



PROJECT PROPOSAL

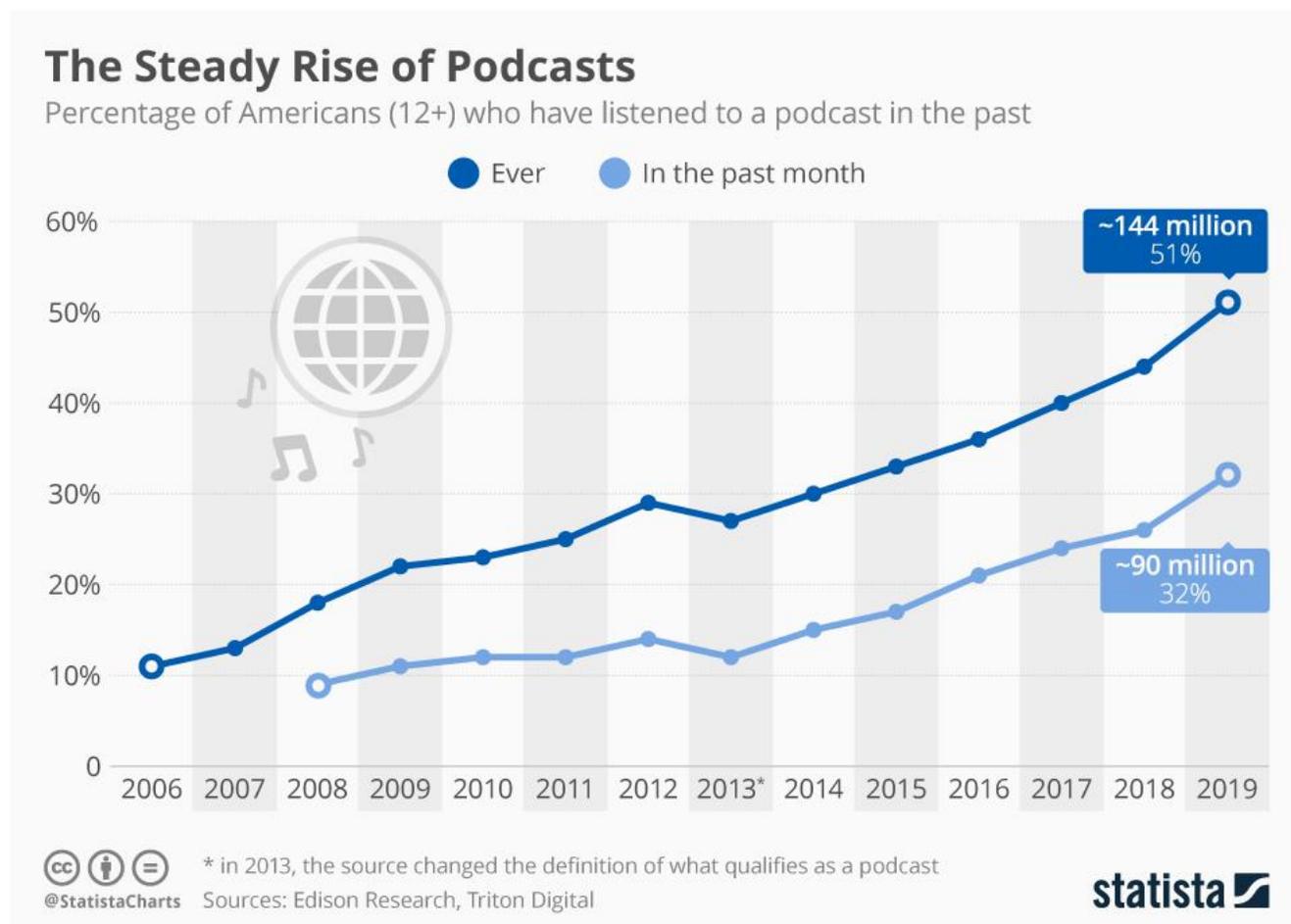
A Talk-Show Style Podcast

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The Rise of the Podcast

Over the past few years, podcasts have gained popularity across the United States. With new shows popping up everywhere, people are starting to take notice, and many are tracking their success. According to the New York Times, podcast listeners have increased greatly from 2018 to 2019. It is the “biggest jump [they’ve] seen since 2006” (Peiser, 2019). One-third of Americans now listen to a podcast at least once a month, compared to one-fourth of Americans in 2018. People who have simply listened to a podcast increased by 20 million over the past year, with 14 million people claiming that they tune in to podcasts once a week.



