

## **Podcasting in the B2B World: How to leverage it to drive brand awareness and revenue**

**Hosted by:** Dani Hao, Marketing Coach and Consultant

**Guest speaker:** James Mulvany, Founder & CEO of Podcast.co and Matchmaker.fm

**Dani:**

Hello everybody this is Dani and welcome to another episode of Supercharge Marketing. So today I have a very special guest and this guest is really dear to my heart because we actually use Matchmaker.fm And Podcast.co. So he is James Mulvany, the founder and CEO at Matchmaker.fm And Podcast.co. Hi James. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

**James:**

How's it going, Dani?

**Dani:**

I'm great. How about you?

**James:**

Yeah I'm doing well. This is my first podcast of 2022 so glad to be on.

**Dani:**

Oh amazing. Yeah, thank you for giving me the honor to interview you in the very first part of the year.

**James.**

First part of the year yeah, we're good to go. I mean it's like it's I love recording podcasts and yeah, it's good to be back behind the microphone I think.

**Dani:**

Yeah, and I know you've definitely played many roles before like you've done podcasting, you've been on podcasts and now you run three different companies that really put podcasting and also being on audio at the center of the world. So just wondering how did you first venture into this world of podcasting?

**James:**

Initially my interest in like online audio came from when I was a teenager. I was looking to go into radio as a DJ and I started getting work experience for local radio stations.

You know, I kind of did a little bit of DJ'ing and I was really into my music, still am, but I was also kind of like teaching myself how to code and I was quite interested in building

websites. So I ended up merging the two together and I went off to university and started a business selling streaming media services to the radio industry. Then towards the end of university, probably about ten years ago now, I started with a friend my first ever podcast. Back then it was like the wild west, you know there weren't very many tools around to start podcasts. We had to do it using some kind of weird WordPress plugin and it was all very technical and convoluted and it was a new platform. You know it was something that, back then, to listen to podcasts you had to download it, transfer it to your iPod, and you know, it wasn't like you could just listen on the go.

**James:**

Obviously, that's drastically changed over the past 5-10 years. You know, people can consume them from anywhere now and it's a great industry to be really exciting and lots of opportunities, both for people who want to explore podcasting as a tool for business and also just for personal reasons as well. I think there are loads of people who have just started some really really interesting podcasts which have come out of lockdown and have ended up being perhaps bigger and better than they first anticipated.

**Dani:**

Yeah, I love that. I love how the podcasting community really started to grow as people started wanting that sense of community, right? Or even like listening to two friends talking to each other while you can't go out. I feel like podcasts have really risen, especially within the pandemic days.

**James:**

I think it's brought people closer together as well because it's created interesting conversations between people, like you and I for example, who perhaps don't know each other that well but also it's creating conversations between the host or the people that are on the podcast, and actually the listeners themselves as well. You can literally find a podcast pretty much on any topic now. So it's a really interesting space to be in.

**James:**

And one of the interesting things I read as I speak about this at the beginning of 2022, there's some research which was just announced or just released and they have announced that apparently one in 10 people in the UK plan on starting a podcast this year which sounds, to me, like a crazy number. That would mean there'd be like what six and a half / seven million podcasts - something like that - coming out of the UK. So I don't know if that's quite true but I thought it was really interesting anyway, it just goes to show that people are not just thinking about consuming podcasts but like the wider population is starting to think about bringing something to the table behind the microphone, and starting their own podcast now too.

**Dani:**

Yeah, that's some crazy numbers. I wonder what the number would be for North America, I have to look that up there. But definitely, I've seen so many podcasts come up in recent years and what's interesting to me is that a lot of these podcasts are also B2B. So companies are also starting podcasts which is really interesting.

**James:**

Yeah and this is one of the areas that we've been really focusing on. We have a production as part of podcast.co and we've had some great success with it over the past year, so we're actually starting our own creative agency which is due to launch imminently which is going to be create.co. So yeah, that's really exciting. So we've been working with lots and lots of businesses in various different industries, working with them on creating podcasts too.

