempt to process their own show. Certainly, when I'm a guest on other people's shows, quite often there's a huge lag from when I do the recording to when it's published, because they're doing it themselves. And the more savvy they are with podcasting, the more likely they are to be doing it themselves.

Charley: It's a trap, it's a trap.

An overlooked growth factor

James: It is a trap. Don't go down the trap, get in touch with Charley, have his team do this. We actually used to offer a service like this many, many years ago. I think it was probably too early because podcasting wasn't as mainstream. And it was hard to get content from some of the experts. But I think people now know that you should have consistent publishing schedule. If you're going to do a podcast, how strongly do you believe it should be published on a fairly frequent basis?



Charley: So consistency is probably one of the main factors that contributes to growth. I think this point is often overlooked. Shows that publish sporadically, or maybe randomly is another word, often don't see as good a growth as shows that publish consistently. And the way I kind of think about it is when you're building a podcast, you're building a relationship. And we know that people listen to podcasts in a habit form; maybe it's like when they commute at certain times. And if you fall into that habit or ritual with them, they'll stick with you. But if you're not around when that time is there, they'll veer to other shows or other content and you miss the opportunity to build a deeper relationship with someone, which can be a huge miss. So consistency is like one of the things we see is very important for show growth and also getting the results.

James: They might even form the assertion that the relationship they have with you can't be based on consistency, they might not feel that you'll be there for them on a regular basis. And I guess in society, this is a rare attribute when people actually are consistent and can be relied upon. Often you expect for people to let you down. And it's nice when people are there to grab you. And I'm pretty sure at certain phases through my podcasting, because I've been doing it long enough, there were times where I just published stuff when I had it. And then I didn't publish it when I didn't have it, and I was sort of erratic. So there'd be big gaps and then there'd be a flurry of activity. These days, my team are really good at keeping us regular with two podcasts a week. They also drive me to make sure we've got [videos](#) ready to publish as well, because we're publishing videos every weekday. And having that team support is good. Do you do chase up of your clients? Do you have a protocol for people who are lagging with their content calendar?

Charley: Yeah, this is a really good question. So I'm a very, how can I put this, systematic, organized person, if you had to characterize me.

James: I'm surprised you're not Swiss.

Charley: Maybe it's in there somewhere.

James: Could be.

Charley: I'm very regimented, and I enjoy that type of lifestyle. But I completely accept that that's a choice. Not everyone is like me. So for me, even in my own show, like I'm like eight to 10 weeks ahead at all times. But for other people, they don't necessarily operate like that. So some clients really like to redline it, they really like to bring it close. So we've introduced a system where we will actually email and follow up with clients if they get within three weeks. And the reason for that is so many things can come up in a business owner's life where maybe there's a week where they can't record, they're traveling, or they're at a training or event. So having them ahead really allows the space where they don't miss a week and fall trapped to missing that consistency. So we really like to have that in place. We have someone on the team that is checking this every Monday just so they can follow up and make sure that clients will have content ready to go.

James: That's a really valuable service. And I know I used to be more ad hoc, and now I'm much more structured and advanced. I get the slides for [SuperFastBusiness Live](#) from the presenters a few weeks before the event, so that I can make sure they're high quality. And then the speakers I think turn up a lot more relaxed, they're calm, they know what they're talking about, it comes across better because it's been prepared instead of formulated in the room the day before, or the night before in the hotel room at three in the morning, which is really common in our industry. So there's a big difference between preparation and winging it. And the more you know your subject matter and the more thought you put into the content, the better the results. And I think that's what you're bringing to the table here, is the more measured and more systematic and more professional approach. Do you give your clients and partners a guide in terms of the show premise or how to structure their episodes to be better content?

Do clients get a guide?

Charley: Absolutely. This is, I mean, such a good question. This is something I've put some thought into. So essentially, is I'm in a very unique position where I get to see behind the scenes on many podcasts. I get to see what's working for some clients, what isn't working for others. And I get to kind of correlate or view all these data. And I really like to pass it on. Now, the reason for that, and this is, you know, partly a selfish reason, is if I help someone have a success with their podcast, they're going to stay as a client, they're going to stay with us. The other part of it is, in this view, if I can keep someone in the lane with me, it's just going to ensure they get the result they want from their show. My biggest challenge when it comes to this is sometimes people will come to us with maybe an artistic idea, or something that they want to do from a feel-good point of view. And when people bring that and they think it's going to bring them results, often it can cause a little bit of friction. But I really like to get involved and make sure that I can keep someone's show on track because I want them to win.

James: What does on track mean for a client? Do they have different versions of what success would look like?

Charley: Definitely, but they all seem to fit in the same kind of window. So you know, every client likes to see that their download numbers are going up, they like to see that more and more people are tuning into their show. So if the show isn't gaining any new listeners, or they're not getting any traction with the actual things, that's a really big indicator on the front. The second part is, you know, who we specifically work with are business owners. The podcast isn't necessarily their business, their podcast is a growth engine that kind of sits to the side of their business in which they are looking to either generate some new business or perhaps traffic and leads from the show itself. So they want to see an ROI on it like it's a marketing asset. So if a podcast isn't necessarily bringing in fresh leads, or it isn't helping them convert some of their leads into clients, like that often falls into an issue as well. So if I can get those two elements working well, that's what I consider as a show that's on track.

When it just won't work

James: Have you ever had someone bring a show to you, and you've said, "Listen, this is a turd, you should scrap it."

