



Should You Even Start a Podcast?



Are your podcast ideas worth investing in? Hear what podcasting involves and the factors that decide whether or not you should have your own show.



Charley Valher

James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 833. I'm chatting to [Charley Valher](#) from [ValherMedia.com](#). Welcome back.

Charley: Nice to be back, James. It's been a little bit now, but I'm really excited, so much happening in the podcasting world.

James: Well, tell me about that. What is happening in the podcasting world from your perspective? It's certainly been around for a while, and I've seen plenty of evolutions of it. From my perspective, it seems like there's a lot of them. Certainly, it's harder for me to rank how I used to.

I just got a reminder on Facebook from seven years ago, I had the number one ranked podcast across iTunes in the world for a very brief moment when [Taki Moore](#) and I had a podcast called [Sales Marketing Profit](#), and it just hit the charts off one episode. But these days, we're lucky if we pop up in the top 20 or 30 in the Australian business ones.

So I know there's a lot of them. I know people have probably advanced the way they edit, produce and so forth. And there's been whole waves of communities of people come into podcasts. I remember the first wave, there were some experts in the market way back in the early days, but they were kind of nerdy types.

And then they went into sort of the more marketing types, making it sort of a podcast was a big business idea, and they built communities off that. And now we're into the sort of modern era of, you got to be quite good to go well type, and there's new communities popping up here and there. And people sort of combining business models.

Podcasting from the viewpoint of a connoisseur

But what do you see? Because you run a media company that publishes podcasts, it's what you do, it's your bread and butter, you know it well. You like to remind me, you're passionate about it. You're an enthusiast.

Charley: Connoisseur.

James: Connoisseur. You're definitely not a podcast nerd or a podcast geek. So, tell me, Charley, what do you see?

Charley: Okay, so I've found these last 12 months, or almost 18 months now, really, really interesting, not just because of world events. But it seems to have been a catalyst or the creation of a real inflection point in podcasting. So what I've seen is a lot of people that were perhaps doing in-person events, or doing things that were more in world, have really looked for other ways to communicate what they do and really educate people, and podcasting in particular has been one of those main vehicles.

YouTube has also been another one. But podcasting, especially. And I really looked into this stat, because I thought it was fascinating from my point of view. Go back about three years ago now, two and a half, and there was a million active podcasts on iTunes. Now that was astronomical, at the time, it was like, wow, a million podcasts. And the most recent stats that I've seen is that we've cracked two million.

So if you think since podcasting existed, it took nearly 20 years to get to a million shows. And then in the last couple, we've gone to two. So for anyone that's saying, Oh, wow, there seems to be podcasts everywhere, particularly business shows or business-related shows, you're correct. You're absolutely correct. That is exactly what's happening.

On the other side of things, though, we manage quite a few shows at Valher Media, and I really thought at a point, well, is this going to create saturation? Is what we're going to see is we're going to see people listening to less shows, the download is going to go down, is viewership going to go down? And it's almost the opposite.

It's like the supply and demand curve have increased at the same time. So there's more shows, but people are now listening to more shows, consuming more media. And again, inflection points on the last bit, the popularity and the demand are just feeding into each other. And I think what we're really seeing is more people are doing it because it works. It's a really effective strategy in the current climate.

James: Well, you know, from a consumer perspective, I don't actually listen to podcasts. However, I am hearing about them on the radio now. When I've been taking my girl out to swimming lessons or whatever, here on the radio, it's the only time I listen to commercial radio, like a short drive, a four-minute drive or whatever. I'm not going to get into an audiobook or whatever.

So interesting I'm hearing ads for podcasts on mainstream radio. They've got these syndications and they've got the big umbrella agencies that are pushing shows. So that's become mainstream. I know that the cars these days have Apple CarPlay and other brands put Stitcher and so forth. So they're putting the means to listen to podcasts more mainstream. And I do think people are switching from just this into free to air radio.

The masses are, rightly so, probably just choosing now to just tune into a specific piece of content that addresses their concern. They know about it, so they know that it exists. They know where to get it, devices have been made available to them. Like, we're all carrying around a podcast-listening device in our pocket.

We are spending a lot more time at home, probably easier for people to get bored, so they're using that time to sharpen up, educate themselves, get into a new thing. I mean, some of my surfing buddies, their wives do podcasts and stuff. They're talking to me about things I'd never dreamed to hear from normal everyday people. And it's fascinating listening to them go through this.

One of them's just sort of started up and they're getting tens of thousands of downloads every week. And it's a whole big, exciting new journey.

The burning question we're looking to answer

But it does beg the question, Charley, and that's what we want to answer today, should you even start a podcast? And as we go through this, I'm going to reflect on this for me too, because I imagine if you've been in the online space, you've been in my community or other communities, you would have been thinking about it, starting a podcast.

If you listen to this podcast, then of course, you're already predisposed to the concept of a podcast. I have a pretty strong, regular audience, which I constantly get feedback from via emails, from product purchases, from attendees to live events when I used to run them. But by far and away, the majority of my community are listening to this podcast.

Maybe you've got some equipment. Look, we all have an iPhone, some of us have a microphone we can plug in and get decent sound quality. We probably listen to other podcasts. And we may have even been a guest on a podcast. If we're any kind of expert, author, have an agency, membership, we've more than likely been invited to be a guest on a show, whether they're a big show or a little show, doesn't matter.

Probably because of the changes with cookies and operating systems and the platform wars, we're finding that we want to build an audience outside of just running Facebook ads. But maybe we find it difficult to find an audience at a good cost of acquisition, or maybe our conversion pieces aren't great. I see a lot of crappy offer pages that in their wildest dreams won't ever convert two percent of their audience on that sales page.

Like, the old day of sending people from an ad to a page and living off that is quickly diminishing, right? And maybe you've even tried a podcast before. I've got plenty of people in my community who started a podcast. But it didn't get off the ground. You know, they recorded an episode, maybe a few episodes, but then they bogged down in the tech.

