



The following is the full transcript of Remarkable Episode 4: [Jon Nastor on How To Create Raving Fans and Podcast Evangelists](#)

Begin Transcript

In this episode of remarkable, you get to hear a fascinating interview I had with an entrepreneur-turned-podcaster who's made podcasting a full time job since stumbling into it less than two years ago.

Through his podcast, he's interviewed over 200 entrepreneurs and business owners, including Seth Godin, James Altucher, Guy Kawasaki, and Gretchen Rubin.

He's the author of a best selling book, co-author of a podcasting course, and cohost of another successful podcast about podcasting. This was a fun interview and we cover a ton of useful tips and insights.

You'll learn the best way to cold-email guests, how to genuinely connect with your audience and building raving fans that tell others about you, how to structure initial deals for sponsorships, and how to respond to the question 'how many downloads do you have?' When you don't have big numbers.

He also shares the one thing he's done that's had the most impact on his rapid growth and success, as well as the one mistake he made that destroyed his listener-ship and download numbers temporarily, and how you can avoid the same mistake.

On a lighter note, you'll learn the selfish reason he started a podcast in the first place, and why he's using a microphone that [Pat Flynn](#) gave his nine year old daughter.

Here's the host of [Hack the Entrepreneur](#), Jon Nastor.

Dave: Jon, welcome to the show, I appreciate you coming on and speaking with me for a little while today.

Jon: Dave, I'm really really excited to be here. Thank you for having me.

Dave: So, for the people that don't know a lot about you or what you do, why don't you give us a little bit of background. What were you doing before podcasting?

Jon: Is there a time before podcasting? That was like a year ago or something!

Dave: Yeah, haha.

Jon: And so, I'm a Canadian. I guess you could call me an online entrepreneur. I've been full time for almost four years online now, doing random wacky things. Building products, writing stuff, doing those kinds of things. Last summer -- well, I should actually go back.

About two years ago I did a podcast with somebody locally. I live most of the time - or at least half the year - I live in a small town in Canada in the middle of nowhere.

So I'm super super isolated from everyone. And there's one guy here that I ended up finding on twitter that's actually in this city, and he was obsessed with the technical side of podcasting. He's really really good at it.

He didn't know what to podcast about - so we started having conversations at the coffee shop, and I was like 'man, we should do something about online business or something. I can just talk about it because I love talking about it, but I don't really know the technical side, so he did all of it.

And so we did the normal went for like 13, 14, or 15 episodes or something, and it just kind of fizzled away. And then, I went to a conference in the Philippines and met some really really smart people - some really really brilliant podcasters as well, and it was like a mastermind, and so it was understood that I need to start a podcast as some point.

Dave: What conference was that?

Jon: [Tropical Think Tank](#). Chris Ducker. It was the first one in the Philippines. Pat Flynn was there, [Meron Bareket](#) was there, [John Lee Dumas](#) was there. So there was only I think 25 of us total, so it was very podcasting-centric in that way, although it wasn't supposed to be. It just worked out that way.

And so it was determined that I should start a podcast. And so, a few months later after like stewing on it a bit, which was last summer - mid July, I just decided to start. And so I spent the summer just recording episodes.

I did like 22 or 24 episodes, something like that, before launching September 5th, which was like last week. And so it just hit my one year anniversary, and - yeah, it's kind of changed my business and changed my life, actually. It's pretty shocking what podcasting has done for me.

But that's sort of how I got into it. I just hated my voice. I typically can't listen to myself still. And I never thought, like I play drums in a band but I would never get behind the microphone, that wasn't me. And so the fact that I literally get paid to podcast now, that pays my mortgage and stuff blows my mind.

Dave: That's great.

Jon: It's literally the exact opposite thing that I ever thought I would be doing. And every time somebody goes on twitter and emails me and is like 'man, I love your style, and you have that Canadian accent!'

All these things I didn't think I did, I didn't think I have a style, I don't think I have a Canadian accent, and I just never expected to be good behind a microphone, and I'm still not sure that I am but I'm working towards it and now I just really enjoy it.

Dave: Yeah, well, first of all, congratulations on hitting that year mark. From what I understand, a lot of people give up way before that, so the fact that you've stuck with it is a good sign. Tell me a little bit more about what your online business background is. Has that been your profession for quite some time now?

Jon: Almost four years.

Dave: Okay.

Jon: And so, yeah, almost four years full time. Maybe three and a half. It was like April 1st three years ago, about three and a half years ago that I went completely full time online.

I had some offline businesses before that, and then I sold one of those and then I spent all the money trying to figure out how to start an online business but not actually doing any of it, just sort of looking and buying the stuff, to the point where I then had to get a job.

And then once I got that job again, I worked the job for almost a year but built the business on the side and was just like 'I'm never going to screw this up again. I'm never going back to having to work - especially going to an office and just sitting there.'

It's not something I can do - so it's not something I'm going to do. So I just made the leap to online, and just started building software and selling it in small amounts and bigger amounts some places, and that's it.

Although I'm completely non-technical still, with the podcasting and building software. I've just sort of partnered with people has been my trick to get things done.

Dave: Get the right people on the right team.

Jon: Exactly.

Dave: So what was the purpose with starting the podcast, other than it sounds like you were told to do so? Did you have a business purpose in mind or did you just think it would be a good thing to do because a lot of people are doing it?

Jon: It was completely selfish. So, and this is - I don't want to say this was before the big Renaissance, but like Serial didn't exist yet, if you can believe that, that kind of thing. It wasn't everywhere yet - it was massive, and there were people doing really really well at it and I was listening to a ton of them, but it was really selfish.

As I said, I live in a really really small town, and I'm isolated, but I love talking business. And my business velocity page at the time was doing well, and so I didn't have to work, it was kind of taking care of itself, so I had a few months off.

I was like if I just call up [Seth Godin](#), or just email him, and say 'hey, Seth, do you want to just get on and talk to me for a half an hour because I'd love to talk to you?' He'd say no! But if I'm recording it for a podcast he'll probably say yes.

So I literally had 30 people on this list of people I wanted to talk to, and it was instant. I knew who it was, and I wanted to talk to those people.

I figured the show would last about two months, and then I would get to talk to all those people and it would just fizzle and I'd go onto my business.

But within that two months, it kind of took off in its own way and I had to make a decision whether to push it as far as I could or to just let it fizzle out, and I decided consciously to push it as far as it could.

And I'm still not sure where that is, but it was selfish at the beginning, and it kind of got its own traction, and so I went with it.

Dave: So you essentially started because you had a list of people that you wanted to talk to and you thought podcasting would give you an opportunity to talk to them.

Jon: Oh, yeah.

Dave: That's awesome.

Jon: It's awesome, right? It's like 'I'm recording it for a podcast.' 'Sure, I'll talk to ya!' It's not like 'no I don't have time to just talk to you, man.'

Dave: So how did you come up with the name? Did you have the name while you were recording with people, or did you already have in mind what the concept would be? Which came first, I mean, you already had the list of people.

Jon: You mean the name of the show?

Dave: Yeah.

Jon: [Hack the Entrepreneur](#) actually came from a good friend of mine - another person that I met at Tropical Think Tank. His name is [Gabriel Machuret](#). It's Colombian, so I'm not sure how to pronounce it.

A brilliant guy, and we were actually going to start after the conference, and then we started talking. We kept a mastermind group going, which still goes to this day, once a week. And we were going to do the podcast together, him and I.

