

Are You Listening? Yes, There is a Place for Dentists in the Popular Podcasting Space

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On this blog, we often discuss the importance of consistently dynamic content. That is varied content that incorporates the diverse forms of media available to [modern marketers and savvy dentists](#). Often, we speak in terms of high-impact yet authentic photos, images, graphics, and video. However, audio is an area that is worth exploring and merits attention.

Do not be intimidated.

Audio is about more than [podcasts](#). Likewise, podcasts are about more than true crime and fan fiction.

Remember: You are not supporting a weekly audio-drama featuring intense music and Oscar-worthy production values. Any time you record your voice clearly, compellingly, and **feature meaningful patient-centric content**, this information deserves a place on your patient website and other social and marketing platforms.

The audio does not have to be in podcast format. The idea is simply to provide a variety of means for existing and potential patients, partners, and community members to engage with you and to get to know you and your team.

The power of audio is undeniable.

In a [study](#) of medical students, “auditory” represented one of the most common “learning styles.” Twenty-six percent of students were characterized as “learning through listening.” They were only slightly outpaced by visual learners, who made up 33% of those studied. Another 12% of learners blended auditory and visual preferences.

It is not surprising that [more medical schools](#) across disciplines are using audio channels to teach and resonate with their students. Similarly, researchers have asserted that learners favour audio formats such as podcasts as a way to receive information. Healthcare information is ripe for being delivered in such a potentially approachable, conversational, and intriguing format. This led the research team responsible for studying the use and potential of podcasting in medical education to conclude that they hope:

Doctors in “underrepresented specialties” will find the value of offering audio content and will be motivated to craft and deliver fresh podcasts.

Let’s consider more of the distinctive advantages of harnessing audio to communicate, reach, and grow your patient base:

- By its very nature, you have a captive audience.
- When listeners put on those headphones and hear you or an associate, they concentrate on what you have to say – not on what you are wearing or the surrounding “buzz” of your office. Distractions are limited or eliminated entirely.
- Podcasts have been characterized as an “[established media market](#).” So, chatter around the potential for the “podcast bubble” to “burst” is largely irrelevant. Like other media formats, podcasts will simply mature and evolve alongside the technologies and platforms used to support them.
- The [statistics](#) bear the above point out; partly, consider how 71% of Canadians aged 12 and older listen to podcasts.
- Podcasts are most popular among the coveted age ranges of 18 to 34 and 35 to 49, with the former group making up 42% of all Canadian listeners and the latter demographic accounting for 32% of podcast consumers.

- Additionally, this demographic is reportedly more likely to be well-educated university graduates earning more than \$100,000 annually.
- The popularity of this space is not waning; in fact, the percentage of monthly podcast listeners in Canada reportedly grew from 14% to 33% between 2010 and 2021.
- In addition to accounting for auditory learners, podcasts and other audio communications also have the potential to reach underrepresented or underserved populations, for instance, those consumers with visual impairment or who simply wish to take a break from their screens.
- As a potential “early adopter” of these formats in dentistry and among your competition, initiatives on this front send an impressive message to your community. They tell the world that you are forward-thinking and not afraid to try new things and to innovate.
- Similarly, these listeners may assume that your practice does not stand still and is always seeking new and better ways to provide care, which is attractive to the prospective patient.
- These opportunities also help to bolster your credibility as a clinician. After all, you are conveying trusted content in an authoritative way.
- By inviting guests and others to participate in podcasts and related audio opportunities, you are further bolstering partnerships with complementary specialists and dental professionals, as well as experts and businesses outside of dentistry.

Dipping your toes in the podcasting “pool.”

Let’s start at the very beginning. Podcasts and related content need not be intimidating, **nor do they need to be costly and resource-intensive**. Right now, you are likely holding or near to a mini-computer – your phone! Here again, use your smartphone or another low-cost recording device to convey the meaningful information that your patients seek. If you are at a standstill as to where to start with content creation, **solicit suggestions from your community!** What interests your patients? What are the biggest misconceptions or myths that you have encountered? The answers to these questions present a good starting point to build content.

Likewise, existing visual and typed content represents a good starting point. You can **get maximum mileage out of existing content** by transforming it into topics for audio recordings or podcast episodes. Be sure also to leverage these other formats **to promote your new audio/podcasting** efforts.

You do not need to have the poise and polish of Peter Jennings to be successful on this front. It is simply essential to be conversational. As a clinician, you regularly use many broadcasting-oriented skills – you just do not think about these skills in this way. They are simply behaviours that are second nature to you.

Consider how you often communicate technical terms, subjects, and processes to the “layperson.” Also, think about how often you must communicate in an empathetic and soothing way, especially to those patients who may not have visited the dentist in a while. Yes, you are a clinician first. But, to be a good clinician, you have also developed considerable “people-first” habits, talents, and capabilities. **These well-established strengths can be applied to the process of creating and delivering a podcast.**

If all of this is really not in your wheelhouse, **look to the many talented individuals around you.** If there is a member of your team who is regularly tasked with speaking at conventions or seminars or who just seems to have a knack for empowering patients with good information, they may be an ideal person to take on this role. In fact, if this associate or member of your team excels at communicating and presenting, they likely will be honoured that you asked and will really enjoy taking on this effort. And, when individuals love what they are doing, *it shows* – the listener will hear that passion and interest in their voice.

The savvy clinician-entrepreneur also leans into the other partners and peers around them. For instance, your fellow co-brand (the neighbourhood health foods store or fitness center) may represent a great way to breathe new life and a fresh perspective into your audio presence in the digital universe. These individuals may also inject a big dose of charisma into podcast episodes by featuring them as co-hosts or guests.

A final “pro tip”: A phenomenon has been isolated in the podcasting world. It is called “pod fade.” This is the process whereby a highly energetic duo, for instance, starts strong and regularly posts podcast episodes – until they reach the six-month mark. After six months, podcasts generally “fade” as quickly as they surfaced. The enthusiasm may be lost. Life gets in the way. All sorts of things happen that contribute to formerly energetic hosts who cease making content.

As a dental practice, you are uniquely positioned to overcome pod fade. You have a substantial body of expertise and good content quite literally at your fingertips.

Podcasts in other arenas may not have specialized expertise in a discipline. So, it may be fatiguing to them to constantly be on the lookout for new topic ideas, which have not been

done 1,000 times by other podcasters. Podcasting in the medical space is a different animal. **Be confident in the volume of knowledge and experiences you have had, which may be used to craft content and be shared authentically with your community.**

Also, resist the temptation to feel that you must consistently produce every week. Here again, you are not recording an audio drama series. **Be consistent, continue to produce, but value *quality over quantity*.** You have a captive audience with ears glued to their headsets, yes, but [attention spans](#) being what they are, it may be advised to break down longer audio into bite-sized chunks. You can then actively promote the “next chunk” or episode ahead of time on your website, Facebook page, YouTube channel, e-blasts, newsletters, and so on.

Let your non-intimidating yet highly trusted, knowledgeable, and reputable voice be your guide and draw others who may never have found you – *if not for your audio presence* – to your practice. As always, if you are “stuck” on where and how to start, your partners in the digital dental communications space are here to help.

About the Author:



Naren Arulrajah, President and CEO of [Ekwa Marketing](#), has been a leader in medical marketing for over a decade. Ekwa provides comprehensive marketing solutions for busy dentists, with a team of more than 180 full time professionals, providing web design, hosting, content creation, social media, reputation management, SEO, and more. If you’re looking for ways to boost your marketing results, call 855-598-3320 for a free strategy session with

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