Charley: I'm giggling a little bit. I've had some shows where I've had to say, "Look, this isn't the right fit." And those shows have even, you know, potentially had some really good download numbers. It's just, it's so far outside of what I've seen working that I haven't felt comfortable taking it on. So that's been one. And then on the other side, I've had people come to me with ideas. And, how can I put this, I've got to tastefully caution them against that path. And that can be difficult. I really don't like telling people their idea is bad or that show is not going to work in my opinion. But it definitely can happen.

James: So what do you look for when you're trying to determine if a show would work?

Charley: So I've built a framework, no surprise, I love me a framework as an organized person. And I've got 11 elements that I kind of dig into to see that a show will be successful in my eyes. And if I go through and see any of them are way out, or way off track that they couldn't fit into those 11 elements, then I can see we're probably going to have some issues bringing this to get the result, and we want the shows to match. Like if something's working for so many of our clients, I just want to see that rollout, I want to increase the likelihood of success.

11 indicators of a show's success

James: If you were interviewing someone, and they said there are 11 ways to know if your show is going to work or not, what do you think the next question should be?

Charley: Oohh, maybe I gave you a bit of a leading answer there. Maybe I knew what was coming. And I wanted to make sure we had a look at it.

James: I need to follow those breadcrumbs, Charley. I'm going to ask you if you're willing to share any of those 11 ways.

Charley: Absolutely. I think we should talk about these 11 things because I think this is going to help people in a big way. Because if they're missing some of these elements, it's kind of like you're baking a cake. You know, you might have all the ingredients, but you're missing one. And if you're missing that one, it can cost you in a big way, like the cake isn't going to turn out the way you perhaps intended.

James: Or if you don't put flour in it because you're gluten intolerant, it'll taste like crap.

Charley: Exactly. So maybe your show needs some things in there like that. And this is probably one of the most common things I come across.

James: Okay, so hit us with the 11 things, as many as you're willing to do. And I know you've got some proprietary IP, and that's part of the value you bring to your clientele. But I imagine if someone passes the 11 filters, they'd be a good prospect for you to work together. And they might consider that they don't ever have to edit their show again.

Charley: Well, I hope so. Now, I'll preface this by saying these are an opinion.

James: Of course.

Charley: There are definitely some outliers that shows can succeed without following this. But these, in my opinion, will help most business owners greatly.

James: Go for it.



1 – One specific audience

Charley: Okay, so number one is one specific audience. So when we look at that, I think a big mistake a lot of shows make is trying to please too many people. And I think there's a fine balance between too niche and too broad. But if your show is too broad, then you're just never going to be able to communicate in the effective way where you gain traction. And you'll come up against some very, very heavy competition and well back to competition. And on the reverse, if you're way too niche and your market is too small, then it potentially will never be able to get big enough where you can get the volume of results you're looking for whether it's leads or traffic or new clients.

James: Is this the one where if the person feels like they're an artist and their specific audience is themselves, and they haven't really thought about an external party, is that something you look for in this step? Or some other step?

Charley: No, definitely.

James: Right. Because that would happen, wouldn't it? You get people who go, "Oh, I've got a great idea. I'm going to do a podcast documenting my journey." But it's really all about them and not about a specific target audience.

Charley: Nailed it.

James: Perfect. Okay. I'm on that one. And do you have any parameters around what a good size audience is? Do you have a methodology that you use? I mean, people like [Ryan Levesque](#), he's published a book called [Choose](#). And he mentioned some filters that he uses to determine if a market is capable of being financial for him or not. Do you have any tools or methodologies?

Charley: Yeah, definitely. So I'm a big fan of Ryan's method. And I'm completely okay with using that. I've quite enjoyed his book. And I think the way he went about using Google Trends particularly is a fantastic option. And yeah, definitely check out that book if you're looking for a method. From my perspective, I actually prefer to look into Ahrefs, which is, I suppose we'll call it an SEO or Google tool, so to speak. But what I like to see is plenty of keywords getting more than 1000 search volume a month. So I like to see that there's a lot of problems to be solved within this audience, it's getting plenty of traffic across the spectrum of there. And there's potentially a lot of things we can make content about.

James: Yeah, well, I mean, I've probably gone a little broad with SuperFastBusiness. But I just got in early, and I'm persistent. But I think a lot of the things I talk about on the show are just anecdotally things that I'm hearing through my coaching audience. I've got access to a great data set of about 500 active people with problems they want me to solve. So that's a nice little vein to tap into, as well. And talk about things that people have already asked me.

2 – Brand voice

Charley: Definitely, but you actually tie in perfectly to point number two here, which is, we call brand voice, which is like, basically, what do you stand for and what are your opinions? So your audience is broad, James, definitely you serve a lot of people. But where I think you really cut through is, you have a strong opinion of what you stand for, whether it's your [Work Less, Make More](#) or [recurring revenue](#) or [a certain type of lifestyle](#). So you've segmented your audience really well here with an opinion. And this is something I say commonly as well is a lot of people will start a podcast and they're really scared, basically, not to piss anyone off; they go very, very vanilla. They wouldn't say that they like something or don't like something, and they often just agree with their guests. And this is a huge due to their detriment, because again, they don't connect with people on an element I would like to see.

James: I've seen a couple of people, where they kind of make their show an open forum for their audience. It's like podcast by committee. They don't do anything without asking their audience what they should do, it's like a choose your own adventure, where they're kind of the Muppet who let the audience pull all their strings, and they don't have any spine. And I often wonder about that. Do you think there's a blurred line between catering for your audience versus just becoming their puppet?

