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Internal Podcasts From A to Z

Shannon Martin



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INTERNAL PODCASTS FROM A TO Z

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How often do you listen to a podcast? Whether purely in audio format or alongside a video, there's no denying podcasts' popularity. In fact, 41 percent of the US population has listened to at least one, according to DemandSage.

Currently, 465 million podcast listeners exist worldwide, and that number will reach 505 million by the end of 2024, according to "Podcast Statistics 2024 (Listeners, Growth & Trends)." There are now more than 2 million valid podcasts on Apple Podcasts.

With that in mind, have you ever considered how podcasting can relate to your organization's goals? Company podcasts have increased tremendously, especially internal podcasts that serve as a solution to strengthen communications and employee culture. Internal podcasts foster interdepartmental collaboration, improve employee retention and engagement, diversify training programs, and develop leaders.

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This guide will primarily focus on internal podcasts designed for staff and talent development departments. However, much of the information and insights here also apply to brand podcasts for marketing purposes. This guide will explore the whole podcasting journey from strategy and conceptualization through publishing and marketing.

In this issue of *TD at Work*, I'll explain:

- What an internal podcast is and why to consider one
- Where to start with conceptualizing your podcast
- Whom to include on your podcast team
- How to record and publish your podcast for secure internal listening
- How to promote your podcast

ABCs of Company Podcasts

With the surging popularity of podcasts, many employers have discovered how the medium can help their businesses. A podcast offers a unique way to tell a story and get information across that is both convenient and effective.

Types

There are two types of podcasts with which companies can experiment—internal (or private) and external.

Internal

An internal podcast communicates directly to staff or other stakeholders such as vendors, select customers, or members; they can be open or private. *Open* means they aren't confidential and may live on a public podcast distribution channel, although the information and target audience are internal.

Some of the ways to use an internal corporate podcast include:

- Onboarding
- Training
- CEO fireside chats; leadership interviews
- Employee stories and knowledge sharing; customer stories
- Leadership development
- Sales enablement
- Product updates
- Role plays
- Wellness content
- Industry knowledge; expert talks

External

Companies can use podcasts as a marketing tool, to share thought leadership or case studies, to build deeper relationships with potential and current customers, or for lead generation.

A branded podcast, while created by a specific company, is nothing like a commercial. However, may contain direct ads for the business or be associated with the brand name. It enables an organization to raise awareness in the external world and establishes the company as a thought leader in a particular field. Some businesses use podcasts for more creative goals, such as to gain access to new investors, share a future vision, or showcase their sustainability efforts.

Such a podcast may use stories or interviews that demonstrate the business's value or describe customer needs. In the TD field, a branded podcast could include recruitment efforts or diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Case Study: Onboarding With a Podcast

A large multinational consulting firm launched an internal podcast that involved talent development leaders interviewing employees across diverse functions, varied backgrounds, and distinct career paths. The podcast brought to life the company's emphasis on a people-first culture in tandem with its focus on equity and inclusion.

Beyond the popularity of the podcast with employees and its rich library of stories, the TD team realized that the podcast could double as valuable content to help new hires. The team developed a playlist of the most popular episodes for onboarding employees. Individuals new to the company noted that the podcast episodes not only gave them a much better feel for the ethos of the company, but that they felt more quickly integrated into their teams.

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Benefits

Podcasting offers an alternative to the classic communication methods. It's a fresh way for team members to consume content.

An internal company podcast can benefit your organization in several ways.

They improve learning, recall, and attention. All individuals have learning preferences, such as visual, textual, or auditory. And everyone communicates or digests different information in unique ways.

In addition, people learn from stories, especially those conveyed in audio. Psychologist Jerome Bruner's research, cited by *Harvard Business Review*, proposes that individuals are 20 times more likely to remember facts when they are part of a story. Combine corporate podcasts with other learning tools and resources. Use them to share learning materials with employees in a way that captures their attention and sticks.

They save time, are convenient, and boost productivity. A podcast can cover the salient points of a long training session. TD can package and present the information so team members can access it on their own schedules. Corporate podcasts enable staff to use time more effectively and promote lifelong learning goals. They are a perfect just-in-time learning tool.

They demonstrate care for employee wellness and improve connection. Brain studies show that increased screen time leads to stress buildup as well as decreased focus and engagement. In other words, screen fatigue and screen burnout are real. Because attracting and retaining talent is already a challenge, companies can't afford to ignore such concerns.