He came up with Hack the Entrepreneur. We were on a walk, we were going over ideas, and he's a brilliant guy. Terrible follow-through.

Dave: He's an ideas guy, right?

Jon: He's an ideas guy. He's doing ten thousand things but don't complete any of them. I do nine thousand things and complete at least one or two of them. So he came up with it, and I was like woah! And then instantly got home and typed it in, and was like 'how is Hack the Entrepreneur available? Literally for \$10 to buy?'

To me it just seemed like hack is such a popular thing - a term that I really don't like, but it's whatever. It worked, and so I bought it. Right? And then we were going to work together, and he literally -- I had just given him 'hey, dude, I need just like 10 questions for you to answer.' And after like a week of not doing it, I was like 'screw this man, I'm doing it.'

So I emailed him and was like 'sorry man, can't do it, jumped on a call and was like 'not doing it, not doing it, but can I keep the name?' And he was like 'yeah, you can keep the name. I'm good at ideas, I'm not good at anything else.'

But he is, he is, he's super good at other things. He's great at business. That was it - he came up with the name. Lots of my friends came up with the questions, most of it's not my ideas. It's just be bouncing ideas off of as many people as I can get around me. All virtually, of course, because of where I live.

Dave: Right.

Jon: But it's just finding people that I trusted on Facebook or Twitter, or email, and Skype, and just like 'can you just listen to this recording?' Can you listen to this? Lots of the recordings that I did in the beginning didn't get released, because I was working out what I was doing.

I kind of had an idea of what I wanted to do, and I knew I needed something catchy, I knew I needed something to get people to listen all the way through, I knew I needed something to really make it stand out and be unique, and that's where the Hack came from at the end, and then my little essay, and the sound effect.

All the things that sounded really cheesy as I was doing it, was suddenly going to be really really lame, or really really awesome. And I'm still not actually sure which one it is, but it works.

Dave: It's working, yeah.

Jon: So that's how it came.

Dave: So did you have to go back to the people that early on, that you didn't release, and just tell them 'I'm sorry', or did you try to re-record?

Jon: A couple of them I tried to re record, because it was my fault. So, with my show, it's kinda short and I feel like both my guest and I need to have a certain level of energy. We need to really be engaged to make it work.

It's either my fault or their fault if it doesn't work. I'm not up to blaming who's who, but I do have people sign off, they check a box on a disclaimer that clearly says that I need a certain thing for both me and my guest for this show, and it might work and it might not.

One thing that makes my guest step up their game, because they could be wasting their time by recording, and I might not release it - but then without their notice or anything, I can just refuse to publish. Which I've done a lot of times, and I just don't get back to them - but if I know that it's totally my fault, and I want this person because I know they'll be good on my show.

I have gone back to quite a few people and just re-recorded it, and they're totally cool with it. Because they want it to be good. They want it to work for the audience.

And I think that they respect the fact that I understand my audience enough to not release something to them, and that we need to re record it and make it better.

Dave: Yeah, that's great. Is that document something that you could share, or something that we could share with the audience?

Jon: Yeah, totally. Hacktheentrepreneur.com/format. That's literally - so the email that I send to my guests has a link to format. And right at the top of the format, in red, there's a notice. It says 'due to the nature of the interview process, not all interviews will be published. Hack the Entrepreneur reserves the right to refuse publication for any reason without notice.

And then, when they go to my meetme.so link, the scheduling link, there's a checkbox where they have to agree to the terms of service that they just read.

Dave: Okay! That's really helpful, and I'll include that link in my show notes for that.

Jon: Awesome.

Dave: So when you were creating the list of people, who were some of the names on the top of the list that you were really hoping to meet with? I assume Seth Godin was one of them?

Jon: Seth Godin was one of them. [Patrick McKenzie](#) was another one. [Brian Clark](#) was another one, who I actually didn't get to interview until later in the year. [Johnny B. Truant](#) was one of them, who I actually interviewed and never released. He has to come back on my show, I just keep forgetting to actually get him back on.

He's somebody who - people sort of like, when I originally came online years ago, just was like reading stuff and everything, there's people who's work I was reading and following, and these are the people.

[Ryan Dice](#), who I actually didn't get to interview until now, he was one of the original Godfathers of internet marketing at the time I came on, even though he was a bit shady at the time.

He totally admits it at this point. Seth Godin was definitely on that list, [Elon Musk](#) is still on that list.

Dave: Yeah, that'd be a tough one.

Jon: Yeah, I haven't even tried. I don't feel like I deserve it yet so I haven't. [Gary Vayner-chuck](#) is on there, he's been scheduled four times to be on my show and we still haven't made it work. But he will be one of the people. So people who I respect their work. I just want to see how they're thinking.

Dave: So do you get pretty nervous right before the show or leading up to it? I guess the interview?

Jon: I freaked out before my first one. I literally had never interviewed anybody until I met Patrick McKenzie first, and I had no idea. It doesn't follow my format or anything. I just went with it, and I couldn't believe we were doing it.

And then I kind of got better. I used some stuff to cheat, like I have some sheets that I use, a PDF that I print out now that I've made, that has spots to put in, like what I think potential hacks are.

I have their name in bold, I have their business name in bold, so I know I can always reference back to it. And then I have a sheet that I keep on the desktop of my computer that has questions and like a flow, so I can pull people.

I want it to kind of stray off one question at a time. Meaning that I don't want to be like [Tim Ferriss](#) where we're just going to go down some weird wormhole. It's just not my style. I want to keep it concise. It's called Hack the Entrepreneur, so it should be quick and hack-y, right?

I want to ask a question that I ask everybody, and they're going to respond. I want to listen, right down something where we're going, and then follow up with one question - but only one question. And then I want it to be like 'okay, now let's go to here, now let's go to work, okay, now let's go to ideas.' And so I can always bring it back.

I do that now still, even though I probably don't need to, but it worked for me at the time because I was freaked out that every time the person was talking, I was like 'are they going to stop right now? And I don't know what to ask them.'

So, I just had these things, and so, at any time if they just stopped, I could be like 'here's a question now, I'll just ask that.' And so now I just do. I don't know if it's a crutch, but I think it works for me, so I just keep it. And I tweak it so that it can work, but yeah. So, yeah, I was freaked out. I still get kind of nervous.

Dave: Yeah, no. I think that's a great process. I'm doing something similar where I have kind of a free hand pad that I can jot down things and then I also have kind of a list of questions to default back to.

Jon: Nice.

Dave: So, did you have a launch strategy? It sounds like you knew some podcasters and that's kind of what pushed you into it. Did they give you advice on your strategy for launching, or did you just click post and cross your fingers?

Jon: Yeah, they didn't really give me any advice at that point. And again, I wasn't doing it for the launch, and with a launch strategy.

I was literally doing it for the selfish means of actually getting to have these conversations, and then produce them in a unique way and really radio focus with like a definite quick intro, no messing around, just quit, straight to the point, and then do the whole late night talk show thing where, this still drives me crazy, and I haven't heard your show yet, so I hope that

Dave: It's not live yet, so whatever advice you give me I can make edits.

Jon: Okay, so here's my advice, and because this drives me crazy and everybody does this except for, like, David Letterman who's not doing it anymore. But when they're introducing a guest, and when you're introducing a guest on a podcast, almost everyone - 99% of the people start of - okay, John Nastor's on the show today, Jon Nastor did all this.

Rather than 'my guest today does this, this, this, and this -- my guest can help you do this. My guest has also done this. Now, welcome to the show, Jon Nastor.' The last two words should always be the person's name, not the first two words.