Charley: Definitely. And it can be really difficult in some markets. In some markets, if you have an opinion on a certain thing, you can be incredibly polarizing as well. So I'll bring up some really controversial ones. We have a show that's in the parenting space, and the topics of like, vaccines, like and that stuff can lead to some hugely controversial topics from there. And if you are trying to, again, to remain vanilla or imbalanced, because you're trying to cater to everyone and what the audience wants overall, I think you, how can I put this, I think you really stop the ability to form deeper relationships with a part of your market. So when, as you said, you know, podcast by committee, I think you prevent all opportunity of happening for them to see you as an authority. And I also think that it stops you from building deeper relationships with a deeper part of the market or a certain part of the market.

James: I mean, that's the most explosive example – vaccines, there's definitely polarizing. How do you treat that without or do you do not care? Do you bring on guests to polarize and then bring opposing points of view? Or do you take a position on it as the show itself?

Charley: I would never push a position on any client. But if they already have a position, I would encourage them to vocalize it, provided it's not going to do harm to anyone, of course, or do damage to anyone and vaccine is a very controversial one. And I think that's why most people can see why it's so controversial. But if you stand for something particular, so James, in your example, if I was going to come on here and say the keys to success are working 120 hours a week, you're going to probably quickly firm up against that and say maybe not.

James: Oh, I'd love that. I mean, I'd like to have a podcast with Gary Vee and talk about, like a real conversation. Because I love a lot of what he does as well. But he does strike me as someone who pushes, like, he's got a strong work ethic from the way he was raised. And that's fine. And he loves what he does. And that's also fine. And he does him, like he says, and I do me. So I think it'd be great to represent different points of view, it would be controversial. But it would also be really interesting and informative. And I guess it comes down to how honest everyone is. And if they're even open to having their mind changed slightly, because I've kind of lived both worlds in a way. Although no one handed me a bottle shop to renovate. So very interesting.

Number two?

Charley: That was number two, the brand voice.

James: Oh, ok. So we already went into two. That was pretty sneaky. So brand voice, I thought we're still on the way to determine a specific audience. What about number three, then?

3 – Value-driven content

Charley: So number three is value-driven content. Again, we live in this world, which is quite fascinating, when I listen to some podcasts where the show is basically all about them. They talk a lot from their own ego. And perhaps they waffle on about things that aren't necessarily important to their audience like the weather is quite a common one.

James: That is an interesting one, because I was very direct in my early days, like so direct people would call me like machine-like, and I started putting stories in, and I actually hear some of the stuff I'm saying and think, is this really going to be interesting to people? But they assure me, they want to hear my stories. They like it when I'm vulnerable. It has changed my life. I've had people come out from the woodwork and helped me with everything from dealing with inflammation and osteoarthritis and surfing and basically anything I mention or anything personal, I'm going to connect with someone and they seem to like it. But I often feel, as the host of the show, that I'm being outrageously selfish and that no one really gives a shit about my stories. Because often, when I'm bringing on a guest, I keep hearing the audience sitting there thinking, just shut up James and let the guy talk, right? Let Charley just roll through these 11 things without sticking a story in there. So it is, I think, a fine line and it was actually outside my comfort zone to start sharing more and to be more story-oriented. But I mean, I've had, gosh, how many [podcasts about story](#) itself seems to be the glue that makes something compelling as well.

Charley: Absolutely. And in all honesty, when I listen to this show, because I do listen to your show, James, I quite enjoy it. I enjoy your stories, I think they're fantastic. But they offer value. So I didn't say in that point, you know, only let's hammer in and be robots, keep it exactly on 11 and regimented and roll it through from there. When you often add your stories, and this is one of the things I think you do fantastically on your show, the stories actually add value and merit and contrast to what someone's talking about. So you just added a whole heap of value to what I said, from your own position. And I think it does a great job of building your authority within your own podcast. So value can be, you know, very differently derived. So, you know, we are delivering value from, you know, these points, these 11 points, but then you're also adding value to my points with your own experiences. And I think that's fantastic. And you know, another thing that I've come to realize is sometimes value can be, you make someone feel good, doesn't have to be necessarily them getting an outcome. It's them relating to a situation, and they feel good about that situation.

James: Interesting. Now, when you said value-driven content, I immediately think to my definition of selling, which is basically helping people improve their situation. I'll tell you what doesn't improve my situation when I listen to some podcasts, is five minutes worth of ads before they get to any content. I've even timed it, some of them seven or eight minutes before they mention a scrap of content. [I think that's outrageous and not valuable](#). What do you think?

Charley: I think some people have gone way too far. Way too far.

James: It's getting a bit commercial, you know. They're turning themselves into free-to-air radio, and it will drive people to where they can skip that stuff. As soon as someone has an ad skipper on their playback device, I think the ad revenue game is going to change interestingly.

Charley: I think there's some big changes coming. We know there's some amazing technology coming for podcasting, where we're going to get much more data and much more insight into how people are consuming and what they're consuming, which I think is really going to help us create better content as podcasters. I really, really do. However, to your point about once brands start to really see how many people are skipping or turning away, I think there's going to be a very interesting shake up in the space. But really interestingly, a friend of mine commented, last week, we're having a conversation about a podcast we both love, and he basically mentioned how their introduction of ads and how they're doing the ads is really rubbing up the wrong way. And it's actually being detrimental to his relationship with that show. Like it really has turned him away and done brand damage. So I think we've got to be really careful as podcasters in going too commercial and potentially rubbing up our audience the wrong way, I think there's a huge chance of doing that. So you've got to be very careful. It's a fine line.

James: Yeah, and I don't listen to podcasts. I mean the few times I've tried to listen to ones that people love, they've turned me off. I just can't do it. It doesn't interest me because I just think, you know, just get on with it. Get on with the stuff, stop abusing my earbuds. And there's some really interesting stuff with dynamic ad serving and being able to segment it and geo target and switch them out. And I think we're going down the path of where Facebook is and native ads, at least they can make them more relevant, which would be interesting.