A study of approximately 1,500 managers and employees reveals that 56 percent found remote meetings to be their main source of fatigue (coined as *Zoom fatigue* during the pandemic). Another study, from Gallup, found that only 28 percent of fully remote staff felt connected to their company's mission. Podcasts give individuals a break from screen time and email overload with a different way to consume content.

They increase engagement by appealing to staff. The power of voice and story creates more engaging communication. Podcasts can use storytelling principles and conversations to reach and resonate with listeners.

Many companies turn to private podcasts because of their staff's listening habits or feedback. Because the format already has wide appeal, it offers the potential for better engagement.

They increase inclusivity and accessibility. Podcasts can broaden employees' perspectives and keep them from operating in silos. They give teams an easy way to stay informed and gain a deeper understanding of the direction and ethos of the company, starting right from onboarding.

Podcasts also offer accessibility for a diverse workforce: According to software development company Connecteam, 80 percent of today's workforce are nondesk workers for whom a company newsletter and email communications may be less accessible or require additional time. By now, your employees may be spread out across borders, continents, and time zones. It's a connected world that challenges schedules, conference calls, and webinars. Replace some forms of internal communication with the more convenient, on-demand option of a podcast.

Individuals are 20 times more likely to remember facts when they are part of a story.

What Makes a Podcast Successful?

No matter what type of podcast you produce, use a clear strategy and endeavor to understand the audience's needs and goals.

When planning for the success of an internal podcast, ensure a balance of engaging content, informative learning, and knowledge or skills development. The content should act as a modality for company-specific goals while being entertaining and keeping listeners engaged.

Take lessons from the podcasts team members love, even if they're quite different in nature and content. What elements can you incorporate to create an enjoyable listening experience, along with bringing listeners valuable information?

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No matter your podcast concept, while you start planning, consider:

- What is the benefit to the company?
- What is the benefit to the employee?
- Who needs to be involved in planning and decision making? Get key stakeholders involved early. Involve IT and finance. Identify podcast champions.
- What formats will you use? Corporate podcasts take the form of interviews, solo talks, stories, role plays, microcasts (in other words, microlearning), a co-hosted discussion, a CEO's fireside chat, or a narrative. A conversation or discussion from multiple voices keeps the medium engaging.
- What content will you discuss? Base the answer to this question on your predetermined goals. Consider repurposing content, but strategize how to transform it for the podcast medium.

Where to Start

Before concerns such as production and equipment, solidify the podcast concept, strategy, team, and brand.

The first hurdle is just getting started. Once you identify a potential need for a podcast, build a team to discuss the possibility of implementing it within the company's strategic landscape.

Get Buy-In

After your team decides that an internal podcast will be beneficial, prepare to gain buy-in. The details and process will depend on how your organization operates, but these guidelines will prepare you to make the case:

- Outline goals and benefits of the podcast (take inspiration from the benefits listed above).
- State the problem the podcast will solve and why a podcast is uniquely suited as a solution.
- Generate a vision for the podcast.
- List resources the project will use such as people, time, and money.
- Note logistical details such as who will host the podcast, a strategy and plan, and equipment.
- Plan for internal distribution and promotion.
- Detail how to measure success and what outcomes you wish to achieve.
- Get podcast champions on board, especially in leadership.
- Involve key decision makers early.
- Understand the potential hurdles in your organization. Don't underestimate the time to obtain approvals.
- Remember that podcasts are evergreen by nature—structure the content accordingly. So, while the podcast production budget may fall in a specific fiscal period, its use and return on investment will continue into the future.

Assemble a Team

Whether internal, external, or a mix, consider how best to form a strong team that will work from strategy and concept to release. The most successful corporate podcasts are collaborative ventures.

Roles include a host; a producer (who will plan episodes, manage strategy, and direct recordings); a technical manager; a postproduction editor; and a lead for publishing and marketing, including internal promotions.

Examine current roles and responsibilities. Use internal strengths to produce the most efficient podcast. For example, who will create a content plan? Usually, the learning team, a group from the particular department on which the podcast focuses, or subject matter experts hold that role.

Ensure a balance of engaging content, informative learning, and knowledge or skills development.

A good host or someone with strong interview skills can make a big difference in making engaging content. Depending on budget constraints, weigh whether to hire external experts such as experienced podcast hosts, journalists, or voice artists. Reach out to talent you've worked with on other projects or a production company to help source the right person.

