

6 CLEVER WAYS TO MONETIZE YOUR PODCAST

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PREFACE

WHO AM I AND WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT MONETIZING A PODCAST?

My name is Shannon Hernandez and I'm a radio broadcaster out of the Phoenix, Arizona area. During my 18 year tenure at 98 KUPD-FM, I have seen just about every type of iteration of how to sell a radio station, its on-air talent, on-air features, street team promotional packages and much more.

If there's one thing I've learned in all these years of doing radio, monetization is not about the commercial you hear on the airwaves.

Monetization is about a game called "O-P-P-O-R-T-U-N-I-T-Y".

Monetization is looking for as many opportunities as possible to sell space on **and off the radio**. But it's just not "any" space you're selling. It's about identifying strategic opportunities for you and your potential new client. It's about capitalizing without being overbearing.

Monetization is a no-holds-barred game and will require you to not only get creative with how you offer opportunity to your potential new client, but how you analyze your podcast and its assets.

Monetization will require you to be well-educated on all fronts in order to navigate the monetization waters.

As you go through this guide, I'm going to ask one MAJOR FAVOR from you. I ask that when you monetize any part of your podcast that ***you're doing business ethically and responsibly.*** Please take heed of this disclaimer.

Even though it might seem obvious to do ethical business, I can't tell you how many times I have been a part of a deal where someone has "sold" something and I was the innocent bystander stuck with no money or opportunity.

Don't be the skeezy salesman when you're offering an opportunity to your potential new client. On the flip side of the coin, I don't want you to be cheated when your new client is getting all kinds of free advertising while they haven't paid you a dime.

I'm sure you've heard the acronym, "CYA" many times. Well, I'm going to ask that you cover your ass in any deal that has an exchange of money. Deals can be mutually beneficial, but always make sure that you're covering yourself first to avoid the risk of losing money and time.

What you will read in this guide is based on my 19 years of radio experience along with my time working in media agencies. I will detail--the best way that I can--the ways you can make money as a podcaster that is just beyond commercials. What I share with you may either be a creative opportunity I have seen work in radio or a brand new opportunity that will help you get money in the door.

Some of these strategies you have heard of and others may be new, however, none of them work if you aren't putting them into action. Once you have reviewed them, I hope you can come back to me and tell me you have started to see an income stream from something that you love doing.

“Diligence is the mother of good luck.”

-Jim Rohn

CHAPTER 1

TOUGH LOVE: WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU AS A PODCASTER

Those who know me, know me as a “chill” guy whose demeanor is easy to be around. I’m a bit of a jokester, I love listening to music or podcasts while cooking, hanging with friends, and trying to make people see the good in the world everyday.

However, those who *really know me*, know that I am passionate and laser focused on where I see myself going personally and professionally. Whether I’m trying some brand new social media tactic with radio or pushing my limits inside the gym or out in nature, ***I’m getting after it every single day.***

Then there are a group of individuals who see me as too intense when they see the amount of effort I put into what I do on the radio, personal relationships, the gym and even podcasting.

And even though my intensity might be too much for these people, they can’t help but turn to me and ask, “Shannon, you’re ‘Mr. Social Media’. How is it you do these things? How are you multitasking on the radio while conducting a Facebook Live? How are you getting people to watch your YouTube Channel? How are you getting people to listen to your podcasts?

It’s just so hard and I just can’t do it.”

Welcome to my “tough love” chapter.

Some of you reading this chapter may not agree with what I have to say based on how I want you to monetize your podcast. In fact, about 80% of you will fall into a category that I will bluntly call the “victim” category. If it offends you that I use this term, then you should put this book down and keep podcasting at the pace you’re going. No one has time to waste and I certainly am not here to spin my wheels for you to get offended easily.

But if you are the other 20% who consider themselves “determined” to have a successful podcast that will make money, then we can sit down and have this heart to heart chat.

What I’m going to ask of you in every step of this book is to put yourself outside your comfort zone by 90%. This will go for interviewing guests, podcast pre/post-production and yes, even selling potential sponsors. Your DISCOMFORT zone is what will separate you from the other podcasters who are fumbling around still trying to figure out “monetization.”

This won’t be you.

Even though I have seen a ton of iterations of how to monetize radio, most people who have never been exposed to radio sales or any type of sponsorship deal will want to quit at the sound of their first “no.” This is where I am going to ask you to shift your mindset significantly.

Podcasting and monetization are all about two simple words:

“TAKING ACTION.”

These two little words have helped me shatter through my own personal ceilings and achieve things I never thought I could have done nearly 5 years ago. I learned a different facet of this mantra halfway through 2018 when I only had about 25 videos on my YouTube channel. It was at that time when I started to see small but powerful results and started thinking, “Take action, life happens.”

Since then, I have never backed down from this mantra and remind myself of it every single day when it comes to my personal life and my online life.

I know what you’re thinking right now. “Oh great, another lecture/motivational speech.”

To be honest, I’m not here to motivate you. I might be here to help inspire you with some ideas, but I’m not here to motivate you.

Only you can do that for yourself.

The truth is, the reason you’re reading this book is because you feel there is a message of value in what I have to say. You’re hoping there is some deep-rooted industry secret that is going to help you make money fast and easy with podcasting so you can sit on the beach and drink mimosas.

Fuck that, because it doesn’t exist. Sorry to break it to you, but now is the time to put in the work.

Now, if you believe that your podcast can make an impact in the world with your knowledge, humor, professionalism, etc., then you’re halfway there. “Halfway” is the idea you want to share with the world. “All the way” is will be

the blood, sweat and tears you put into your content to see it get downloaded, shared, repurposed, and monetized.

“All the way” is making your content valuable so that an advertiser won’t have to think twice about advertising on your program.

“All the way” is reaching a certain point when you want to quit, but you tell yourself, “I can go a little further.”

80% of the “victims” will only go “halfway” with their podcast. 20% will go “all the way” and challenge themselves to see how far they can truly go. Are you going to be part of the 20% who is curious to see what’s on the other side of monetization? Or will you be 80% who will give up at the sight of having to enter in basic information into an online platform?

I’m not one for excuses when things get hard. I only have one mentality if something gets hard and it’s all about facing the inevitable.

It’s about facing the fact that I might have to make cold calls; it’s about facing the fact that I might be charging too much for sponsorships; it’s about facing the fact I might have to make more content; it’s about facing the fact that I might suck at this whole monetization game.

But at the end of the day, if you can face these simple fears knowing you put all that you could into finding every solution possible, you’re capable of achieving more with your podcast.

We will now shift from the “lack” mentality to the “abundance” mentality.

Anything that's worth having is going to take knowledge, work, money and execution.

Once you read this book, you might think to yourself that it's impossible to achieve every one of these things. It will be that moment that will separate you from the rest who are just running to stand still. That moment will be the catalyst in determining whether you are ready to go all-in with monetizing your podcast or not.

That will be the defining moment where you believe you are abundant with downloads, sponsors and knowledge instead of the latter.

That will be the moment where you realize that every ounce of blood you put into this process, you've gained in knowledge or money.

After you read this book you'll either be all-in or come up with every possible reason as to why monetization won't work because it might take too much work or money.

MY WORDS ARE NOT EMPTY: BREAKING PERSONAL BARRIERS

Before I grind away at you with some more tough love, I think it's important to let you know how I have gotten to the this very moment where you're reading these words.

Four years ago I found myself at a crossroads physically, mentally and emotionally. I had just gotten out of a toxic relationship and I felt completely broken in every aspect of my life. I began to question some major issues in my life that were stagnant. I questioned why my relationship with money, love and success weren't breaking barriers for me personally.

I went on for weeks after that breakup blaming my ex-girlfriend for the reasons why we couldn't succeed.

Then I blamed my job for where I lived and why I wasn't making as much as I thought I should have.

Then, I started blaming everyone else as to why they couldn't get along with me romantically or personally.

Blame expanded to all aspects of my life and I never recognized the one thing that was the catalyst to my problems:

It was my mindset.

I remember it like it were yesterday...

I got out of bed around 11AM, went to the bathroom and suddenly saw someone standing in my bathroom. I stopped me dead in my tracks and asked, "Who are you?"

I gazed at this person for about 5 minutes before I realized I didn't know who he was.

The individual was my reflection in the mirror and I didn't like who that person was physically, emotionally and mentally. I was suffering in every one of these areas and it was now showing physically.

Sciatic pain caused my left foot to fall asleep; blood was dripping out of my ears for some unknown reason; my face was scabbing up from something that could have been eczema or psoriasis; my scalp was dry and bleeding.

Bluntly, I looked and felt like complete shit and I was the cause of it.

It was in that moment that I had realized every failure I had made was a result of an inadequate mindset.

For 38 years I had been relying and blaming everyone else for my shortcomings when I knew that I needed to take responsibility for who I was and where I was in that moment.

That very day, I put on gym clothes for the first time in 15 years, went to my local gym and paid the \$125 yearly membership fee.

And even though I was afraid to pay the \$125 per year--because I was unsure of my commitment to the gym--the visage of my reflection was burned into my memory banks. I knew that it was time to be accountable for my own decisions and success. I didn't want to be this person anymore.

So I committed to ten minutes a day on the elliptical machine just to get feeling back in my foot and make the pain go away.

After one month, I had gone from ten minutes a day at the gym to fifteen minutes a day--AND the pain in my foot was going away.

At two months, I was now pedaling twenty-five minutes and the pain in my foot was almost gone.

By four months, I was pedaling forty minutes, discovering more nutritious foods to complement my exercise routine, the pain in my foot was gone and my energy levels were off the charts. I felt like a teenager again.

After six months I was now pedaling for an hour, my lower back pain had gone away and I lost 27 of the 185 pounds I was carrying for my age and height.

Then something remarkable happened to me one day in the kitchen. As I was cooking, I made a left turn to grab an item off my counter and my lower back popped so loud that it sounded like it could have hurt. Instead, it was the amount of pressure that was built up in my lower back after years of a sedentary lifestyle.

But it was more than physical relief. It was the first moment in my life that that I realized all the stresses in my life were suddenly released and unrestricted from my own limitations. It was also the first time I had realized that my journey was only beginning. I recognized that I had shed away part of my past and evolved into something that I knew I could be. I recognized that I was now a success story.

And once I had a taste of that success, I knew it was time to channel my physical success into something that could be a professional and interpersonal success.

This is why you are reading this book.

PUSHING THROUGH THE FATIGUE AND PAIN

As successes started to flow into my life, my mindset was becoming stronger. I had learned that success doesn't happen overnight.

Instead, success was a few little advantages hammered out every single day. And those little advantages would turn into one large advantage if I kept it up.

By 2017 I was flying high. My health was back in order; I eliminated negative friends and replaced them with people and activities that made me feel alive; I stripped down my old website and invested in one that would benefit my goal of helping others; and I hired a business coach.

I was on a roll.

But the Fall of 2017 delivered some unexpected news.

Upon one of my routine annual checkups at the doctor, I had learned I developed an autoimmune condition called hypothyroidism. This condition is where your thyroid is not producing enough of a particular hormone that regulates weight loss, affects moods and your energy levels.

After my diagnosis, I did my research and learned the condition is mostly common in women, but rare cases are found in men--I was a rare case and I suddenly started to feel sorry for myself.

Up to that point, I had felt fine, but I was definitely struggling with losing any more weight than I could. I was pedaling for an hour a day and eating as healthy as I could. “How could I have developed this condition?”, I thought.

When the doctor informed me that even though my hormone levels were off, I could replace the hormone, synthetically, with a pill that would give me the boost that I need. But, I would now have to take a pill the rest of my life and I wasn't cool with this. If you know me, I'm believer in wellness through nutrition and fitness, not pills.

The doctor told me I could opt-out of taking the pill and treat myself with fitness and nutrition, but I ran the risk of developing an extreme version of the condition, Hashimoto's Disease.

He now alerted me that I would start experiencing symptoms of fatigue even when I wasn't exercising. If I opted out of the pill, I could put my life at risk.

I thought, “This sucks so bad. Why me?”

The moment I got home from that appointment, I began to fall into a month-long depression because I had felt all of the work I had done didn't matter in the end anyway. I slept for hours upon hours and cried when I was awake.

It was in that month I was tested based on the inner fortitude I developed to heal myself physically and mentally. Was I going to be a “victim” or “determined” to push forward?