I guess we should look at number four now.

4 – Being consistent with release

Charley: Absolutely. So this is something we spoke a little bit earlier about, which is consistent. Being consistent with release.

James: Oh yeah, we definitely covered that. What about five.

5 – Quality production

Charley: So we can go over to the next one. And this is what we talked about, quality production. It's really interesting. Let's say you went to one event, okay? Maybe you went to a training or you attended a SuperFast live event. And if you saw someone who looked like they were homeless, regardless of how valuable the content they were talking about, or how smart they may be, it acts as a huge deterrent in you doing business with them. And just like in many cases, people who dress and present really well, even if they don't know their topic as well are often better received. So we've got to accept that as humans, we judge, we do judge. And we do judge books by their covers. We do judge videos by how they look. And we do judge people in the videos, if they're shaven or unshaven or how they present themselves.

James: I shaved this morning because I made some [videos](#) with a partner of mine. And that's a conscious thing I do after running that, I did a [should-I-shave-or-not-shave](#) video many, many years ago, probably seven or eight years ago, it's somewhere on the [SuperFastBusiness YouTube channel](#). And we could probably embed it where this post is at Episode 694, if you want to laugh. Because in that one, I've recorded part of the video unshaven and then I did a quick change and shaved. But in the quick-change part is this little flash of me not wearing a shirt. So I'll just say that to get everyone a bit excited, it was kind of a bit edgy at the time. But the clear feedback was, if I don't know you, I'm going to judge you better if you're clean shaven. If I know you, you know, it doesn't matter how you present because I know you, and I like you now, and I'll let you off the hook.

Charley: I agree with that point a lot. Once you have a deeper relationship with someone, you can definitely be more raw.

James: But I hate to put out a crappy quality podcast and I have had to do it on occasion where I just couldn't get around it for whatever reason. Like if you record as many podcasts as I do, you're going to have some that are less than perfect just because some guy is tapping a pen, or they're speaking to their laptop without an external mic, or they're in a noisy place. At least with audio, and I don't do video, you can set up the scene, you can say I'm here outside in a cafe and there's motorbikes driving past, so you can at least give a concession. I think I get a couple of leave passes for the ones that are less than perfect. Especially the ones I used to edit because I wasn't very good at editing. But I agree with you. I really feel and empathize for the person committing to listening to my podcast, I want it to be a good experience for them. And I've learned so much now about when you pay for good design, and you have better quality production of your stuff, people will notice it. But with one huge caveat, Charley, and this is something super counterintuitive, one of my clients switched from DSLR camera gear and Boom mics and all the sh*t to a straightforward, handheld, selfie, shoot and point camera, and he doubled his YouTube views because they loved the organic and the microphone and the camera was good enough. And [I make all my videos with just an iPhone](#), no external mic, just an iPhone for all those videos you see every day. And that is a good fit for production value for that medium for my audience for what I'm trying to do. So there is the caveat. But I think with audio in particular, it's really worth stripping out the extra noises and making sure that it's a pleasant experience for your listener.

Charley: Absolutely. And when we say quality, we don't mean expensive. I think they're two very different camps. So, you know, smartphones, for example, are amazing these days. The camera on my smartphone, I think would give most DSLRs a run for their money, maybe the older ones, new ones look pretty amazing. But you can definitely create quality on a budget these days. And quality doesn't necessarily mean expensive. And often, the room you're in or how you look in the video, or how close you are to a microphone, or if you're using a tripod or something, like, that can make a huge difference to the perception of the video itself. But it doesn't surprise me at all, that people have been able to double their YouTube channels with using a smartphone or similar.

James: Yeah, I mean, that box of stuff that I pulled out, it's got all my old flip cameras, Codec Zedi8, I got an HD flip cam and all these stuff. They were on eBay now for \$39. Not my stuff, I'm just seeing what other people sell them for, these relics of 10 years ago, before phones, before people were making videos with phones, they were using flip cameras. It just took video, HD video. You can plug it into your computer with a USB. It's fascinating how we've gone back full circle, but now it's all in one device. You really can actually probably make a podcast just with an iPhone, and a decent mic, if it all comes down to it.

Charley: Definitely can.

James: But it's what you do after you hit stop that matters. Yeah?

6 – Publishing system

Charley: Well, definitely like, you know, I kind of think about it, I think, you know, actually making the content is about half the battle. And then it's what you do from there is the other half of the battle. And, you know, going into our next point here, but you've got to have a publishing system, you have to have something in place, which gets your show on to the right channels in sync each and every week to fall in with that consistency.

James: Yeah, I'm down with that, you know, that's what really the heart of [OwnTheRacecourse](#) was creating your own publishing platform to not be reliant on one thing, like you don't want to be the YouTube star whose account gets shut down, or the Facebook page whose account gets shut down. Because it's only a matter of time until something happens if you put all your eggs on someone else's platform. That's why I like to have a system of owning my own content and publishing it in multiple places, bringing them all back to the thing that I'd like to happen, which is them to visit my asset at some point, which I control. And having that system means you don't have to do it. What's acronym SYSTEM? Saves You Stress Time Energy Money.

Charley: That's the one.

James: I like that one. And, you know, I've got a little team. But I have to realize I'm a little bit rare with that, because I've been having a team for a long time, because I used to lead a team, because I am actually naturally systems-oriented. I mean, I've got a framework for packing when I go away and all these sort of things. I just pull up my SOP, check, check, check, check, and I'm away. Most people aren't like that. And most people aren't like you, Charley, they're not like me, it'll probably be easy for them to just pay a service to do it for them. And not worry about trying to hire, train, manage, educate, update, you know, people having certain, you know, life issues happen to them and all sorts of things. Unless you have a small team of a few, [I would not be single VA-dependent](#) and I would definitely not be single VA part-time dependent. Do you agree with me on that?