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Case Study: From Reading to Listening

A fast-paced biotechnology company already had a strong internal communications strategy, including a popular company newsletter. The company used the newsletter to highlight wins as well as to build excitement for planned staff events.

The internal communications team recognized the importance of efficiency in communications and saw there was room for improvement, especially because some employees could not fit reading the material into their schedules.

The team chose to turn the company newsletter into a podcast. First, it produced a simple audio version for employees who wanted to listen to day-to-day company updates. Second, the team made an interactive companion podcast. The second option covered major initiatives or topics, including interviews or discussions to enrich the content, which engaged employees by enabling them to directly contribute. Both podcasts were short in length and quickly became popular.

Analytics revealed a high listen rate. But, more importantly, the internal communications team discovered that employees who didn't read the company newsletter now listened to the podcast. Granular episode data reveals that listeners consumed 90–100 percent of each episode.

Now the company has new data and a better understanding of how their employees interact with internal communications.

Create a Strategy

To develop a strategy, define the podcast's purpose and objectives, aligning with company values and goals. It should cover business objectives, staff needs, and the audience's identity (for example, all employees versus specific groups, job roles, work life, or needs).

Choose a format based on the purpose and audience. Will you create content via interviews, scripted episodes, or repurposed content? You may have a specific use in mind; regardless, survey your target audience and seek feedback about how the podcast will apply to them. Keep corporate podcasts digestible. Some companies tailor episodes to fit within a typical staff member commute time.

Decide how frequently to publish the media and episode length—though that may change as results emerge. Release an ongoing podcast consistently, such as weekly, so employees come to expect it. Alternatively, release an entire series on a single topic at once.

Create an audience profile. It's hard to be all things for all people; you may have different listener personas or segments to consider. No matter the situation, a podcast is for the listener—not for those creating it. A profile should include age range; role; typical workday; education; career trajectory; socioeconomic status; hobbies and interests; challenges and problems; and motivation or content and causes that engage their attention.

Determine what success will look like. To get started, evaluate the related podcast landscape. Browse and identify podcasts in your industry as well as podcasts to which your target audience listens. Build a database, taking note of topics, formats, and guests. A competitive landscape analysis assesses what the audience expects from podcasts, what that audience enjoys, what content is already available, where gaps in the media occur, what ideas resonate, and what ideas don't. Even for an internal podcast with a specific objective, the exercise will provide ideas and tips to avoid missteps.

Build a Strong Brand

Clear branding will grab employees' attention and entice them to tune in. Even though the podcast is under the corporate umbrella, package it and give it an identity.

Consider the title, both for the show and individual episodes, making them catchy to intrigue and engage but also clear enough that a user knows what to expect. Eye-catching cover art makes a difference to attracting listenership.

Craft Compelling Content

What type of approach will help your company reach its goals? An interview-style podcast, a dialogue, a lecture or teaching style, or a story narrative?

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The concept may be clear from the start, especially if a specific objective led to the podcast's creation. For example, you want to conduct role plays for the sales team or interview employees to showcase diverse journeys. That does not mean, however, that the format is rote. Brainstorm concepts to suit the goal. There are many ways to achieve objectives with podcasting, and a little creativity can go a long way to gaining and retaining individuals' attention.

Storytelling is truly what makes a great show, hooking the audience from start to finish. Whether sharing personal anecdotes, discussing a prescribed topic, or interviewing guests, weaving a story throughout the podcast adds depth and buoys return listenership.

Add narration, such as an attention-grabbing intro; interstitial narration to interviews to signpost the story and reinforce key lessons and applications; and an outro to summarize and emphasize takeaways. Incorporate a touch of fun with a standard question or game for every episode.

A podcast is for the listener —not for those creating it.

Choose a Platform for Hosting and Distribution

When distributing a podcast, use a hosting provider that enables you to upload the content for distribution to various listening platforms (such as Apple, Spotify, and Pocketcasts) via RSS feed. Rather than users uploading podcasts directly to listening platforms, use a hosting site (such as Transistor, Podbean, Libsyn, Buzzsprout, and Spotify for Podcasters). You can also publish podcasts on YouTube, whether as audio-only or with video.

Internal systems. The first option is to simply publish on your intranet or learning management system. However, those platforms often don't offer the best listening experience.