For six months, I refused to believe that I had developed any type of condition that would stifle my routine and endeavors.

“How can this be? I’ve done everything I could to become healthy and do the right thing? Why am I being punished for this?” I thought.

Over the course of the next few years, the symptoms of fatigue would start to exhibit themselves more than normal. Waking up from 8 hours of sleep would feel like I had run a marathon. Peeling myself out of my bed to take my daily medication felt like dragging my legs through the mud. Then, life started to get harder based around the lifestyle of the condition.

I could no longer wake up in the morning and immediately have a cup of tea or eat a hearty breakfast. Instead, my medication required that I drink it with only water and wait an hour for maximum potency. THEN I could eat. This meant I now had to get up earlier than normal to take my medication just so I could eat at a normal hour. This was not what I signed up for!

Normal healthy foods that I loved to eat were now the potential cause of my condition. Cauliflower, broccoli and brussel sprouts were now questionable foods that contained compounds that could aggravate my thyroid.

Caffeine was a big “no-no” on the list of foods that would needle away at my thyroid and stress it out too much.

Pedaling for an hour a day was now off the list for those who had hypothyroidism. Too much cardio exercise equally stressed my thyroid, depleted my hormone stores and lowered my metabolism.

My sleep patterns have never been normal, but now they were becoming more erratic due to the condition.

Needless to say, my life was turned upside down for nearly a year as I tried to find the right balance in my physical life so it didn't affect the other parts of my life.

Because I have found some balance with nutrition and a new way of exercising, I have also found a new groove that has minimal effect on my ability to create content for podcasts, weekly YouTube videos and this book.

I can't tell you how many times I have sat in front of my laptop struggling to type out a few sentences to this book because I was so fatigued. And, I can't tell you how many times I have sat in a chair at work and have struggled to stay awake at the start of my shift after 7 hours of sleep.

I have learned that some days are better than others, but ultimately I knew this:

Success doesn't happen overnight.

Success is the result of getting knocked down and getting back up.

Success is hammering out one little advantage at a time.

Success is pushing yourself through hard times to remind yourself you can go a little farther.

Success is peeling yourself out of bed and working only 30 minutes a day instead of none at all.

Success is not compromising for excuses.

Success is the definition of your heart.

Success is diligence.

NO EXCUSE: YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY BE MORE TIRED THAN I AM

Even though I do care about you and your podcasting situation, I don't care for the excuses that keep you from reaching your goal. And I certainly don't care for the negative attitude you have toward finding opportunities to make money with your podcast.

You can't possibly have more going on than the person next to you.

You can't possibly be more tired than me or someone with Hashimoto's.

You can't possibly be more under-qualified than your co-workers.

You can't possibly be less influential than someone with influence.

You can't possibly be less popular with your podcast than the big dogs.

Every excuse you come up with as to why you can't monetize your podcast is a fucking joke--and it will always be on you unless you start to believe otherwise.

When you start making excuses for yourself, I want you to look at someone like Sean Stephenson. Here's a guy who is confined to a wheelchair, has a condition that makes his bones brittle, yet he's a millionaire.

The moment you start feeling sorry for yourself, I want you to watch this video:

<https://shanman.tips/sean-stephenson-ted-talk>

In this guide, I'm going to ask you to create your own universe of success with your own creativity. The ideas I'm giving you are the baseline to help you create a line of income for your podcast over time.

Just like my weight loss and hypothyroidism journey, monetizing a podcast is going to take one little step in the right direction every day. You're going to hit bumps in the road, not feel motivated, fall backwards, receive negative feedback, have self-doubt and who knows what else.

Monetizing a podcast is about diligence and determination.

Monetizing your podcast is about building a door when opportunity isn't knocking.

Most importantly, monetizing your podcast is more than just making money. It's about *why you want to make money*.

Monetizing your podcast is about the value you share with your listeners and how you can improve their lives through laughter, information, education, inspiration or motivation.

Monetization is about the *why* so your advertisers can see your “why”.

The methods I’m sharing with you in this guide aren’t difficult, but require time, education and money.

I’m not going to give you templates, downloads or additional guides you can use because it’s going to be on you to create your future. You’re going to have to create packages, guides or even invest website tools to get what you want in terms of monetization. But just know that every advantage that you are hammering out every day will count in your favor every time.

Nothing bad ever happens to someone when they are truly making an attempt to impact the world with their knowledge and talents.

Just like building physical endurance or creating a quality podcast, obtaining clients and sponsors for your podcast is going to require you to try, fail, and try again until you succeed. There’s no other way around this.

The ideas I’m about to share with you are models that I have seen in radio, TV, YouTube, blogging and podcasting. Depending on how you view monetization, not all of these ideas will work for your success model. This is completely OK because these ideas can be combined to make a hybrid for monetization in some form or another. This will be all about your creativity with the tools I’m sharing with you in this book.

Some of the industry language used in this book will be used interchangeably. You might see me call an “advertiser” a “potential new client” or even a “sponsor”.

“Commercial spots” might be used interchangeably with “ads”, “commercials” or “spots”.

If a word or term needs clarification, I will make a note of it in this guide in a footnote or a Pro-Tip section.

MY FINAL PUSH TO YOU

Opportunities come in the form of creating quality content as well as investing your time looking for quality sponsors.

I just ask that you **believe in yourself** when it comes to monetizing your podcast. For the most part, you’re going to have to grind just as much as you grind when you come up with content for your program. Every time you come up with a piece of content, you’re taking a leap of faith in hoping your audience will like it.

Monetization is an equal leap of faith that you have to believe will happen.

Whether it’s \$20 dollars or \$2000 dollars, monetization will happen. Every dollar you earn will always be considered a win. Never discount the value you earn because what you earn in cash is 100 times more valuable in knowledge.

Just make sure you keep your shoulder to the wheel and your focus tight because monetizing will happen for you.

You have to believe it.

CHAPTER 2

GROWING YOUR AUDIENCE FOR MONETIZATION

“When should I start monetizing my podcast?”

Short answer: not until you’ve built a sizeable audience.

What you’re thinking right now: “OK, so what is ‘sizeable’?”

The measurement for determining “sizeable” definitely (and almost always) varies.

Let’s use a website that gets “sizeable” traffic as an example.

A website owner who has 10,000 visits to a website can be considered sizeable, but not massive. Still, 10,000 is a lot for monthly visits, but it’s nothing compared to a site that is getting 1 million visits per month (obviously). With that many views, it’s a wise decision to research and analyze which pages bring you traffic. This is where you build your strategy behind placing specific calls-to-action on your popular pages.

As you will learn in this guide, “visibility” is the name of the game and any blog/podcast that is getting a ton of visibility is an opportunity to capitalize on monetization.

In this example, a blog that can be monetized might have the following on a highly-trafficked blog post:

- Google AdSense
- Banner ads containing multiple affiliate links to products that are endorsed by the blogger (I'll cover more on affiliate links later).
- Paid digital product downloads created by the website owner.
- Merchandise and swag.
- And more...

In podcasting, the game is similar except you're dealing with a hybrid of radio and blogging together.

Each podcast you're posting to your hosting provider is something that can be evergreen. Additionally, the post itself is something that people can go back and revisit if the content is really engaging and reusable.

However, most podcasters think that simply posting a podcast to a hosting provider will be enough for them to gather traction to their podcast so they can start monetizing.

This is a HUGE misconception.

Monetizing a podcast is all about:

- **The quality of the content.**
- **How well you are promoting your content.**

As you may have seen me speak [on my YouTube channel](http://shanman.tips/youtube) (<http://shanman.tips/youtube>) about building podcast content, I am always urging podcasters to have a website where they can lodge their content for discovery. When I talk about "discovery" I'm not just talking about creating a

podcast and posting it to Apple Podcasts. I'm talking about finding content through a search engine like Google.

The reality is, podcasts aren't organically discovered unless you're doing these three things:

1. Writing a compelling episode title. This title can be Search Engine Optimized or it can be appealing like a news article headline.
2. Writing descriptive show notes so that each podcatcher (Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, etc.) can search for the keywords within the platform to give the listener the result they're looking for. In your case, your podcast.
3. Writing an accompanying blog post so that Google and other search engines can discover your blog anytime a query is requested by a user. As a reminder, this is ***in addition*** to your show note that show up inside of different podcatchers.¹

Discovering a podcast is very intentional if you're inside of podcatchers--remember, they're search engines too. The listener is there to *hear something specific* and performs an accompanying search inside those platforms. The title of your podcast and the show notes are key for discovery.

However, **discovering a podcast through a search engine is not only intentional, but it's equally specific.**

¹ If you're trying to kill two birds with one stone, you can use Blubrry's service with their plugin Powerpress. Powerpress is a great tool that basically transfers the blog post to different podcatchers. In other words, your blog post would be your show notes on different podcatchers.

Face it, we all look to Google when we are searching for an answer to something. The only way that anyone is going to discover your podcast organically is through detailed show notes that can be indexed by Google.

Text couldn't be more important in this stage of podcast's evolution and if you're not optimizing for podcatchers and search engines, you will be reducing your opportunities to sell your podcast.

Optimizing your podcast for discovery is the easiest promotion you can ever do for your podcast.

SOMETIMES YOU DON'T NEED A WEBSITE

Please don't mistake me when I say that your content can't be found through Apple Podcasts or any other platform that distributes podcasts. In fact, I know for certainty you don't need to have a website in order to have a top podcast. You need to look no further than my friends James Pietregallo and Jimmie Whisman from the podcast, *Small Town Murder*.

The STM duo were fortunate enough to garner thousands upon thousands of downloads to their first podcast, *Crime In Sports*, without a website at all.

As the podcast got more popular, podcast listeners were looking for a website hub where they could communicate with the two comedians. As a result, a simple website was launched and incorporated necessities.

In no way did these guys have a blog, but they did incorporate the power of word-of-mouth to get their podcast into the ears of listeners. This is part of what drove their success of their podcast. Not only was it funny and

informative, but the duo made it a point to encourage their listeners to share the podcast out for maximum visibility.

In the case of *Small Town Murder* and *Crime In Sports*, the popularity of their podcast didn't require them to have a website immediately. Nor did their website require them to write content inside of a blog post or iTunes description. However, they did need a website eventually.

The point I'm trying to make to you is that **monetization depends on the quality of your content and whether you can get your audience to engage with your content.** And in order to get your audience to engage with your content, you need to build up that level of trust with your audience over time.

Whether you're starting a blog or a podcast, it's your goal to get your audience to know, like and share you and your content. Once you have built up enough trust with your audience, the effect percolates to potential new podcast sponsors.

In the case of the STM guys, they built up enough trust with their audience that they were able to monetize their podcast through merchandise sales, donations through Patreon and Paypal. Then when advertisers learned of their gigantic monthly download numbers, the sponsors came.²

So what am I trying to say to you?

This means you're going to have to create a podcast that people will WANT to interact with. As you do this, you'll start to see that your listeners will take an action based on anything you ask them to do.

² You can't forget that talent agencies got a hold of their podcast and soon they were touring the United States and podcasting live in theater and concert hall venues. This just added another line of income for them.

Why?

Because they're invested in YOU and your content.

Podcasting is a game of acquiring highly-interested listeners who will take action, so this is what you need to consider when you're thinking about monetization.

Take into consideration the opportunities I talk about in this download **AFTER you've built a sizeable audience.**

I know, I know. You might be asking yourself, "Why am I even reading this guide if he's asking me to wait to create opportunities?"

Well, it's for a few reasons...

1. I feel it's imperative to have monetization ideas in the back of your mind when you're ready to make your first opportunity with a sponsor. These ideas will come in the form of building killer content before trying to sell a podcast that has yet to see its full potential. While you're building this content, write down ways you can offer a monetization model to a potential new sponsor when the time is right. In fact, some of the ideas I mention in this guide won't even matter to you because you may find a new way to monetize your program.
2. I stress the phrase "AFTER you've built a sizable audience" because your download numbers and TSL (Time Spent Listening--a feature that is now available in Apple Podcasts Connect) will carry more weight for you to sell to advertisers. But I also want you to consider this...

