

PODCAST POWER



Podcasts can help elevate your brand.

BY NAREN ARULRAJAH

Podcasts are back and bigger than before. More than a third of Americans have listened to podcasts, and 15 percent of Americans listen to one weekly, according to a survey by Edison Research.

A podcast is essentially an Internet broadcast. It can be in audio or video format, and can be distributed on your website or through platforms such as iTunes, and played on any device.

The benefits for an aesthetic practice include:

- *Building an audience.* Unlike most forms of content distribution, podcasts are published on a schedule, usually daily, weekly, or monthly. Over time, you will acquire a following.
- *Growing your professional network.* Inviting colleagues to appear as interviewees or guest co-hosts is a great way to create or strengthen professional relationships. It also keeps the content diverse and interesting for your audience. As a bonus, your guests will typically promote the show within their own networks, expanding your reach.
- *Establishing yourself as an expert in the field.* A podcast is the ideal opportunity to share your wisdom, educate the public, and communicate your philosophies about patient care.

The content of a podcast is more important than the technical aspects. A podcast should be polished and professional. You can produce it yourself with minimal recording equipment and basic editing software. Alternately, you may choose to hire a professional or marketing company to help.

Before you begin recording, make a plan. This starts with:

- *Defining your audience.* Are you talking to patients, or fellow physicians? What demographics are you targeting?
- *Adopting a theme.* Naturally, your topic will be related to your specialty, and the sub-topic should be of interest to your target audience. Try to choose a unique angle that supports the image you wish to cultivate.
- *Naming your podcast.* Like a radio or television show, a podcast needs a memorable name. Something clever and catchy is good, but a descriptive title is most important.
- *Choosing a format.* Podcasts can be audio or video, and each format has advantages. Audio is easier to

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record, while video content is more engaging. If you are new to podcasting, an audio format is a good starting point. You can change to video later, and it will be seen as an upgraded format. However, if you start with video and then change your mind, moving to audio will seem like a downgrade to your audience.

- *Picking topics.* Choose the topics for your first few episodes before you begin.

Last but not least, don't forget to market your new podcast! Announce it on your website, in social media, via email, and invite your patients to subscribe. ■

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