You want to deliver a smooth user experience similar to existing podcast delivery. Make sure, even if it is a private podcast, that staff can access the podcast on the go. Mobile access is key to engagement, enabling listeners to access the podcast at any time.

Review feasibility with your current vendors and what the login and listening experience will be like.

Private RSS feeds. Another option is an unlisted podcast RSS feed, sometimes called a private feed. Unfortunately, individuals can easily share and access them without permission. If your content is not sensitive, this is one of the easiest and most affordable options. Almost any podcast hosting provider will work (look for information about private podcasts on hosting provider sites).

Enterprise private podcast hosting platforms. Some hosting providers have built enterprise solutions specifically with secure hosting and distribution. They have all the built-in capabilities you'll need to deliver podcasts securely and conveniently to your employees.

Begin with a demo or trial of any potential platform. Get a feel for the user experience and what tools the platform offers that can save you time. Security is an important consideration for proprietary content. Find out whether the platform offers single-sign-on integration, an attractive application, collaboration tools, and detailed listening analytics.

Enterprise-hosting solutions (such as Supporting Cast, UStudio, or Storyboard) can provide a good listening experience, analytics, as well as features and controls designed for companies' internal and external podcasts.

Be sure to consult with IT (as well as other stakeholders) about security requirements.

Production

Now that you are armed with a strategy and setup plan, it's time to go to work creating the content.

Episode Content Planning

As ready as you are to get started, there is a little more to know before you record. While you may think all will go smoothly—you have plenty to talk about on a topic, and guests will have plenty to say—that is rarely the case without good preparation. Neglecting to lay the groundwork results in lack of substance, direction, or flow.

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To create a show that makes sense and conveys a compelling narrative, you need an outline or content plan both for the podcast overall and for each episode. In the case of an interview show, do the research and prepare appropriate questions. For other formats, you may need a full script.

Intro and Outro

While they should be quick, the intro and outro are important. Script an engaging introduction that provides context and hooks listeners within the first seconds of an episode.

An effective outro offers a satisfying ending to a show, one that commits audiences to keep coming back. Use it to summarize key points and add a call to action, such as something listeners can do to apply the knowledge on the job.

Host and Guest Preparation

If you have an experienced podcast host, they may only need a quick outline for preparation. If your host is a SME from within the organization, they will likely need to practice recording or get coaching from a producer.

If your podcast is interview based, pay particular attention to the way you choose and prepare guests.

Find Guests

The right guest for the podcast is someone who will provide valuable content for the audience. To find potential guests, start within the company's network, especially if the show will be completely internal. Look to your training staff, managers, and most enthusiastic or insightful team members. Reach out to business partners or clients. Browse reputable articles and blog posts relevant to your niche and podcast goals, then locate the authors to check whether they have any public speaking or media experience. Additionally, listen to podcasts that focus on similar topics. Identify whether their guest lineup would resonate with your audience. Platforms such as LinkedIn can also be valuable resources for finding suitable guests within your or your company's extended network.

Conduct a Pre-Interview

To ensure a positive and valuable experience for both your guests and listeners, conduct a pre-interview session to warm up the interviewer and the interviewee. The pre-interview also uncovers any potential concerns and acts as a test run for the interview. For internal guests, it may be beneficial to provide interview questions ahead of time. However, the downside to that is overly prepared answers and possibly a lack of natural conversation flow. Overall, it's best not to give guests the questions but to either have the pre-interview or send a list of general topics instead.

Case Study: Researching Guests

Podcast production company Lower Street produces several podcasts in which its producer works with client organizations to identify potential subject matter experts and conduct pre-interviews.

Sometimes, the interviews determine which guests fit with different episodes. For example, one client's goal for a leadership program podcast was that each episode would have two diverse leaders. To spark a genuine and engaging conversation, pre-interviews became an essential part of the content planning process.

The result, which exceeded expectations, was insightful dialogue between leaders the producer matched perfectly to bring out intended lessons and stories. The listeners (in this case, a particular leadership cohort) not only gave positive feedback about the podcast, but they also demonstrated knowledge and skills acquisition from the episodes.

Technology

Before hitting record, make sure you have the necessary technical equipment such as microphones, a suitable location, and editing software or a digital audio workstation.