3. **You don't HAVE to wait until you have killer download numbers.**

You can start selling ad space on your platform right away but the cost is going to be considerably smaller. "Smaller", as in cents instead of dollars. It will be a lot of work when you start including sponsors and advertisers on your platform without sizeable numbers. This is why I want you building killer content to leverage the download numbers for potential advertisers. Just know that you will have a better chance with 700 downloads per week as opposed to 70.

LEVERAGING DOWNLOAD NUMBERS

Working toward getting those 700+ downloads per week is going to be a grind, but it's not impossible. What I'm going to ask you is that you **build great content**, but when the time comes, you're going to want to evaluate your downloads so you can leverage them.

"Leverage" for podcasting is specific to utilizing download numbers based on:

- How many downloads you get nationwide.
- How many downloads you get statewide.
- How many downloads you get by gender.
- How many downloads you get by age, etc...

Once you've analyzed your downloads, you're going to want to spend some time in the "extrapolation" process.

Extrapolation of download numbers will require you to become analytical of where and **HOW** people listen. Once you have analyzed these numbers, they will show the most benefit for your advertiser--and your advertiser may see it as a benefit to get eyes and ears on their brand.

WHAT TYPE OF ADVERTISER SHOULD I GO AFTER?

When you go out and look for sponsors, **it's imperative your sponsors and advertisers are in alignment with your podcast branding and messaging.**

For example, if your podcast is about UAV Drones and Photography, your advertisers might fall in line with camera lens companies, photo editing companies, video editing companies, etc. These are likely the products your listeners will be buy from, right?

However, if you are just out to get any advertiser that has nothing in common with what your audience might need, there's the higher chance that your advertiser might not see any type of return on their investment.

When you hunt out an advertiser, make sure that you are setting clear goals for them based on your knowledge of your audience and what they like/dislike.

Remember, it's not so much about getting your advertiser to get someone to buy something through your podcast as much as you are putting the advertiser in front of the right audience. As I have seen in radio, advertisers will likely want visibility and branding that will drive traffic to a store or website. Sometimes campaigns are all about awareness instead of customer conversions.

Now that you know your podcast can be based on leveraging download numbers to specific advertisers, let's explore some of the ideas that I have for you.

CHAPTER 3

IDEA #1: PRE-RECORDED SPONSOR ADS FOR A PODCAST

This first idea is based around the radio commercial spot model.³

It's a traditional ad like you would hear on radio stations across the U.S. and around the world. In the U.S., a radio spot is typically 60 seconds of promotional audio that you've worked out with a client. These spots don't always have to be 60 seconds, though. They can also be 30 or 15 seconds with a variation of the same copy or audio.

Let me do my best to break down the benefits of a pre-recorded commercial spot. First, let's further define what pre-recorded spots are:

- Pre-recorded spots/ads/commercials are created by the sponsor and sent to the content creator (you) in order to play on your program. Either they produce the audio or **you can charge the client to produce the spot yourself.**⁴
- Pre-recorded spots/ads are “baked” into your programming and static.
- Pre-recorded spots/ads are great for **branding campaigns**--campaigns specific to “getting the word out.”
- Pre-recorded spots/ads can be utilized for **conversion campaigns**--where your sponsor is looking to see some type of return on investment (ROI) with hopes someone will purchase through your podcast.

³ As a quick note, I realize this model is based around radio and might have some differences with podcasting. The purpose in mentioning this model is to acquaint you with what you might expect.

⁴ Oh hey, look at that! Your first way to make some money that revolves around your podcast.

- Pre-recorded spots/ads are based on an **inventory model**. Inventory is based on how many minutes you want to provide for advertisers within a given hour or program.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMERCIAL SPOT PROGRAMMING

With Pre-Recorded spots, there is a system of hierarchy in which order each spot should be played. Let me illustrate how this hierarchy works.

Let's say you create a 60 minute podcast that you now want to start monetizing with commercial spots. You're not too sure where to put them, but you start following a model that looks similar to this:

- Opening Segment (1-5 minutes)
- Main Content (20-30 minutes)
- Closing Segment. (1-5 minutes)

Now that you have sectioned off your content, you now want to “bake in” some Pre-Recorded spots like you hear on the radio.

The aforementioned model will now transform into this:

- Pre-Roll Spot
- Podcast Brand Identification Promo
- Opening Segment
 - Brand Identification
 - Client Spot 1
 - Client Spot 2
 - Client Spot 3
 - Etc...

- Brand Identification
- Main Content
 - Brand Identification
 - Client Spot 4
 - Client Spot 5
 - Client Spot 6
 - Etc...
 - Brand Identification
- Closing Segment
 - Brand Identification

Now that you have set up this template for your podcast, you can now focus on the order in which the commercials will be played. Let's break down what each spot means, administratively.

PRE-ROLL SPOTS

Pre-Roll Spots are commercials that come before the entire podcast starts. This means these types of spots start **FIRST** before anything else starts.

You may have heard a podcast where the commercial comes first and you just fast forward through it or let it play. Either way, it's the first thing that is getting played and you can charge your advertiser to place a commercial there.

This type of spot is a bit touchy when it comes to its length. The reason for this is because listener behavior tends to favor a listener who loves to hit the fast forward button on their phone.

Because these spots start at the beginning of the podcast--and listeners would rather just get to your content--I would recommend that you make these spots either 15 or 30 seconds.

Keep in mind that if you decide you want your Pre-Roll to be 30 seconds every single time, you can potentially get two advertisers to fill those spots if you want. In other words, you work a deal with two different advertisers for the top spot on your podcast with a 15 second spot per each advertiser.

Get creative with which type of spots play and how they play in your program.

Before we jump into pricing your podcast out--we'll talk about that later--remember that you can place a higher price on whichever spot you think will get the most visibility. In radio, this is typically the first spot going into a commercial break. For example...

If the very first spot is for ABC Company and the second is for DEFG Company, you may want to charge a higher price for ABC Company because they are the first thing your listeners will hear on the podcast before your branding is even heard.

After some testing, you'll figure out which one gets the most visibility when you listen to your audience.

IN-PROGRAM SPOTS

In-Program Spots are similar to Pre-Roll Spots. If you're utilizing the aforementioned programming template, then you can charge the a higher premium on Spot 1.

Then, your subsequent spots can be a slightly cheaper premium because they aren't in the first position (Spot 1).

Remember, you can always mix and match your In-Program Spots when it comes to length. Instead of having a full 60 second spot, you could potentially open up more opportunities for advertisers by providing a package that includes two 30s in place of a 60.

Or, you could potentially have two 15s and one 30.

Here's a brief illustration of the order in which you could get three advertisers with two 15 second spots and one 30:

- Advertiser 1 - Spot 1 = 30 seconds
- Advertiser 2 - Spot 2 = 15 seconds
- Advertiser 3 - Spot 3 = 15 Seconds

PRO-TIP: The longer the commercial, the higher the price

In other words, time is money in radio and podcasting. If an advertiser really wants to spend more time on your podcast delivering their content, then it will cost more because they are chewing up time that could be used for content instead of ads.

Ultimately at the end of the day, this will have to be your call. Try to be flexible with what you offer while still being firm. You don't have to offer up this method, but it is definitely an option if you're actively looking for sponsorships.

HOW MANY MINUTES OF SPOTS CAN I OFFER? (INVENTORY)

Even though podcasting has almost no limits, you can offer up as much advertising space as you want, but I don't recommend that you do this.

I'm all for the free-form nature of podcasting, but setting some boundaries within your program can serve as more value for your audience and your potential new advertiser.

In radio, there are dozens upon dozens of clients who advertise with a radio station, but even the program directors have a say in how many spots can play during the normal content hour.

There must be a balance between the importance of content and the importance of playing advertising spots in your podcast.

DETERMINING YOUR COMMERCIAL INVENTORY

If you ever listen to radio stations (which I recommend you do to get great ideas for monetization), you've probably complained that there are too many commercials that interrupt the music or content.

Let me just tell you, I completely understand. I'm in radio and even I GET SICK of hearing too many commercials.

But what most people don't understand is that commercials are what keep the lights on for most radio stations around the world. And since you're going to be someone who has a platform that will be just as effective as a radio station, commercial spots will be a necessary evil for you.

OK, so how do we determine how much space we can offer to an advertiser for commercials?

As I mentioned, you're going to offer your advertiser either a :30 or :60 second commercial spot. So, as a podcaster, you can make the call as to *how many* minutes of commercials you can offer up for the length of your podcast.

For example, let's say you have a podcast that contains about an hour of content that you produce. Within that hour you can offer up 6 minutes of commercials that can be played within the hour.

In other words, if you offered one :60 second spot to 6 advertisers, you'd have six minutes. The podcast file that you're uploading to your hosting service might be 1 hour and 6 minutes long.

Ultimately, you determine how much time you want to make available for commercial spots in your podcast.

In corporate radio, this number can range from 8-14 minutes of inventory per hour depending on the market (city) and popularity of the program daypart.⁵

DETERMINING THE PRICE PER COMMERCIAL SPOT

If you're a podcaster that is just starting out, the prices you set for your commercial spots will be on the lower end. This is because you are not likely to have a whole lot of listeners and downloads to your podcast.

But if I had to give a barometer on how much you could charge per spot if you're getting 1,000 downloads per week, the cost of a commercial could range anywhere between \$60 to \$120 per week for one sponsor.

The reason I bring up these numbers is because most major market radio stations could be charging around this number based on the different times an advertiser wants the commercial spot to run.

As an example, if an advertiser wants to get more ears on their brand, they're likely going to spend a heftier amount on having their commercial spot run during the morning and afternoon daypart.

You will need to take into account how many weeks you want to run the commercial for your potential new advertiser and determine an individual or package cost that you will offer to your potential new client. Just as a note, podcasters will never deal with dayparts.

⁵ "Daypart" refers to the time slot the radio broadcaster works. In layman's terms, it's a shift.

Chapter 7 of this book goes more in-depth on how you can charge your clients with a concept called “flights”.

PRO-TIP: Audio Normalization & Leveling Between Content & Spots

As a podcaster, it's your duty to provide the listener with a quality listening experience. This means that your audio (including spots) should all be processed at the same decibel and equalization level.

The audio that you create between actual content and spots is going to differ.

The goal of **your sound quality should be in the range of -6db to -3db** for any and all pieces of audio your are importing into your editing software.

This sound level is a contentious debate amongst podcasters who say your sound levels should be -12db. Most amateur podcasters don't realize that -12db is for radio broadcast standards that are already running multiple processes. Podcasting doesn't have these hardware and software processes--which is why I mix all of my audio between -6db and -3db.

Therefore, your content should be mixed down at -6db and your commercial spots should be mixed in or around -3db.

The loudness factor is a listening behavior that allows the listeners to know the difference between the actual content and the commercials.

CHAPTER 4

IDEA #2: THE “BILLBOARD” METHOD

Think of the Billboard Method like the billboard you see on the side of the road.

Imagine you're driving your car and you happen to come upon a billboard off in the distance. As you approach the billboard, you see the sign has a simple message and a call-to-action.

The most important thing here is that as you drive closer to the billboard, you only have a few seconds to identify the brand, decipher the purpose of the billboard and identify the call-to-action, if there is one. This all happens within a few seconds before you pass the billboard and go on about your day.

Seconds. That's all it took.

The Billboard Method in radio and TV broadcasting is no different other than it's in audio format. You've heard the billboard method many times when you've listened to a program. It might go something like this:

“This podcast is brought to you by ABC Company. ABC Company has been in business for 60 years and provides nothing but the best service. You can visit them online at ABCcompany.com.”

Typical Billboards in radio and broadcasting are about :05 seconds, sometimes :10 seconds. That's it.

Also, Billboards are more like the sponsorships that you are hearing on radio and TV. They are literally “sponsoring” the program. Compare this to the sponsor that enjoys your program and has no problem listening to your program. Therefore, they have no problem advertising and “sponsoring” the program.

The Billboard Method is probably the easiest because you don't have to put a whole lot of production into it. You're just reading a script/copy from your advertiser and placing it somewhere in your podcast.

Of course, we're not just placing it ANYWHERE in the podcast. There are definitely more effective ways to place a billboard in your podcast. So let's share where you can place Billboards.

BILLBOARDS IN THE PRE-ROLL POSITION

As I mentioned in Chapter 3, a podcaster can sell ad space inside the Pre-Roll position. But a podcaster can also sell a Billboard before any Pre-Recorded spot.