Because otherwise you just hear it, and if somebody hasn't heard of me, or they're just like 'oh, I heard Jon on 5 other podcasts,' they'll kind of clue out. Rather than building anticipation like 'who is this?'

So there was some TV and radio cues that I really focused on, and I wanted to see if I could make it unique. But then, I launched terribly. Like I launched with three shows, and then I went to a random schedule, and my first month I got hardly any downloads. It was just how it was.

But then my second month it kind of took off. And then my third month was even better, and then it fell apart again.

But it wasn't really a plan that I had, there were some things I did. And I really focused on getting ratings and reviews from people. It wasn't thought out at the time, I've since made [The Showrunner Podcasting Course](#), and I kinda go back through my process and be like 'what did I do at this stage, what did I do that, and then write it all down?'

It's like oh, there was a kind of a plan, looking back. But at the time, it was just kind of winging it. It's like using things from business, using things from marketing that I knew, and from experience, and what I thought would probably help it work.

And then obviously I did have the email of Pat Flynn and stuff, that had helped, but I mean I didn't have Pat on my show until like Episode 90 or something.

I still haven't Jon Lee Dumas on. Chris Ducker is actually coming up on Monday. And So I didn't use those people that I knew and that had kind of got me started. I didn't want to use them as a platform, or a springboard.

They put their work in, they did it, and also because lots of them are on a ton of shows, and so I didn't see the value right away. All of the people that I had on right away, I literally had no connection to. It was just blunt emails, it was just like 'here we go. This is me. I just want to interview you, and here's why you should do it.

Dave: Any tips to reaching out to people that you don't have a connection to, or don't know? I met you and [Jerod](#) at the Podcast Movement, and then I've made some other connections through introductions, but any advice for reaching out - kind of a cold email or a cold call to somebody?

Jon: Yeah, totally. Use [VoilaNorbert](#), it's a great link for , you. VoilaNorbert.com. It's a service where you can type in the person name. For Jerod, say, he works for [Copyblogger](#), so you would just type in Jerod and then you type in the domain where he works, copyblogger.com, and it will give you his email address.

So, a guest that you want, that you know works for a place, or I've had to do it this way - James Altucher. I typed in James Altucher and then gmail, because I thought well, everybody has a gmail account! And it gave me his email address. And then I sent a form email that I have that is super super short.

It really has to sell them on the benefits of being on your show. They don't need to know that you're this massive fan, they don't care. They get lots of emails from fans. They want to know what this is going to do for them.

And what's in it for them to be on your show. Who's your audience, and how can they help your audience and how will that benefit them and their business.

That's all people want to know. Keep it to 6-7 sentences if you can, and always include the link, I believe you use [Calendly](#)?

Dave: Mhmm.

Jon: Calendly, there's meet.so, they're just scheduling links because you do not want to ask them to be on your show and then email them back and be like 'well, how about next Wednesday at 3pm. Because as soon as I get back from somebody I'm like 'no, I can't play this game. I can't go look.' And then we find a time, and then find out that we're on completely different time zones. Just send me a link! I can look what's available for you, and then I can just choose it. Perfect. It makes it easy.

So make it easy, make it short, and make sure that you always always always provide what's in it for them. Not what's in it for you, not how much you love them.

People are typically are 80% of the time they're on their phone, and they're in the back of an Uber cab, and they're getting your email and they don't want a 10 paragraph thing about

how much you love them, and how much you've always loved them, and how great they'll be on your show.

Just tell them what they can do and how they can do it, and then make a link there so they can book it instantly from that phone via Uber.

It's just the way people work. They're busy. That's why you want them on your show, right?

Dave: That's good advice. If you don't have a show that's very established and you don't have the numbers, any tips for somebody that's maybe just launched - maybe has a dozen shows, what would be the value, or how would you go about pitching, or how did you go about pitching the value to the first 2 dozen people before you had something established.

Jon: It's a great question. Don't mention numbers. Still, my numbers are great now, I don't mention numbers. Unless somebody replies back -- I think 6 people of the 200 people I've tried to have on my show, or have had on my show, have replied 'okay, well what's your audience like?

And sometimes I just ignore it. It's like, you know what? If it's not worth your time unless there's a thousand people listening or 10,000, then whatever. To me, it's the whole Gary, Van and Chuck. Like 1 is better than 0. Right?

I mean seriously, you have to know the value that you provide and your audience provides. I don't care if your audience is 47 people. I could email almost anybody and be like 'I can get you in front of 47 people in a room today to talk about your ideas and to sell your business to them.

They'll say yes. Right? That's a full small room of people. Once you get up to 200 listenings, that's a big room full of people. That's a lot of people. Don't underestimate the fact that 200 people are listening to your show. That's massive.

You don't have to tell them that, but use that confidence. Yes. Here is my audience, not here's my audience of 226 people on average. It's here's who they are, here's what they want, and here's how your story can provide them value and you will gain audience from this.

It's perfect.

Dave: Yeah, no that's great. That's extremely helpful. So I'm curious, with all your guests so far, who has been the most fascinating person to -- does anybody stand out or come to mind as just a fascinating person that you've interviewed?

Jon: [Dame Stephanie Shirley](#) was probably. It's the least like any of my other episodes, but it was - I felt really inadequate through the interview, so James Stephanie Shirley, who is like 88 years old or 89 years old, she literally started a software company in the late 1950s, early 60s, where it was literally done with punch cards in the UK. And before that, at like age 2, she was sent on like a train to flee the Nazis without her family to England, at like two years old!

And she never really saw her family again, and then around her teens she decided she was going to make a life worth saving because her parents spent everything they had left, and they fled over the mountains separately, and sent her and her sister on a train.

It's the craziest story!

Dave: Yeah, that's awesome.

Jon: And she literally went on to create this business with punch cards and she got women to start working from home with punch cards when women weren't supposed to be working from home, all this wacky stuff.

She literally created a multi-billion dollar business that she ended up selling in the 90s, and now she has given away like hundreds of millions of pounds. It's just insane. The story of this lady.

She was introduced to me by another guest I had had on, who was like you have to have this. She had never been on a podcast before, and so I had this wacky conversation with this lady who is older, and she was on an iPad, and she had the video on, and I never do video.

It was super early, it was like 4 in the morning my time because she's in England, and so I'm not good in the morning.

I had read her book over the few days before, she wrote this [memoir](#), it was a business book, a memoir type thing and I was like crying at times. It was amazing.

I was crying at times. Dame Stephanie Shirley, it's an amazing story. She just did a [TED](#) talk in July in Vancouver, so you can find that online I think soon.

Dave: Yeah, I'll link to both of those. That's really fascinating.

Jon: Yeah, she was cool. It was different. If you listen to that show it's different from all my other shows. There's not really a starting and an ending point, we just had this really cool conversation and it was fun.

Dave: So did that kind of open up your new possibilities in your mind for where you can take this show? And have you explored any other, I guess, outside those core circles?

Jon: Ahh. It's interesting because it really opened it up to who I can have on the show. And I think that helped a lot. It opened me up to changing my format. My format is super strict.

Actually today, an episode came up with [Dane Maxwell](#) from the Foundation, and I recorded his episode 6 months ago, and refused to release it. It got really awkward, and the conversation was supposed to end at one point, but then he starts typing on his computer to people, and then it's like 'we should keep this going' and he starts asking me questions.

