

MONETIZE YOUR B2B PODCAST

Getting the Most Out of Your B2B Podcast Through Sponsorships

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Hot sheets

B2B marketers are making room in their digital ad spends for podcasts—and for good reason. Marketers are looking to position themselves as thought leaders in their respective industries and to align themselves with authentic and trusted content. Podcasts are perfectly poised to deliver these marketing messages directly to relevant and engaged audiences.

According to Edison Research, 52% of monthly listeners listen to the entirety of each podcast episode.¹ When you compare that type of engagement to time-on-site for web visits or viewability metrics on display ads, you can see why podcasts are becoming attractive to advertisers.

That said, the podcast scene is getting noisy. It can be tricky to draw in large subscriber numbers. But don't let that be your focus. A niche podcast that delivers educational value to its readership is well positioned to draw in dollars for sponsorships. And here's why:

B2B ADVERTISERS ARE PURSUING AUTHENTICITY

It's hard to get past the contrived tone of traditional marketing speak. B2B marketers know this, and it's a big reason why they're looking to podcasts to inject authenticity and personality into their marketing efforts.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IS THE LATEST "TOOL" IN B2B MARKETING

Savvy B2B companies are developing their own podcasts as a way to position themselves as thought leaders, so it makes sense that they'd want to sponsor podcasts delivered by their respective industry publications.

TOPICS THAT ARE TYPICALLY DENSE OR COMPLEX CAN BE MORE EASILY DELIVERED AND DIGESTED

Podcasts allow you to give context and a better narrative around complex topics. Because they're more conversational in tone—as compared to a blog post or

article—a podcast can bring life to otherwise dry or nuanced topics, such as compliance or regulatory issues. This opens the door for advertisers who struggle to produce engaging marketing content around their services.

TRUST HAS BECOME MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

The rise of content marketing has led to an inherent uncertainty around content—who is it coming from? And is it trustworthy? That's where the opportunity for advertisers to align themselves with a trusted B2B media brand becomes invaluable.

All this means that publishers have an opportunity to leverage their high-quality content and audience relationships through sponsored podcasts. The Edison Research study reported a 14% lift in purchase intent for brands who advertise in business podcasts. If B2B media brands look at podcasts as a natural extension of their publication's mandate—to connect advertisers and readers in a meaningful and valuable way—then creating sponsorships around podcasts becomes simpler.

So, let's break down how B2B brands can build valuable sponsorship packages around podcasts. First, consider what podcast format would resonate most with your audience:

Episodic

Episodes appear in ascending order, from latest to oldest, in most players. You also have the option to break it out into seasons.

Serialized

Episodes appear in descending order, from oldest to latest, and are more suitable for narrative or storytelling podcasts.

Episodic is the most popular style for B2B podcasts and lends itself to sponsorship opportunities. Consider the following sponsorship model:

- Flat rate sponsorship rate (per episode or a block of 3-4 episodes)

- Sponsor logo and mention on all digital marketing materials, including email and social media
- Pre-roll and post-roll sponsor mentions (10-15 seconds)

Don't forget about "bonus episodes." Bonus episodes are not part of your podcast editorial schedule, so they're not assigned an episode number and will appear in your feed based on the date it was published. They can include behind the scenes content or can be focused on timelier, news-worthy events. They're typically shorter in length and they can be sponsored.

If the sponsor is delivering the content in a bonus episode, the title should reflect that and start with "Sponsored Bonus." Standard sponsored content rules apply: content should be relevant, deliver value to the audience and not be overly promotional.

Finally, a few podcast tips before you flip on the mic:

- **Editing is your friend.** During a podcast interview, don't be afraid to interject and ask the interviewee to repeat a key sound bite or to discuss how to best segue into the next topic. It can be cleaned up during editing and can make a big impact on the end product.

¹ <https://www.edisonresearch.com/the-podcast-consumer-2019/>

- **Consider your audience.** Is your audience working a standard 9–5 workday? Shiftwork? Are they on the road or in the office? The length of the podcast (anywhere from 5 minutes to 35 minutes) should suit the industry and their average bandwidth for listening time.
- **Software for all levels.** Consider GarageBand (for Mac or iOS) or Audacity (for Mac or Windows users). With the right software, editing a podcast can be surprisingly painless.
- **Choose a good hosting platform.** There are myriad of podcast hosting platforms (Buzzsprout, Captivate, PodBean, Blubrry and Soundcloud to name a few) that make it easy to get your podcast submitted to the various players (Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher and many more).

According to the 2019 Podcast Trends Report, the most popular podcast listening areas were: home (82%), in the car/truck (58%), and walking around/on foot (41%).² For B2B media brands, this means we're reaching our audiences in places we've never been able to reach them before. It means we have an opportunity to deliver thoughtful, valuable content that will help build an even stronger relationship with our B2B audiences.



² <https://discoverpods.com/podcast-trends-report-2019/>