They're trying to edit themselves is a massive, recurring problem I see. Please stop editing your own podcasts. Just don't edit your own podcast. Maybe they've tried the thing, edited it, promoted it, but it's just not flying. Maybe they got the premise wrong, maybe it's not catchy, maybe they just didn't get traction, or they don't even know what content to make.

If that's you, if you're listening to this, and any of those things resonate, this episode is for you.

The work of adjusting to the times

I've brought on Charley to help out. That's exactly what this episode is. And the first point I want to make is if you're going to do a podcast in 2021, you really need to do a podcast, and I'm going to put myself in the bucket here.

We've had to do a lot of work to stay relevant with our podcast. We do things differently now than we did a year ago or two years ago. One of the big ones, Charley, just as a recap, if you just joined this podcast, this is your first episode, well, welcome, but we put our whole native podcast on video platforms now that we didn't use to do. That was one big change, getting to where the customers are.

The entire episode on Facebook, the entire episode on YouTube. And people watch them there in that platform and ecosystem. That doesn't show up on my podcast counter. But I know when we add them all up, the views across the platforms, we're still getting a good distribution. We still pop up in the top rankings from time to time when we get a great episode like this one out.

We have put more work into the narrative, like, what are we actually talking about? Who am I talking about with? What problems do we address? Our publishing frequency, we've really committed to two episodes a week, and we've been doing a good job of that. We put a lot more work into the promotion of the show. Again, that was really inspired by you, Charley, you said you should put a lot more promotion effort.

You know, there's certainly time recording and publishing. But we used to be doing what you said, people are guilty of, just chucking them out there and getting on with the next one. And some of my episodes are really valuable and are evergreen in terms of what they can do for people. So we do better show notes, better headlines, better social media shares, better quality of production, better camera.

We work on our editing. My assistant now sends me two intros for every episode, and I pick which one, and she's trying to shadow me and make sure she can guess which one. I think she's up to now about 12 out of 15, she picked the one I picked. So we're working on the hook.

I even sometimes remember to ask people to leave reviews, right? I know, they don't really drive the ranking that much. But it's certainly nice for other people to see a five star review, a nice comment, helping other people who are looking around those two million podcasts, trying to work out what they should commit to stick in their earbuds. So I do sometimes remember to ask people to do something.

We don't run ads on the show. But I know, even my friend, my surfing buddy's wife, is making thousands of dollars per episode on a brand new podcast with the ad revenue. That's their current only play. So I know that's something that you could help them, Charley, and maybe we'll have an introduction on that one later.

And only do a podcast if you really want to commit to it. So it's not just an idea you romance, right? It's not a dip in the toe. It's a dive in. And I think that once you get to the point where you say, Yes, I'm going to do a podcast, then you've got to commit to that. But I'm going to sort of throw it over to you for a while, Charley.

What hurdles can you expect when starting out?

I'd be really interested in observing from you, like what challenges and struggles do you see when people want to start a podcast? That might help them identify if they should or shouldn't start a podcast. And I want you to be raw and direct. That's how we roll on the show. I know that's how your default mechanism is anyway, just you know, tell me, what's your beef about why people are failing with their podcasts that they need to be honest about?

Charley: Yeah, let's go there. I'm all for this. I'll start with my number one. When I mentioned those two million podcasts on iTunes earlier, now, of course, the thing that is really interesting about that stat is the average episodes per show. So today, I think we're recording, is it 833, or something of that speed? you've got 833 episodes recorded at this point, which is an awesome achievement. But the average amount is actually six.

So you can say that majority of the podcasts out there actually get abandoned after six episodes. I think that says a lot for where people go wrong in thinking is a pure lack of commitment. They get short-term focus thinking that they're going to start one and be highly successful overnight. And then on the back of that, it just turns into a whole bunch of challenge which we see time and time again.

So to your point, making sure that you've got good time allowances to do your show properly, create really good content, and then stay consistent is probably the number one thing I see when it comes to failure. I always get asked the question then, Well, what does a commitment look like? Like, how long is long term? Is this years and years before I'll get anything from it? And I would say no.

But I would say if you're not going into this with the idea of like, I'm going hard for 12 months, you will probably fall short of where the major results come from. So that's like an indication, I would say there. The second component is, and I see this often is, people tend to get lazy with their content. Like in the beginning, they prepare well, if they're having an author on their show, they might even read their book.

But then down the line, it's like they're just jumping on calls with people, not properly researching them. And it's like, what chance have you really got making a great podcast episode if you've done no prep? I find myself, if I've ever been lazy with an interview, I can tell it doesn't come out as good as the ones where I do prepare. And the ones where I prepare properly? Funnily enough, they're the ones that do well.

So adequate time to prepare for an interview and conduct a good interview. And then really doing things outside of interviews as well. Like, I know you've done [many series](#) along the way, James, like your [Maldives](#) episodes, where you put that type of effort in. So they're the things I really, really look at.

James: Someone has to do all the hard work to create episodes like that. To make that episode, I had to book flights, pack bags, fly to paradise, surf my face off every day, eat the most incredible healthy food, network with friends. But I did take my recorder and I did document it. In my mind, that was me leveling up with storytelling and sharing a behind-the-scenes scenario that I know a lot of my listeners hear about, but I know they are curious about what actually goes on.

And I did get good feedback on that episode. But I also got a learning experience for myself on how I could have made it much better. People wanted to hear the stories of my customers more. So the next time we're able to go to the Maldives, I'm going to improve on that one. That was the bar. And I'm going to lift the bar on myself for documenting that journey.

Charley: Even to the point of that, you've made sacrifices of that trip to record. So as much as I realize you were going there anyway, for anyone who's ever done vlogging or anything like that, you realize that it's actually a massive inconvenience to stop what you're doing, to record what you're doing, to go back to it. It can be something that takes away from the experience of what you're having.

Now, I know that's not true in all cases. But if you're in the Maldives, I suspect you probably want to spend the most time surfing out with friends, not making audios or videos that go with it.

