

Alright, we've talked a lot about ideas in terms of how to set them up for success. Now, let's talk about those actual ideas and turning them into something. These, this part of our conversation is going to help you very much as you head into the next couple of weeks of content, development, and production and before you get to metrics and sales.

And the reason I'm sort of going through this in a 101 is as a Content Director and as somebody who writes about which podcast to listen to I'm always asked sort of what am I looking for either in terms of something to recommend? Or something that I think will be commercially successful. Now, this is useful for you guys to know only in as much as I think it'll help you set up for the next modules as you go through this course with all of us.

So without further do, what am I looking for? Alright, this is the only ironclad rule I have. And even that is flexible. But. You need one of these three topics. One of these three formats or one of these three hosts. You have to have something that is compelling in a winning format and or on a specific topic. So if you are making a show about knitting, your knitting audience is probably going to find it. You should also have a good host or a good format. You don't need all three of these things, but you absolutely must have two. And ideally you'll have three.

Hosts are not necessarily people who are the most famous for most notable, but they're the people who can most sort of compellingly pull a listener into their world. They can be a tour guide. That's really important. Shows that have a very winning format sometimes don't even have host. Song Exploder comes to mind because it's the perfectly formatted show. It's a 20 minute show about a song. You hear the ingredients that go into making that song by the people who chose and created those ingredients. And then you hear the song. It creates tension. There's your learning stuff along the way. And that tension is released in a very sort of ecstatic way when you hear this song a new with new ears, even if it's something, you know.

Hrishikesh Hirway who created Song Exploder is the host, but he barely hosts it. That said it's because he doesn't need to but you know what they have. It has a format that will be amazing for literally any song that's out there and it's a show on a specific topic, which is music. So again, one of these three things is not enough, you need to ideally three.

What am I looking for in terms of shows that I can recommend, shows that can grow? These are content that's geared towards the audience and tomorrow because they have hosts that sort of speak to new ideas new topics. These are shows I can cross promote, shows that publish regularly and shows that are prime for emerging platform.

So, what does that mean? It basically means if you are making a show that already exists and it says Radiolab knockoff. Why wouldn't I just listened to Radio Lab? If you have a new idea that can be exchanged or shared with some of the shows that already exist because everyone's going to want to meet and talk to these hosts. And if you publish regularly again, this shouldn't be short of a shock to people but a lot of people have a good first month where they publish a couple episodes and then they drop off. These are not shows that I can grow.

Commercially appealing? Does it meet an existing or anticipated advertiser interest? This is why there's so many business shows for example. Do I love that this is the case? Not necessarily, but being honest if you want to have a show that has a chance for success you're reaching either a high-priority audience like Millennials or your meeting an existing or anticipated advertiser interest.

For me personally these are shows that are on mission. Are these voices underrepresented in podcasting? Is this show creating formats that haven't existed before? Is this a show that will bring in new audiences? These are people who haven't listen to podcast before this is these are the three sort of rubrics through which I evaluate good ideas and I think will be helpful to keep in your minds as you are starting to create.

Sometimes it's also helpful to illustrate something in the negative. So what am I not looking for? Non replicable masterpieces. A lot of people I've met can make one thing that sounds amazing. Can you make 10? I'd rather have a show that is reliable, rather than genius. Because I know that if I tell an audience person to listen to it, they'll be able to tune in again and again and again and hear something great instead of one thing that's great. But never gets repeated again. In podcasting that doesn't really help.

Expensive things by unproven talent. I think that speaks for itself. Shows that already exists. A lot of people want to pitch me ideas that are very similar to something that already is out there. Why wouldn't I just listen to the original? Tell me your idea for a science storytelling show and make sure it sounds different than Radiolab for example.

Things that set value production over regularity. Again podcasting and audience development and commercial development is all dependent on you being able to attract an audience and keep that audience. If you make one beautiful masterpiece, and it sounds great because it's well produced and there's Foley artists and original music and talent and blah blah blah, but you never do it again. That's not likely to get an audience. In the podcasting space regularity matters.

And like I just talked about if shows don't have a compelling topic, host and or format or they only have one of those three. It's harder for me to say yes. And shows by and for an over index audience segment. This is you know, sports fans frankly white guys. If you're making a show like that, if you're making a political show, a sports show make sure your sounds very different. Or more impressively reached an audience segment that doesn't already get spoken to regularly. Podcast is supposed to democratize our conversation and I'd like you guys to be part of doing that.

Alright, just so you know how this works. This is really going to be something you get into in the next two modules, but just so you know going in. There's a lot of ways to pilot. Essentially they all involve a pitch. What an episode is comprised of in terms of segment A, segment B, voiceover, banter. You're going to have to produce sample audio to give to somebody you're pitching whether you're pitching a network on your show or a radio station or a company. Essentially you're going to have to show how your show is put together. How it's structured. How its paced. And ideally how much it costs.

Then if your show gets picked up for pilot, you get to make something. Usually you get to make three episodes. Sometimes you only get to make one. But like TV piloting you get picked up and or you don't and you can make it on your own. But essentially if you want to create a pilot to then show to other people with the idea that they will fund the next creation of it. You're going to need to do a lot of work to show how you got to the sort of concept. What each show will sort of do in the overall, you know pantheon of your shows existence. And you're going to have to put a budget next to it.

Alright. Piloting 101. A couple things you should know. Not everyone is a host. People who think that they should be hosts are usually not the people who should be hosts. But if you get in a booth, if you make a sort of initial pilot attempt, you'll be able to learn that very quickly. Allow for surprises. Allow for somebody who you didn't think was going to be the star of the show to be the star of the show. And make sure that when you're piloting your list, you're getting feedback from a lot of different people. These aren't just people who you know are going to say something positive. Really hear what they have to say and ask them pointedly, "would you actually download this? Would you listen on a weekly basis?" Unless the answer is yes. Keep going back to the drawing board.

And something to think about in piloting is do you have an episode on your hands or do you have a show? An episode is one idea that can sustain an episodes worth of interest. Can your idea sustain 20 episodes? Is it something you can always go back to and they'll be plenty to say? Does your idea work if you repeat it? These are all things that I have in my head when I'm evaluating ideas.

Alright. I hope this has been tremendously helpful. I hope it sets you up for success with your own ideas. And most importantly I hope you're going to get a lot out of not only this but the modules that are to come by these fantastic teachers doing this along with me.

Thank you again. Find me on Twitter. Like I said it @caitlin\_thomps. In the instructors forum leave me messages. I'll be responding back and forth during our week and as always good luck.