Since a Billboard is a “sponsor”, it can make sense to either place the Billboard in the first position or the last position before your podcast starts. But you would never put a Billboard sponsorship at the front and the back together on the Pre-Roll.

For each sponsor or billboard, only offer one slot per sponsor. Whether you decide to sell a Billboard or just a normal Pre-Recorded commercial spot, never include an advertiser twice within your spot set. Doubling up on an ad with a Billboard followed by a normal commercial spot isn't necessarily more

effective. It's more redundant than anything else. You'd be better off creating a package where you spread the sponsor's message over the course of the podcast for brand visibility.

BILLBOARDS BEFORE SEGMENTS

As of this writing, anytime someone hops onto my email list, I send them a survey to get a better idea of how they are podcasting.

I ask questions like:

- “How comfortable are you speaking in front of a microphone?”
- “What are your 3 biggest challenges you face with podcasting?”
- “How do you see yourself podcasting in the future?”

But there is one question that I am particularly interested in asking. It's the one question that separates the hobbyist from the serious podcaster who will take the time and effort to consider all elements of podcasting. These elements range from having quality sound equipment all the way down to compositional nuances that exist in podcasting.

- **“How important is the structure of your podcast?”**

This question is probably the one that I have the most interest in learning about. It's also the one question where podcasters have the cloudiest understanding when it comes to podcasting.

Although podcasters may say they have structure, they aren't looking at structure the way I'm looking at structure--especially if they are looking to monetize a podcast.

When I talk about structure, **I'm asking whether the podcaster has implemented segments into their podcast.**

As an example, if you've ever listened to talk radio, you might hear segments like:

- The Top 5 Stories at 5
- Crank It Or Yank It (for music radio, this could be a featurette where you ask listeners to choose a song to play a song again later in the program)
- Lunch & Learn With (Host Name)
- Q & A
- Book, music or app reviews

And when you've heard some of these segments on the radio or in podcasting, you can hear the segment is *sponsored*. In other words, someone has paid money to have their Billboard before a segment.

Billboard copy can either be baked into the sound design branding of your podcast or it's something that you can actually read at the top of the segment. Be mindful that you are only reading the copy and not adding any banter to the copy.

You've committed to giving your advertiser :05 to :10 of your podcast in exchange for money. If happen to give an advertiser more than the allotted time, then you're just dumping money away for time spent.

If you happen to bake the copy into the sound design of your podcast, be aware that you'll need to keep a copy of the produced sound design in case you need to remove the baked-in billboard. Don't forget to update the piece of audio into your subsequent podcasts.

Segments are part of the structure of how your podcast will flow. If you haven't implemented segments, then your opportunity to sell space before you jump into your segment doesn't exist.

This is why structure is important.

Here are a couple of examples of Billboards that can be baked into a Pre-Roll or read at the top of a segment.

This example might be used for a Fitness & Exercise podcast. The podcast could be named "Clean Paleo Eating" or it could potentially be a "segment." Either way, your Billboard can be placed before it:

"Clean Paleo Eating is brought to you by 20 Dishes--head to 20dishes.com to get 20 free gluten free recipes to start healing your gut today."

Or, let's say that you have a segment on social media tactics and marketing tips. The Billboard copy might look like this:

"This week in social media tactics is brought to you by Social Media Hat. Leverage your social media to grow your bottom line by 6 times in less than 6 months. Visit socialmediahat.com to learn more."

I think you can get the picture.

PRO-TIP: Self-Sponsored Billboards

When you get into the planning stage of selling space on your podcast, you're going to have a lot of inventory to fill. And, I'll be honest, you won't fill your inventory because you won't have the demand for your podcast yet. But don't fret, it will come. You just have to be diligent and patient.

In the meantime, one thing that you can do is build in Pre-Recorded Sponsors or Billboards that promote something that YOU have going on.

In other words, you can build in an ad that promotes an activity you've got running with your brand. Some of these activities might be:

- ❖ Building an e-mail list.
- ❖ Promoting the blog section of your website.
- ❖ Purchasing merchandise you have on your website.
- ❖ Promoting another asset like your YouTube channel or Facebook page.
- ❖ Promoting an event you might be hosting.
- ❖ Promoting a free download that is on your website.
- ❖ What else can you think of?

Someone who does this really well is Michael Stelzner from *Social Media Examiner*. In fact, Michael self-promotes his event *Social Media Marketing World* for months at a time to drive sales to his own event. In fact, he doesn't really need to search out sponsors because he's able to monetize his own business with the self-promoted ads he creates within his podcast, *Social Media Marketing Podcast*.

Michael has done a fantastic job by providing *extremely valuable* content to his website which allows him to promote it through his podcast. Keep in mind, his podcast isn't the only way he's promoting. He's touching base on every platform that gives him visibility.

CHAPTER 5

IDEA #3: ENDORSEMENTS

This happens to be one of my favorite ways to earn cash for what I do in the radio industry. But this just doesn't work in radio. It definitely works in podcasting too--and likely you've heard it.

You've probably seen athletes shill away for their favorite workout shoe or music artists showcasing their favorite soft drink on TV or in social media. The best part about an Endorsement is that you can do them just about anywhere as long as you:

1. Believe in the product that you are endorsing.
2. Have no problem mentioning the the product in your podcast.
3. Showcase the product in photos on your social media or website.
4. Have a sizeable social media presence.

Endorsements can either be pre-produced or read live in the middle of the podcast.

The most common way you hear a radio endorsement is when the host incorporates the endorsement in normal conversation. Likely you've heard a podcast host just start talking about a particular product in the middle of their podcast. Before you know it, you realize that you've been fed an advertisement from the host.

Endorsements can be as clever as you want them to be.

In some cases, your sponsor or advertiser will want you to mention a couple of key pieces of copy in your talking points, but for the most part, it's a little more lax since you are already sold on the product you are shilling for.

Just be aware, you need to show that you are actually endorsing the product instead of just taking money for the sake of taking money. It isn't fair to your client and really isn't fair to you if you're being shady with your endorsement.

When you get the copy from the client, get creative with what you talk about in your podcast and incorporate your endorsement as part of the conversation.

Years ago when I started scouring iTunes for podcasts that were doing things like radio, I only came across a few programs that understood what an Endorsement was. One of those podcasts was *Marketing Over Coffee*.

Here was a podcast where two guys sat down and talked about the latest marketing trends while having coffee at a coffee shop. Soon, the podcast grew and the hosts were now working in tandem with certain businesses to help drive traffic to particular landing pages on a client website. In fact, I recall the podcast endorsed an online training school to help content creators become better copywriters.

As I listened to the podcast, the hosts would do a good job of tying in the current story with the training school they were about to promote. Hearing these hosts shill away for this online training sounded flawless and couldn't even be noticed as an endorsement.

This is how you should consider doing your endorsements.

EARNINGS FROM ENDORSEMENTS

To give you a scope of what you can possibly earn through an endorsement, check these three personal examples from my time in radio:

1. I was once asked to read two commercial spots for a cola company and attach my approval on top of it. I read one commercial that ran for two weeks on the radio. The total endorsement fee received was \$600.
2. I was asked by a vision center to promote vision wellness by having my eyes checked. In return for promoting the brand and pushing listeners to walk into this particular vision center, I was compensated with a pair of designer sunglasses and \$1000 per month. Some of the campaign logistics included social media promotion as well.
3. A phone company reached out to see if I would endorse a new mobile phone upgrade from the one that I currently have. Not only would I get a brand new phone upgrade, but I would also receive a fee ranging from \$200-300 per week for reading an endorsement and having it run during my shift. The promotion ran for a month. All I had to do was take a few key points from the copy the agency sent over and I had to ad lib a Pre-Recorded Endorsement talking about my experience getting the phone and using it.

Please understand that endorsement fees vary based on the client budget and how long they want the endorsement to last. They may also be based off a price the advertiser/sponsor sets or part of a package you create for your potential advertiser.

CHAPTER 6

HOW TO CHARGE CLIENTS USING PROMOTIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULES

After you have secured a new sponsor, determined what type of ad you want to run, you can now create a schedule in which your sponsor's ads will run. In radio and TV they call these schedules "flights".

Think of a flight schedule in the same respect as a flight itinerary from Los Angeles to New York. Before you book the flight and board the plane, there are a series of steps you must take before you complete your trip to New York.

First, when you book your flight, you determine which time is going to work best for your travel schedule. If you're planning on flight out on a Friday at 10AM, there's the likely chance the price of the flights are going to be more expensive than if you were to book your flight on a Saturday afternoon.

Next, some airlines will ask you how many pieces of luggage you will be bringing with you on your flight. Some airlines will promote the allowance of one carry-on luggage and a laptop bag while others will charge you for the carry-on luggage. Additional pieces of luggage as well as the weight of the luggage are going to come at a cost if you decide to travel with these items.

Sometimes you'll book a flight on an airline where you can have the airline pick where you sit or you can pay an extra fee to choose which seat you want to be placed in.

After you have chosen your seat, you are then taken to checkout and pay the fee to transport you from Los Angeles to New York. All you need to do is wait for the day of travel and you're on your way.

Before you arrive at the airport, you must check-in with your airline so that you are confirmed to travel on that airline. If you aren't able to check-in with the airline on one of their apps, checking-in at an airport kiosk or with an attendant is just as fine.

You have checked in you are now assigned to a boarding system line number. This is the line that determines who gets on the plane first or last.

Now that you're on the plane, it's time to now travel all the way to New York.

Your flight is comfortable for the most part and there are no problems. Now that you are about 20 minutes from landing in New York, the pilot's voice is heard in the overhead speakers informing you about the weather and any instructions about connecting flights in the airport.

The plane lands, you deplane, walk to the baggage claim area and you have now completed a trip to New York City.

Promotional flight schedules in radio and podcasting are similar in nature, but you're arranging the schedule for the sponsor/client.

Because you are the platform provider, you are now able to negotiate with the client about the following when it comes to a flight schedule:

- Dates in which the commercial(s) will play.
- Which type of spot they want to run in your podcast. (:15, :30 or :60)

- Which position they will be placed in your podcast. (Primary or Secondary position)
- Any variations of the commercial that will run in your podcast as it relates to the client campaign schedule.
- The total cost of how many times a commercial will run per podcast or commercial break.

When you deal with promotional flight schedules, dates and the frequency of how many times a commercial runs will determine the outcome of the total price you set for your client.

Let's use the following as an example of how you would charge a client to run a spot in your podcast for 5 weeks. We'll first break down what type of podcast you have and move forward:

- Your podcast is a nutrition program where you talk all about healthy eating and ways to heal yourself using the power of food.
- Program topics range from nutrition and dieting all the way to fitness instructors who preach the importance of nutrition for optimal fitness performance.
- Podcast downloads range around 25,000 downloads per month and growing.
- Your podcast is 1.5 hours long and is released every Wednesday at 8AM.

Before we provide any information to our potential new client, it's always best to determine if your client has a specific goal in mind. Clients with particular promotional goals are better than ones who just want to "promote" something with no goal. Potential new clients who don't have a "goal" in

mind don't understand the value of ROI (return on investment) if they are looking to spend money with you.

Potential new clients with a goal in mind will want to know how their ad dollars are being spent and whether those dollars are worth spending on your podcast. You are now in the business of getting results and you want to help your client achieve a quality ROI as well.

Choose clients who want results that you can give them.

Next, you will need to come up with a package proposal that includes a promotional flight plan for your client. Your proposal may look like this:

Example #1:

Client: ABC Fitness, :30 Second Spot

Promotion: Fancy Water Bottle Promotion

Flight Dates: Wednesdays, March 6 to March 27, 2019

Spot Type: In-Program, :30 seconds

Pre-Roll :15 seconds

Talent Endorsement

Spot Position: Primary

Price Per :30 Second Spot Per Week: \$50

Total: \$200

Price Per Pre-Roll Spot Per Week (:15 seconds only): \$35

2 Weeks Only

Total: \$70

Price Per Weekly Endorsement: \$150

4 Week Total: \$600

Total Value: \$870 + service fees

Example #2:

Client: ABC Fitness :60 Second Spot

Promotion: Fancy Water Bottle Promotion

Flight Dates: Wednesdays, March 6 to March 27, 2019

Spot Type: In-Program, :60 seconds

Pre-Roll

Talent Endorsement

Spot Position: Primary

Price Per :30 Second Spot Per Week: \$60

Total: \$240

Price Per Pre-Roll Spot Per Week (:15 seconds only): \$35

2 Weeks Only

Total: \$70

Price Per Weekly Endorsement: \$150

4 Week Total: \$600

Total Value: \$910 + service fees

Example #3:

Client: Happy Dog Pet Co.