James: You know, it's actually super prescient, that thought. Because, you know, when I used to go to school carnivals and stuff, a lot of parents spend the whole thing looking at it through a lens, and not actually being present and enjoying that moment of their child earning their bronze medal, coming third in the rank. There is that line between switching on and off.

And I had that thought the other day. I woke up, made myself a coffee, turned off the air conditioner from my phone, and I checked a couple of things. And I got a notification pop up on my phone, and I saw some guys walking on the beach giving a coaching lesson on a live or something. And then my first thought was, Screw that.

I don't want to just switch my life across into being a performer. There was the most incredible sunrise happening at that time. Put the frickin phone in the pocket and enjoy that. That's what it's all about for me. And I know it doesn't gel well with the Lamborghini Ferrari grinder marketing set, like, they want to do that. But I wonder what they're chasing? I do wonder that.

So yes, you're right. When it comes to that, for my podcast, and this is a bit of a behind the scenes, I schedule calls like this, we're recording this call, it goes into my scheduler, it appears on my diary. We booked this call a week or so ago, Charley, and talked about what we want to talk about, and prepped it, and then it goes into the scheduler and then that's it.

We do the call, after I hang up, it goes off to the team, everything else will get done. So I've found the podcast for me is so much better than surrendering my real time with the lives.

And the same when I did take the recorder to the Maldives. I thought about what I wanted to share, but it's also a great way for me to actually relive the event in the future to step back into a time capsule and be right there when the boat captain's laughing and when the flights get canceled, you know, like we remember these funny things that were challenges at the time that we can reflect on how far we've come and how polished we are.

The kind of leverage you can achieve

So I think we need to find the balance between, how much are we doing to be a showman and to impress everyone else and to drive business, versus when do we actually have our time off? So I think just one tick in the podcast box for me, and I've been doing podcasts for quite some time now, is they are such a great leverage tool for me to be able to share my message en masse, but in a very convenient way.

If you want to break it down, I do two 45-minute sessions a week to sustain a seven-figure business. That is leverage on leverage on leverage.

Charley: Absolutely. And you touched on this a little bit earlier. But like with the promotion side of things, those two 45-minute sessions are then able to be turned into all your other content and all your other social content. And this is where the promotional leverage on the other side comes from it as well.



I know I'm heavily biased, I know. But I still think podcasts are the absolute win when it comes to business marketing, just because of the leverage on both sides. You're building recorded assets, so a great library of knowledge and expertise. And then you're also able to repurpose and repackage that into promotional leverage.

So you're playing it from both sides, which I just don't think many other mediums do well. Like if you were writing, I know it's become quite popular, I'm not against this, but I do see some people writing these massive stories in Facebook, really well-constructed copy, but then the next day it's disappeared. Like, it's a zero-leverage activity.

And like for myself, I mean, I could probably learn to write copy at that level. But I just see the wastage. And I'm like, you're always having to produce that every day to get a result.

James: I think you could take that same piece of content and make it a podcast. That sort of stuff tends to go well, story-based, long-form text turned into a different modality. That's why I think podcasts convert so well. If someone's committing to listen to you, and they will stick through the episode, and there has been not very good stats on how long people listen for up until now, if it's even around now, but if they will, then it's a conversion powerhouse.

I've found the people I'm coaching, they know a lot about me. They constantly remind me of things that I've said, or whatever that I've forgotten about. I have so many episodes, I don't know what I spoke about 100 episodes ago. But someone may have just listened to that an hour ago. And so it's like, fresh in their mind. So it's a fascinating scenario where you're creating all these time capsules.

But yes, take your long form, amazing, written Facebook posts, and consider how you might come up with a good premise or whatever. You've obviously done the prep, you've obviously put in the time, take it to the next level. So that's, I guess, the people who are writing those things, they're not just phoning it in, they're putting in the effort.



So that's one of your checkpoints, Charley, is make sure that you put the effort in to come up with something that's useful, rather than just doing a podcast so that you could say, I'm a podcaster, and that you're just doing the minimum viable. With two million podcasts out there, I think what we're saying is, there's been a bit of inflation.

What I was doing back, if you go and listen to [episode one](#), it's pretty crap. Everything about it's crap, the show notes, the sound quality, me, right? So you know, it's funny to listen to how things have moved, just in my own journey.

A look at the editing aspect of podcasts

Let's talk about editing, because it's such a bitch, editing. It takes way, way longer than people realize. Some people are addicted to editing because they kind of like it, and it's an escape from actually doing the really hard work of thinking of business ideas, and generating customers or fulfilling on customers. It's kind of fun for people to just get in their little quiet place and do that creative work.

But I've found for me, I mean, the leverage that I'm able to gain by dumping, having edited the last 500 or 600 episodes, we're talking about a significant amount of time. Even in just simple terms, if I'm doing two 45-minute podcasts a week of talking, how much editing time is involved in that, Charley?

Charley: I know this one. So we do it off an hour. I had to time this to know how many people we would need on the team. So it's like, for every hour of content that's recorded, this is just for audio, it's four hours from start to finish to edit and polish a file. And that's with someone who knows what they're doing and is skilled and trained.

So I would imagine if you're learning this on the fly, or unskilled, you're either hacking it to bits and doing it poorly, if you're shortcutting. Or it's probably taking you about six hours, I suspect.

James: Right. So in my case, with two 45-minute podcasts, we're probably looking at six hours of editing a week, six or seven hours. And thankfully, I've got a team who do that. But that's rare. I mean, it's an unusual scenario where I'm not the same as most of my listeners. I've had a team for over 10 years. I've got six people in my team who do everything like magic.

And if you don't have a team, then you're either doing it yourself, or you're hiring a contractor. So they're really the options - you do it yourself, you hire a contractor, or you have your own team. I'm going to put it out there and say for most people, it's not really worth having your own team unless you're really getting into the seven-figure business region like I am, where I've got multiple memberships.