It was all weird, and I couldn't decide if I should just edit it out and make it my episode or what. Today I released it completely unedited. It's like 50 minutes.

All my episodes are 30 minutes basically, and it's nerve wracking. He curses like a banshee on it. I warn people at the beginning, and then I go into my exact same intro, and then we go through - I pull out this hack and I have this weird thing that I do.

It's really, so far, it's literally been out for like two hours now, and I've already gotten crazy feedback from people because I ask for it. I'm like 'do you like this? Tell me if you hate it, that's cool, I really felt like the conversation is worth it.

And now, just with this initial feedback, it is pushing it to think that maybe I could open up the doors of my format, or else create a side sort of show where some of my guests, we go deeper on things.

Which I have been told that some people might be interested in. But it's weird. It's an evolution, right? When you launch your show, I'm 130 episodes in right now, right? So it's changed a lot.

If you listen to my first 20 episodes, then like 21-50, you'll see changes, and it's sort of evolved. So to listen to my show now, episode 130, and think 'wow, I could never come up with a format like that, right at the very beginning!' And it's like 'well, no, I didn't either.'

You kind of have to follow your gut more than anything. Really don't listen to other people. Don't listen to your audience, they really don't know sometimes what they want. But sometimes you really have to follow your gut and kind of know what direction you want to go, and then take feedback off that.

There are people that email me still and are like 'oh, your hack is completely crappy, it blows.' It's like 'whatever man, the shows' not for you. Perfect. There's tens of thousands of people that listen to it and love it.

I don't care that you don't like it. I don't want everybody to like it.' But if you always listen to those people, we would never find out way, so you really have to trust yourself more than anything.

But then when you ask for feedback, then listen. And just get feedback on certain aspects maybe. But then, take all that feedback, and kind of let it settle inside of you, and then make a judgment call based on your gut, and what your intuition is telling you.

Because you can have so many people. People are going to hate this, love this, hate this, but it's you honestly who has to like it. You have to know that it's going to work for whom it is the audience that you're trying to build.

So, this is the first time, with this episode coming up today, and I'm only going off about this because it's really internally right now, and literally it happened right before this call I was just going through stuff on twitter and my email and on Facebook, and I was like this is really cool!

Because it scared me to release this episode. It's one episode. Dame Stephanie Shirley also scared me because it really ventured far from format. But they've both so far been sort of a success.

But it's also, I think I just have a really awesome audience. And they'll allow me to try new things, which is really cool, and so I appreciate that, and it really means a lot to me that I can really try things that actually do kind of scare me to publish.

Dave: Yeah, see you are a marketer, totally. You get the fact that you have to connect with what people want, but then you have to do something that's unique to you. To me that's marketing - that's what makes things remarkable. You have your own set of experience, and your perspective, and your view on life, and your take on that. I think that's great.

You've mentioned you have a great audience. And it sounds like it. How do you connect with your audience and go from having them be a passive audience where they're just listening and downloading and subscribing to better understanding, and what are you doing to kind of corral them and put some structure into that?

Jon: I give them complete and utter access to me. In every way imaginable. I was literally, yesterday, I was sick we had just moved in and then I got sick in the afternoon and felt terrible. I lie down for a nap and then I woke up to texts. Two texts from different listeners. And every once in awhile - I forget I do this - but I give out my cell phone number.

Dave: That's great!

Jon: They texted me. I say, don't call me, because even when my mom calls me I don't answer. I'm terrible at answering the phone.

Dave: Yeah, I hate answering the phone.

Jon: Yeah, but text me, and I'll totally answer! I wanted like a picture of like where you're listening, so I get these wacky things.

So, it started off, really it's building relationships, right. One person at a time. The whole one is better than zero. Don't focus on building an audience of a thousand people. Focus on building this one person audience. Across multiple people eventually, but worry about the one person.

And, open yourself up. You have to do it. You cannot expect to build a big email list or build a big audience to your podcast if you're not willing to do the other side. Your side of the relationship. You can't have a relationship with anybody in real life and not talk to them. Not be open.

Like, if you met somebody and you started to be friends, well you wouldn't start to be friends if you were like well, I'm not going to give you my email address, I'm not going to give you my cell phone, well I'm not going to talk to you if you ever ask me something. I'm going to ignore you.

You know what I mean? It just doesn't make sense. You have to open yourself up and you have to go over the top, responding and talking to people. This is completely not scalable. But I haven't really found where it's not scalable yet.

I've got a fairly good sized audience now and I can still manage it and still love it. It overwhelms me some days, but there's tips and tricks you can kind of, once it gets to that point, but that's a good problem to have.

So it's really just being human and just treating people like actual people. The people listening to your show are legitimate real human beings, with you in their ears.

And then they might get so inspired to actually write you an email. Sometimes the most heartfelt crazy email, when everything has gone wrong in their life and is happening, and it will like bring you to tears. And for you to ignore that or to not give them that access, or 'just go to my contact bar.'

It's like 'what the hell am I? Just a vendor who wants to sell you pens?' Like come on! Like Jon@hacktheentrepreneur.com That's it. It's not that hard. It comes straight to my cell phone. I'll get that email and I'll respond to you, as a human. Not as a marketer, not like 'oh, did you check out my other episode? No! I never say that to people!

They're already listening to me! And most people will not do that. And actually I got this from my first guest, my second interview but my very first guest on Hack The Entrepreneur, [Chris Brogan](#). And my first question, still at the time, and still is, is what's the one thing you do that's allowed you to be successful?

I didn't even get that right. But he said here's the trick. Nobody else does this, but I respond to people. People email me or tweet me or Facebook me, I respond. Most people in this game will not respond to people because they want to act like they're too big and too good and too busy, or they just don't care. Respond.

And that has built everything I possibly have. And I was like 'wow, that's amazing.' And so then I started focusing on making sure to give out my email, making sure to give out my Twitter, and making sure I give out my cell phone number. And I want you to reach out to me. And I'm going to respond to you like a friend. And like a human being. Because that's what you are.

And it doesn't sound scalable and I don't know how it really works, but all the sudden it goes from doing that to one person a day, to five people a day, to ten people a day, to thousands of people listening. Because those people become I guess Evangelists and I guess will talk about you all the time.

Dave: Yeah, sure.

Jon: Maybe there's something inherent where I know now that these people are out there, and I'm having conversations with even three of them as I'm starting, and it really gives me confidence to do a better show because I know that those people are out there, and so it just makes the whole thing get better, you know what I mean?

And I'm not sure exactly how or why it works, but for some reason it's gone from one person emailing me to literally tens of thousands of people listening to my show. And somehow I never stopped doing that one simple thing of responding to people.

Dave: Yeah, that's great, and as I'm listening to you I'm thinking about my background. I do a lot of teaching small classes, small conferences, things like that. It would be the same for me.

It'd be like if I walked out of the room without answering the questions of the five or 10 people at the end that come up to talk to you. And just answering those questions at the end, they feel a connection. You've treated them like humans. And those are the people that come back the next time. Right

Jon: Exactly. And people, I don't know why we get -- when we take it online, right? So five people come up to you after a talk, and you're probably amazed by that. This is freaking awesome, right?

But if you do a podcast, and only 5 people come to you on Twitter, or even one person, you're like. 'Oh, whatever. It's only one person.' That's one person! I don't think I've ever listened to a podcast in my life and been so inspired that is at down and wrote somebody an email about that.

That's amazing to me. That's a really bold thing. I've had people tell me I've never done this before and this makes me nervous to do this, but I need to tell you this.