Now, another interesting trend is *who* is listening. Older generations are less likely to begin listening to podcasts. They still saw a general increase in this study, but not as high as the younger age group. People between the ages of 12 and 24 saw a 10 percent increase this past year.

In 2018, Spotify expanded their podcasting abilities and began to allow anyone to share their RSS feed and have their podcast be available on the software. Another great thing that Spotify did for podcasting was creating the free podcast-hosting app, Anchor. This allows a user to easily record, edit and share their work (Anchor, 2020). Another great aspect of

Anchor is that it gives you the ability to collaborate with others. As long as they have the Anchor app, they can record audio with you, no matter where they are. Especially during the current situation, is it extremely helpful to have an option to record audio remotely.

This semester, I plan on creating a talk-show style podcast with my two childhood best friends. This will include deliverables such as cover art, scripts, promotional materials, a teaser trailer, and a full-length pilot.

Best Practices for Podcasting

Before creating a podcast, there are some best practices I hope to follow.

MAKE YOUR MESSAGE COUNT

When making any kind of content, I always want to think about my audience. Who is listening and *why* are they listening? There needs to be a purpose behind what I am creating (Martin, 2018). A big part of creating a meaningful message is research. A big tip that I discovered from Speaking Human is going through different charts on multiple platforms such as Apple Podcasts or Spotify (Speaking Human). By sizing up my competition, I can see what listeners want. Seeing what works and what doesn't can help me determine just what I want my show to be. All of this will help me a topic that I am passionate about that I can successfully market to my audience.

PLAN, PLAN, PLAN

I do not expect to jump right into recording. Prior to that, I need to take all the things I learned while researching and plan out episode topics, guests, and creating a script outline (Martin, 2018). Rehearsing the show and making a few trial runs will help my co-hosts and I find our flow, as well as help us brainstorm new ideas (Speaking Human). Before releasing the podcast, it best to create a publishing schedule (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly). How long will it take to record and edit the episode? Once I choose how often I want to release an episode, I should stick to that. According to InsideRadio, weekdays are more popular to upload compared to weekends. Mid-week is specifically a popular time to upload. Wednesday is the busiest, followed by Tuesday and Thursday. Another big factor is the time of day a podcast is uploaded. Most people download and listen to their podcasts in the morning when they wake up. Those shows that are uploaded between 2am and 6am do much better than shows that are uploaded late at night (InsideRadio, 2019).

INVEST IN QUALITY EQUIPMENT

Quality of equipment has a huge effect on the quality of work that I produce. In order to achieve professional level work, I am going to invest in software, mics and quality songs and sound effects.

DISTRIBUTE AND PROMOTE

After creating my podcast, I need to get it out into the world. In order to do this, I need to share my RSS feed with distributing sites such as Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts (Martin, 2018). This also makes it easy to promote the show on other platforms. I also want to create a "home" for my podcast. This can be a website where the podcast can live. This allows a platform to grow the podcast, whether it be a blog or other content, merchandise or ticket sales.

Purpose Statement

Ever since I first listened to *Serial*, a true-crime podcast hosted by Sarah Koenig, I fell in-love with podcasting. I listened to it over and over again, wondering how Koenig could capture the attention of the audience just using her voice. From there, I started listening to more comedy talk-show style podcasts such as *Girls Gotta Eat* and *Best Friends with Nicole Byer and Sasheer Zamata*. Both of these podcasts had an element that I found extremely important to their success, chemistry. The co-hosts on these shows had known each other for years. They talked about their lives openly and freely. They regularly exchanged genuine laughs and offered honest advice. It was relatable and real.

After regularly listening to these episodes with my two childhood best friends, we all wanted to try it out for ourselves. Over the past six months or so, we have thrown around name ideas and episode topics. Our friendship has spanned 15 years and we've watched each other grow up through the good and bad times. Different from shows such as *Girls Gotta Eat* and *Best Friends with Nicole Byer and Sasheer Zamata*, we are a younger group of girls who can talk about challenges we face as young 20-somethings.

