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August 29, 2016

## **Guest Post published on Bonoboz.in blog site**

### **Why Every Business Must Include Podcasts In Their Content Strategy**

#### **Part I**

#### **Summary:**

In this two part series, I will talk about the benefits to businesses from podcasting, and how businesses can leverage this form of content. From creating content for target groups, to re-purposing that content across multiple platforms, podcasts enable engagement with listeners, from customers to employees and vendors. In Part I, I will talk about the evolution of podcasts and some notable business focused shows.

#### **Introduction:**

Imagine a scenario where you create content in one format, but are able to re-purpose it into multiple formats and distribute it through the relevant channels. For example, an audio interview can be released through iTunes or Facebook. It can be then converted to an infographic, which can be posted through Twitter or Instagram. The text summary of the interview can be posted as a blog, or an article on LinkedIn or Medium. Most importantly, the content that is created has a far longer shelf life than you are used to. Would you not be enticed by such a scenario? Podcasts

present such exactly a scenario, and that's what we will talk about in this post.

At the last count, there are about 60 or 70 podcasts that are produced in India, with atleast 5 or 6 more shows getting added every month. In other words, the market is very small. The good news is that podcasts are quickly becoming the flavour of the town, and celebrity author-speakers such as [Devdutt Pattanaik](#) and Venture Capital firms such as Kalaari Capital ([through Kstart Podcast](#)) have their own shows.

### **What is a Podcast?**

[Wikipedia](#) defines a podcast as "... an episodic series of digital media files which a user can set up so that new episodes are automatically downloaded via web syndication to the user's own local computer or portable media player." In other words, once a podcast is subscribed to, the new episodes get delivered to the user's devices. It is an on-demand versus "pushed" content, similar to how newspapers get delivered to your doorstep once you subscribe. While majority of the podcasts are in audio, some of them are video series. In a way, a series of videos on a YouTube channel is also a podcast!

People often assume that a podcast listener is an iPhone or iPod user who listens to these shows say while running or walking the dog. Surprisingly enough, nearly two thirds of the listeners of [MyKitaab Podcast](#), one of the shows that we produce, do so using a desktop or laptop. They are most likely at work or listen to the podcast while working.

### **Podcasting By Business, For Business**

That raises a question, while majority of the shows are consumer oriented, how can businesses benefit from podcasting? That is where the first movers can really carve a

niche and build a following. For example, a real estate company can start an informational program that covers topics such as [Vastu](#), carpet versus built-up area, etc. This show can quickly become a Go To Place for potential buyers who want to learn more about these concepts. The company can build a mailing list of potential buyers by including a Call to Action in each episode, and invite questions from listeners to increase engagement with the audience. Podcasts also provide advanced listener statistics, which allows us to tweak the messaging and marketing.

For example, we produce a podcast called [Baalgatha](#), through which we publish 2 stories for children every week. 90 % of our listeners are in the age group of 25 to 45, and have children below the age of 7. A fourth of the listeners are NRIs. In India, where less than 10 percent of Internet users are women, nearly two thirds of our listeners are mothers. Over the past three months, we have build a small but a very engaged group of listeners, and we have grown purely by word of mouth.

If you are a company that is selling baby products, you can start or sponsor a podcast on parenting. There are several websites on parenting in India, such as [Indiaparenting](#) and [MyCity4Kids](#). But how many of them offer content in the form of audio? The easiest way to differentiate yourself or stand out from the crowd would be to create high quality audio podcast.

Podcasts are a great way to send high quality content to target listeners. The content created for podcasts can be repurposed and distributed through multiple channels. In other words, the transcript of the audio file can be used to create a blog post, any key takeaways can be repurposed as infographics, etc.

### **Notable Business Oriented Podcasts**

If we look at Podcasts as a form of content that is targeted towards specific listeners,

the purpose of the content becomes quite clear. For example, a publication focused on say the startups can interview movers and shakers in this space. In fact, as many as eight of the 60 odd podcasts produced in India today are on Entrepreneurship. Some firms can release customer stories in the form of audio podcasts, or consulting companies can use a podcast series say for case based interviews. The Boston Consulting Group, for example, has a show called [BCG Perspectives](#). Thus, podcasts can be a channel for customer connect, as well as a recruitment tool. They can also be used for branding. For example, a science fiction podcast called [The Message](#) was sponsored by [GE](#). It has a very high quality of production, and the podcast was very well received and received great reviews.

Indian media was quick to react when Forbes India launched a podcast for its Indian edition. Mint is a publication which is ranking high on the iTunes New and Noteworthy in India. However, India is yet to produce well listened and regarded shows such as APM Marketplace. Specialized content like Manager Tools Podcasts has been broadcasting for over 10 years now! There is a great potential to create similar shows that focus on issues relevant to the Indian market.