That's amazing. Don't undervalue that. Don't think that 'oh, well I'll wait until my audience is big like Jon's is, or Pat Flynn's is. Well, it's never going to get there if you don't start with that one person.

The same thing with email lists. Everyone's like 'how do I build a bigger email list?' Well, 'how many people are on your email list?' '73 people.' Well, what's the last thing you've emailed them?' 'I've never emailed them, there's not enough people on there!' 'Are you kidding me? There's 73 people that said they want to hear from you, in a room!'

My office is a fairly decent size. If I had 73 people in here you wouldn't be able to breathe.

Dave: Yeah.

Jon: If all those 73 people were in here and I said nothing to them for 6 months, that'd be really friggin' awkward.

Dave: And, they gave you their email address.

Jon: Exactly! That would be so awkward and weird. But somehow when it's online we just look at it as numbers, and not as people, and we screw up. You never go from 73 to 73,000 because you screwed up the first 73. Sorry, that's how it is.

Treat the people like they're golden, because they are. They're human beings. They're real people. That are into your stuff. And even if there's only 7 of them. Freaking put your heart and soul into your next email that you write them.

Because you won't get to 70 from 7 if you don't do that. You won't get from 70 to 7,000. It's the way it works.

Dave: Yeah, that's great. That's awesome. Do you mind sharing just a little bit about how your numbers have changed. You've been at it a year now, and you don't have to give us exact figures, but I'm just out of curiosity, where did you start? What kind of downloads were you seeing early on? And maybe where are they now, what ballpark?

Jon: My first month I launched September 5th. September last year, I did 27 hundred and something downloads. The next month I did 27 thousand something. And then I believe I did 50 thousand. And then it fell apart to like 20.

And I went through this huge dip for like three months. Even looking back now, I don't know why I didn't stop. But I didn't. But because that whole 'new and noteworthy.' The whole promotion within iTunes stops after 8-10 weeks.

And then it drops off. And then it's like 'okay, now, so I go from two thousand downloads a day to two hundred a day. But it's consistent. But it's small. It seems small. But it's not small! That's two hundred people that are actually listen now. That's awesome. That's what I gathered from iTunes.

Very cool.

And then last month, august of this year, it's the first month I broke a hundred thousand downloads in a month.

Dave: That's awesome.

Jon: Which blew me away. It's amazing. It's like, wow, I'm not sure. And it looks like this month I'll do a little bit better than that again. And - but I mean like my email list. I just broke a thousand people on my email list. I don't use lead magnets or whatever people call them. I don't try and trick people into getting - not that it's bad, but I don't want just a large email list.

I don't want to just brag that I have this massive email list of people that don't care about. I have just over a thousand people- like I literally broke a thousand a couple of weeks ago. I think I have a thousand fifty today, I saw, because I get a daily email from [Mailchimp](#) that tells me.

Dave: Yeah, I do too.

Jon: But I get like, 52-62% open rate on an email. And I send out one email every Sunday, and I literally write it that day as I'm about to send it with something I'm thinking about or working on, or that will help propel you through the week. And that's all I want. And I just want those people

I've only sold them a bit on the Showrunner podcasting course. Other than that it's just me working, and them being able to respond. Sometimes I get overwhelmed with responses on Sunday. That's when I know I've hit something right. And it's awesome. It's amazing. So those are the numbers, those are the exact numbers.

Dave: That's great. Thank you for sharing that with us. That's - congratulations again. That's a really steep curve. That's great. Are you letting people know about your new episodes through your email list? Or just letting them know about your thought on Sundays?

Jon: Actually, I just started, because I've heard from a lot of people that they want email updates. So now on my site you can actually subscribe to the RSS. But I release three episodes a week - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday. And because it's three a week, and because when you get on my email list I'm literally saying I just want you to get my best writing every single week. Literally from me.

I don't want to then bombard you with three emails a week. Because it's not what I promised to give you. So now I've started separate emails where you can literally get a separate feed. And it comes through the emails - it's not me writing, it's not that.

We put that out two weeks ago, my developer did. So there's only like, a little less than 5 people on each one so far. I didn't even mention that I have it. It's just on the site now, and that'll start building.

I just thought that nobody would want it because it's three a week. And there's the choice that you can get it when it comes out live to your email, or else on Saturdays you get a compilation email with all three episodes there. So.

Dave: Yeah, no I think that's a good idea and I'm on your Showrunner list, so I get those email notifications as well, to kinda remind me of what shows or what's been released or what's happening over there.

So let me transition, if you don't mind, just for a few more minutes. How did you get connected with the folks at the new [Rainmaker or Rainmaker Digital](#), formerly Copyblogger media, and Jerod? How did that come about?

Jon: Rainmaker Digital, I have to write that down. Last night Jerod and I had to record a new [Showrunner](#) episodes, and I had to call them the Artist Formerly Known as Copyblogger. I honestly don't know what they're called anymore. So Rainmaker Digital, it just changed at the beginning of this month.

Copyblogger is one of the things that got me going in online business. I've admired their work literally for years. That's why [Brian Clark](#) was like number three on my list of people needed to talk to. I'd emailed Brian last July and said that. He's terrible at email, like I am, so it got missed apparently

And so I didn't want to ask him again. Whatever, I didn't even get a response, whatever, we'll call other people then, right? But he was following me on Twitter, and then in like January or February he direct messaged me on Twitter. He's like 'I hate to say this, but I'm feeling kind of bad and left out that I haven't been asked to be on your show yet!'

And I'm like 'you're kidding me man! I said 'check your email right now!'' And I forwarded him the email from July and he's like 'oh. I totally did not see that. I feel terrible.'

So I was like alright. Let's go on the show. And he came on the show the following week. Did a cool interview, and literally the second I said 'okay, we're off.' He was just like 'okay, I haven't thought about this, but we're starting up a podcast network in a couple months called Rainmaker.fm, and you should be on it.'

I was like 'oh, okay.' He was like 'I haven't told anybody this, I didn't even plan this, but that was a cool interview, that was fun, you should be on.' And so that was it. I was one of the two shows that were non Copyblogger people. When it launched. And then before Rainmaker even launched, then Brian called me one day and asked if I had thought about doing a podcasting course.

Which I really hadn't. But he introduced me to Jerod, said that they'd been getting lots of questions by their audience asking about podcasting. He's like 'obviously you know how to podcast, and you did it without any help and you did it all by yourself and made it work really well. I think you guys could work really well together, so how about we do it?'

I was like 'is this a question, or is this rhetoric?' Obviously the answer is 'yes. Let's do this. So we partnered on it, and yeah, we created a course. It's been great.

Dave: Yeah, that's awesome. So you, I guess you had about six months of experience, or nine months of experience at that point. When you helped create the course?

Jon: It would've been nine months. Nine months experience.

Dave: Yeah. Well, that's fascinating. How did that go, the course creation. Working with Jerod and the other folks over there?

Jon: Well, I'd never created a course before, so like anything you've never done before, if that's creating a podcast or software or anything, it's like you're just starting at this like idea of this massive thing you have to do. And it's overwhelming, right?

So it was like three weeks of that - me just in my office. I was like I have no idea, I have this massive course I have to create. But then I was like 'okay, Jon, how do you do anything else?'

You break it down into ten small parts, or a hundred small parts, however many you have to to make it digestible. I literally took yellow post it notes, just started it across my desk. Started moving things around. What else do I need? What else do I need? And then I looked at them and I was like 'yeah.'