**Dani:**

Yeah, and I think with B2B podcasts, sometimes you know the ROI of the podcast is really kind of a question mark, especially for companies that are a little bit conservative with their branding. So just curious from your perspective, how can B2B companies really leverage podcasts to drive their brand but also to drive revenue?

**James:**

We have lots of businesses approach us saying we want to start podcasting. Some are big businesses like enterprise-level companies with offices all over the world, some are smaller local firms. The first question you've got to ask is what is the purpose of the podcast? Why do you want to start one? There are three main answers or three trains of thought here.

**James:**

So it could be to generate leads which is maybe the most obvious one, eg attract customers or get a new business to the company. The second is to interact with your existing customers. Perhaps educate them, inform them and help build that brand loyalty. And a third which a lot of businesses don't think about which, especially applies to larger companies, is as an internal form of communication. So creating a podcast specifically for your staff or for your stakeholders to keep them engaged, keep them informed and up to date of what's going on within the business which is, as I mentioned, especially relevant to bigger companies, particularly with distributed workforces etc.

**James:**

Podcasting is a much more engaging medium than written content. It's been proven to be more effective than video. A lot of people tune in to the entire episode, like 80% of people who start listening to a podcast episode will actually complete it. So I think as a business owner or if you're in a B2B space or as a marketer, you've got a great opportunity because it's very seldom you have that engagement from someone, you know you have that attention span for such a long period time, and it could be 20 minutes, 30 minutes.

**James:**

Most of the time, especially as marketers if we're going on to social media things like that, we're trying to combat lots of noise. But I think right now it's still a golden age of podcasting where you've got that attention. Obviously, as more people start podcasts and as the industry grows that attention span is going to get less and less. So I think right now it is still a great opportunity for businesses to actually get into podcasting. And also it doesn't necessarily have to be creating your own podcast. You mentioned Matchmaker before and I think we're going to get onto it a bit later, but being a guest on other people's podcasts is great. It can help position you as an expert, whether you're a CEO or a founder, or if you just work within a company as well. Going out and getting on other podcasts can be a great way of driving traffic to your website and getting exposure, and it can help position you as an expert.

**Dani:**

Yeah, most definitely. In my past life, I was in PR, so a lot of times companies would come to me and they'd be like 'oh we want press' and normally they think they want the more traditional type of press like print press, or they want to get in some like fancy you know Forbes or whatnot... Like these are quite important but also sometimes it's like vanity metrics. There are now so many different forms of media where you want to get your thought leadership out there, and I feel like podcasting is really a hot space for you to do that because there are so many great B2B podcasts out there and if you get on one of these, you can get in front of maybe like 50000 subscribers at once.

**James:**

Absolutely. Yeah, I mean, it's a case of just going out there and locating relevant podcasts that you feel like you can deliver value to, and trying to think outside the box as well because it's not the obvious podcast. You don't necessarily always need to be chasing podcasts within your industry. Let's say you're an accountant, going and being on other accountant podcasts isn't necessarily the best thing to do but if you can provide valuable advice to businesses you could potentially go out and find podcasts which are targeted towards specific types of business owners.

**James:**

So it might be that you want to go after people who are Beauticians working within the health and beauty space. They've all got their own businesses, a lot of them are self-employed, so you could go on and say 'right, here's how you can make accounting easy for beauticians'. It's about being specific and thinking outside the box and thinking 'right, okay, what podcasts can I approach which I can deliver value to that perhaps my competitors aren't already doing well?'

**Dani:**

Yeah, that's a really great way to think about it. Yeah, I feel like a lot of times people think within their own industry or like 'here's all the things I can talk about' but finding the intersections, like what you're mentioning, I think that's a really good strategy.

**James:**

Absolutely.

**Dani:**

So for people who are starting podcasting for the very first time, what are some of the biggest misconceptions about podcasting that you want to debunk?

**James:**

I think first of all, people think it's kind of easy, like you don't have to really do much. That's completely the polar opposite of the truth. You know, you have to work really really hard to build an audience. So if you think that you can kind of just roll up one day, record a couple of episodes, and suddenly get like Joe Rogan famous, that's probably not going to happen. I think also people somehow think there's like a magic bullet to becoming successful like growing a podcast or getting lots and lots of traction, or getting lots of listeners. You know it's a case of, just with anything, growing any kind of online brand or presence you have to work hard and you have to apply some simple principles.

