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Six Tips To Turn Stations Into Podcast Specialists.

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Podcasting is blowing up and radio stations are eager to exploit the growing space. After all, who knows audio better than radio programmers? But extending a brand to a new platform requires presenting the content differently—what works on one may not translate to the other, as one expert stresses.

Amplifi Media founder Steve Goldstein presented the “Six Ways Podcasts Are Different From Radio” last week at the NAB Show New York, in partnership with the New York State Broadcasters Association:

- **Radio Leans Back, Podcasts Lean Forward.** Radio basically does all the work for you, from interviewing guests to curating a unique music mix. People have to actively seek out podcasts. “No one will hear the podcast unless they opt in and find it,” Goldstein said. “There is that friction in having to go find the audio somewhere.”
- **Radio Is Joined In Progress, Podcasts Start At The Beginning.** “With podcasts, everyone begins at the same place. In that sense it’s a lot more like television,” Goldstein said.
- **Radio Has To Immediately Attract Attention, Podcasts Are Appointment Listening.** With radio it’s, ‘be compelling right away or send the audience down the dial.’ Podcasts are destination programming on a topic of interest to the person who went through the hassle of having to download it.
- **Radio Is Mass Appeal, Podcasts Are Narrowcasting.** Radio’s mission is to aggregate as large an audience as possible. Podcasting is much more narrow in appeal. “Podcast topics are not designed to hit home runs but a great health and wellness podcast intended for a specific audience can amass great success—without having to shoot the moon,” Goldstein said.

- **Radio Content Is Perishable, Podcasts Live On.** After it airs, broadcast content disappears into the ether while podcasts remain available for consumption. “That’s also the downside. It’s always available—among all the other hundreds and thousands of shows.”
- **Radio’s Always On; Podcasts Have Start, Stop And Delete Buttons.** Broadcast radio can either be tuned in or tuned out but podcasts have more playback options, such as pausing the content and re-starting it.

Hometown Podcasts That Hit Home Runs

Goldstein also used his presentation to highlight a handful of radio personalities he thinks are hitting it out of the park with their podcasts. Among them are “The Tom Barnard Podcast,” hosted by the top-rated Minneapolis morning man, who’s heard on Cumulus Media classic rock “KQ92” KQRS. Then there’s “Your Last Meal with Rachel Belle,” featuring the KIRO-FM Seattle host interviewing stars about what their last meal would be. Belle then does a deep dive on the dish’s origins, preparation and cultural influence. WTOP-FM Washington, DC’s “Capital Culture” explores DC life beyond politics and traffic. Premiere Networks-syndicated morning man Bobby Bones’ “BobbyCast” offers in-depth interviews with country music makers. And at rocker KISW Seattle, morning man BJ Shea’s “Geek Nation” explores tech while “An Acquired Taste” by “Elvis Duran & The Morning Show” cohost Bethany Watson talks about women’s issues in a light and fun way.

Also, “Enough About Me With Kirk Minihane” gives the WEEI-FM Boston morning show cohost an opportunity to stretch out on topics and with guests in a way he can’t within the confines of morning sports radio. “I wanted to talk with people long-form in a way I couldn’t do on the radio show,” Minihane told Goldstein in a video played at the conference. The biweekly podcast averages 50,000-60,000 downloads but sometimes spikes over 100,000. Minihane says it’s helping turn a younger audience on to the morning radio show. “When something spikes, whether I get into a fight with somebody or I have a big guest, you can definitely feel it,” he said. “We had Lenny Dykstra from the Mets on and we went back and forth screaming at each other for 10 minutes,” Minihane added. The station played it the next day on the morning show to cross-promote the podcast. “When they’re good, we play them and promote them,” Minihane said.

Several of these examples illustrate what Goldstein sees as radio’s golden podcast opportunity: local podcasts. “Local is the missing component in podcasting today,” he said. “Radio is very well equipped to do local podcasts—both public and commercial radio.”