I have business partners. I have one good, strong, steady podcast that we're pretty geared up on. And we've got an email database, and we do the occasional promotions. So I've got a business that sustains a team. But for most people, especially if you're in the mid sixes, like my absolute sweet spot customers who I have the most impact with at the moment are people who are doing between \$250,000 and \$500,000 a year, but stuck.

It's still a bit hard to get your team to be doing specialized things like editing at that level. So until you're getting later on, you might consider bringing that in house. To put this in very simple terms, if I was to edit my podcast each week, then I would have to give up surfing every day. That is a direct comparison, I either surf for an hour a day for a week, or I edit my podcast. And for me, that's a really easy choice.

Charley: I'll just concur that it's unlikely your highest and best use activity in your day is editing your podcast, I really doubt it. And if you've read your [book](#), James, with your [effective hourly rate](#), I just can't see podcast editing coming into that for most people.

Back when Charley was a podcasting newbie...

Now, second to that, I'll loop back around here, I have to share my first podcasting experience because I think many people attempt to do this. I know I did. And then it was a bit of a disaster. When I first got into podcasting, I had this idea that I could just give podcasting to my VA. I had an assistant with no skills in editing or visuals or anything like that. She was a general admin assistant, great assistant.

And I decided, you know, well, what I'm going to do is I'm just going to start recording, and I'll give you the files, and you can edit it, I mean your time isn't as expensive as mine in retrospect, and this is how we'll do it. And I gave my VA the files. I thought it was going smoothly anyway, until I realized it was taking her like two and a half days of the week to edit the podcast.

And my awareness to how much this was taking up of hers, because it wasn't her competency skill, and she was trying to watch, like, YouTube tutorials and learn how to do bits on the fly. It ended up absolutely just train wrecking the delivery of other tasks within the business.

And this experience is what led me to going or understanding that, you know, editing is a specialized skill. Like, there's editors just like there's electricians, right? It's not something you just pick up on the fly. It's like it's its own craft.

So I look to many people, and I'm sure there's some out there that are listening to this, where they're handing it out to people in their team thinking, I know they've got this, not completely understanding what goes into it or where it is or, you know, brushing it off as this lightweight task. And I just go, that was such a train wreck for myself, and I regret that experience immensely, and that's why I only use proper editors now, or trained, I should say.

James: That was an interesting example there. You used to be a trades person, didn't you, Charley?

Charley: Once upon a time, I was a plumber.

James: Right. And I imagine the average customer would think their job's small, but then that you would tell them it's much bigger than what they think it is.

Charley: You would see heartbreak, you know, it would be the littlest thing, but they wouldn't be able to conceptualize that, you know, we'd have to dig up half your house to pull this off. A common occurrence. And the other one I always thought was so funny is whenever you were a tradie and you worked with other trades, by default, you always thought your job was the most important and the biggest.

So like, you go on a job and it'd be like, well, the plumbing is the most important thing here. Everyone's got to work around me. I've got the hardest thing, you know, plasterer, don't worry about him; the electrician, don't worry about him, you know, we're doing it. Everyone seems to look into how much work their own thing is and think that everyone else has got it easy, for some reason. It was an odd thing in the trade.

James: Well, it's what you're describing here. You're doing the hard work of recording a podcast and then handing it off to the assistant. Good editing is way deeper than that. Like I was talking about before, I've got a relationship with my editor. Like, I ask her, Tell me, which parts of the podcasts when you're editing do you like?

They have to choose the things they're going to put into the bullets for the show notes. They have to select the best hook from the entire podcast to put in the pre-reel before the bumper. They have to ensure minimum quality levels. They have to make sure that it's uploaded in the right places and all that stuff.

But when they're editing, often I get feedback, you know? My microphone fades here or this guest was a bit muffled or the episode ended a bit early on my side, do I have the missing piece? Like I'm a nightmare, I think, for my editor. But also they say, I really liked this episode, such and such, you know, talk about a guest was really inspiring, or, they've never thought about something the way that I mentioned.

So I know they're actually listening and not just looking for sound blips or whatever. They've got to be intelligent, and they have to turn my raw material into something useful.

Bits from James's archive of failures

Speaking of raw material, something that does happen, and you got to just know this get getting into it, if you're going to do podcasting, you're going to lose recordings from time to time.

I've had some epic failures. The worst one I can remember was when I had a Hollywood actor doing a walk around the set in a little golf cart, and then into studios and getting other famous people on the recording. And then when I finished the episode, I hit stop, and it started recording. And I've just like, lost the whole thing. And I couldn't get it back.

It wasn't quite like I bumped into Arnold Schwarzenegger, but it was sort of at that level where we're getting a full Universal Studios from an actual star, and I lost the whole thing. But I've had lots of losses. I think I've recorded at least 1000 episodes. And I'm sure I've lost dozens, and some have been bad enough when I did capture them, but I didn't use the right mic or whatever, like it's going through the one on the Logitech cam, instead of a really good mic, and it's such rubbish, I can't put my audience through it.

One of the most tragic recordings that we did publish was the [Jay Abraham](#) one. He moved the appointment about six or seven times prior to that episode. He's one of the hardest guys to ever catch on a podcast for me. And when I did get him, I happened to be in the Philippines, had really crappy internet.

So I went and we waited almost four or five hours to get good internet from my house. And then I even got a backup. And it was still rubbish. And we recorded it and chopped out and clipped in a few places. And it was just a really bad quality recording. But my guest was so hard to get. And it was such an important episode for me.

We just published it anyway. And he shared it to his own audience, which was wonderful. And he even had to put an apology for the bad sound quality. It's like a bad reflection on me, because I do such a better job most of the time. But it's that judgment, you have to actually exercise judgment and decide, do I run with it or not?

But what I'm pointing out here is if you're going to do a podcast, it's not going to be an easy run. There'll be challenging times. You'll have challenging guests, you'll have challenging scenarios, you will lose recording.