Charley: I definitely do. I just think you nailed something so important there. We're all unique. I definitely think that in business, we see people with certain strengths and certain weaknesses. Now, you know, my strength is clearly systemization. I'm very regimented, as I mentioned earlier, and this is something that people can take advantage of. I'm for hire. You can leverage what I've been able to create here and take advantage of maybe an area that's a weak point for you. So when I look at this, and you know, this is one of the things where I've made this business, I don't think there's a need often to change who you are or try and become a systemized person, it's to be aware of it and then leverage other people who have perhaps created that.

James: Nailed it. Number seven.

7 – Promotion strategy

Charley: Alright, so publishing system is all about that omnipresence definitely falling into your OwnTheRacecourse philosophy, which is where I got it from. The next one we come to is promotion strategy. Now, this one is a little bit unique depending on what niche you're in or who your market is. But absolute certain there are places you are better off promoting your podcast than others. And this can take a little bit of data collection to work out, you might try a few different things. But all shows we have tended to have, let's say, two to three placements that work best for them. And then they'll have some which may not be worth your time at all.

James: And is this number seven?

Charley: It is.

James: I told you before, I would ask you where you're promoting, like what you're actually doing with the shows. Are there some common places that seem to work most of the time?

Charley: Definitely. Shall we go into them? I'd just given you a dry answer.

James: I think you know what's coming. Yeah. It would be great if you could reveal a couple. Because I'm curious as a podcaster, you know, at this point in where I'm at, I'm as open minded as possible as to where I'd be. Funny, like I've had some recent success in new platforms that I've been trying, that have been giving me great results. Like, for example, on Amazon, I'm able to run ads to my book, it's working really well. Kind of got put on to that from [Allan Dib, who has a top-selling marketing book, The 1-Page Marketing Plan](#). And I started running some ads for [Work Less, Make More](#). And actually, in Australia, it actually is ranked second for marketing, it actually outranked Allan. I'm sorry, Alan, for jumping the queue there with your technique. But also, I'm excited by the new platforms, I think there's lots of platforms you can run ads on, but which ones work for podcasts?

Charley: So this is something, again, I'm in such a unique position where I get to see a broad spectrum of shows in different niches at different stages and get to draw out the commonalities. So I'll give some that work. And I'll give some that I would probably hesitate towards at the moment. So overwhelmingly, Facebook and Facebook ads is working well across many of our shows. Now, for myself, particularly if you have a video show, I think Facebook ads is a fantastic place to be promoting full-length content at the moment. And I'm seeing a lot of success from that across the board.

James: Okay, now you said full-length content, does that mean you're uploading the show natively and then paying money to have that show to other people? Like what type of ad are we talking about here?

Charley: Yeah, so to go deeper there, I'm doing a video view ad in the news feeds. So I'm making sure I'm on either Facebook or Instagram, which is a part of Facebook ads, I'm promoting the full length of content, so the whole 30- to 60-minute episode. And then I'm also making sure to take people to something after that, whether that's a content upgrade, or might be a webinar or a video, or it might be an offer to join a community; some form of next deeper relationship when we go about that strategy. But that is working overall for the majority of clients and myself at the moment. So that's our favorite.

James: Where does that call to action happen? Is that in a future ad to a segmented people who watched it? Or is it in the surrounding description? Or is it in the video itself like a call to action inside the content?

8 – Call to action

Charley: I tell you what, the next point is, call to action, on my list.

James: Alright. Let's go to eight because I'm excited about the call to action. But you have to tell me another promotion strategy other than Facebook, that's simply not enough.

Charley: I couldn't agree more. So we're going to go back and forth. We're just going to acknowledge that you've got to have a promotion strategy and you've got to have a call to action.

James: Because there's little point promoting without asking for the order. That's called branding. I think. It's like the old days, you know, buy a few billboards and it didn't really matter if you sold anything or not. Job done. Black skivvies, Porsches, fancy offers, not so much anymore.

Charley: Not so much. Okay, so in the example I just did, and I'll use these, I'll go through them a little bit, how can we put this, step by step or go through them in detail so I can give a really good point of view. So with the Facebook one, we're putting the full video on a Facebook page, we're then boosting or running ads from that full-length video to similar podcasts or the guests as the audience. So for example, if I was going to promote this episode that I'm on with you, I would look for podcasts that are related to your podcast, as well as any names you may be associated with, and I would hit those audiences. So perhaps, you know, Gary Vee or [Pat Flynn](#), will be some really good ones from there.

Within the content itself, we make sure that in the actual, I'm trying to remember what they call it, in the text above the video, we make sure to put, you know, something really curiously provoking there. So maybe it's a question, maybe it's something to acknowledge what's in the video, but we always open strong with something that would make someone curious to watch the video. Then after that, we give a point about the video or what someone would learn. And then we will put a link in that text as well. Now that link could lead to a variety of things depending on the show. So a really good example, it might be to the show notes. So to download something that's in the show notes, or it might be for an opt in or framework that's related to the show. So if this episode is the 11 points on podcasting, maybe you can download my infographic on the 11 points from podcasting as an example. We might take it to a webinar, if someone's making webinars. But really, what we're doing is we're allowing people to consume the full video content on Facebook itself, and then just taking them to that next logical point where we want them to flow through from there.