And then I moved it to a [Trello](#) board. Trello is free software that's kind of like post it notes, but online.

Dave: Yep, yep.

Jon: And set up a Trello board. And then I sent it to Jerod and was like 'how does this look?'

And he was like 'that's awesome. We literally just marked off colors with who's going to do which videos - which changed as we went. Because then it would be like I would do one, and it would be like 'no, I can do this one really well too now, as a follow up.' And just went for it.

Literally the creation took a couple weeks, once we actually got over ourselves. That was it. Jerod did like the technical stuff - like the technical stuff in the course because I'm really not good with beans, I don't get it.

I don't understand that part. I don't understand microphones really. I have a microphone that Pat Flynn bought my daughter. That's all I've ever used. I just think I understand the interviewing. I think I understand the marketing. I think I understand the launching. I think I understand building an audience.

But I don't understand the technical side at all. And I don't do any of it myself. So, luckily I had Jerod to do all that, and to take that. But it's been a huge success. And it's really helped my podcasting a lot. Just dealing with, and getting to now relate with so many hundreds of other people doing podcasts. It's really made me step up my game. It's good. It's great.

Dave: That's awesome. I've got another follow up question. But I want to slip on this tangent over here. So Pat Flynn bought your daughter a microphone. Can you give me more there?

Jon: I always just let that slide, and no one's ever let me let that slide. So this goes back to the Philippines, Chris Ducker's conference. My daughter who was with me at the time, she was nine at the time, she started a blog on our trip.

We were on a trip for about 8 weeks, went to Japan and then through the Philippines before the conference, and so she started a blog and it was really adorable and stuff. It kinda got word around the conference because she had been doing it for a few weeks at that point.

She was there, she was the only kid there of course, and she's blogging, right? And so at one point we're eating lunch in this little room and I look over at the stage and there's Jon Lee Dumas and my daughter Sadie just sitting there chatting.

I have a picture of it. It's the funniest thing. And, of course, what he's saying 'oh my God you have to start a podcast, you'll light this world on fire and make ten million dollars probably!'

And it was amazing, I was like, I have this training course for it, podcast paradise, I'll let you in, you should start a podcast based on your traveling and stuff, Sadie. So, which was cool, everybody saw it 'oh my God, we took pictures, it's amazing, Sadie's going to start a podcast.

So the next day at lunch, to make a short story long, the next day at lunch we're just like standing in line getting our food, and then Pat's right behind us and he goes to Sadie, he's like 'Sadie, I really do agree with Jon that you should start a podcast.' And if you want to, just tell your dad, and when he gets home he'll email me, and I'll send you all the gear that you need to start. Because I think you would be amazing at podcasting as well.'

And she was just like 'whoa!' And then Pat talked to me after, and he's just like asking what kind of gear. And he told me 'well, you should start a show too, Jon' and he asked me what I had. And he was like 'okay, well I'll set you guys up with like real setup. Like the exact setup I use. And then you can use it too, and Sadie, and you guys can both rock out.' And that was it! As soon as we got home he sent it. It all appeared magically from Amazon and different places. That's it.

She did a show, she made it to 15 episodes, and then she got sidetracked because she wrote a novel last year.

Dave: Because that happens. That happens all the time.

Jon: That was because of another interview I did with [Joanna Penn](#), who's an independent author in the UK, she heard about Sadie, and then she was like 'can you give me her email address? It won't be creepy.' And then she emailed her and told her about this month long thing in the UK, called [NANOWRIMO](#), which is national novel writing month.

And then her and Sadie started emailing back and forth, and then Sadie ended up writing a novel two months later during NANOWRIMO. Which now she's going to use her podcasting gear, she just decided last week on our road trip that's she's going to do an audiobook version of her book.

Which her book is available on Amazon, you can buy it, she sells copies of it. Which is crazy.

Dave: What's the name of it, I'll include it in the show notes.

Jon: So the podcast is called '[Between Two Worlds](#).' And how do I not know her ... that's crazy. I can't remember her book. Worst. Father. Ever. One second. The cool thing is I can actually go to Amazon and look in her last name. Oh, '[A Dream Inside a Dream](#)' by Sadie Nas-tor.

Dave: And how old is she?

Jon: She's ten now.

Dave: We're going to have to keep in touch. I've got an eight year old who's very similar personality, wants to explore and build things and create and innovate. So I'm going to try to do my best to encourage him to go that route.

Jon: That's awesome. Sadie would love to talk to him.

Dave: That's great. That's great. Let's me get back to the Showrunner. A Couple more questions, I don't want to keep you too long. How did you come up with the business side of the Showrunner. Can you give me any details about how you decided to - was it a revenue sharing, or were you getting paid to help produce the course, or how did that go?

Jon: No, I got paid nothing. It was simply a revenue sharing. A really really generous revenue sharing. And for the legal people out there and everything, there's absolutely no contract signed. It was literally just kind of how I've done business.

Any time I've been involved in contracts, it never goes anywhere, and it just gets stuck with lawyers and it costs a bunch of money. It's literally just trust. Just Brian and and myself on a phone, blah blah blah, and then that was it. We just agreed. Let's do it.

That was it, never talked to him again until after launched it actually. Just talked to Jerod, and they gave us full access to designers and developers, and administration people to like get, like, everything done. It was amazing. So we really just had to create the course. We

kind of scoped it out in our heads, and then, it's a brilliant team that made it look awesome and work awesome.

That was it. And it was literally just I guess a handshake without actually ever meeting in person.

Dave: A virtual handshake.

Jon: Yeah, and it's worked out better than anything I've ever done, so.

Dave: And I know you're, currently closed, you can't enroll. But about how many people have you gotten in this first wave?

Jon: I believe we just passed 300 people.

Dave: Great.

Jon: I believe so. I wish I should have got numbers for that.

Dave: I just wanted a rough idea.

Jon: It's just over 300 somewhere. And I don't know exactly where. It's been amazing. It's been great. I'm really really happy.

Dave: Do you have plans for additional follow up, or?

Jon: Yeah, It's getting weird. Rainmaker digital is doing some things. Some of its out of my minds. It's all out of my hands actually. So we'll have to see where it goes. It might be getting a big revamp. It's going to carry on, we're still doing it, and Jerod and I have some ideas, but it might become part of something bigger. Which I'm not sure about yet.

Dave: Okay, we'll hush that and move on.

Jon: The artist formerly known as Copyblogger.

Dave: So do you have, maybe two more questions here. Do you have anything that you've tried to help build your audience or your podcast that just hasn't worked or that, you know, anything we can learn from a mistake?

Jon: Mistakes. Oh boy. I think I typically just make mistakes and - a big mistake is failing to stick to a regular schedule. Which I did a lot up until June, actually, June was even one of the worst months ever.

Where, because I was preaching to stick to a schedule, then I really didn't stick to a schedule and then I pushed it to really not stick to a schedule. Meaning, when I say I'm going to publish Monday, Tuesday, Thursday to my audience. You have to publish those days.

So in June I had missed some days because I was traveling and stuff. And then in June I was missing some days and I thought a decline in downloads so I decide to really push it just to kind of experiment on myself - and it absolutely; by July my numbers were horrid.

They were less than half in what I did in August once I started. Through the end of June to July I kept a solid schedule all through August, and then August as I said, did my biggest numbers ever. And I will do better this month. And I have not missed an episode now, and I guess like forty something episodes. So this is moving to the third month.