Promotion: Fluffy Dog Bed

Flight Dates: Wednesdays, March 6 to March 27, 2019

Spot Type: In-Program, :30 seconds

Spot Position: Secondary

Price Per :30 Second Spot Per Week: \$30

Total: \$120

Total Value: \$120 + service fees

I could sit here all day long and draw up different types of proposals with different price points. I could give you different scenarios of the packages you could create too. Ultimately, it will be up to you to determine which package will work best for your new client. Your proposal creativity is what will be important here.

Keep in mind that the prices I have mentioned above are only examples. At the end of the day, you will need to determine which price is best for your client based on your current download numbers, website visits, etc.

If you know your podcast brings a significant number of people each week, then you're going to probably charge a higher premium on the cost per spot. But if you're just starting out with low download numbers,, it's OK to start out with a low number such as \$5 dollars per spot.

When you compound the price of your spots, endorsements, or whatever else over the course of a few weeks, it adds up to a lot. Do what you can to not

only provide value in terms of visibility, but give your client a reason to spend money with you if it's going to help them see ROI. If you can provide value to them with visibility and listener action, then compounding your prices into flight dates makes it more manageable for the client to provide the funds to you.

CHAPTER 7

IDEA #4: PATREON & MEMBERSHIP SITES

YOUR TIME AND MONEY IS VALUABLE, LET'S MAKE IT COUNT

Both you and I know that podcasting is no joke when it comes to developing content. There's so much that goes into a podcast that normal people don't actually see.

Think about it. If you are a solo podcaster conducting guest interviews, you're going to spend a lot of:

- Time to research and gather the right equipment.
- Time and money to set up the equipment and test it each time you conduct a new recording.
- Time to research, record and conduct interviews.
- Time and money to brand your podcast with a sound designer (if you don't know how to do it yourself).
- Money for your podcast hosting service.
- Time to upload your content and promote it.
- Money spent toward your yearly website costs.
- Time spent learning how to create a quality website that people will want to visit.
- Money spent on themes and plugins for your website.
- The time and money it will take to transcribe a blog post so your podcast has a place to live.
- Shall I go on?

Even if you don't do all of these things, you're still going to spend a considerable amount of time and money just trying to get the podcast off the ground. That, in itself, is already a hefty task and can feel discouraging at times.

In short, time and money are your *MOST VALUABLE* resources. If you really think about it money can always be replaced with more money if you're hustling to make it. But when it comes to time...

TIME is the one resource you can never get back. So it's important to that you maximize your time working on your podcast so you can spend more of your time generating some type of income.

PRO-TIP: Avoid Free Audio Hosting Services If You Want To Monetize

As much as I realize it is tempting to use a service like Anchor.fm, I strongly recommend against using a platform that is free like Anchor if you're looking to monetize your podcast.

I do realize that Anchor has a system set in place to monetize podcasts on their platform, but it's rudimentary and basic at best. It's a great idea, but based on how the system is set in place, they aren't valuing your content the same way you think your content is valuable.

Monetizing a podcast is about starting a business. And in order to make money from a business, you're going to have spend money on the necessary tools that will propel you to the next level of the business.

Be mindful of using anything that is free before understanding where the catch is going to be. As I have used these types of services in the past, I realize--more now than ever--that if you want to use a free service, you're sacrificing something else in return that might not benefit you in the long run. Please be mindful about using any type of free service and ask yourself whether it will benefit you when it comes to statistics & data vs. the cost of being free.

Services like Libsyn and Blubrry are providing way more value if you are subscribed to their hosting than when you're using something like Anchor. Until a service like Anchor doesn't have catches, stick with paying for hosting that will be reliable.

My best advice to you is:

Work on your podcast a little bit every single day. You don't have to work on it a lot, but just a little. Remember, little changes you make every day eventually lead up to a big one. So set some goals to get some of these pieces in place every day.

When you're looking to monetize your podcast, it's imperative that you set up small goals to help you make money with your podcast--even if your podcast isn't popular quite yet. It's always better to have a few processes in place than none.

That's where something like Patreon comes into play.

DRUMMING FOR DOLLARS USING PATREON

Everyday when I log onto YouTube, I get a list of suggested videos to watch before I conduct a search. Every now and again I'll get a suggestion for one of my favorite drummers. This just isn't any normal drummer, though.

The drummer's name is Meytal Cohen and SHE absolutely kicks ass on the the drums. As you might assume, drum covers seem more male-centric than female. But not in today's day and age.

The songs Meytal covers are of the highest complexity within the rock and roll genre. Some of the most difficult songs that are admired are now covered by Meytal and she hits every single note in time with the song.

Let's rewind back to when Meytal started...

Over the course of a few years, Meytal released a brand new drum cover every Friday for people to check out. For the real drumming fans, she blew their minds away and she shared the kick drum and tomtom patterns the original drummer performed. It's fascinating to watch.

As she continued to deliver new content every week she grew her YouTube channel and eventually had quite a few of her videos go viral. With this new massive following, Meytal was now starting incorporate specific calls-to-action at the end of her YouTube videos. Sometimes she would ask her viewers to check the description or comment section in YouTube for important information while other times she would ask people tap on a visual card within the video to see another video.

Eventually, Meytal's call-to-action was to get on a email list to get exclusive swag that she would sign and send to any fan. For a few years, this was how she was making her money online.

Once Patreon jumped onto the scene, Meytal admits that she didn't jump onto the platform right away. But once she saw how people were using it, she started directing her YouTube fans to her Patreon site to help support her in making drum covers.

And instead of releasing a new drum cover every week, she was able to share the videos earlier to her "patrons" before she dropped the drum cover to YouTube. Before you know it, she started collecting money for each drum cover that she created because her fans knew how long it took to learn a drum cover, record it, pay an editor to create it and who knows what else.

At the end of the day, Meytal gets paid out each time she shares a piece of content to her Patreon channel all while building a community of raving fans that she has no problem communicating with.

Now that Meytal has incorporated Patreon into her online business, she has been able to fund an original album for everyone.

Meytal gets to do what she wants for a living by sharing her talent with the world and making her fans feel welcome each time she's creating new content.

The important takeaway here is that Meytal valued her time to provide knowledge and entertainment to her audience.

LET'S GET IT ON WITH PATREON!

Within the last 6 years, Patreon has made a name for itself as the premiere membership platform for content creators. It allows people like podcasters to build exclusive content that is gated/protected/behind-a-pay-wall to deepen the relationship they have with their audience.

As of January 2019, there are 1 million creators on Patreon--all who are getting paid by people who are interested in their content. At the time of writing this e-Book, there are probably way more.

More and more content creators are realizing that **if they create quality content, people are more than willing to send a monthly “donation” your way.**

So let's talk about how Patreon could work for the podcaster.

PATREON FOR PODCASTERS

Patreon works a few different ways. When you create an account with Patreon, you will be presented with a couple of options:

- Do you want your patrons to pay you each time you make a new piece of content?
- Do you want your patrons to pay you each month?

As a podcaster, you should probably focus on having patrons donate each month. It will be easier on you. Further, you now have the option to create a series of tiers where people can donate to you each month for the content you're already creating.

If you don't know what tiers are inside of Patreon, you'll be educated by Patreon when they onboard you into their platform. Just follow their instructions and you should be good. But one thing they don't mention to you is something that is more of a nuance. It's about who will donate to you and who won't.

As you create more free content, you're going to come across these types of fans:

- THE SUPER FAN
- THE LOYAL FAN
- THE NON-COMMITTAL FAN

THE SUPER FAN will comment, like and share every post you place on Twitter, Facebook etc. In fact, these types of fans are more likely to donate to your content because they love what you have always done.

THE LOYAL FAN will comment, like and share, but not on every post. They may eventually donate to your content, but it takes a little more persuasion to get these people to open their wallets. They still love you, but this group of people will put your content second unless they see some type of value that you are providing for them.

THE NON-COMMITTAL FAN enjoys your free content, but doesn't find it valuable enough to comment, like and share. It doesn't mean they hate you, rather, they are individuals who put their lives first before your content. There is nothing wrong with these people at all. If your content just happens to show up in their news feed or timeline, they're likely to watch it, but not to the level of commitment your SUPER FAN or LOYAL FAN will exhibit.

So how do you serve your listeners on Patreon?

Create Extra Episodes In Exchange For Donations

I belong to a couple of groups on Facebook where podcasters talk about their favorite podcasts. Sometimes you'll see posts from podcasters asking whether or not they should include some type of extra episode in exchange for a donation on Patreon. This is completely doable.

You have to think of it this way:

If your listeners are enjoying your FREE content in your podcast that is available on Apple Podcasts, then what's holding them back from listening to an additional 30 minutes of a conversation that is housed on the back end of your Patreon membership site?

If a listener loves your interviews and conversation, then surely they would be willing to pay the additional \$7.99 a month to get 30 extra minutes a week that is on your Patreon site. And let's not forget that when you compound \$7.99 by (x) amount of patrons, you could potentially make hundreds per month.

Just as an FYI, any audio that you upload to your Patreon site comes with its own exclusive RSS feed that patrons can put into their podcatcher to download these exclusive episodes. Read Patreon's FAQ section to learn more on how to incorporate audio into their membership site.

Create A Commercial-Free Version Of The Podcast

Since you're going to try and build out some type of sponsorship deal with different clients, commercials inside of a podcast can be a huge drag on the listener. While the research shows that people are OK with hearing ads inside of a podcast, there is still a group of individuals who will fast-forward through the commercials so they can get to the content.

This is where you can persuade your fans to becoming a patron to your Patreon site by providing episodes commercial-free. Commercial-free episodes can become one of your tiers where a patron is now paying \$9.99 to get a podcast without commercials **ON TOP OF the additional 30 minutes that you're providing for those who are donating at the \$7.99 tier.** It's more of a benefit for the \$9.99 tiered member because of the simple option of NOT having commercials in their podcast.

To clarify, when you're providing a commercial-free episode, this means you're not including any pre-roll ads or pre-recorded ads that might be included somewhere inside of your podcast. However, if you have created an

endorsement deal, those will probably have to stay because your endorsement will be baked into the podcast with your conversation.

Nevertheless, if this is the route you are going to go, it's important that you learn how to beef up your editing skills and graduate from Audacity into something like Adobe Audition.

PRO-TIP: Graduate Your Editing Program and Hone Your Editing Skills

When you get to the point of creating commercial-free podcasts for Patreon, you'll need to learn how to maximize your editing so that you're not spending all of your time building content that could potentially take much longer than you had expected. Do yourself the favor and learn how to edit in a program like Adobe Audition. It will make your life much easier and it's far more time efficient.

Add Early Podcast Releases

In addition to your \$9.99 tier, you might want to add in the benefit of releasing your podcasts earlier than when they hit iTunes, Stitcher, Spotify or Google Podcasts.

I'm not saying it will work with your audience, but it could be the catalyst to turning a NON-COMMITTAL FAN into a LOYAL FAN.

Add A Behind-The-Scenes Video, Photo and Story Tier

As you continue to come up with more benefits, your tiers will now start to increase in price. Let's say you record a video of the 30 minutes you only used as audio for the first tier.

This tier now increases to \$12.99 and patrons will get video of that interview as well as the audio. Plus, you might have a guest that is in the studio with you.

You now have the opportunity to share these exclusive photos with your \$12.99 tier.

Additionally, Patreon gives you the ability to create Snapchat-like/Instagram Stories within their own mobile app. Theoretically, you could record a number of stories that you use for Patreon and save them for later when you are promoting your podcast to those who are listening to the free version of your podcast on Apple Podcasts.

Let's break down a few numbers based on the basic tiers I outlined here:

(Tier 1) $\$7.99 \times 30$ monthly patrons = \$239.70
(Tier 2) $\$9.99 \times 15$ monthly patrons = \$149.85
(Tier 3) $\$12.99 \times 10$ monthly patrons = \$129.90
Total: \$519.45

Let's not forget that you won't always be stuck at these theoretical monthly patrons. You'll grow this number over time, but it can shrink if you're not in contact with your patrons and communicating with them.

