



So...podcast – Episode # Christina Canters – Podcast Services Australia

You're listening to So...podcast with John McKenna

John: Greetings. John McKenna, So...podcast. The question in this episode is 'Why aren't they listening?' And I'm talking about people who are not listening to podcasts. Christina, welcome.

Christina: Thanks John, I'm excited to be here.

John: First of all, I want you to have a go at answering that question and then share with us who you are and from what perspective you're coming from.

Christina: Sure. Why aren't they listening? There are a number of reasons, John, and I am sometimes surprised when I meet people and I say I have a podcast or I help people set up podcasts and they say oh what's a podcast? Or I've heard of podcast, but I've never listened. And it seems to be a combination of they've not learned how to listen, so it's just something they haven't been exposed to, or maybe they've tried before or they got confused. But usually it comes down to they've never been shown how. So I think as podcasters it's part of our responsibility to educate people on what a podcast is and why they should be listening. I'll always ask my Uber drivers "Do you listen to podcasts?" And a lot of them say no and I'm really surprised and so I teach them, I say "Hey, on your phone, at the lights, of course, go here, go here, and here's how you listen to a podcast." So I'm particularly passionate about helping people discover podcasts because to answer your question about my perspective, I've been podcasting since 2013 as a tool to build up my credibility and to connect with great people. And I also run a podcast development company called Podcast Services Australia.

John: You're being very humble.





Christina: So I'm quite involved in the podcast world.

John: I know. So the audience don't know that. That's right, Christina is from Podcast Services Australia. Go and Google it, it's an amazing organisation. They've helped me as a newbie into this industry and that's why I said to Christina let's have a little bit of a chat about who is missing out and why are they missing out? I guess Christina as we spoke off air, was about, we don't want to just talk about the problems but I really want to focus on for those people who do love being involved as an audience member or making podcasts, how are we doing as society to help those who aren't? What steps can we take? And I'll give an example. When I've asked people do you listen to podcasts and they say I know what they are but I've never listened. And I'll, if possible, if the time is right I'll say would you like to pass me your mobile phone? Sure. So then I grab their phone, I'll go and look at it, normally it's an iPhone. And you know you've got a folder that says utilities not often used?

Christina: Yes.

John: I'll go there and sure enough that's where the podcast app is. Oh, yeah I never knew what they were for. But I step them through it. I say just allow me to show you what this is and we go step one, click. Oh, okay. You just see their face light up. It's interesting. So I think there's just one way if it's appropriate and the person does trust you is to just grab their phone and explain how it all works.

Christina: I'd say that's one of the best ways, John. It's great that you do that. I do the same thing.

John: For sure.

Christina: What I do is if I'm talking about what I do and I mention I have a podcast they'll say what's it called? And I'll say let me show you, can I grab your phone? And so I grab their phone but I take them to my podcast and then I





subscribe for them and then if I'm feeling really cheeky I'll leave myself an iTunes review from their phone.

John: Yes. Guess what? Same, I do that too. Little trick to get subscribers.

Christina: You got to do what you can do get reviews.

John: Yeah. But I think also when we're having those conversations with people who are not podcast listeners we use a lot of jargon don't we? And there is so much tech out there and there's so many social media options, things like Podcast Platform, Subscribe. And I want to just talk about some groups of people. Obviously what I'm really passionate about is the deaf community, simply due to the hearing loss, they can't access podcasts. How do we fix that? Of course ideally in the perfect world we have someone does Auslan signing, that's a resource that's a cost. A simple fix can be transcriptions and subtitles using YouTube. And some podcast producers are doing that which is great. Other part of the demographics are our aged, our seniors, people 65 plus. Just recently my dad and mum have an iPad and they listen to my podcast because they have to. They listen on YouTube. But more importantly dad's got a bit of hearing loss so we just went and got a Bluetooth speaker to make the iPad volume increase and that made a huge difference. So it's about where possible... Because I think we saw this with the internet, didn't we? I'm older than you Christina, but the age did miss out on the Internet, the great digital divide we called it because we just got so excited about websites we forgot to tell people how to click onto them.