Now as a caveat, we're going to go a little bit deep here, and some people may tune out. Something we love doing is that with Facebook ads, particularly, if we get to build remarketing lists for people that have, let's say, watched 50 percent of a video; so if someone's watched half of that podcast episode, one of my favorite things to do is to remarket to them, and show them another episode of the podcast, or maybe show them that download or that next step we want people to take as well. And that is overwhelmingly working really well for us at the moment. That's a strategy I love to roll out. And that's one of the first things I'll do from a show growth perspective.



"To have someone consume 30 to 60 minutes of content is almost more valuable than an email address these days."

CHARLEY VALHER

Now to give some stats to go with that, if we're nailing this, what we can often see is we can get someone to consume a whole episode of our podcast for about a dollar. And I look at that at the moment and I think to have someone consume 30 to 60 minutes of content is almost more valuable than an email address these days, because I think consumption and relationship play such a huge role here.

James: So do you do this for your clients?

Charley: We do this with some of our clients. Yes, not all, some. This isn't a strategy that's best for them. But certainly for some of them, it's what we do.

James: What happens if they've got a Facebook person doing their stuff? Do you tell them what you want them to do, do you chat to them? Or do you just ask if you can do that bit?

Charley: Yeah, really good question. So actually, a fair few of our clients will have someone doing Facebook ads or ads for them in general. And what I'll do is I'll make him a Loom video, or I'll give them some instructions. And I'll frame it from the position of, 'Hey, we know this works really well, you might want to lean into this a little bit,' but of course, give them the option. And some of them have taken the strategy and run away with it. And it's done really well for them. And others have found different ways to go about it. And they're leveraging the content in other ways. I'm not saying our way is the only way. But it's certainly a great starting point.

James: There's got to be lots of other ways. So I'd love you to share another one.

Charley: Yup. So I'll go into some other ones for me. So that's Facebook and what's working well for us on Facebook. On the other on the other side of things, because you know, there's so many other options, there's so many different ways to promote. And I love kind of playing with all these and testing them on my own show. The next one I'm really enjoying at the moment is LinkedIn, I'm going to talk a little bit about LinkedIn here. So LinkedIn has this challenge where they won't allow you to post the full video on your personal profile.

James: Is that the 10-minute limit?

Charley: You have a 10-minute limit.

James: Yeah.

Charley: And some of the other platforms like Instagram have limits as well.

James: Well, they used to have a one-minute limit. But then IGTV meant you could now post to your main wall and whatever it's called on Instagram, and then click through to watch the rest. That was a big shift. That's when I switched from one-minute videos to longer videos.

Charley: What a great change that was because it was much harder, particularly on Instagram, for podcasters. So this is something we've been playing a lot more with now is like, I think, you know, LinkedIn, and Instagram, these are both platforms. I'm going to tie these into one a little bit here. I think there's a great opportunity to be on these platforms if your audience is on there. And obviously, the Instagram audience is very different to the LinkedIn audience. If you're in more B2B, LinkedIn is probably going to be your place. But what we're enjoying at the moment is we're often pulling snippets from our podcast. We'll pick maybe a key moment or a couple of key moments that, let's say, three minutes long, three to five I normally like. And we'll turn that into a shorter video or a shorter piece of content. And then we'll promote that natively on their platforms. So this is from a personal profile. So for myself, it is my own Instagram or my own LinkedIn. I'm putting that into the feed. And then I'm putting a link to the full episode of the podcast that that comes from, perhaps in the comment, not necessarily in the text itself. One of the reasons I do that, why I'm playing with that, it seems that LinkedIn and all these other platforms, they really like you keeping people on their platform. So if you put the link to the full episode in the comments, instead of perhaps in the text, I'm just finding that seems to get a little bit more reach. Now that is, how can I put that, an opinion, I could be way off. But this works.

James: I think that's what we were advised to do. And we found that seems to be more effective, and we're killing it on [LinkedIn](#). I think the reason is that LinkedIn is so damn boring. It's where people are pitching you to buy something in the private message, or looking for a job. And when you're scrolling through and you see a video, it's so much more engaging compared to Facebook, which is highly visual, Instagram's super visual. So it really does stand out.

Charley: Absolutely. I think it's a winner as well, I'm certainly seeing some great results from that and people who follow that where they're releasing those on Instagram and LinkedIn. It does really well. One of the ones I'm trying at the moment, I'll just mention this, is I'm always in my stories, and this is the Instagram stories, particularly, letting people know when a podcast is out as well. And that seems to be getting some good traction from views. I can't necessarily correlate that to a huge amount of clicks. But I like it from an awareness point of view. I think it's a great thing to do at really no extra effort if you've got the assets already.

James: I like that too. In fact, you were talking about that and even pre-teasing episodes, we started pre teasing some episodes after chatting with you last time. And that's been great for us. People are asking me, when's the one coming out with such and such? And I said very soon, and then it came out. And it actually got the most shares of any episode we did, for quite some time. So I've seen evidence that it could work. I also, you know, I used to watch [Ezra](#) upload his whole content natively on Facebook. And at the time, I thought, I'm not sure I'm ready to do that. But then eventually, and you were telling me what great results you're getting for your video podcasts, loading them up natively to Facebook, eventually, we did that. And it forced a major change in the way that [OTR](#) works. We're not afraid to contribute the whole piece of content on those platforms, as long as we're using some of those targeting options to bring people back to our site through the remarketing campaigns of the content upgrade. Let people watch it where they are. But they're getting to know you and eventually they come knocking. And that's if you've got that call to action, which is, you know, point eight, make sure you remember to tell people exactly what you want them to do now.