At the end of the day, the creativity you put into each of your tiers will determine whether someone will want to donate to your Patreon channel or not. Your value proposition should entice your fans to want to be connected with you on a deeper level.

CHAPTER 8

IDEA #5: AFFILIATE SALES

Now, I know affiliate marketing has gotten a bad rep from skeezy online marketers out there peddling crap.

The type of affiliate marketing I'm talking about in this book is the one where YOU believe in the products and services you use--NOT something a marketer is trying to push onto you to make their quarterly sales quota. So let me give you a heads up on how I got started in affiliate sales.

First, what are affiliate sales?

Affiliate sales is a means for the podcaster or influencer to promote products in order to earn a commission. These products can be items that you use for your podcast, programs that you use or websites that you frequent. When you become an affiliate, you are basically promoting for someone else in order to earn cash for yourself.

The cash that you earn will vary month to month based on how well you promote these items. These items can be promoted through links on your site or actual physical products in a physical store. For our purposes, we are going to be working with links that will help you earn a commission.

HOW I GOT INVOLVED IN AFFILIATE SALES

When I first got involved with helping podcasters develop and build their programs, I discovered a section of individuals who were looking for the same thing in advice and equipment.

“Your podcast sounds amazing. Can we sit down so I can pick your brain on which equipment I should use for my podcast situation?”

I'm sure you've been encountered by the same situation in a more casual setting.

“I love your lemon garlic chicken dish! How did you cook it?”

“Your canvas painting is incredible! Which paints did you use to create it?”

“I want to get a home gym just like yours. Where did you get it?”

When people admire something you might be doing, it's as though they are immediately drawn to the products that you use to get the job done.⁶

So, when I kept getting asked the question about my podcast, I realized a couple of things:

- Even though I wanted to help people with their podcast equipment questions, I didn't have the time to schedule out a Skype call or a coffee shop meeting to give them a list of everything I used to create a podcast.

⁶ Hint: Your mind is what makes success, not the products.

- I wasn't getting paid for the time I was spending for travel and the same redundant conversation.
- I HAD to make a guide for anyone who wanted to know which equipment I was using to create my podcasts. Those guides are the same ones that have led you to reading this e-Book.

I soon realized that I was basically a product ambassador for the equipment that I was using. But it wasn't just the equipment I was using. There was also "software as a service" that I was using to help me with my podcast editing and promotion.

Then one day it clicked for me. I realized that I needed to become an "affiliate" the same way product manufacturers put their items in a retail store to have someone sell the product for them. Suddenly the clouds lifted and I realized that affiliates and the manufacturers were all making money through partnership.

So I went back to the drawing board and wrote down every piece of equipment and service that I used to help me in my own podcasting journey. I'm not just talking about the big stuff either. I'm talking about the tiny things like cords, headphone adapters, aluminum mouse pads--basically anything you could find inside of Amazon.

Then, I compiled product names and URLs and placed them in Google Sheets until I was certain I had found most of the pieces of equipment I used for my podcasting.

Then, I moved onto the software-as-a-service companies.

If you don't know what software-as-a-service means, it's the software you're paying a monthly fee to utilize their programs at full capacity. It's like subscribing to Netflix but for software.

There are a series of companies out there like Adobe, Canva, Mailchimp, and more that do this. And some of those companies offer up affiliate programs too.

Next, I created a new Google Sheet and started to list out the pieces of software that I used to create podcasts, host my podcast, make my promotional images, host my website, etc. In other words, if I was paying for something on a monthly or yearly basis, I was checking to see if those companies had an affiliate program that I could partner with.

Once I had all of my ducks in a row, I started with the [Amazon Associates](https://shanman.tips/amazon-affiliate-program) (<https://shanman.tips/amazon-affiliate-program>) website and applied to their affiliate program.

I made sure I did my research and read every piece of literature on their website about how their affiliate program worked and the commission percentage I would be paid for shilling the products.

Once I learned everything I could about their affiliate program, I applied to become an affiliate and soon got approved.

How Much Can I Earn With Amazon Affiliates?

Honestly, as much as you want, just as long as you have the hutzpah to get out there and start showcasing as much of the product as possible.

Some of my colleagues in the podcasting space have created such a buzz around their products, they now earn enough to pay their mortgage and bills.

To be clear, these individuals didn't make their thousands overnight. However, they did collect a list of product links and curated them over time. This means they pumped out the product links on their podcast, social media, in their online guides, on their website, during speeches and so much more.

Eventually, they had built up a following that was willing to purchase these products that it's now a regular income based on where they have the links listed.

Your earning potential is limitless depending on how much you promote your links.

As a quick note, you won't make a whole lot when your products are less than \$10. Don't get me wrong, they still count, but if you use specific equipment or products that cost a lot of money, you will obviously earn a higher commission.

This is why I encourage you to make a free downloadable guide of all of the products and services you use. People will pick and choose what they will get while still helping you earn a commission.

The best part is that you really don't have to do work other than promote the guide for people to download.

PRO-TIP #1: Use Trackable Link Shorteners For Ease Of Use

As you will eventually realize, all of Amazon's affiliate links are super long and hard to remember. This really isn't effective when you're trying to direct someone to go to the product to purchase it. So, we get around this problem by using a link shortener URL. There are three main places you can get these link shorteners:

Pretty Links for Wordpress (free): <https://wordpress.org/plugins/pretty-link/>

Rebrandly: <http://www.rebrandly.com>

Amazon Associates

Most people will have a Wordpress site, so I recommend using Pretty Links any type of short link you want to share on your podcast, website or otherwise.

But if you're someone who runs a site like Squarespace, you may need to invest in a branded link shortener like Rebrandly. Because you'll be starting out slow, you won't need to purchase any plans on their website. This is one of the few times I'll ask you to use a free account for a platform based on your needs to grow. Once you set this up, the only cost you'll need to pay will be for the annual domain name. At the time of writing this, most domains cost anywhere between \$10-20 per year.

If you ever find that your links are getting more than 5,000 clicks per month, you can always upgrade into their monthly Starter package.

Hopefully by this point you will be making enough money to cover the cost of Rebrandly.

PRO-TIP #2: Tracking IDs For Grabbing The Right Amazon Affiliate Link

Step 1: Set up a Tracking ID inside of Amazon Affiliates. You can set one up by going to your Account Settings on the top right-hand corner of your account page.

Step 2: Go to Product Linking>Link To Any Page

Step 3: There will be three tabs in the middle of this page: LINK TO FAVORITE DESTINATIONS | LINK TO SEARCH RESULTS | LINK TO ANY PAGE. Choose LINK TO ANY PAGE.

Step 4: Enter the URL of the product you want to link and name it and press Get HTML.

Step 5: Click on the hyperlink that will take you to the product page, but this time it will have a UTF (tracking code) appended to the link to identify you as the affiliate. This is how it will look:

Link to Favorite Destinations Link to Search Results **Link to Any Page**

Build links to any page at Amazon except for search-result pages. (For those, use the Link to Search Results tool above.) **STEP 3:**

STEP 1: Enter the URL

Hint: Click [here](#) to open a new window to Amazon.com. Search for your desired page, copy the URL, return to this page, and paste the URL in the field above.

STEP 2: Name Your Link *

Preview **Hydro Flask**

```
<a target="_blank" href="https://www.amazon.com/Hydro-Flask-Insulated-Stainless-32-Ounce/dp/B01GW2H4YE/ref=sr_1_4?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325" data-bbox="520 180 870 280">Hydro Flask</a>
```

Note : Your Associates ID theshanman08-20 is already embedded in the code.

encoding=UTF8&tag=theshanman07-20&linkCode=ur2&linkId=261a9026810adef7f

SEE SOMETHING NEW, EVERY DAY TAKE A LOOK

amazon prime hydroflask **STEP 4:**

to Shannon Buy Again Browsing History Shannon's Amazon.com Today's Deals Gift Cards Whole Foods

Outdoors Sports & Fitness Outdoor Recreation Sports Fan Shop Sports Deals Outdoor Deals

Introducing: James Harden Fitne

Hydro Flask Insulated St

Copy the entire link and paste it into a Google Sheet or immediately place it inside of a Pretty Link or Rebrandly link.

It's imperative you create these Tracking IDs otherwise you will not be paid for any of the products you sell. Verify they are on your URL after you've run this process through Amazon.

PRO TIP #3: Getting Paid

To make sure you're getting paid for your promotional work, you'll need to set up your banking information within Amazon before any funds hit your account.

Also, it's important to take note that you won't get paid out at least until 3 months after you start. Amazon has a payout schedule that happens every month or two, so be aware that your payouts won't come immediately.

You'll be emailed that a payout has happened and the payouts should be regular as long as you are promoting your links.

Should I Use The Amazon Influencer Program?

You'll see on the back end of Amazon Associates that there is a program called the Influencer Program. Should you use it?

In short, not unless you have a large social media following that you are consistently communicating with.

The Amazon Influencer Program is great for influencers looking to make extra money by pushing fans to products on Amazon. It works exactly the same as Amazon Affiliates, however there are some small caveats that come with the program:

- Influencers must have a large social media following.
- Influencers have to constantly send traffic to their store page in order to keep their influencer page.
- Not all products can be listed inside of your influencer product page.

When it comes to making affiliate sales through Amazon, just stick with the normal Amazon Affiliate program. When you grow your following, then I would consider starting an influencer program.

However, I still think the best way is to collect all of your links and share them in the relevant areas:

- A specific page on your website
- The sidebar of your website
- Your podcast
- Your podcast show notes (if relevant)
- Online Guides
- As a pinned post on your Twitter or Facebook
- At speaking engagements

Where else can you think to push your own affiliate links?

CHAPTER 9

IDEA #6: SELLING MERCHANDISE

When it comes to merchandise, it can be a great source of revenue for your podcast. But as you will notice, merchandising is no joke and potentially labor intensive if you don't know how to maximize your time.

Before I get any further, I think it's important we understand why merchandising might be a part of our podcast and whether or not it's a fit for the podcaster.

Your Connection With Your Audience

As you build a loyal fanbase for your podcast, you're going to learn a lot more about podcasting than just recording and editing. In fact, you're going to learn a lot more about your audience than you thought.

You're going to learn the little nuances that go into making your podcast is a result of your listener's behavior.

You're going to learn that your audience will hang on every word that you say and remind you of something you said a year prior.

You're going to learn that every word they hang on is going to become a part of your podcast brand in some way.

You're going to learn that your podcast brand is going to be inspired more by your listeners than it is by your own ideas.

This has happened to me multiple times in the radio industry--more these days because of social media.

In my 18 years of radio, the audience that has stuck with me make it a point to remind me of something I said 6 years ago. If you think I'm lying, just wait until you have a SUPERFAN OR LOYAL FAN that comes up to you and mentions how something you said made an impact on them in some way back in the day.

These little things will add up over time and will become a part of your brand.

And when you take it a step further, these little impacts can turn into merchandise.

Allow me to share an example of how my connection with my audience led to merchandising an idea that was more collaborative with my audience than an idea I came up with.

Back in 2017 Facebook Live was becoming more of a tool that allowed me to connect with my listeners on a deeper level than just hearing 20 second quips between songs. Facebook Live allowed me to deepen my relationship with my listeners by allowing them to see me work in a radio station setting while communicating with them online.

As I kept a normal schedule of appearing on Facebook Live, my audience started to learn more about me. They learned that I was huge into positive mindset, podcasting, entrepreneurship, hiking, running, different styles of

music--the kind that I wasn't playing nightly on the radio--and my love for pizza and tacos.

Now, as you might imagine, not everything resonated with my audience. I mean, I understood my audience as a group of individuals who weren't as into the positive mindset as I was. But, the moment I brought up pizza and tacos, they went nuts. I mean, let's be real. Who doesn't love pizza or tacos?

Even if someone was vegetarian or vegan, they found a way to love pizza and tacos.

And so it became the long-running joke for all of my Facebook Live feeds. No more than a few seconds after the first person would jump into the live feed chat, they were mentioning tacos.

Then, during one of the live feeds, someone brought up the idea of making a shirt that had something to do with tacos. This was something that I had thought of doing, but really didn't know where I should start. I started asking questions like, "What do I even put on the t-shirt?"