Christina: Yeah. Well I guess a lot of older people now are also getting, everyone has got smart phones now. So the capability is there. Both of my parents are over 70 and they've got more advanced iPhones than I do. So they're across a lot of the new technologies. But I must say the only reason they listen to podcast is probably because I have one and I introduced it to them. So I think that education piece is really important and being able to explain it and show people in a simple way. But you're right about the jargon. For example, when we say subscribe to my show, when people hear the word





subscribe they usually think it's a paid subscription like Netflix or Disney Plus or a magazine subscription. That's normally a paid. So there can be confusion when you say subscribe to my podcast. So a better word to use is to say listen, listen to my podcast at this website. Or listen to my podcast for free, you can always say. And in terms of accessibility I think a mistake that a lot of podcasters make is they'll say listen in iTunes. So they'll assume that everyone uses iTunes, which they don't. And when you mentioned before about people who are perhaps hearing impaired, a better place to send people to, to listen to a podcast, could also be your website. So this is why when we set up podcasts for clients we always recommend that podcasters have a website where their podcast lives as well, not just on the app. Because like you said before John, most people understand websites. Maybe people didn't learn how to click on them back then but now most people these days will know how to navigate around a website if it's built clearly and properly.

John: Sure.

Christina: So by having a podcast there, if there's a button that clearly says podcast people can click on that and then people who are hearing impaired will be able to read the blog post or the transcript or see the captions if you've got a video in there as well. So that's probably the simplest way.

John: And on that topic of accessibility, even people who are blind, they have special software which basically scans websites and it's called a screen reader, and that's going to pick up that button you talked about, podcast.

Christina: Yes.

John: So it is a really inclusive medium if we just are mindful of it and not get too focused on I'm going to go and do a podcast. Let's just put the audience in front. Because we only exist as podcasters because we have an audience. I think that's the bottom line.

Christina: Yep, absolutely.





John: And it's about being able to engage. So we talked about aged, we talked about accessibility, and then you've got other things like culturally and linguistically diverse people from other cultures. Goes back to jargon, Christina. If we use lots of jargon, people whose English is not their first language will miss out on what we're talking about. So if we are explaining the experience to an audience member, whether it be a video we're going to do or talk to somebody, use really plain English just to get them on board because if you look at our statistics around Australia and the world being so International, of course, we need to be as inclusive as we possibly can.

Christina: Absolutely. I usually say to people when they say so what's a podcast, how do I listen? Or like what do I listen to? Because that's another challenge as well. There's a lot of content out there, people don't know what to listen to. I always engage them by asking what's a hobby that you like or what are you interested in. Anything, what are you interested in? And so my Uber driver might say I like sport. And I'll be like what type of sport? They'll say cricket. Or I like cooking. Or I like this style of music. And I'll say okay, let's search for that particular topic and then I'll search for that topic in the podcast app and I'll say look, there's like a hundred podcasts here that are purely about cricket. You can pick any one of these shows and listen to them for free and they only talk about cricket. So you can learn everything you want about cricket, get your cricket updates, etcetera, etcetera. And they go oh okay. So relating it back to what that person is interested in, because if you say to someone there's great podcasts on true crime and business and news, if they're like I don't care about that stuff then they're not going to be interested. If you make it relevant to them and say hey, there's podcasts about horse riding and knitting and photography and gardening, if that's what interests them they'll be like yeah sure. I want to get in on that.

John: I'm loving what you're saying because it's so true. It's part of an explanation we sort of say when you're scanning on your preferred podcast platform you've got show notes of course, and on those show notes that's going to describe what the podcast is about. You and I both know how





important it is to have really concise show notes. Part of that of course they talk about how long the podcast will go for. So if you are going to go for a drive or go for a walk or just lying in bed, it's about a little bit of planning. Because people do this with TV and Netflix. They put their pizza in the oven, they know I'm going to stop it now and go back to my Netflix. It's a similar experience when it comes to podcasting. Do some planning. Just explain to people who are not in podcasting on what's involved to prepare yourself, make sure you're comfortable. But another thing I say to people, Christina, is you're away from screen.

Christina: Yeah.

John: You know we talk about down screen time. Podcasting is just closing your eyes if you want to and you can just listen. You can be on the toilet, you can be in bed, you could be anywhere listening. At the end of the day we're talking old technology. What I mean by that is your grandparents, my grandparents listen to the radio all the time. That's all we're doing except it's on demand. What does on demand mean? You listen to it when you want to listen to it.