As a public relations student, I was interested in seeing how content was made, rather than just promoting it. I find that many employers were looking for skills that included photo, video and audio editing. In order to give myself a leg up, I have always looked for way to gain experience in content creation. In the Spring of 2020, I took a podcasting course that taught me all the basics I needed to know about the creation of a podcast. By the end of the semester, I was able to create a business plan, plus a pilot of my very own podcast. This experience solidified my passion for this project and when I reached out to my best friends, they did not hesitate to approve this plan. Not only am I looking forward to creating a personal product, but I am looking forward to try and successfully market it to the correct audience.

Podcast in the Making

TECHNOLOGY

In order to create this podcast, I need the correct tools to do so. After much research, I have narrowed down what equipment is necessary for me.

Adobe Audition

Being a communications major that often used Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator and other Adobe suite programs, I invested in this software. This comes with Audition, a great software to edit my podcast on. There are other options such as Pro Tools (often considered industry-standard but at a high price) and the free option, Audacity. I have previous experience in Audacity but it proved to be temperamental and overall, not worth it. Pro Tools is something that I would eventually like to use, but since it is such an investment, Audition is a more affordable option that is still reliable and considered professional.

Mics/other recording equipment

I have been looking into the type of equipment that is needed to record the podcast. In the past, I have used my iPhone to record audio, but for this project, I am investing in a microphone. After looking at many options, I found that the Logitech Blue microphone is the best option. Compared to other options it is fairly priced (\$129.99 at Target) and produces high quality sound.



Along with this mic, I am also purchasing a windscreens that will further enhance the sound quality. There are many cheap options that run anywhere from \$11.00 to \$15.99. One of the windscreens I am looking at is a \$13.00 windscreens from Sweetwater that I can attach to the mic stand.

Music/sound effects

One of the most important factors of a good podcast is the music and sound effects that go along with it. There are many free sites such as freemusicarchive.org, soundbible.com, and freesound.org that provide a limited library of music and sound effects. The problem here is that many are generic. I have been looking at different subscriptions to have access to a larger library. The best option for me is from epidemicsound.com. They have a personal subscription that costs \$15/month. This offers unlimited access to music and sound effects that have been cleared for use in videos and podcasts.

STRUCTURE

In terms of the layout of this podcast, it will be an un-scripted talk-show style podcast. Prior to recording, I will develop different segments such as Q+A's, games, and other fun things to help structure the show and also keep listeners engaged. Prior to every episode, I will create a "script" which will help outline the topics in that episode as well as help with transitions and timing.

Deliverables

BUSINESS PLAN

The next step of this project is to lay out the logistics of this podcast. This business plan will include a timeline, publishing plan, and other details to help paint a clear picture of my vision.

TITLE: "WORKING TITLE"

COVER ART

This image will help represent our podcast. I intend to plan out a color scheme that would be universal across all platforms. In order to create this, I can use tools such as Photoshop or the online site Canva to help complete a professional and clean design.

LOGLINE

Three best friends, fifteen years of friendship, and lots of laughs. We've seen the highs and the *lows*, but now we're here for you.

EPIISODE SYNOPSIS

Episode One: "Are We a Cult?"

For years we've been told we're "too exclusive" or we "hate other girls", both are untrue. Well, at least the second one is kind of untrue. We talk female friendship and how we've stayed so close for so long.

Episode Two: "Long Distance Relationships Will Kill You"

College is hard. College is even harder when you have to leave your significant other in another state. We give our tips on how far we've gone to make things work.

Episode Three: "One of the Boys"

Are you of bro status? We talk to some of our guy friends and find out what makes a girl worthy of bringing around the boys. Can girls and guys be close friends without hooking up?

SCRIPTS

In preparation for each episode, I will create an outline for us to follow to ensure that we include all the information that we wanted to say. This will include an intro section, the different segments and topics we want to discuss, along with how long we want to talk about them. This will also help me in the editing process. As we record I can make notes of where we may have stumbled or messed up so that while I am editing, I can easily find mistakes.

PROMOTIONAL POSTS/MARKETING MATERIALS

These will be social media posts or website content that will help us gain a following. They could be things such as episode announcements, teaser gifs, or blog posts that help lead up to the launch of the podcast.

TEASER TRAILER

Before we release our podcast, I plan on cutting a teaser trailer. This will introduce our show to the world and will help us gain traction online. It will include an intro to who we are and why we're making the show.

30-40 MIN PILOT EPISODE

The main deliverable that I want to come out of this project is our pilot episode. I am aiming for this show to be anywhere from 30- 40 minutes long. As this process continues, I will be able to get a feel for how long it will take to produce content that long.

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