Then that question led to a series of other questions:

- *"How do I even create specific designs? Do I need to know Photoshop well enough to create a cool design?"*
- *"Will I need boxes to ship my t-shirts?"*
- *"How do I calculate for shipping costs?"*
- *"How will I collect payment? Paypal? Stripe?"*
- *"Will I have to fulfill every t-shirt order?"*

- *“Do I sell shirts through Teespring again?”⁷*

And the questions just kept on coming. It became overwhelming to me.

Even though I wanted to give my audience something they were demanding, I started to putting unnecessary fears in my head based on my knowledge of e-commerce, merchandising, Photoshop and more.

The reason for this was because about 8 years prior I had taken my first step into e-commerce and t-shirt design. Back then, my first venture into e-commerce for t-shirt design was primitive and a valuable lesson in losing money because I didn't do my homework. So you could say this was where some of my fear was coming from.

Now that I am a little more versed in knowing what to look for, I've learned to maximize my time and money to benefit the ideas I have.

To avoid the fears you may be having, I hope the following tips will help you if you decide you want to sell merchandise.

TIPS FOR CREATING A MERCHANDISE

Tip #1: You Don't Need To Be A Graphic Designer To Start

When I took my first steps into creating a t-shirt many years ago, I didn't know how to use Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator. To be honest, those programs intimidated me quite a bit and I didn't really want to sit down and learn how to use them.

⁷ I had once sold shirts through Teespring years ago and I ended up losing money because I didn't do my research.

So I started doing Google searches on where you could get graphics from repositories for free. I knew that I couldn't just rip off any image that was lying around on the internet, so I needed something that was "rights free".

After a few weeks of searching, I stumbled upon the Creative Commons website - <http://www.creativecommons.org>. At the time, it was like wonderland of rights-free images and music. It was exactly what I was looking for. But after browsing around the repository, I soon learned that I couldn't find the images and graphics that ***I was looking for.***

It was frustrating.

After hours of hunting--and the help of my creative juices--I found one image that suited the first t-shirt design. All I needed was to put some text on the top and the bottom of the image and I'd be set. Since I knew Teespring gave me the ability to do this, my first t-shirt design would be created and ready to sell.

In the midst of searching for the right image, I was perusing other online stores to get an idea of how they were creating and executing with the merch they had in inventory. I then realized there was a common theme inside each one of these stores:

Most of them hardly had any graphic designs on the t-shirts.

Instead, they had *sayings*.

I was officially mind blown.

It was at that moment I realized that I didn't always need to have an image that was on the t-shirt. Instead, I saw people walking around and wearing something that they stood for. Whether it was a saying that was humorous, inspirational or motivational, almost all of these shirts didn't have an image.

Sayings were the things that made people proud to wear a shirt.

As you podcast, you will go back and hear yourself say something incredibly profound or wildly funny.

Document what you said and don't lose it. These sayings will be potential for you to create a t-shirt, hat, or anything you like.

Tip #2: Photoshop and Illustrator - Save Your Designs as .PNG Files

One thing you will learn when you create merchandise is that your design needs to be uploaded in a .PNG image file format with a transparent background.

In layman's terms, a .PNG file that is saved at the highest dimensions will give you the best print quality on your t-shirt, mug, purse or whatever. If you use a .JPG file, you're not going to get the same resolution on the merchandise than you would with a .PNG file. Additionally, printing on t-shirts, mugs and anything else requires the image be complete with a transparent background. If you use a .JPG image, there will be a background and your product won't be usable.

Another note: sometimes your .PNG files will need to have incredibly large dimensions in order to get the best possible print. To give you an idea of what “large” could be for an image, 800 pixels by 800 pixels is small compared to an image that is 7000 pixels by 7000 pixels.⁸ This is so the printer can adjust the size without compromising the quality of the image onto the product.

If you don't know how to use Photoshop or Illustrator, I've curated an unlisted playlist here so you can learn how to use the basics of these programs:

<https://shanman.tips/photoshop-tutorials>

Also, if you ever want to add variety to your font selection, use www.dafont.com. You can use these fonts in Photoshop and Canva For Business.

Tip #3: Use A Service Like Teespring To Fulfill Your T-Shirt Orders

One of the smartest things I did when I created my first t-shirt was that I took pre-orders because I was going to fulfill all of the orders out of my bedroom.

However, one of my biggest mistakes was that I didn't factor in the cost it would take to get the supplies to ship the product. Additionally, I didn't take into account the shipping it would take to get the product from my house to theirs. AND, I didn't take into account the taxes I would have to pay on each of those items.

As e-commerce has evolved, companies like Teespring will do all of this for you--but at a cost. Your profit margins are much lower than if you were to

⁸ The dimensions I'm talking about here would make a square.

fulfill on your own. But when you think about it, it comes out to be worth it because you aren't spending hours folding shirts, packing envelopes, writing addresses, printing labels, applying postage, etc.

In fact, if you're first starting out, Teespring might be the route you go in the beginning.

Under no circumstance do I want you fulfilling merchandise from your home unless you have a ton of time and loads of money.

Having someone else do the work for you will be the cost of business. But that cost of business puts your product in the hands of those who believe in what you believe in. In this case, a saying on your shirt.

The only time I would fulfill an order on my own is if I made a limited edition product that had a cap of only 15 items along with some custom packaging. Keep this in mind before you think about fulfilling every t-shirt or product order.

There's no greater feeling than to see someone flaunting your simple design on social media. I want you to get the idea out of your head that you need to make all of the money from the design you created.

Some things in the merchandising world are going to cost money and time. If you ask me, I'm happy to spend the money if it saves me time to use creating more quality podcasts.

Tip #4: Consider Creating Other Merchandise With Dropshipping

When I mentioned that you should have Teespring fulfill your t-shirt orders, it's the very basic version of dropshipping.

Dropshipping is basically distributing your goods through the manufacturer to the consumer.

Conventionally, it's where the retailer (you) sets up an online store for items to purchase, but you aren't fulfilling the items. In essence, when you dropship you aren't touching any of the inventory at all.

The only thing that you have to do is find a distributor, upload your artwork, set up your store, connect your store with the distributor and start selling.

The only thing you are responsible for is creating the product and pushing people to your online store to drive more sales.

"OK, how do I get started with dropshipping?"

I'm glad you asked.

Below are the steps I would take to start my own online store with dropshipping.

Step 1: Find a Dropshipper, Like Gooten, For Products

I didn't learn about distributors until January of 2017 and they are FANTASTIC. The three dropshipping companies that I researched when I was looking to make new t-shirts were:

Gooten
Oberlo
Printful

There are a handful of other dropshipping companies that are out there, but these are the ones that I came across that would print t-shirts and coffee mugs.

These companies have more than just t-shirts and coffee mugs. I know that Gooten has shower curtains, throw pillows, phone cases, notebook covers and so much more. Think of the possibilities!

Out of the three that I listed, Gooten had the most comprehensive list of all three. If I had to give Gooten a rating of 5 stars, I would give it a 3.9 because their website is very clunky, but does the job. Did I mention it was free? You only pay the cost to make the product.

Oberlo and Printful had great inventory but not a wide selection as of this book. But I do know they are always growing their product inventory.

Both Gooten and Oberlo are always conducting free webinars to teach you how to create an online merchandise store. I'd highly recommend hopping in one of their webinars and learning more.

Step 2: Select Products You Want to Sell, Upload Your Design To Your Dropshipper and Connect Shopify

If you're not versed in Photoshop or Illustrator, Canva is a great tool to create images. If you're looking to get transparent backgrounds to your images, you will need to upgrade into Canva for Business.

First, you will want to go into your dropship website and grab the dimensions of the type of design you will be uploading for a product you've chosen. Once you find those dimensions, create your image in Photoshop or Illustrator and start building out the types of merchandise you want to sell.

After you've uploaded your design your specific products, make sure you adjust the pricing (all found in your dropshipper) and write the prices down for your sizes.

Next, you will need to get a Shopify account.

As I'm writing this right now, Shopify gives new users a 15-day trial of their platform so you can get used to using the platform.

I'm not gonna lie to you, but Shopify is HUGE and super comprehensive when you first dive in. In fact, it can become overwhelming, but I recommend that you study up on using Shopify first before you put any products on your store. This is why you have a 15-day free trial. **So, utilize that free trial when you are ready to set up your store.**

At the end of the day, Shopify makes it easy for the retailer (you) to connect a dropship merchandiser through apps on their website. In fact, mostly

everyone is using Shopify with their merchandise that is drop shipped. I would recommend you do the same to save you the time from having to do it yourself.

How Much To Charge For Your Products To Make A Profit

You're going to get stuck on this number if you've never shipped anything before in your life.

Short answer:

Include the shipping cost into your product if you want make a profit. Online stores will charge anywhere from \$25-27 dollars for unisex shirts--this includes shipping costs.

As for other merchandise, you will need to determine this based on the weight and size of the product you want to sell.

If you were to break it down for t-shirts, the shirt may only cost \$9 dollars to make. You will then need to determine the shipping costs at the most affordable parcel delivery rate. Standard shipping you will charge will be around \$6.95, depending on where you are shipping. Keep your shipping within your own country for now. Shipping internationally has a lot of rules and costs that come associated with it. Jump into that way later down the line when you have the money to ship internationally.

Next, plug the cost of profit to that cost of your shipping. It should look something like this:

$\$9$ (cost to make shirt) + 6.95 (shipping) + 13 (profit) =
\$28.95 (what you charge on Shopify) + tax (calculated at checkout)

$$9 + 6.95 + 13 = \$28.95$$

In reality, you're potentially making a little more by charging a shipping cost to ensure delivery. In this example, you'd be making about \$10 in profit.

PRO-TIP: Calculating Shipping Costs

Shipping doesn't normally cost \$6.95 for one product, as you may know. When you pay shipping on some items, you will see that it only cost \$2 for a shirt. But, the goal in using a dropshipping company is to make sure that you're not losing money on shipping costs and getting the product delivered to the consumer. You can look at your shipping costs as a part of your profit unless the consumer purchases multiple items. The more items they buy, the more profit you make that can cover the cost of shipping if they order multiples. If a consumer wants more than 15 shirts, you may want to consider working a bulk purchase deal with them.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Your Credit Card and Production Costs

When you use dropshipping, you will need to have a credit card on hand ready to purchase the product to ship to the consumer. I would recommend a business credit card so that it doesn't eat into your personal credit card.

By this point, I know you're aware you need to have a credit card, but I'm telling you this for a very specific reason when it comes to producing merchandise that isn't in your hands.

Step 4: Set Up Direct Deposit To Get Paid Out For Your Profits

When an item sells through your store, you won't be paid your profits automatically. Your funds will be held by Shopify for a few days before they are transferred to your bank account.

You will need to go into the settings of Shopify and set up your banking and tax information in order to get paid out.

Once you are approved to receive funds, Shopify will notify you via email.

When you make your first sale, Shopify will notify you when the funds will be transferred into your bank account.

As you grow your podcast and the wisdom, inspiration and humor pours from your mouth, take the time to put your sayings in a Google Sheet and save them for future. If these sayings mean something to your audience, you have a higher chance of them purchasing your merchandise

CHAPTER 10

IDEA #6: ESTABLISH LOCAL MEETUPS WHERE PEOPLE PAY TO HANG OUT WITH YOU

HEADS UP:

This next idea is perfect for the advanced podcaster who has developed a strong audience over time. If there's anything that I would love for you to do would be to make this last idea one of your bigger goals.

In August of 2017, I attended the conference [Podcast Movement](#). Not only was I there on my own accord, but I had the opportunity attend sessions that related to the radio industry with my parent company.

Score!

But the most valuable lesson wasn't at the conference, per se...

On my first day in Los Angeles, I drove from LAX to Burbank to watch my friend Dino produce the Tom Leykis online radio show. Even though Tom's show isn't a podcast, it really kind of is when you visit www.blowmeuptom.com. Tom is still utilizing a digital platform to create a membership site for his audio, but also building an audience who trust him and thrive to hang out with him.

On that particular day, Tom, Dino and the rest of the production crew were preparing to meet up with **listeners who paid money to hang out with them.**

This absolutely blew my mind.

However, it made complete sense because I had seen something like this before.