When the magic of it just starts to fade

But one of the big problems that happens, and you sort of pointed this out, Charley, with the average episode plays a number of six, seems like the excitement fades a bit.

Charley: Completely. Like many things in life, I look at it and go, that beginner stage where everything's new and flashy is very drawing, and I think podcasting has that. It's the perfect combination for me where it has toys like microphones. And then it also has other people involved. So it's got these two elements where I get to spend time on a Zoom call as we are now, and I get to buy things and look at YouTube reviews and test equipment, which for me is like a dream.

So I look at that and go like, it's very enticing for a lot of people. Most people I speak to that come on board at [Valher Media](#) have had a microphone for ages. They've already been down that rabbit hole a little bit. So we know the toys are very intriguing. We definitely know that.

So what we look at here is that over time, when it starts to impede on other activities, so for example, maybe you've got a big week of work coming up and you're trying to start squeezing it in, this is when people that are newer in the game start to go, Am I getting results from this? Or should I be focusing on something else?

And because they're not enjoying the harvest from their podcast yet, that normally, and I say normally, not all cases, ends up the thing that gets a little bit compromised. And then in turn, lack of effort leads to lack of more effort, and in turn, they go to what we call in the industry pod fading. So people will just dwindle out and pod fade.

James: Pod fade. Well, I can tell you the secret for me is the podcasting is really down to just one of my two main activities that I do. And it's a pretty low impost into my week. I have two podcasts a week, we're publishing. At this time, I've actually got quite a few in the bank, which is amazing. So I'm not feeling any pressure.

It's not like my team are tapping me on the shoulder and saying, Hey, boss, you better send us something. We're due to publish tomorrow. We've got nothing. It has been there. I've had phases where I didn't want a podcast, didn't feel like it, felt like I'd said everything that could be said, and I'd spoken to most of the people that I could speak to.

And then you look around, there's all the mixergies and Tim Ferrisses and like, they're just so much more impressive. And they've got all the amazing super baller guests and stuff and you just, you could actually feel intimidated or, like, you'll never be as good as that. I think this could happen.

In my case, I've found my little sweet spot where my only two jobs are to create some content and to deliver my coaching, and that's like the 80 percent is deliver on the coaching and the 20 percent is just to get some content out there. That's my simple business model.

But I actually am more energized and enjoying podcasting more than ever, as I'm building in more structure, as I'm really dialed in. Because I'm doing so much coaching, I know what they respond to, what they like, what problems they're having, what they need. And right now they need to know if they need a podcast or not, which is why we're doing this episode.

So I feel like I'm creating something valuable and interesting for them. So that's good. But it's not like it's being pushed out of the way by other things, because there are no other things, because of Work Less, Make More. I've got my team doing everything else.

Indicators that you should really not do a podcast

But what I want to do now, Charley, is I want to have a sort of rapid fire round, and let's just clear the path for anyone who really shouldn't be doing a podcast. If you're listening to this, and you're not sure, what I want you to do is push people back off the fence and say, not for you. Who should not be doing a podcast?

Charley: Okay, you're very limited on time, and you have inconsistent ability to record. So maybe you travel a lot, one week, or one month of the year, or you can't batch record of some kind, I would say, just don't do it. You're just going to waste your time and resources.



Two, if you want to really do a podcast that you want to create, instead of a podcast that an audience wants to consume, just don't do it, or do one for fun as a hobby, don't bring it into something into your business. This is a really common one, like people want to be Joe Rogan, thinking that it'll benefit them in some way. But it's really that's a hobby type thing, you may want to endeavor down instead.

Three, if you've really got absolutely no funds for equipment, I would look at it and say, if you're not going to buy a mic, if you're not going to get a camera of some kind, or invest in that type of technology, then it's going to be a very difficult thing. As well as more shows coming in, standards have definitely gotten higher.

I think three, if you're the type of person that doesn't like being on camera, and doesn't like doing podcasting, you probably shouldn't do it either. I've met some people where it's like, they've kind of felt like they had to do it. And when they come on, they're really dry and boring. And you can tell when you're listening to their episode, they're just trying to wrap it up the whole time. Like, what's the quickest way for me to get off this podcast?

So that would be my big ones. And then I'd say number four is that if you're someone who doesn't have an alignment, I'll put in here, so if you're trying to do a podcast, but you got nothing to sell, or no way of bringing into a business or there's no value to areas that are important to you, you probably shouldn't do it either.

James: Right. There's a couple of others I can think of too. What about the person who thinks, like, they look at the big shows, and they think, Oh I'm just going to make all my money from publishing ads, straight out of the gate?

Charley: Huge one. Very common.

James: My friend, actually, you know, his wife seems to be actually doing that from a fairly good start. But she was already a social media influencer. So I think it's important that you've got something up and running if you plan to do that. You need to already be famous in some way. Having a standing start publishing income might be difficult.

In my case, you will notice a lack of ads on my shows, it's because I have products and services of my own and affiliations that I can mention or guest on this show and make it great value for the audience, but still drive my business. Clearly, [SuperFastBusiness](#) is a membership that helps people with their online business. And this podcast is a great way that people get to find out about me.

And I would consider this as like my demonstration. It's like, if you like what I talk about, if you think I've got the right values, if you hear guests who we talk about things and I'm saying things that you think makes sense, and you'd like me to help you with your business, that's what this show is about. So I'm able to drive it from my own.

So I think you need to have an affiliation or your own products or services, if you're not already famous and you don't want to make the money off the publishing, there's still a pathway for that. So I think podcasts are not for someone who's starting absolutely cold. You don't know what you're selling, you don't know who you're selling it to, you're not famous, you've got no list, you've got no budget, you've got no time.

And one way to validate it is, do you already have a couple of channels? Are you already active on Facebook or Twitter or YouTube with something that you can augment with a podcast or seed your podcast with? Or do you have an email list that you're working well? These are indicators that would help you get clear on it.