**James:**

But there's not necessarily one magic one size fits all formula which will guarantee your success. And also the other thing I think is audio is important. Like, a lot of people will go into podcasting, they will just be recording on their phone or their laptop, which is fine to begin with, but especially if you're going to be building a podcast for your business, you might want to think about investing in some good quality equipment. At a very minimum, get a good USB microphone to make yourself sound 10 times better than if you're just recording using a built-in microphone or your earpods or whatever. So I think those are kind of like the 3 misconceptions a lot people assume that tend to be incorrect.

**Dani:**

Oh, tell me about it, James. I remember when I first started my first podcast I was like 'okay well if I get the right guests it's going to start growing'. Definitely wrong. You definitely need a marketing strategy for your podcast, like for your company.

**James:**

I completely agree. It's just it's the same with anything. It's like if you want to grow a business, if you want to grow a brand on Youtube or Instagram, a lot of the same principles apply. It's a case of identifying your market, trying to reach people who are maybe looking for a solution to a problem, or identifying some of the common pain points or the common questions that your customers have, and trying to solve them in an informative and entertaining way.

**Dani:**

Yeah, absolutely. So nowadays, almost every cool SaaS company out there and their competitors are kind of jumping on this podcasting bandwagon. So we've mentioned that there are so many podcasts now in the space and you mentioned 25% of UK'ers are trying to start podcasts. So how can a podcaster really position themselves in the B2B podcasting space and stand out? And if there's some examples you can give from clients you've seen or podcasts you've seen.

**James:**

Yes, it's interesting because I recently did a series on LinkedIn. I did like five cool examples of brand podcasts. So if you go on my LinkedIn profile, I'm sure we'll talk about that at the end, it was just before Christmas I posted five videos talking about some interesting ones. There are a couple of different examples which I'll just reel off now from that series. Mastercard have cashed in on the kind of branded podcast gold rush back in 2018. They launched a podcast called Fortune Favors the Bold. Mastercard, you know, huge company, everyone knows who they are.

**James:**

So, really when you're an organization of that scale, you've already got attention and you're trying to figure out ways of kind of maintaining that attention and getting people engaged. So they created a podcast called Fortune Favors the Bold and it's basically exploring our relationship with money. They've done 3 seasons so it's been successful. You know, obviously, there's a lot of branded podcasts where they'll just do one season and they'll kind of move on. And again, sometimes that's a good thing because it can just be like really specific and they can kind of just do something and it can generate a buzz and they'll be on to the next.

**James:**

I think it's really really interesting and I think that's something that kind of affects everyone. You know, they don't teach financial stuff in schools as much as we'd like. You know, you could get taught math but you know they don't get taught how to manage credit or how to apply for mortgages or anything. So I think they've really hit on a sweet spot there. Interestingly, we've just been creating a podcast with a big national UK Bank that's specifically focused on first-time buyers. So people who are young and trying to get onto the property ladder. Again, it's not just about banking. It's keeping it interesting, it's focusing in on a subsection of their businesses. Obviously, banks do lots of different things but mortgages and lending is one of them. So why not create a podcast targeted towards first time buyers. So again, it's about focusing and getting that niche right, and really focusing in on a specific problem or solution.

**James:**

There was another really cool podcast a few years back by Landrover which is called The Discovery Adventures. It's a little bit different in terms of it wasn't as informative, it was more of an experiential thing. But basically, they got an Olivier award-winning sound designer to record these 360-degree soundscapes. So we went out with some special equipment to various different locations around the UK and created an immersive listening experience for this podcast series. So it's kind of like if you put your headphones on it kind of sounds like you might be at a waterfall and the water's kind of crashing around you and all that sort of stuff. So a really, really immersive experience.