You may host your guest via an in-studio interview or remotely. In either scenario, conduct a technology check—many podcasters create a template email or checklist (see "Podcast Technology Checklist" in Tools & Resources). Reassure guests that you can edit out mistakes, so they can pause or ask to restate or restart.

If the guest is joining you in the studio, make sure to prepare a microphone for them. If a guest is remote, it's

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ideal to send them an interview kit that includes a simple dynamic microphone with a USB connection. Ask them to wear wired headphones rather than use air pods or a laptop speaker.

Remind your guests to find the best environment they can. They should plan to call you from a room with little background noise or echoes (carpet, curtains, and other softer surfaces help).

Online meeting tools are not optimized for audio recording. To record episodes with remote guests, use podcast recording software such as Riverside.fm, Squadcast, or even streaming platforms such as Streamyard (it doesn't need to stream live).

Sometimes, it's impossible to achieve an ideal recording environment. If away from your usual setup, consider a portable recorder. There are also options for recording on a mobile phone.

Editing Software

When producing a podcast fully in-house, use editing software or a digital audio workstation. If your team already produces content, review the pre-existing software or ask internal experts to handle postproduction.

Editing software ranges from free (or included with existing software) to a range of costs and features. Examples include Descript, Audacity, GarageBand, and Alitu.

Video

A video aspect of any podcast requires cameras and lighting. Cameras can range from better-quality webcams to full multicamera setups to 360-degree cameras that shoot a panoramic view. The latter provide a simple setup with good-quality output.

While bright, natural light is best, it's not always reliable. Consider ring lights and specialty lighting designed for video—inexpensive options are available.

Troubleshooting

Check equipment ahead of each recording (see "Podcast Episode Checklist" in Tools & Resources). Allow some wiggle room ahead of recording time for glitches and adjustments. Make sure to turn on all your equipment, and don't forget to hit record (it's more common than you think).

If you're having trouble with a specific piece of equipment or software, visit the company's website or search online for possible solutions.

Whether it's an issue with the technical side or your podcast episodes just aren't coming together as you had hoped, seek help from experts, whether in your organization or in a podcasting group on social media or via podcasting workshops.

Postproduction

After recording your podcast, polish it up to make it a great listening experience. Editing and polishing a podcast is essential to ensure it resonates with listeners and elevates content quality. Here are some postproduction basics.

Ordering and editing. Basic editing includes sound leveling and cleanup, removing any mistakes or sections the host or guests wish to remove, and weaving the recorded pieces together. Sometimes editing takes a heavier approach, significantly cutting down conversations to share the desired information while keeping an engaging narrative. Try developing an episode out of multiple interviews or different pieces of content or adding clips or various voiced segments.

Sound engineering for an immersive experience. The best podcasts use sound other than voices, such as background sounds and effects, to enhance the listening experience. It could be as simple as theme music and relevant clips or more complex such as using background noise and immersive soundscapes to transport listeners to a new location.

Discoverable descriptions. Write clear titles and descriptions to optimize visibility and attract listeners. External-facing shows require detailed show and episode descriptions to enable search engine optimization.

Show notes, transcripts, blog posts, and supplemental content. Each podcast episode should have accompanying show notes, which can range from a simple overview to a more detailed summary with links. Recommended best practice is to provide a full show transcript, for accessibility. Today, artificial intelligence tools can generate a transcript and some editing software has a built-in function. When using those features, edit them for accuracy.

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Understanding Types of Microphones

The microphone that works best depends on many factors. You may have existing equipment you want to use. The right setup and, perhaps most importantly, the right technique, will ensure you get the best sound. A good dynamic microphone generally works best for the majority of podcasters.

Here are the pluses and minuses of dynamic and condenser microphones.

Dynamic

Advantages

- Long-lasting, with a sturdy construction
- Plug and play; easy to use
- Conducive to loud environments, including high sound pressure levels
- Work without external power
- Affordable; can be less expensive than condenser microphones (though that is not an absolute)
- Versatile; perform well in a variety of situations and purposes.

Disadvantages

- Don't perform as well with high-frequency sounds
- Offer a lower threshold of sensitivity than condenser microphones

Condenser

Advantages

- Superb sound quality due to a low diaphragm mass
- Higher threshold of sensitivity; perform well with high-frequency sounds

Disadvantages

- Less durable due to delicate construction
- Suffer from self-noise and interference, which could negatively affect a recording
- Require an external power source
- Work best in studio environments; less versatile than a dynamic microphone

Source: Adapted from Riverside.fm

Blog posts boost a podcast's reach and provide supplementary materials that will help employees while listening and with follow-up learning. For example, after each episode, provide questionnaires, checklists, tools listeners can use to apply the learning on the job, further reading, and playlists or links to related podcasts.