That's the biggest one - it's all part of that relationship and trust, right? If I tell you it's going to be there. And people have way too many options for podcast. So if Jon's not there on Thursday today, just because I don't even know why, or really I don't care why.

He's not there like he said he was going to be I'm going to go over to Pat Flynn and listen to his show. And once you listen to Pat Flynn's show, you're not going back to Jon Nastor. It is, because Pat's awesome.

Dave: It's nice to know that it's not just a theory then it's fact, that if you mess up your schedule then you're literally going to see the numbers drop.

Jon: It was terrible, I mean it was bad. To the point where it's like, okay, I can't do that anymore. And it was done as an experiment at the end because I really did want to verify that. And yeah, it's terrible. It's just inconsistency, right? It's inconsistency in downloads - people just don't want them. And so that's it.

Dave: So, where is Hack the Entrepreneur going from here? Any immediate plans, or are you just staying the course for the foreseeable future?

Jon: I'm writing a book that's going to come out hopefully in the next couple of months. "Writing" a book. It's going to be a book which I've been told by probably thirty different people now, listeners, that I need. It's going to be a book of the top 50 Hacks from my show.

Based around the five Hack subjects that I have, that I sort of - on my site I separate everything into Being Wrong, Fears, Habits, Mindsets and Ideas - so I'm going to take the top 50. I'm going to take 10 from each of those.

On the show after the Hack, I do my little essay thing. I'm going to clean those up, and it's going to be just kind of a resource, kind of, where you can just go through. I have this great content, these brilliant people I get to talk to but it gets messy when you have approaching 150 episodes.

It's hard for people to know where to start, so this will be a place for them, with an intro and an outro. It's been almost completely laid out by amazing audience members, who have just kept emailing me stuff.

So many have emailed me at this point that it's like I literally have to do it. So it's my September project is to get the book together and get it out. And then, to kind of see where it goes from there.

Other than that, I think stay the course. And then probably, I'm going to get into a product or something myself with Hack the Entrepreneur, but I'm not sure exactly where that's going yet.

Dave: Yeah, I was going to ask. Now that you've heard so many entrepreneurs give you hacks and insight, does it stir up something in you - are you looking to use their hacks and start a business now?

Jon: Yeah, but at the same time, I'm not so much going through - I've gone through in this last year this weird transformation from just online entrepreneur who nobody knew to being known, which is what I wanted to do.

That was kinda my thing, if people could actually know me, would be cool. But now, I'm becoming known as a podcaster, which was hard for me. It was hard - no, no, no, I make software. I don't podcast.

I have a podcast just to talk to people, but now I'm realizing that I'm actually kinda good at it, from the humblest Canadian way I could possibly say that. And I really really enjoy it. And I get paid to do this now, with sponsors, it blows my mind. So, I'm cool with it.

I'm kind of - any business I now want to create, or ever think of creating, is all based around Hack the Entrepreneur. My ultimate goal for the humblest Canadian way that I've only ever told my mastermind guys is that I want to turn Hack the Entrepreneur into like a media empire if I can.

I want to create an amazing blog around it, a podcast around it. Other people have asked to write on my site, stuff like that, and I just haven't done it yet. I haven't known the correct path which I guess none of us do until we do it.

I have big sort of goals for Hack the Entrepreneur at this point. Just like any other business I don't know exactly how I'm going to get there yet.

Dave: Yeah, well I encourage you to do it. Build what you want to built, right?

Jon: Yeah, totally.

Dave: Well, I don't want to leave without asking you a little bit about the sponsorship. So how did you - I know you said now it's your full time gig. How did you get your first sponsor? How did that play out?

Jon: Well, it was weird. It was like six, seven weeks into podcasting, and this was like last late October, and one weekend I was like I think since my numbers were going up -- it was foolish because it was too early in that way and I shouldn't.

But I was thinking over the weekend that I should approach sponsors and try to find somebody. I was doing the editing myself, and I got to a format I wanted. I'm not really good at making it sound really good - I don't have the patience.

So I needed to hire somebody, and I needed to hire somebody to help me find more guests, because I was doing a lot of shows, and I had ran out of that list of thirty by now. So I needed a sponsor to pay for those things. And I literally got approached the following Monday.

I got three different emails from companies. I had talks with all of them, and the best one was Freshbooks. They're Canadian like me, I use their product, I liked it. And so, I said I'm going to have just one sponsor, I'll put a banner ad on my site, I'll give them an ad in each show - everything.

But I don't want to change. I didn't want to just go to random sponsors all the time yet. One thing is that it's a lot of work, and another thing is I didn't think my audience was read for it. Which they weren't. So, Freshbooks just signed on for three months, and then two months into that, they signed on for another 3 months.

Once that one ended, they're actually still signed on now. But we went from around March or April - so about six months into it I started getting a backlash from my audience. They were like 'alright, Jon, we get it, and we kinda hate Freshbooks now.'

Dave: Too much.

Jon: Literally, every episode, three episodes a week, okay Freshbooks! It was like Jon, we get it! And Freshbooks kind of got the same feeling. So around Christmas, at the time, [Midroll.com](https://www.midroll.com), which does, they're like an intermediary, they take sponsors and they sell them to you. You can sign on with them.

They only have I think six or five business podcasts, with Pat Flynn, John Lee Dumas, [James Altucher](https://www.jamesaltucher.com), it's amazing. And then there's me. They asked me around Christmas actually if I would join. I turned them down.

I actually didn't really know who they were at the time. I was like no, I have Freshbooks, I'm signed on to one on one, and they were like 'okay, well, if you ever want to, then by all means get back to us.'

So I learned a lot more about podcasting after that, and I started the course, and then I was like okay, this Freshbooks thing happened, and I didn't want to start finding my own, so I went back to Midroll, and we went into talks for about a month, and then I signed on. And late July I started doing ad spots for them. It filled me up to I think November.

My inventory is booked up right now. Yeah, they're awesome. They get me great sponsors, they deal with all the money, they just pay me out once a month. It's easy, they give me the ads, they give me all of it.

So that's it. So now this pays for it. It's weird. So now I literally can't actually miss an episode anymore because I'm sold out for three episodes a week.

Dave: You're contractually bound to keep going.

Jon: Which is good, actually. It's also like when I joined Rainmaker.fm, it wasn't just me by myself. You know, you look at production, split the bid, it's like whatever, it doesn't matter.

And all the sudden it's like no, actually - and I can't let grammar drop on my show notes or anything because it's going through Rainmaker which is Copyblogger, which has all these people.

You have to make this better. It's really made me step up my game. Midroll has now made me step up my game further.

Which is cool if you can do it yourself. And I guess I had to do it to a certain level or else Copyblogger wouldn't have taken me on, or Rainmaker Digital now, or Midroll wouldn't have taken me on. I guess I had enough level of professionalism. But it's still up to me even further when I did join them.

Sponsors are great. But they're also a pain in the butt, but it's - I get so many emails about it now because I'm one of the few business ones on Midroll. So I get a lot of emails from people, how do you get into that. I'm like 'dude, you're on episode three. It's way too soon to be worrying about this.

'I'm doing super well on week 4 - new and noteworthy, I have all these downloads!' I'm like 'yes, but, in six weeks it's going to just fall to crap. It does. Because you're going to lose all that and you have to power through. And once you power through that, Midroll might listen to you.

And I know, because I've had Midroll tell me that - I mean, don't give out our email addresses, don't. I've already told you. Voilanorbert. You can figure it out yourself.