**James:**

And again, it's kind of called binaural technology where you have this sort of stereo field. So again, a very very different take on creating a branded podcast. Not as much about providing information but providing more of an experience, and again, Landrover kind of did that and that was something that was really effective. So there are lots and lots of creative examples out there of how people have used podcasting that are really really interesting. We've got a few different articles on our site that kind of highlight some of these so they'll be worth checking out too.

**Dani:**

Yeah for sure. For the listeners that are listening, don't worry about finding those links. Those will be placed in our blog post that's following the episode. But yeah, I've never heard about the immersive podcast before, like the experiential ones, that one is something that is definitely new to me.

**James:**



Yeah I mean, again, it's something that's not for everyone. If you're running a small business, unless you've got like a big marketing budget or you can create something so wild that will get lots of PR and attention, sometimes starting with something that's more informative could be easier to begin. But certainly, if you're a brand and you want to do something brave or different going down that route could be interesting.

**Dani:**

Yeah, and I wouldn't expect that from Landrover so that's really interesting. So this is a question that I think a lot of B2B marketers think about and they're often challenged by their CMO or CEO. So how can a B2B marketer measure the success of the podcast and how that ties to overall company goals? So we're not just talking about subscribers. we're not just talking about listens, like how does that tie into the overall company?

**James:**

This is a tricky question to answer, isn't it, because I think it varies depending on what your goals are. I mentioned earlier, to begin with, what sort of podcast do you want to create? Is it something that's going to be outwardly facing to the public to acquire leads? If that's the case, I guess you want some kind of mechanism to track how many leads are coming in through the podcast. I think the easiest way of doing that is to have a really clear call to action, something that is trackable. So maybe at the end of the podcast, or you might have a pre-roll, mid-roll and post-roll, effectively like little adverts promoting your product or your service within that podcast. Within those, you might have a specific link that you're giving out which isn't your normal website address but you can actually track then how many people are following that link and therefore you're kind of measuring the success of your podcast.

**James:**

Another thing people do is they have an email they give out in the podcast and they'll say 'just drop us a message on this unique email address and we'll send you something for free' or 'we'll subscribe you to our newsletter'. Again, it's about thinking about how you can measure those actions. Traditionally, if you're using PPC for example, as a marketer to drive traffic to a site the way you track that is by looking at how many clicks you've got then you might have to look at how many conversions have been generated by the clicks. So you need to try and think about your podcast as a similar thing.

**James:**

But then again, if you're looking at say, employee engagement, your metrics can be very different. So it'll be a case of looking at how many people are actually engaging with that podcast and listening to the episode. Again, there's certain ways that you can measure this by saying 'okay, well if you've got to this point in the podcast, why don't you go and



check this out or 'why don't you email us with this idea' and see how many people are actually responding to your message. I think it's just about being clear of what you want to achieve and then thinking about ways as a marketer that you would go and physically actually track this sort of stuff and get some metrics from them.

**Dani:**

Those are all really good ideas, like getting the mid-roll, post-roll, and I think bringing it back to a campaign where you know I've seen people do giveaways and whatnot or even making the entire podcast into a book, right? Those are all really good ideas.

**James:**

Completely. Yeah I mean, if we're we're doing any kind of campaigns as marketers, it's always about tracking your results and seeing who's taking action and trying to measure your success that way. But then of course the other thing with podcasts as well is making sure that you're doing cross promotion. So if you're sending out email newsletters, for example, remind people if there's a new episode out. You've got to take a holistic approach to it and see it as just another form of marketing that you might already be doing. So if you've already got you know an SEO content strategy, you've already got a PPC strategy, well podcasting is just an extension to those kinds of things that you're doing.

**Dani:**

I completely agree. And just a plug here, we do talk about repurposing content as well in one of our previous episodes, so if you wanted to give that a listen, that's a really good episode as well because we talk about how you can repurpose podcasts into blog posts and blog posts into videos and so on.

**James:**

Yeah, that's another great thing that you can do. I mean another good reason to get into podcasting is because it is really really cross-purposeable and repurposeable.

**Dani:**

Yeah, absolutely. So just kind of putting your entrepreneur hat on a little bit because I know you've been an entrepreneur for as long as you can remember. How were you able to grow the Matchmaker community so quickly? Because I remember back in the early days I remember getting a message from you actually saying you're creating this you know matchmaking service for podcasters. Just curious about what strategies you implemented for that.