Get Your Podcast in the Right Ears

Your podcast is ready to go out in the world. But how can you ensure your chosen audience finds it and actively listens?

To engage an external market, implement optimization strategies for discoverability both on your company's website and on podcasting platforms. Other strategies include collaboration and cross-promotion, newsletters, implementing paid promotion or public relations teams, and harnessing the power of social media.

Take these next steps for an internal audience.

Manage Internal Marketing

First, publish the podcast where prospective listeners can easily find it. List a direct link wherever possible—on your staff sign-in dashboard, the company's

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Case Study: Grow Listenership Through Employee Engagement

A large SaaS organization experienced massive growth. With that change, employees' feeling of community and connection with the company's
mission decreased. Formal, written communications fell flat.

The company started a podcast in which the CEO and CFO discussed different areas of the business and their strategic thinking.

Initial podcast subscriptions surpassed the company's targeted rate. Employees shared anonymous reviews, and listener feedback was positive.

The listen rate per episode, however, was not what the corporate communications team had hoped. With some advice from its production agency, the organization implemented strategies to grow engagement.

First, the corporate communications team worked closely with different department heads to advertise the podcast and demonstrate how to share it. The L&D team created tools, such as short cheat sheets and emails for each episode with highlights and potential discussion questions. Such efforts created a buzz, leading to an immediate spike in listenership.

The corporate communications team asked its cohort and managers to provide public reviews, which team members then shared with all staff to create social proof and buy-in.

Further, the corporate communications team strategized with the employee wellness team on how to tie their initiatives together, resulting in an expanded network to champion the podcast and make better use of the podcast in organizational goals.

The company tested different ways to include podcast episodes in meetings and encouraged "walking listens" or "lunch break listens"—that is, employees could take an extra 15–30 minutes before or after lunch for downtime while listening to the podcast.

The team also added monthly employee voices to the podcast, resulting in a greater consumption rate. Staff could also engage by asking questions either via voicemail or a written form for the leaders to answer on the podcast.

intranet, internal communication channels such as Slack, or your team's email signatures.

Add a reminder to your company's shared calendar when you release new episodes. Depending on the distribution method, individuals will receive notifications in their podcast applications as well (provided they have subscribed).

Don't doubt the power of physical signage—place notices with QR codes around the office spaces where you know employees gather.

Foster Employee Engagement

Next, let employees be your biggest advocates.

Include them in the content creation process. Rather than making the podcast the effort of an individual or the L&D team, it's ideal to get different team members involved in the creation and production process where you can.

Incorporate their voices. When staff believe they have a voice and can connect with the content, they are more likely to be engaged with the show—and, by extension, company culture.

Invite staff on the podcast to share their stories or feedback and showcase their career achievements and incorporate employee questions and comments. Encourage staff to submit voice notes that the host can listen to and potentially address on the show.

Plan listening parties. Provide managers with a set of discussion questions to use with their teams after listening.

Integrate the podcast into L&D goals. Once employees listen to the show, for example, they can earn a training badge or achieve a development goal.

Solicit input. Encourage listeners to complete a survey to gather direct feedback. Use anonymous comments from the survey to internally promote the podcast.

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Measure Results and Make Improvements

Track podcast performance. Analyze the data against your goals. Base metrics such as downloads or listens provide a general idea of the podcast's success, but it shouldn't be your primary focus.

Data on consumption, such as how long people listened and areas they skipped or relistened to, can give better insight into the podcast's impact. Aim for above 70 percent consumption of episodes. The average for podcasts is in the low 60th percentile, while many internal podcasts achieve 80–100 percent. Such statistics indicate how to make content more appealing, whether episodes need to be shorter, or whether intros are not engaging enough.

Examine overall time employees have listened. For example, you may see that your podcast has racked up more than 21,000 listening hours. That's a more interesting statistic than saying each episode has an average of 500 listens.

You should also consider the qualitative data: Are you hearing more team members discuss topics from the podcast? Are you seeing more interaction and better connections throughout the company? Are employees implementing ideas from the podcast? Ask managers to conduct surveys or interview select individuals.