Dave: So your show is hosted on Rainmaker.fm. But you deal with the sponsors directly.

Jon: Yeah, I have no contract with Rainmaker.fm. I do all my stuff. They just promote me to their audience, but I deal with all my sponsors. That was - that first, right after our interview, that conversation, Brian was like 'I don't want to take money from you or control you or anyway.

I just literally think you're doing something cool and I would like to have another show that's not Copyblogger on our network when it launches, and I would love to build your audience and help you build your audience for you.

I was like well, how can I say no to that.

Dave: Yeah, very cool. One last question about sponsorship. I'm not interested in your numbers now, but in the early days, as you know you're already getting emails from people, what do you think someone could expect that's getting a few thousand downloads a month, as far as how much money they can make from sponsors.

Jon: So, like when you're approaching guests. Leave numbers out of it when you're starting out. Once, with Midroll and stuff, it's all numbers. It's literally a CPM (which is cost per thousand) and there's no getting away from that.

But originally, I should get more money for the amount of downloads I had. Because I made like a package deal. This is business, this is marketing, this is just selling something 101.

Create something really valuable. If your audience numbers aren't that valuable, to you they're not that big. Then don't mention them. Just talk about how you have this really engaged audience, they're this -- really narrow them out and show, even if it's not exactly

right, at least show that you have thought about who exactly your audience is and why it will work with this company.

I gave them a sidebar ad, Freshbooks, on my site, and it was like nobody else is going to get that - you guys get that all the time.

I get quite a few visitors to my site - I gave them text ad in each show notes, and I gave them sponsorship there. And I said you're my only sponsor, so even to this day, we're on this podcast to your audience, I'm talking about Freshbooks. Tell me there's not value to that - there's absolutely value.

And Freshbooks knew that. They even admitted like six months later, yeah, we knew we were taking sort of a chance on you. Your show was cool, we thought you were doing something cool, and that it would grow, and we could grow with it, and we were happy to do that because you gave us so much exposure and you still do.

Do that. If you're out there thinking of sponsorships, make a cool package and like with your audience, build a true relationship. Don't just think about it as money. The money's great - but that's not what you're doing it for. You're doing it so that your sponsor has to win. They have to win as much as you do - actually they have to win more.

If they're paying you more money than they're getting in return, somehow, and that can be just through branding, it doesn't have to be through direct sales. The branding of me talking about it everywhere.

Then, they won't keep sponsoring you. Until they're making, getting more value for the dollars they're giving you they will not keep spending with you. And why do I want to have to find a new - one sponsor, my only sponsor, every month or every two months or every three months.

I'd rather get a little bit less money. So it's the whole thing of just make a win win situation for you and your sponsor. Give them as much as you can. And if you tell them you're going to talk about them everywhere you go, and talk about how this sponsorship works, then do that. Don't not do that. Don't underdeliver.

Over-deliver on everything and build a real relationship. The girl at Freshbooks, which I don't want to tell you her name because you'll be able to find her email address.

I can literally just email her at any point any time of day or night, and if she's awake she'll get it on her phone and get right back to me and get me anything I need.

We have an amazing relationship. When I got to Toronto. I see her. It's cool. It's awesome. And we each kind of took a chance on each other.

I went sort of lower pricing than I thought was right, they went higher pricing than they thought was right, and we grew together. And you can do this.

And I didn't have big numbers at the time. I just had a willingness to really set up a winning relationship for both of us. And then I stuck to what I said I was going to do.

Dave: Can you share that first, just your first package, what that number was?

Jon: The first package, I think I was getting \$2000 a month. I don't actually know. I think it was \$2000 a month, it might have actually been a little bit less. Yeah. That was when I stepped up to three episodes a week. I'm trying to think on my feet but I think it was that.

Dave: So you were putting out about 12 episodes a month.

Jon: Yeah, I think that's when I stepped up. That was the whole turning point, like I had to either quit this or I've got to keep this momentum going and push this as hard as I can. And I decided to push it as hard as I could.

So I stepped up from two episodes a week to three, and I've just focused on becoming a podcaster and doing as good as I could. But yeah, maybe it was like \$1850 or something. But yeah, so that's what it was. But now I get paid like 3 or 4 times that.

Dave: Yeah, that's great.

Jon: Which is great. More. But it's just where it needed to start. And now, u fortunately once you get to a certain sort of level, then it's strictly CTM at that point, which is cost per thousand.

Typically you're going to get people that - if you email people asking if they want to sponsor your show, they're going to say 'how many downloads do you get?'

Totally fair enough question. Just do the politician thing. Just answer other questions. If you're asked a direct question, just answer a bunch of other questions. Just tell them how awesome your audience is. Tell them about the engagement you get.

Tell them about your email list if you want and how you can, when you email those seventy eight people on your email list, that you'll also put a PS to your sponsor and thank them, with a link. All those things help. Show that you want to help them and their business, and they will take you serious, which is how it is.

Maybe you're going to get less money than you expected, but one is better than zero. That counts for audience and that counts for dollars.

I don't care if you're getting \$10 a show and you're getting \$0 before, that's infinitely better. That's just the way it works. You've gotta start somewhere. Just work your way up.

Just trust me, even if you get \$50/episode. The first day you get \$50 to do an episode of your podcast. It feels really awesome when you get to go out to dinner that night and think 'man, podcasting just paid for this!'

It's amazing! It's an amazing feeling. And it's small, and it will grow from there, but it gets you - it really incentivizes you and gets you that feeling of 'okay, this is how it works. And now continue building. One is better than zero. One is better than zero.

Dave: That's great. That's great. So my last question for you is what is the most remarkable podcast that you listen to.

Jon: So I just did a crazy road trip across the country, so I listened to so many podcasts. I'm going to go with the new podcast that's literally I think on episode 11, called [Question of the Day](#).

It's hosted by Stephen Dubner of [Freakonomics](#) fame, and James Altucher, of James Altucher fame. They literally get together in a studio daily in New York.

It's like a 10 minute or an 11 minute episode. Beautifully produced by the studio, James has a hard time being reigned in, but Steven does a great job.

Literally, just one of them asks the other one a question, and the other one doesn't know what the question is when they sit down. And they just give an answer.

And it's completely random - business stuff, just general. Life to games, just weird - and it's super short, produced really really well.

They must be part of Midroll because they have all the same sponsors I do - and in a short episode Steven does two ad spots but he does them really well and he's really making me step up my game for how ads are read.

Which is good for you if you're thinking of doing sponsorships. Learn to really put your personality into these ads because it works better, and therefore you can earn more money from it because they earn more money, your sponsor does.

So for that alone, just for the ad spots, it's totally worth it. Its called Question of the Day, Stephen Dubner and James Altucher.

Dave: That's great. I'll check that out. And lastly, where would you like to send people that want to learn more about you and what you're up to and keep up with you.

Jon: If they're on Twitter, Twitter's amazing, so @JonNastor. If you're not on Twitter, you should be on Twitter, but if you don't want to listen to me, then go to [HacktheEntrepreneur.com](#). You'll see my pretty face up there and a place to put your email. Put your email up there, and you'll get a welcome email.

The only automated email you'll get from that list. And hit reply to it, and that's where you can contact me. Comes straight to my phone.

Dave: Great, excellent. Jon this has been extremely helpful, and you've provided quite a bit of information, so I'm going to have a lot of notes to add at the end here. I really appreciate it.

Jon: Absolutely my pleasure, Dave, thanks for having me.

Dave: Thank you.

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