The good news is, like, if podcast is not for you, there's plenty of other things you could do. You can do your long-form Facebook posts, you can do videos. In fact, Charley, we should do a podcast versus show episode down the track, because that's what I tell people who aren't a good fit for a podcast, just make little videos and pop them up on your socials and run ads to those to start with, just to get going and build your audience because then your podcasts will be tipping petrol on fire rather than trying to go out into the forest looking for timber.

Charley: A really great way to find your concept or show premise as well, and we've touched on this a little bit earlier, but like a really big failure point is that, for example, people just do podcasting to do interviews. They just want to do it like everyone else.

James: So genericized and boring, and in some cases, just a bit selfish. You know, I get approached every week from people who have a brand new podcast or no episodes released, and their main premise is, really, they just want some free coaching, and they may or may not ever publish it to like, an extremely restricted or limited or no audience.

There's not really anything in it for me as an expert, or coach, to record a one-time episode for no audience to benefit the recorder. So you've got to think about this, you've got to really be more strategic about it. Don't approach the bigger guests until you've got a bank of episodes. And then you can build up, would be my tip on that. And show them that you're actually going to be helpful.

They'll be more likely to refer people too if they had a good experience. But I think what's important for us to talk about Charley is the two main pathways you can go. There's a try and do it all yourself, and then there's the get help from someone else thing. And I'm not knocking do it yourself. I started do it yourself.

What kind of investment would you be looking at?

My first podcast was me with a little Dictaphone in a hotel room, interviewing my guest. And then I went back and published every single scrap of it and sent out the email and did the way. I used to do absolutely everything myself. I did go out and buy a Dictaphone. At the time, that was a big expense. It was \$300 or \$400.

And that's what I thought I needed like a press photographer, or a press journalist, I needed a portable audio recorder. Because, you know, I never heard of a Snowball or a Yeti. That stuff wasn't popular in 2009. That's how you did it. I mean, I struggled to work out how to actually get audio onto the website back in the day. It was much harder then. But I think you probably do need a budget for equipment.

You mentioned it before, what sort of budget do you need for equipment and what sort of budget do you need for time, if you want to do it yourself?

Charley: If you're going to do it yourself, I would say that you've got to allow one day a week for creating your content, and then editing and publishing. So if you're doing a one-a-week show, and maybe you're recording about 45 minutes, one day a week, full day, would be required to do your editing, publishing and everything that goes into it.

Equipment wise, at a base level, I think you can get a really good setup these days for 500 bucks. So in that range, you're going to get like, as you mentioned, in 2009, since then, the industry has come a long way. Everything is so cheap now. You can get really high-quality equipment that works, looks great, sounds great at rates you just wouldn't believe.

And then if you wanted to upscale and go to something more like what I'm using now, you can go up to two grand, three grand, and get a very pro, proper DSLR camera, high-quality mics, and everything like that as well. So the range of cost has come down dramatically. Let's say, if you were going to use a service like mine, or other professionals out there, where you're getting the wins is you're only really prepping your content and recording.

So you're down to maybe an hour and a half to two hours a week rather than that full day. And then the advantage is, you're getting all the experience of people that know what they're doing with editing. So you get a much more polished feel and professional look.

Probably, I would say, and not that I did it, it's, you know, everyone's got their business in the areas they thought, if you're in more like financial services niches, or very professionalized niches, I would probably steer away from DIY, just because that is the impression you're passing through your show.

If you're doing a surfing podcast down at the beach, and your audience is less inclined to be on quality, not that I'm saying surfers are, but just for a premise of a hobby show here, you could probably get away with a little bit more in that space and DIY type tactic. So your audience plays a huge role on your pathway as well.

James: Well, almost all the surfers who will be at the level where they're doing a podcast have got cameras for filming surfing for the purpose of reviews and content. So they already have half the equipment. I know a couple of surfers who have started podcasts, and they do a good job. Big shout out to Craig, if you're listening.

You've also got to pay for hosting even if you're editing yourself. You're going to have to host it somewhere. You might want some images. And you might have to listen back through your content to pull the show notes. I imagine my team have to work pretty hard on those things. So these are time-consuming things. That's where the time comes into it.

One of the cheats that I have is I get the same people back on my show over and over again, like you, Charley. [I don't know how many times you've been on the show but a lot.](#) So I don't have to go through the whole, Who-is-Charley thing for myself. I don't have to get the context. I know deeply about you, and it helps me bring the best out of you, because I know what you'd like.

Like I know you like cycling, I know you used to be a tradie, I know there's a mysterious chocolate thief in your house.

Charley: It keeps getting in. It's ridiculous.

James: It likes black and gold, is it? What's that, the rum and raisin or something?

Charley: Oh, dark chocolate almond, absolute favorite there.

James: Dark chocolate almond, this thief has a preference for that type of that chocolate. It seems to disappear as fast as you can buy it. Okay, so then, I think we sort of covered that. It's totally doable. But you make sure that you put the time for it. And at some point, even getting research from your VA to start doing research is an easy win.

And I didn't do research up until about a year ago for my podcast. So I really stretched it a long time before I started getting too deep into that, but it definitely has helped. And the more prep and research you do, the better it is. And that's true, whether you're selling, whether you're doing a podcast, whether you're presenting from stage. If you're still winging it, you're cutting corners, and you're not doing what you could do.

If you can afford to get help...

What does the other universe look like, Charley? We get help from Valher Media. We can afford some slightly better equipment, and we just want to pay for someone to help us with the rest of it. So what does that look like?

Charley: Well, I'll tell you my use of time we've mentioned here, and the same show's design, you'd go from a four day per week, or probably an eight hour I would say down to about a two. In addition to that, one of the things that I think is not often spoken about is like, we look after a lot of different shows, we see all the things that's working, we know a lot of things that don't work. Having someone in your corner who can kind of slip you the test results and say, Hey, maybe you should be doing things like this, can be really advantageous.

James: Insights. Intelligence.