Charley: Absolutely. If you've got to go native on the platforms, you absolutely have to have a strategy to take people into those off the platform as well. Because the risk in these platforms is definitely there. And I think it's something we've got to have in place. And I'll just give one more show growth strategy away or, you know, promotion strategy. I actually got this from [Matt Wolfe](#) from Hustle and Flow chart. But I'm a really big fan of this. We tried this on a few shows as well. It's kind of a bit of an interesting one. I mentioned earlier that I have some podcast mics in the room with me. Matt really opened my eyes to the idea that doing giveaways in exchange for people leaving you a review on your show and subscribing to your email list is a really powerful strategy as well. So I like doing competitions and giveaways. Because in getting those reviews and people onto your email list, when you get reviews on your podcast, particularly in iTunes, it definitely, how can I say this, plays a part in where you rank in certain categories. So by doing a competition or something to the side and encouraging people to leave a review, it can definitely help with your positioning on iTunes, which then gets you exposure on that platform. And then it's also a great way of bringing people onto that email list so you can start emailing them about when you're releasing your podcast and offering more value through your show.

James: Hmm, something I might have to look at, Charley. Well, I always wondered, you know, is an incentivized review legit? You know, is it bribery? Should your show be so good they want to review it just because it's awesome and you're not having to incentivize them? For me, it's been an interesting question. I'd be so easy for me to do giveaways. I've got boxes of hoodies. I've got leftover books from my event. I've got my own book. I've got tickets to my event. You're speaking at [SuperFastBusiness Live](#), right?

Charley: Absolutely. Looking forward to it.

James: I'm excited about that. Because I can't imagine what sort of data you're going to have collected by that stage. But whoever's in that room is going to experience the absolute freshest, most up-to-date stuff.

Alright. What about nine?

9 – Have something to offer beyond the podcast

Charley: So we're coming past call to action now. And we're moving into have something to offer beyond the podcast. So this is where as a business, you've got to have something to sell. Like if we're going to be measuring a part of your show success as the perhaps leads, revenue and profit you're going to make from the show, you've got to have something to sell that would quantify that being how we get there.

James: So in other words, the podcast isn't the product.

Charley: Definitely not.

James: And a lot of people think the podcast is the product.

Charley: It's a huge mistake.

James: Yeah. For me, it's never been the product. It's always been the tow truck that tows my SuperFastBusiness caravan. You know, we're around the country so I can help people.

Charley: Yeah, and that's exactly how I want to encourage people to go about it. Again, you know, for some people, like I'll mention, Joe Rogan, his podcast is his product. And you know, good on him. I think it's amazing what he's done in the space. I love his show, I listen to the show. But I think as business owners, replicating that format, is probably not going to be the best result from you. You're going to get far more success in naturally leading people towards your products and services and helping him them that way.

James: And possibly, he was a bit of a celebrity already anyway with being a fighter and a comedian.

Charley: Definitely.

James: Apparently, he's a comedian.

Charley: He is. His comedy is quite good. I actually like his comedy.

James: I'll let you know if I ever hear anything that resembles humor. But he was one of the shows I found very hard to listen to. It was extremely long, but they're full of ads, especially in the beginning.

Charley: What's interesting about Joe's show is like, the fighting stuff doesn't interest me. I'm not a fighter at all. And I probably don't listen to those episodes. But he brings some fascinating scientists on and I find that the people he has access to with his celebrity status often creates some outstanding content, if you can get past the ads.

James: Yeah, I've seen some of the ones; he gets good, controversial ones like alien sightings and that sort of stuff. I mean, it's really catering for mainstream. In fact that's a fun fact here, the reason I got on the internet in 1995 was because I was really curious looking at things like Loch Ness Monster and alien UFO sightings, and spy shots of BMWs and so forth. Like it was all the fun stuff. I didn't have a business reason to be on there other than the spy shots of BMWs because I was selling BMWs at that time. But that was what drew me in. It's got a broad appeal that stuff. He's done well, he's at thousands of shows too like, killing it?

Charley: What's forecasted, he will do about 100 million dollars in advertising revenue per year now, just as crazy and amazing.

James: I'm not surprised because there's a lot of ads, but then, you know, he probably doesn't have to do coaching stuff. So you know, we're doing other things for our income that require effort. So he's done really, really well. But it's not the one to base your hopes and dreams on, it's probably harder to replicate. I think that's your point.

Charley: Definitely, in my opinion, not the way to go if you're a business owner.

James: Okay. What about 10?

10 – Leverage into other content and assets

Charley: Okay, so if you're doing this podcast, and you're going to invest all this time into creating great content and getting guests, you've got to leverage your show content into other content and assets. For example is this show or this episode, we're probably going to leverage into maybe a blog post, or it possibly is going to turn into some email content for you. Or you're going to mention this show as an Instagram post. So we're not just creating a podcast, and then we're publishing it in one place and marketing in that one place. We're turning it into a whole variety of content past this. Now, this episode, we could make an infographic for on this 11 points here. There's so many different ways to do it. But again, a lot of podcasts I come across is they're creating relatively good content, but they're not leveraging it or milking it for all they've got. And there's so much more they could do.

James: Yeah, and that ties in with having a team and a system. We'll definitely turn this into a content upgrade; there'll be 11 steps. There'll be an infographic, it'll be fully transcribed. The names we've mentioned in the show so far that will appear on the site will bring SEO traffic as well, which is good, it helps Google understand that my site is relevant to Gary Vee, and to [Ryan Levesque](#), and [Pat Flynn](#), and Joe Rogan. It clusters them all together. So there's a lot of ways to get a payoff from that original content; in the written form, not just the audio form. But also you can turn it into visual stuff, the video things like Charley was talking about, little teasers, even if it's audio, you can do those waveform videos. And we do quite a few of those. Because I don't do the video podcast, it would have been hard, I think for me to do 694 video episodes, it's just such a different logistical feat than just recording audio. So I'm thankful that I've chosen a medium I can sustain. This is a lot around personal choice and sustainability.