If the podcast is part of a training program, success may be the completion rate for the target group. To measure that aspect, acquire individual user data via an appropriate platform. You can also develop tools such as follow-up questionnaires, quizzes, and test projects to check that learning has stuck.

Remember that you can always create more content around a specific topic, so shorter, targeted episodes can lead to deeper engagement.

Conclusion

Implementing a company podcast can greatly benefit your organization by fostering engagement in L&D, boosting company culture, improving internal communication, and increasing productivity. By providing employees with a convenient and accessible platform to consume educational content, you can enhance their skills and knowledge.

But you shouldn't just throw together any audio file and call it a day. A podcast that incorporates quality production and formatting, storytelling, and elements specific to your audience and their needs will resonate more strongly with staff and, ultimately, help your company reach its goals.

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Online Resources

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Podcast Launch Planning Worksheet

Use this worksheet to think through the important details of launching a podcast.

Target launch date: _____

Overall Direction

What are your goals for the podcast?

What does success look like to you?

What are your favorite and least favorite podcasts (and why)?

Audience

What's the audience's persona (e.g., demographics, roles, likes, dislikes)? Are you directing this to a particular group of employees, a department, or the wider organization?

What is the audience's day to day like (e.g., schedule, workplace, tasks)?

What are the audience's greatest job-oriented pain points or biggest concerns?

Competitive Landscape Analysis

Review podcasts with similar content or podcasts to which your target audience listens, tracking common themes, benchmarks, and ideas.

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Podcast Launch Planning Worksheet (Cont.)

Specifics

Consider holding a "namestorm" for possible titles. If your podcast is public, check to be sure the title is exclusive. The title can be clever, but be sure it's also clear and descriptive, or add a subtitle (especially for search engine optimization if the podcast is public).

Working title: _____

Test artwork in the size that viewers will encounter when listening to your podcast. Note that Apple uses these specifications for graphics: square, 3000 x 3000 pixels. If submitting the show via RSS feed, Apple Podcasts accepts cover artwork ranging from 1400 x 1400 to 3000 x 3000 pixels, giving preference to the larger size. The file type should be either a JPEG or PNG file.

Format:

Technology needs and setup (e.g., recording equipment and software):

Podcast hosting account setup (or internal distribution) details:

List the ideas to convey in a trailer:

Distribution and promotion plan:

Additional Notes

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Podcast Episode Checklist

Complete this checklist to ensure that you have accounted for podcast recording details—before, during, and after.

Before Recording

- ❑ Choose the episode topic.
- ❑ Book guests (if applicable).
- ❑ Schedule the guests' pre-interview date (if applicable).
- ❑ Schedule the recording date.
- ❑ Schedule the publishing date.
- ❑ State the purpose or storyline.
- ❑ Compile background notes on the guest or topic.
- ❑ Create questions or a script.
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

Day-of Technology Check

- ❑ Test the host microphone and headphones (functioning and sound levels).
- ❑ Test the guest or cohost microphone and headphones (functioning and sound levels).
- ❑ Test any lighting and visuals.
- ❑ Start recording.
- ❑ Allow the software to finish processing at the end, if applicable.
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

After Recording

- ❑ Edit the episode's audio, video (if applicable), and audio merge (if using narration or multiple interviews).
- ❑ Create the title and description.
- ❑ Choose the episode artwork.
- ❑ Prepare show notes.
- ❑ Secure feedback and changes.
- ❑ Review the episode and approve.
- ❑ Publish to a hosting platform or internal system.
- ❑ Notify the target audience.
- ❑ Carry out the promotion plan.
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

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Podcast Technology Checklist

Use this checklist as you consider where the podcast will live, how and where you'll conduct interviews, and what tools to use for editing.

Hosting Platform

The podcast will be (circle appropriate answer): Internal External

Where will your podcast live (e.g., learning management system, intranet, podcast platforms)? What privacy measures do you need?

_____

_____

Recording Setup

Where will you record?

_____

_____

Hosts:

- ❑ Microphone
- ❑ Headphones
- ❑ Recording software
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

Guest:

- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

If using video:

- ❑ Camera
- ❑ Lighting

Editing

You will edit the podcast (circle response): In house Third party

What software will you use (if in house)?

_____

Who will be in charge of editing and postproduction?

_____

What is the review and approval process?

_____

_____

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