**James:**

I guess to begin with let's just give it some context. so Matchmaker.fm is a platform that connects podcasters and guests. We had already had an existing podcast business, podcast.co, which you mentioned earlier. We were looking at different ways to drive traffic to our site and funnels that we could create to engage with the podcasting community as a whole. And obviously, lots of podcasts, you know, just like this one, are based on interviews with the podcaster and guests. And we thought well a lot of people who become guests on podcasts probably will eventually want to start their own show, so would it be a good idea if we started creating some content targeting people who are looking for podcast opportunities as guests.

**James:**

So, one of the first things that we did is we started writing some blog content around that and then we thought, okay well why don't we just target podcasters who are looking for guests too, and then we ended up creating these two Google forms. So we had one for podcasters who are looking to identify good guests for their shows and one for people who are industry experts or authors or speakers or CEOs who are looking to be featured on podcasts as guests. So, we have these two funnels which we've created on the podcast.co site and with these Google forms we had actually no way of connecting people at this point and it was kind of this sort of MVP where we sort of thought maybe we're onto something here, should we actually create a platform to connect these two groups of people together, rather than just looking at them as potential customers. So we sort of sat down with our designer at the time and we came up with some screen designs for a product. We thought let's just call it matchmaker like a play on online dating, kind of like tinder for podcasters, and that was kind of like where the idea came from.

**James:**

It was really interesting because we didn't take any action then for about six months and it was at the beginning of 2020, we were at a stage where we had an MVP which we created, we had a developer who joined our team, and we thought well this would be a good little project for him to work on as a sort of side thing. So he kind of got to work on it and created the first version of the platform and we then obviously had our initial group of beta testers from those funnels that we'd set up. The trick then was really trying to grow it so I remember thinking if we could get to a thousand users that'd be great. We've actually just gone past 40000 users which is you know beyond what I ever thought we'd be able to achieve.

**James:**

But to get from a couple of hundred people who have express interested to then 1000 was really just... our initial focus was just doing a lot of manual outreach. So, we

hammered LinkedIn, we looked at different websites containing lists of podcasts and started reaching out to those podcasts manually and just tried contacting as many folks as possible. And we actually found that quite quickly there was clearly a demand for this product because I think we went from 200 to 1000 within the space of a couple of months, it wasn't a long period of time. And, you know, one of the pitfalls which we were concerned about to begin with is we didn't want people signing up and thinking 'wow this is like a ghost town, there's no one in here' because obviously, the thing with Matchmaker is that podcasters are looking for experts within lots of different categories.

**James:**

So it might be that they're looking for people who are experts within marketing, but it might be science or sports or health and fitness or whatever. So it was a case of trying to make sure that our outreach was distributed along various different tangents versus just looking for entrepreneurs, for example, or people are involved in businesses. So we kind of had different funnels that we set up and campaigns that we were running to try and onboard people within various different sectors, mainly focusing on English speaking. And then from then on when we kind of got to a certain level, it was trying to leverage our audience to build the community further. I think word of mouth has helped us tremendously because people sign up, they get booked, they get really excited and they share it with their friends which has been awesome.

**James:**

Since then, we've tried various different things. We've obviously got share profile buttons now so you can actually share your profile on your website or on social networks which again helps sort of grow traffic. We've got more of a content strategy now too. So we have a blog over on <http://amplified.matchmaker.im> which has got lots of great information, so we're kind of focusing a bit on that which is traditionally how I've built businesses in the past - very much looking at kind of inbound marketing. But interestingly with Matchmaker, it was a lot outbound to begin. But yeah, continue to rely heavily on word of mouth, I think people like talking about it and last year we opened up the directory so Google could start crawling and indexing profiles, things like that as well. Yeah, it's been a really really interesting journey.

**Dani:**

Yeah, and it was so wonderful seeing the growth of Matchmaker too. I remember back in the earlier days and we used to get like pitches just through email for the podcast that I ran and I was like okay well if there was a service for this, it would make it so much easier because then I can just go to a page or something and look for people and then boom you know you you showed up with podcast.co and Matchmaker which was great.