Charley: Yeah, I'll give away a few now. Many of the clients we have struggled with recording time and guest prep, as you've said from here, but some of the strategies you can bring in, and this is one of my favorites is, do a Q&A episode every month. So instead of having a guest on, like, answer the questions you get more commonly. Or do an industry update, where you're going through what changes are coming in, in an industry and how you're looking to solve them, or how you understand them.

They're great for positioning. And then there is no prep, it's just you. Another one you've mentioned, which I actually stole from you, James, is the multi-part series. So you get one guest on and record for an hour and cut it into two episodes or record for two hours and cut it into two episodes.

Like, there's unique ways of bringing show concepts and ideas together, that one, are unique, and then two, save you even more time, which is a really big winner. So that's a few of the stuff from there that I really mentioned. Three is really the polish. If anyone's gone on YouTube, or listened to podcasts more recently, I've really noticed that quality is just going through the roof.

Like I've noticed, like it used to be when people saw I had a DSLR camera on my computer, it was, like, groundbreaking. It was like, Wow, that looks so good. And like now, it's almost standard in the circles that I would play. So I think they're a lot of the things that start to become more relevant there. Yes, costs are higher, but in my belief, I'm very confident of this, you get a very high-quality result from that.

James: Yeah, nice. I mean, I notice that sometimes when I get a guest, you know, they're just talking to a laptop, or they're using a laptop camera. And it's like, it's a real sort of letdown, it's like, Okay, this is what I got to work with here. And you can't control that. And I'm not going to tell my guests, go out and buy a DSLR camera.

But I will stop and say, Hey, just wondering, do you have a microphone that comes with your phone that you could plug into the laptop there or any other?

You're also, as an agency, I think one thing you do help people with, and you talk about this a lot, is you're quick to alert people when their podcast is absolutely not in any way shape or form aligned with their business or has any chance of success based on what you've seen. Like, you're quick to call it and say, This podcast has no business doing this thing, I don't know what's the story with this premise, or, you know, how did this come about? Or what are you actually trying to achieve?

And I've seen you turn people around from what they were doing to a different type of podcast that actually works. So kudos to you. But that's what you get. If you're doing it alone, no one's going to tell you that. You just wonder why no one's listening or buying off it. And you do hear that.

And then of course, it's good to have someone else tell you if you're just not entertaining, or too boring, or too dry, or monotonal or whatever. I'm often coaching guests now on how they can improve, especially if they come back, so that I can punch it up to the next level. So I think you have that level of coaching for your clients.

Who should be doing a podcast?

Let's flip the script, Charley, who should podcast? Like if you've got a dream list of things, like, we can go through the checklist, and we can either get like, a nod of the head or a shake of the head, just yes or no, as we're listening to this, to know if it's a home run for us.

Charley: One of my favorites at the moment is authors. It really is. And James, you might even be able to give me some data on this, of [your book](#), how many people or what percentage buy the Audible instead of the actual book?

James: Well, I have a podcast audience. So a lot of, I think it's two or three times more people buy the audio than the actual book.

Charley: I actually think that's common now. I know you do have a podcast audience, but I just would love people to really recognize, Hang on, most people are listening to my book, would they listen to other things I have to say? It's very likely that a lot of authors out there actually have an audio audience they're unaware of. I really like that.



In general, people who have a book generally have an opinion as well. And huge in podcasting is if you're going to do it, stand for something, have a view, have an opinion. I think it's so important, and again, why we like that author space, or expert space, I should really say.

James: Yeah, you're right. It's like, essentially, the cover of the book is the push for that person of what the whole podcast theme could be. I know, like I helped [John Warrillow](#) set up his Built to Sell radio in the very beginning. And it was very easy for him to use that as a tool to do case studies of people who sold their business to sell his services and business, and [he's spoken about his book on my podcast](#) a few times, and he's a great guy. Very smart, good business. That podcast really changed his world.

Charley: Absolutely. I enjoyed that podcast as well. We'll stay in that wheel for a second, though, but a good friend of mine, Dave Jennings, who I know you know as well, had a book called SYSTEMology come out not long ago. And what we actually did is we recorded some episodes, which were kind of like, I won't say chapter excerpts.

But we spoke about chapters in the book, why they're in the book, and I did a case study for the result of that chapter. And we used that as like priming lubricant to sell the book. And it worked really well, because it gave people such a taste of what was to come forward, and I really look at it and go, these are some of the unique things you can do with podcasting, if you've got books to sell, and potentially even courses.

Like, how many people out there have got courses that they would love to be making more sales from, but they haven't properly educated their market on what's inside, what they could get from it, what people who do these results are coming from it, something you do really well with case study episodes, which I really like a lot.

Another market I'd really recommend is today, there's so many service providers that they're almost commodities. I look at it and I will say Facebook ads is an example here. So I think a lot of people struggle to know what's the difference between this Facebook ad agency and the other one.

And I go, if only you had a way of getting your thoughts or ideas, results and concepts out into the world, so that people could, I don't know, filter and self-select on why you're the right purchase for them.

James: Well, you know, [Ralph Burns](#) kills it with Perpetual Traffic for his Facebook agency. So it's absolutely an amazing foil for a service agency.

Charley: I mean, it's not hard to find the people that are doing this well. And that's what's great about this. It's Ralph, I enjoy the podcast a lot with [Molly](#), although I'm not sure she's on it as often now.

James: I don't think she's on it at all. The background for that podcast is I know it's set up with Digital Marketer, but I was coaching [Keith Krance](#) at the time, and I said, you need a podcast. There was Keith, Ralph and Molly. And in [SilverCircle](#), I've coached Keith and Molly and Ralph, and Ralph is still in there. He's great. And so that podcast was born from me telling Keith, You need a podcast.

And then they went out. The advantage they have - this is like a big tick in the should - they had the Digital Marketer database to spread it to, so obviously it just blew up and then the people running it are actually good and have useful content and great guests and the knowledge about what they do. So it's a great case study of how to take advantage of an ecosystem and just blow it up.

