

Why podcasts don't belong in content marketing plans



By [Ann Druce](#)

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Content marketing is not all about blogs. (In fact, it's not all about digital marketing either, but that's [another conversation](#).) Of course a blog might be a great option for you, but you don't have to stop there.

If you're marketing a professional service, a white paper might be what you need to position you as an industry leader. If you have a technical product, you might choose to publish a case study. If you've the back-up of a big corporate budget, you could conduct industry-related research and present that.

The dreaded podcast

There are ebooks, videos and newsletters, cartoons, infographics and newsletters. But there's also the dreaded podcast.

I love the idea of a podcast. Download it and listen to it while you're driving or at gym. While you cook, garden or spring-clean your store room. As a student, I loved "radio theatre". (Does anyone else remember "Consider your Verdict" and "Squad Cars"?) But so far, I've yet to find much memorable in a podcast.

Instead, they tend to be more reminiscent of a primary school oral. "Good morning, Mrs Smith and Grade 7. My name is Ann Druce and I'll be talking to you about my hamster." On a good day, it might be more like the principal's address at prize-giving after a long day. Not too bad if you're close enough to the stage to see the speaker but, otherwise, a tolerable cure for insomnia.

"Squad Cars" had compelling scripts, interesting characters, trained actors and sound effects like breaking glass and police sirens. Changes in pace and volume, disagreements, emotion and intrigue. And ad breaks to give you time to re-focus. Modern talk radio is a bit less structured, but it still offers much of the same: presenters with charisma, variations in pace, content and opinions. Talk radio challenges and involves you and breaks the message up into digestible bites.

The go-to option

If you expect to engage your target market using a podcast, you'd better offer them the same level of professionalism. It's not enough to give expert advice, you need to do it in a way that will engage them and make sure that they don't drift off. And if you aren't sure you're going to achieve that, go back to a visual format - even if it's just the humble blog. (There's a reason it's the go-to option.)

That's not to say you shouldn't consider profiling your business or your brand using audio, but add a visual element too.

Back up a speech or interview with slides or use video. (Even low budget video blogs are building loyal followings and traffic to their websites by creating personal relationships with viewers.)

Your content marketing programme, like all your marketing, should be based on a well thought through strategy.

Decide on your objectives, what you want to say, to whom and why. Then select the best tools to achieve those objectives. You don't need every shiny new toy, but be sure that those you choose serve you well.

ABOUT ANN DRUCE

I help clients define and execute digital marketing strategies, to make a real contribution to achieving their business goals.

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