**James:**

Yeah, thanks. Well I mean that's exactly it. That's what we try and do. We try and build products that are easy to use and basically help people with what they're trying to achieve.

**Dani:**

Yeah, I think you've done it. So we're almost nearing the end of the interview, I try to keep it within 30 minutes if possible. So we can cover two more questions. So one I'm really curious on what you think about B2B content consumption, especially in this era of community and personal branding like nowadays with the rise of how LinkedIn has changed where it's now very personal branding focused and very you know content focused. How do you think that's going to change?

**James:**

Yeah, I think people like buying and people hate to be sold to, right? But people love to buy stuff and I think if you're building a brand it's great, but you're always going to run up against that resistance because your customers will sort of see you as 'ah yeah, they're just trying to sell me something'. But if you can start creating content as a personal brand versus just your company, it gives you another avenue of approach to your potential customers. I didn't really pay much attention to LinkedIn or personal branding until about two years ago then over the last couple of years I've really been focusing down on that a lot more.

**James:**

I think people like listening to people that they look up to/ that they aspire to be like/ or that they can get lots of valuable information from. So I think podcasting is an extension of that. It's a really good way of executing a personal brand whether you're hosting your own show or your being on other people's shows, and it also gives you the ability to have honest conversations with people, so I think there's still a lot of opportunity there. I think people are going to continue engaging with personal brands that they like. And I think it's going to probably continue rising. One of the questions is do you think podcasting has hit saturation. I certainly don't think we're anywhere close to that just yet.

**Dani:**

Yeah, so for people out there that do want to start a podcast, especially as part of your B2B brand, don't be discouraged that there's so many podcasts out there. I think what James mentioned and the tips that he gave really help your podcast stand out. You have a go-to market strategy for your marketing team, and also your product. You can do the same with the framework of podcasting.

**Dani:**

Well, thank you so much, James, for sharing all your insights. And this is one last question that I ask all of my guests which is what is one failure within your career that you wish to share and what did you learn from it?

**James:**

I've had a lot of ups and downs. As an entrepreneur, I've had multiple failed businesses. I think one of them always stands out to me. It was probably about eight years ago I launched a business and my heart really wasn't in it. I thought there was a good opportunity there, turned out maybe there wasn't because it didn't really work out. But I think it was something that I thought maybe there's a potential gold mine there, but I wasn't really passionate about what it was.

**James:**

It was completely away from the audio space. It was like an enterprise hosting thing and yeah, it didn't work out very well. I spent a lot time on it and spent a lot of money building something that in the end didn't really work out too well. So I kind of think following your passion is really important as an entrepreneur and that's certainly something that whenever I'm thinking about starting new businesses, I've got plenty in my plate right now but in future when I come to think about starting new ventures, I'm always gonna be thinking about what I'm really passionate about. You know, you're going to be with that business for a number of years so you know you might as well enjoy it.

**Dani:**

Yeah, that's actually a really really good tip. I remember um interviewing Guy Kawasaki for one of my previous podcasts and he mentioned that a lot of people think that you need to have courage first to do something but really it's about having passion and then also being persistent about it.

**James:**

Yeah, I agree. Persistence is also key.

**Dani:**

Yeah, well thank you so much, James. I really enjoy chatting with you. I feel like every time I talk to someone about podcasting on a podcast it always gets really meta, but it's always a great conversation. Thank you so much.

**James:**

Thanks very much, Dani. I appreciate your time. Thanks very much for having me.

**Dani:**

And for the listeners out there. James can be found on LinkedIn and there's so many great resources on [podcast.co](#) and [matchmaker](#) so I'll make sure to include all of his social profiles here if you want to connect with him. There are free plans for each of these platforms there's it's really easy to get started. Personally, I do pay for it. I'm not like an affiliate or whatever, I'm just putting it out there. It's really really cool, so check it out. Otherwise thank you so much for joining me today on Supercharge Marketing and we'll see you at the next one.