Christina: Yeah for sure.

John: Christina, what is your experience? You've mentioned your parents but have you, as Podcast Services Australia, your experiences looking at aging community on senior citizen clubs or anything you can share there at all?

Christina: In terms of work we've done in that area?

John: That's right, yes, or even some of your customers. Are they mindful that it's important to get messages out that are relevant or accessible for people who are older?

Christina: Yeah, it's interesting because with our clients we always focus on who is the target audience they're wanting to connect with? And that's what makes a successful podcast, when you know who the person is that you are talking





to. So if our client wants to reach an older demographic then of course we have to make sure that topic is relevant and the content is relevant to them. But it's also kind of a tricky one. I'll give you an example. We had one woman in one of our podcast courses who wanted to do a podcast about the bowel cancer screening to encourage men over the age of 55 to get checked for bowel cancer. And she said this is really important, they need to find this information. It's important for them and it's important for their health. And as we explored further I asked her are men over the age of 55 actively searching for information about bowel cancer through podcasts? And she said probably not. This is the sort of information we need to push in front of them. So they're not actively searching out this information. They're not being proactive about it. So we had to say to her maybe a podcast is actually not the best medium for that type of content. And so she changed her idea and she ended up doing a podcast about the ukulele.

John: Okay.

Christina: Which is a bit of a shift.

John: Big shift, yes.

Christina: So for something like that, that's a very specific health related topic, but it comes down to who are you wanting to target and are they already there, are they already listening? So that is something to keep in mind. And maybe there aren't enough podcasts out there for that older demographic because maybe people are thinking that they're not listening and maybe it's this vicious cycle where they think oh, they're not listening, so therefore we're not going to make one for them, but then they don't listen because there's no podcast for them. So I'm sure it will change in the future because podcasts are becoming more and more widely spread across... A listenership is distributed across all demographics from age 20 up until age 60. So there's a bit more of a spike in the middle but there's definitely listeners from all age groups.





John: For sure. A key part of all of this is the word search. So all platforms have a nice search. I think the world knows about Google, Google is the leader.

Christina: Yeah.

John: And if you could just translate that mindfulness into podcasting to say just search a topic as you mentioned, I thought your Uber driver cricketer example was fantastic. And there is so much content out there. And I think there's a lot of trust in podcasting too because of course you've got huge organisations that put out a podcast, you've got a lot of solo people such as myself who basically receive feedback and mentors such as yourself and Aaron which I'm really grateful for on how we're travelling. But a lot of the content is organic and not a lot of BS, it is quite clear and at the end of the day it's media. I realise that. It gets back to people tones of voice and people trusting on what you're hearing. And I've done quite a bit of reading about podcast ads and the audience does become very engaged and loyal with listeners. Have you heard that also, Christina? About the loyalty?

Christina: Absolutely. I believe the stat is that podcast listeners will listen to at least four hours a week and if they subscribe to one show they subscribe to, I can't remember the exact figure, but most podcast listeners don't just subscribe to one show. They subscribe to many and they will come back and listen week after week. Kind of like your favourite TV show. It's on every Wednesday night at 8pm so you're there every Wednesday night at 8pm. So this is why it is important for podcasters to keep up that consistency with their show. There's no point just releasing one episode or even one episode every few months. You've got to, I mean this is if you want to build up that loyal listenership, you've got to be consistent with it.

John: I agree. And it's like so many other social media, like Twitter and Instagram, you need to be consistent and keep it fresh. So Christina, thank you so much for having this conversation with me. I think it was meant to be a conversation and it has been a conversation and our audience, please keep in mind, just because you're listening to us right now and you love podcasting, which is great, tell the world and take the time to share with





people on how to navigate because it is complex to some people, it's not always easy. I'd like to remind everybody that my podcast is on my website, johnmckenna.com.au, it will be transcribed. Christina your podcast show Stand Out Get Noticed will be on my show notes.

Christina: Wonderful.

John: So thank you for joining me today.

Christina: Thanks John, this is fun.

John: All the best, bye.

Christina: Bye.