At the time, Tom mentioned to me that he opened 25 slots for people to pay \$400 to eat with him at a pretty nice restaurant somewhere in Burbank. I thought to myself, “Who would pay \$400 to hang out and eat dinner with anyone?”

Well, these people would because they had developed a strong relationship with him over the years.

As Tom and Dino kept telling me more, I realized their operation was deeper than I had even imagined. They not only talked about that night’s meet-up, but the various lines of income they had set into motion when they first started this operation about 15 years prior. They told me about the exclusive Tom Leykis wine, swag, advertisement spots, podcast membership fees, etc.

Multiple lines of income and the “meet and greet” method was one of their biggest money makers.

In the digital marketing space, I have seen influencers use the “meet and greet” method before. I had always thought podcasters could do this, but sloughed the idea for no reason other than I didn’t give it consideration.

But when Tom told me about his meet-and-greet line of income, he made no bones about what he was doing. He told me, “If they want to continue to

hear me they [my listeners] need to understand the work I put into the production to keep them entertained.”

It made so much sense to me when he said this.

Most people think there is no value in the idea of podcasting. In fact, most don't realize the amount of time and money you will spend to create something they enjoy listening to. So it must be made known to you listeners that time and money is put into creating a solid product.

The following night I was eating dinner with a group of radio broadcasters who were still trying to figure out how to monetize on podcasting. As the discussion swirled around about creating advertising inventories and retargeting campaigns on Facebook and Google, Tom walked through the door and blew everyone's mind with how he made money for his program.

Again, get mass amounts of people to LOVE YOUR CONTENT and trust you first! Develop that rapport before you build out a “meet and greet” or “meetup”--events that can be promoted when you record your podcast.

“Meet and Greet” packages don't mean that you have to meet them at a restaurant. It means you can hold individualized Skype calls and put a price on how long you speak with your listeners. They can ask you anything about your program, how it's produced, etc. This isn't just a podcast thing.

It's more universal than you think.

CHAPTER 11

MAKING A PODCAST THAT MARKETS ITSELF - INBOUND MARKETING TO BOOST MONETIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

One of the hardest things for podcasters to realize is that they have work to do AFTER they've created the podcast. As if recording and editing wasn't enough, you now have to think about the marketing aspect of your podcast.

After all, if you don't have listeners, how are you able to throw any semblance of monetization into your game? You need listeners to gather numbers.

You need numbers to implement a strategy.

You need a strategy to get potential new clients and subscribers.

You need potential new clients and subscribers to provide social proof that your content is that good.

You need social proof to continue to grow your podcast easily.

If you think that working after you've recorded a podcast is something that is:

- a) Unnecessary.
- b) Something only podcasters have to do.

You're sorely mistaken.

Even as a radio personality, I have to work nonstop to make sure that I'm reinforcing the reminder to my listeners that I'm still around and I'm fucking relevant. This means I'm showing up somewhere on their social media timeline with a story, post or live feed every day of the week. I'm everywhere I need to be because that's where my audience is and that's what reinforces my brand.

Equally, you should be where your audience is and show up every single day in some way, shape or form. As a podcaster, your relevance AFTER the podcast has been dropped is just as important.

If there's any chapter that I want you to pay attention to, it's this one. This chapter will be the one where I share my own secret of how I garner traction to just about any piece of content that I create--podcasts, blog posts, YouTube videos, etc.

By no means am I saying that I am perfect at this process, but it is **my process** and it has helped me step out of my comfort zone of podcasting and utilize it for my blog and YouTube channel.

What I will be talking about in this section will be mostly about creating organic traffic to your podcast so that you don't have to work so much all of the time. In professional marketing terms, this is called **inbound marketing**.

In other words, the content you create will do the work for you when you're sleeping, spending time with your children, at the gym, eating lunch with a buddy, etc. People will be coming to you instead of you having to constantly be working OUTBOUND to get them to even look at your content.

Please don't misunderstand me when I say that you won't be using social media posts because you will, but not as much if you implement an inbound strategy.

Inbound marketing is going to be crucial for you to grow your podcast over time.

UNDERSTANDING THE TRUE NATURE OF PODCAST PLATFORMS

I don't need to sit here and tell you how to listen to a podcast, rather I want you to take a step back and look at the real reason you have listened to podcasts in the past.

Seriously, I want you to think of the reason you have subscribed to certain podcasts.

Do you subscribe to be informed?

Do you subscribe to be entertained?

When you look at content inside of podcast platforms, these are the two reasons why podcasts exist. As humans we thirst for knowledge and enjoy being entertained at the same time.

Whether you're listening to a True Crime podcast or you've got Joe Rogan playing in the background, tell me how many times you have been entertained all while learning something brand new.

Go ahead, put this book down and think about this for a second. I'll wait.

THE VALUE OF SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH EFFECTIVE PODCAST TITLES - (ENCLOSED SUPERHACKS)

Now that you've thought about this for a bit, you may have come up with some very personal reasons as to why you listen to your podcasts. Whether you're being entertained and educated, you've probably heard something in these podcasts that have hit on education and entertainment. These are typically the podcasts that achieve both at the same time.

From my vantage point, when I jump into iTunes/Apple Podcasts, I go to the podcast section and select from a category. When I look at those categories, I see there are so many podcasts to choose from that are mostly about *educating* the listener about something.

As a content creator, you should now think in terms of how you have searched for answers in the past. Can you go back and remember the last time you needed to learn about something? What did you do to find that answer on the internet?

You likely went to Google, entered in a few keywords and got some of the top results. And when you went into iTunes, you probably got some podcasts that were close to what you were looking for.

As Google and podcast discovery search continues to mature even further, people who are looking for the answer to their problem are not just putting in one or two keywords inside of Google. Instead, they are putting in full phrases inside of Google or Apple/iTunes. And when these full phrases are

put into a search query, the questions are formed in a manner to find the answer to an **EXACT** problem.

This is how I want you to start thinking about your podcast titles.

Podcast titles should be written to solve problems, not to be quippy or clever. I mean, have you ever gone inside of a search engine to find something written clever to discover the answer to a problem? The chances of this happening are very low.

However, I can't tell you how many times I have gone into Google and did a search on a specific keyword term or phrase and have gotten the results I've needed. Sometimes I get an exact result while other times I don't.

It doesn't matter.

This is where your podcast titles come into play on your blog and for your podcast episode titles.

Here are some examples of titles that you could create for any podcasts:

Health Benefits of Brazil Nuts For Your Thyroid

Proper Bench Press Form For Beginning Weight Lifters

One Eye Blacks Out After Eye Surgery - Common Causes Of _____

Should I List My Home For Sale In A Bad Neighborhood?

Alleviate Back Pain With Standing Desks

Are Rubber Toilet Gaskets Better Than Wax?

Why Was Napoleon Bonaparte A Good Leader?

Should I Wear A White Dress After Or Before Labor Day?

Where Can I Find Classic Transformer Toys?

I do realize what you're thinking right now.

You're probably saying to yourself, "But someone has already talked about those topics. How am I supposed to even talk about them when they've been covered?"

Sure, there might be 10 other blogs out there that talk about the same thing, but none of them do it the way YOU do it. AND, if you are creating content that is detailed in nature, people will likely be drawn to how you deliver your podcast content and what you have to offer in terms of personality.

The titles of the podcasts simply make it easier for you to get discovered because they are actual phrases that are being searched inside of Google or iTunes. Not ALL of the phrases will get searched exactly, but the keywords will give the requester the best choice when their results come up on the Search Engine Results Page (SERP) for Google.

Even if you don't have a blog and you're creating titles inside of your hosting provider that are like the aforementioned, they still come up in Google or iTunes when they are searched out.

PRO-TIP: Use Google's Auto-Complete to Generate Podcast Titles

I discovered this hack about 2 years ago when Google kept auto-completing my phrases. When I decided to start my blog and YouTube channel, I started doing research on topics I could talk about.

Each time I put a search query into Google, I saw that Google was auto-completing a list of commonly searched terms. And then it made sense to me! I learned that most of what was created in the auto-complete fields were queries by other people looking for those answers.

In turn, I realized these would be great titles for my blog and YouTube videos. Then I took it a step further and realized that titles like this would make for a great podcast title as well.

In other words, if the exact phrase of my query didn't come up in a Google search, I made sure it came up in a Google Search because it was specific for someone's query. It didn't matter if I showed up on the top of the first page or not. The keywords alone did the work for me and if someone just happened to key in the exact phrase, I would be one of the top results on Google's homepage. In turn, someone could find the title as a podcast, YouTube video or blog.

THIS is called inbound marketing. You're solving someone's problem so they can discover you upon happenstance.

Inbound marketing is the thing that will help give your podcast downloads a little extra push if you're **including podcast show notes inside of your blog**. I am constantly preaching the importance of dense show notes on a blog because not only does the title help people discover your podcast, but it also helps Google match a search term for a specific user.

Google has a specific bot that makes a pass at your website every now and again so it can index which words will match the appropriate query. When that person enters in that query, your site should be indexed to fit that requester's query. And don't think this is just for your website either. Google is also making a pass at iTunes, Stitcher and Spotify to give someone the best search results.

In the case of Google, podcasters are missing out on traffic as a result of NOT posting into their blog or creating helpful show notes. Show notes are one of the things that will do the work for you while you do the thing that you love the most--PODCASTING. Y

And any social media attention that you give to your podcast is extra gravy for promotion. Extra promotion will drive traffic to your podcast immediately and in the moment if you are consistent with pushing people to your site.

WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT? GOOGLE OR APPLE PODCASTS

At the end of the day, both platforms are going to matter. But if I had to pick one, I'd have to say Google is going to be the platform that is going to be the most important.

Sure, searching inside of Apple Podcasts can happen, but when it comes to your inbound marketing, Google is the place where you need to be because your site will be hit up constantly as people are searching for the answers to their problems.

When I started my YouTube channel, I was getting a decent amount of traffic to those videos, but then I realized that I could drive traffic from my YouTube videos back to my blog to start building search authority for those pages.

So I went back, started including transcriptions of my YouTube videos in the body of the blog to give Google a chance to crawl it. I kept doing this for each new video that I posted. As I continued to build a habit of adding new content to my site, Google started to recognize that my site had valuable content that people were looking for regularly.

Suddenly, I saw my website views grow over the course of a few months. Additionally, I started to see more people hop onto my email list as they wanted to know more about the process of podcasting.

There are so many resources out there on inbound marketing that I don't even know which one to share with you first. If I had to share ONE with you, I would recommend grabbing Jay Baer's *Youtility*. He'll set you straight.

EDUCATING THROUGH COMEDY

Again, I will use my friends from the *Small Town Murder* podcast. The whole premise of this podcast is to learn more about a crime that happened in a small town while adding commentary through the discovery of the criminal. In fact, James Pietregallo has told me that he will spend a week doing the research on the crime they want to learn more about, write out notes on stacks of note cards and prepare them for the next week's podcast recording.

When James jumps into his recording, he tells the story from the beginning of the criminal's life and ends everything at the moment of conviction in court. As James tells this story, he and his co-host, Jimmy Whisman, add commentary that is comedic in nature.

It's not hard to realize they are not only educating their audience on something the audience doesn't really know about, but is willing to listen and learn all while throwing their own spin of comedy on top of it.

FINAL WORD

This e-book certainly doesn't have all of the answers outlined for you. However, my intention behind it was to share what you aren't hearing from certain influencers and podcasters that are out there. Most of these people are just guessing--and guessing right. I suppose this book is meant to confirm to those who have been monetizing their podcast all this time.

But this book hopefully demystified what the term "monetization" really means. Podcasters who are currently monetizing on every aspect of their podcast realize that opportunities exist on and off the platform. These podcasters also understand the value of working hard to earn extra cash or sometimes a living doing what they love.

I can't tell you how to ultimately monetize your podcast because that's going to be up to you and your determination. I just hope that what I have brought to light in this book will help stoke the creativity in your mind to create an opportunity to earn some type of income from something that you love.

All I ask is that you utilize the same creativity for monetization as you would for the content you create for your podcast.

I want to thank George Schauer and Meagan Getz for their feedback on this book. Whether their feedback was about concepts or grammatical mistakes, it is appreciated. And FYI, if there are still mistakes in this book, it's because I overlooked them and will continue to refine them over time.

I wish you the best of luck in your monetization journey.