### **Personal Branding is In**

The top podcasts list on iTunes in India has the likes of Jaggi Vasudev and Robin Sharma. They most certainly do not need any additional publicity, but they have embraced podcasts as a form of connecting with listeners. Artists, consultants, marriage bureaus can take advantage of this trend and launch the shows themed around their business.

In Part II of this 2 part series, I will describe how a nonprofit and a startup were able to use podcasts for visibility and customer connect respectively.

## **Why Every Business Must Include Podcasts In Their Content Strategy**

### **Part II**

#### **Summary:**

In the first part of this post, I talked about the benefits to businesses from podcasting, and how businesses can leverage this form of content. In this second and concluding part, I will discuss how Indian businesses, including nonprofits and startups, can leverage the power of podcasts from brand building to customer connect and even hiring.

#### ***Technology is Favourable for Podcasting***

The perception about podcasts till a few years ago used to be that it is a form of content made for iPod or iPhone users. Or, one needed iTunes to listen to podcasts. That is no longer the case. There are atleast one dozen apps in the Google Play Store through which listeners can subscribe or listen to podcasts.

*Insert Image: Podcast payers on Google Play Store and iOS store*

There are 680 million mobile phones in India today, and the number is expected to reach 1 billion by 2020. With increase in usage of 3G or 4G data, the consumption of digital media is bound to increase. And while video might have the highest share of the content, the cost of production and distribution of video is still very high. In contrast the cost of production of content as well cost of bandwidth is reducing, which will help in spread of podcasting. For example, a 20 minute weekly podcast used to consume roughly 280 MB of data in the past for the listener. Today, the same podcast with equivalent audio quality consumes 80 MB.

Curated audio content in regional languages of India is another great opportunity that podcasts present. One of our shows, [Baalgatha](#), brings children's bedtime stories in the form of audio. The stories are available in English and Hindi, and soon we plan to offer them in Marathi and Gujarati. We use WhatsApp and Facebook to distribute the content. In fact, Baalgatha was the first podcast in the world that was launched using WhatsApp (You can read how we launched Baalgatha using WhatsApp through this [post on LinkedIn](#)). Today, we also use iTunes and Stitcher for distribution, but they two are primarily for the NRI audience. This is the level of customization of the content and means of distribution that podcasts can offer.

### **Does Podcasting Work For Businesses?**

Podcasts have a longer ramp-up time compared to other forms of content. However, the engagement level is very high. Therefore, we believe that businesses can benefit by sponsoring or co-branding podcasts that have a B2B or a B2B2C focus.

For example, we worked with nonprofit in energy space to create a 6 part audio series. This Nonprofit wanted to create a Thought Leadership positioning for itself, and increase engagement with the financial community. By interviewing international experts in the space of financing for renewable and energy efficiency projects, we were able to create a bridge with the financial community for further engagement. In the coming months, this interview series may become a monthly show for this organization.

One of the assignments we are working currently involves creating a show for an entrepreneur who wants to target their key customers: CFOs and heads of operations. Through discussions about use of data and analytics, and looking at energy not as a cost but a productivity tool, this entrepreneur has been able to create visibility and branding. Keeping the long term ROI in mind, this podcast has been off to a great start.

## **Way Forward:**

Podcasting presents a great opportunity for organizations. They can use it for a variety of objectives including customer connect, brand building, recruitment or in the form of an internal newsletter. Today's technology has greatly reduced the effort required for production and distribution, and with the increasing use of smartphones and availability of data, the market for this form of content is bound to grow. Businesses need to take a hard look at podcasts as a part of their content strategy.

## **ABOUT AMAR VYAS**

Amar is a husband, Co-Founder of [gaathstory](#), and author of the Amol Dixit series of books. He is the creator of [MyKitaab Podcast](#) and [Baalgatha](#), a Podcast of classic children's stories.

A self-described nomad, Amar has lived in fifteen cities over the past twenty years, including the two years spent at the [University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign](#) as a graduate student. He also spent time at the [Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad](#) for his MBA. These days he lives in Bengaluru (Bangalore) in India. In his spare time, he likes exploring offbeat places, learning Gujarati from his wife, and spending time with his dog, Buddy.

The published articles can be found at:

Part I: <https://www.bonoboz.in/why-every-business-must-include-podcasts-as-a-part-of-their-content-strategy-part-1/>

Part II: <https://www.bonoboz.in/why-every-business-must-include-podcasts-as-a-part-of-their-content-strategy-part-2/>