Tell me about step 11.

11 – Access a high-quality network

Charley: So the last point here is that if you're doing a podcast, what I really love to see from business owners is, they're leveraging that podcast to give them access to a high-quality network and key players in their industry or niche. You know, for example, here, you know this show, you've been able to leverage in many ways James. You've been able to bring people on to the podcast that perhaps you want to work with, or perhaps you want to get to know a little bit better so you can get involved in their world. For myself, in my own podcast, I've been able to turn my show into inviting people onto the show, and then doing joint ventures with them, or getting speaking gigs. So there's this whole form of leverage that can come off working with the guests you know, and for it to become a credibility or authority asset for you to leverage in business as well.

James: I learn so much from my podcasts, I take plenty of notes. I've learned a lot from you before and in this one. I was so thrilled like back in Episode 690, [I got to chat with Bob Serling about licensing for profit](#), which is a real sweet spot for me at the moment. It's where I'm driving my business. So it was very educational. And it's a good way for me to check in on what I'm doing and get validation. Same when I had [Jay Abraham](#), it was a good way to check in and see where I'm at. Also, I learnt [how to learn better from Scott Young](#), 689. So some of the recent ones have just been topping my top episodes, and, you know, over time; [the one with Nir Eyal](#) was amazing. [The one about fear with Nam Baldwin](#), some of my favorite episodes I've ever done. So out of hundreds, you'll get half a dozen that have a huge impact. The one I did on fear with Nam, I think it was my favorite episode for so many years because it helped me tremendously in life, especially in in surfing, I was able to rapidly progress my learning curve and ability to develop my resilience by understanding how to control things.

And I had a bench test on this recently, I was involved in a situation yesterday that was very intense. And it went for hours, it was a super hardcore negotiation. And the last time I was in almost the exact same situation was about 17 years ago. And the difference between then and now, the old version of me, I was emotionally wrung out, you know, physically, mentally, emotionally exhausted, and I went through cycles of frustration, rage, disbelief. And there was just like this massive roller coaster, this intense negotiation and ended up being, you know, I was just empty at the end of that. I was like, I remember having a tear in my eye because it was too much. But yesterday, walk in the park. Easy, cheesy, not even bat an eyelid. I've really noticed that big change. And I think podcasts have been a fundamental part of my business story [over the last 10 years](#). So this could be perhaps the most powerful one Charley. If you want access to network, having a podcast is such a better introduction, hey, you should come on my podcast sometime. Most authors, experts, speakers are very interested in getting their name out there and appearing on your show for distribution. And if you build up a good body of work, you'll get a high category of guests.

For example, one guy asked on a Facebook group the other day, who do you know is really good with [memberships and subscriptions](#). And a lot of people mentioned my name, which I'm super grateful for. And then he contacted me privately and he said, "Hey, look, I normally do research. Have you been on a show before where you've ever talked about memberships or subscriptions? And I said, "Yup," I sent him a link. Like I just googled it, found the first two pages, there was like 12 listings, and then I think there were about 24 pages on my own site of discussions revolving around memberships or subscriptions. And I just sent him that list. And he goes, 'Ah yep, okay, so when's a good time?' So, as you build up traction, you will actually level up just like a video game and get to the next level and the next level, the next level, and you'd be so far advanced compared to someone who's just starting the game. So I guess step 12 is start now. Make sure you go through those 11 steps, tick all the boxes, and you're good to go. But start. Charley, you are a force of knowledge.

Now is the time

Charley: Thank you, James. I hope these points have been helpful to your audience, particularly. If you follow these, I think people will see a lot more success in podcasting. And I really agree with your point. Now is the time. I think the next five years are going to be huge for podcasting. And those that get in or already in at this point stand to reap the most from it.

James: When your grandma and your kids are listening to podcasts and it's in the car you buy, you know it's a thing.

Recap. Number one, have one specific audience. Number two, brand voice. Number three, value-driven content. Four, consistency. Five, production. Six, system. Seven, promotion. Eight, call to action. Nine, have something beyond the podcast. Ten, leverage your content, and 11, access to network. Twelve, start.

Charley: Absolutely.

James: Charley, looking forward to your presentation at [SuperFastBusiness Live](#) in 2020. Hopefully, you'll come back and share some more podcasts with us and a few videos here and there.

Charley: That I will. I'm looking forward to the event. I'm going to be going deep on this stuff and showing more behind the scenes. So it's a lot, I mean this year, sorry, was so great. This event. So next year, I think it's going to be sensational as well.

James: The year is probably stretched out for you. You've been doing excessive amount of flat pack furniture assembly with oncoming addition to the family.

Charley: Absolutely.

James: It can lengthen the day. So if you want help with your podcast from Charley, get over to Valher Media. [ValherMedia.com](#). Check it out. Charley's very friendly, ask him a question, see what he's got. And you never have to edit your own podcast again. You definitely don't have to distribute it or run your ads and so forth. If you're meeting the criteria that Charley would think would be successful for you. You should already know now if you go through these checklists. Get in touch, make something magic.

If you liked this show, be sure to review it at iTunes. I don't have that many reviews. I never really ask for it. But I'll certainly appreciate it. Unfortunately, there's no giveaway if you leave a review, but I do read them and I feel nice about the people who leave reviews of course. It's nice to spread the love if it's earned. Thank you so much. Catch you on a future episode.



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