Charley: Hugely so. Now I'll just mention someone who I actually met because of you, [Mike Rhodes](#). He had a new course come out, and we actually made a podcast version of the course with him. And he had it, it was like a complimentary audio, a bit of a unique case. But I always love to give people ideas on how they could be different.

He made this course, and he wanted to give people something to listen to with the course, so that they could become more educated, get better at every element. So I actually think the audio is better. Again, I'm biased, of course. But I thought, what a unique idea to give people like a complimentary resource, so they get a better result from a program as well. Really cool concept. I liked that one a lot.

James: Good idea. I have a recollection that I think I actually read the first chapter of my book as a podcast episode at some point a few years back. And that's probably in there somewhere. The other one that I really enjoyed was the [Life Lessons series](#) I did, where I was talking about things that I've learned as I wander through, and I want to do a legacy lessons, things I teach my kids, but I'm still waiting to see how they pan out before I go too deep into that. That one's still out.

So other applications, you should if you've got a very complicated product, and information helps. So I mean, even government agencies have podcasts these days on becoming a citizen. There's a podcast on how to become a citizen of Australia that supports the citizenship process.

Charley: The ATO has one now.

James: There you go. That's the tax office, for our overseas listeners, just like the IRS. Passion and sports markets, blogger markets, creative industry type markets, they all can sell a lot of merch, and you can sell subscriptions off of that, if you want to get into it. Anyone with a high-ticket product is probably a good chance.

But maybe not if you're in a reactive high-ticket thing, like an injury lawyer or whatever, not as good a fit. But if you're in an evergreen type high-ticket thing, like if you're a coach, or if you have a service, then it's likely to be a really good fit.

Charley: Yeah, the hobby markets are great, I really enjoy them. So cycling one, I follow quite a few cycling podcasts as I'm sure you do surfing as well.

James: I just don't do podcasts. But if I did, yeah, I tried the surfing ones a few times. And it's been insightful into the culture. You know, I'm a late surfer. Keep in mind, I only started surfing when I was 42. So I'm listening to people who've been surfing since they were like, five, and they've got a long run up on the culture to me, but I'm getting there eventually.

I'll be coming up for a decade anniversary in a few years' time. And that'll be interesting. I'm only now starting to get immersed enough into the culture to understand it properly. So I'm a long-term player, as this obviously comes across.

You need some money for equipment. So if you do have some budget for equipment, if you want to spend what you said before, 500 bucks to what, a few \$1,000, Charley?

Charley: That's a good range. There's everything in between.

James: I think I'm using a good camera here and a cheap mic. This microphone is 100 and something dollars. And I run a podcast. If you're good at or interested in running interviews, you're probably leaning towards it, you're on the edge of your seat ready to get started now. Charley's given you the old tick of approval.

If you're opinionated, if you're funny, if you're entertaining, I would argue on of those three things, I'm only opinionated. If you stand out, like basically if you really have your position in the market, it's good to throw a spotlight on that. And as Charley said before, if you're ready to do it for the long haul, you do need to educate yourself. There's things that you're going to do.

So if you get all that right, you might end up in a situation like me, with a mature podcast that's easy for me to create, with a team to support me, where I can speak to my dream guests like Charley, and I get so much education from learning, as my audience learns, but I have to advocate for my audience.

I do know the responsibility I have. I have to ask the questions on the mind of my audience. I have to get the guest into places where they probably haven't been before sometimes to get the story that no one else has got. That's my mission. And I want to ask the right questions to get the better answers.

How to get in touch with Charley

So after you get the podcast going, then you just promote it. We've already done that on episode number [748](#), how to promote the podcast. So if you have listened to this, and you've decided you're in the should-start-a-podcast camp, I definitely recommend you have a chat to Charley, ValherMedia.com. He's more or less the sponsor of this episode by the fact that you're the only other person here, Charley. I have already mentioned SuperFastBusiness.

So what is the process if we want to connect with you and go a bit deeper on this whole podcasting professionally topic?

Charley: Yeah, so ValherMedia.com, everything's on there, wave of resources. But I go as far to say, if you're someone who's thinking about this, come and do a podcast audit with me. So normally, these are for people that have the show. But we're going to do like a pre-audit, where I'm going to go through and really define if this is right for you, and help you with that premise and equipment element.

So head on over if you're someone who wants to know more about this topic. And I'll be sure to tell you if it's right or not right for you.

James: You could be onto something, with the something or someone thing, because I see a lot of people now, they put her or him or his, like how they identify with themselves or themselves. It's very interesting to see that sort of progression. But I did hear a commercial for Victoria Bitter Beer today that sounded a bit sexist, because it was talking about gentlemen. And I'm wondering if they should have said people, but it's clearly targeting male tradies with that sort of gruff talk and, you know, end of the day, knock off time sort of language.

And they said, Gents, Gentlemen. Oh, that's interesting. But maybe that's how things are this. So if you are someone or something, and you're interested in a podcast, have a chat to Charley. From my perspective, I just want to say thanks for listening to this episode. This is Episode 833.

What we do is we break it into an easy chunked-down show notes, so if you know someone who's in sort of throes of whether they should have a podcast or not, perhaps send them over to SuperFastBusiness.com, search for Episode 833. You'll see this whole episode broken down into a bite-sized little readable, which my team have generously created for me.

And we'll also transcribe this episode in full, which you'll be able to download from SuperFastBusiness.com and go through it again, if there's little nuggets or whatever. Appreciate any feedback, respond to any email I ever send. It comes straight to me. And of course, give it a little thumbs up on your favorite podcasting platform.

I'm James Schramko. This is SuperFastBusiness.com. That was [Charley Valher](#). [ValherMedia.com](#). Charley, we'll catch up with you on a podcast versus YouTube chat at some point in the future perhaps.

Charley: Oh, a showdown. I look forward to it.

James: We'll even try and get some gun sound effects, you know like,

Charley: I'll have it happen. I'll prepare.

James: Thank you. See yah.



Let James help you create
powerful marketing
strategies for your business

[CLICK HERE](#)