



- TOP 5 THINGS -
**TO KNOW BEFORE
YOU START A**
PODCAST





With over 1,000,000 podcasts in Apple Podcasts, simply **"hitting record"** and starting a podcast will not lead to long term success and hitting the **Apple Podcast charts.** I unpack the 5 most critical things **you need** know **BEFORE** you **start** a podcast.



Hi, I'm James McKinney, the Creator & Host of The Startup Story podcast. I launched **The Startup Story** on January 15th, 2019 and within 2 months we were **#26** in our category on Apple Podcasts. Since then, we are regularly in the **Top 20 in Australia and Top 100 in the US and UK.**

I am going to share with you **the 5 most critical strategies that I employed with The Startup Story.**

The reason I tee all that about me and **The Startup Story** is so that you understand, this is real talk from a podcaster and not just some theory from a self-proclaimed thought leader or expert.



So with that in
mind...let's countdown
**my top 5 podcast
strategies** that have
helped me lead **The
Startup Story** to the
levels of success we've
achieved thus far.

Strategy #5



Be a listener

- **First**, and foremost, if you are not a podcast listener and are simply starting up a podcast because you see the potential in the market...then just stop right now. Don't even start one.



I'm dead serious, there is a nuance to podcasting that you are absolutely clueless about if you are not a consumer of podcasts.

- **That said**, if you are a podcast listener then think about your top 3 favorite podcasts.



What is about those top 3 that you enjoy so much?

- Is it the audio quality, whether it's really well produced or is it the raw and gritty audio sound you like?

- Is it the use of explicit language that you enjoy or maybe the opposite, maybe you like it because you know you can always listen to it around the kids without fear of having to explain a new vocabulary term to them.

- **Until now**, you might have thought you liked those shows purely because of their content, and of course the content matters, but there is actually so much more to what makes that show your favorite and you need to think through those things.



You see, those things are part of why you are thinking about starting a podcast.

You loved those shows so much that you became inspired to start a podcast because of THOSE things...whatever they might be.

- **Spend some time truly** thinking through the various elements of your favorite shows and make a list of the things you want to bring into your own show.

Strategy #4



Be Consistent

WOW does consistency matter!

If you have some experience in software or web development then I don't need to tell you how important the User Experience is. Think through your favorite stores, websites, and apps. They are your favorite because YOU KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT.

If it's a favorite retail store then your favorite because you know you can rely on their sizing to be exactly what you need, or exactly where to go to get the item you need.

If it's a favorite website, like Amazon, you know exactly how their navigation and filters work. You know that their **FREE** two-day delivery for Prime Members is reliable.

The fact that you can count on those stores and sites to deliver a consistent experience for you...plays a **HUGE** part in why you keep coming back and spending your money with them.

Well, you are wanting your audience to spend something more important than money with you...and that is their time!

That said, if you are wanting to monetize your podcast then make sure to check out my video on **"How to make money podcasting?"**

But with regards to your audience's time...they need to know what to expect from you and if you just launch right now without thinking through everything then you are probably going to end up making a ton of adjustments and those inconsistencies are going to turn off your listeners. Do the work on the front-end so that the adjustments are minor and not disruptive.

What are the main areas you need to nail down immediately?

- Is your show a serial show or an evergreen show?
- Is your show simply you sharing your thoughts with the occasional guest or is your show a weekly interview format like The Startup Story?
- What do the first 15 minutes sound like for each episode?
 - What's the flow? If you listen to The Startup Story the flow is very much the same.
 - Guest speaks their intro
 - My intro theme plays
 - I go into an intro monologue.
 - Then I intro our guest and we roll into the show
- Are you going to have ads? Where and how many per episode?

Lastly, what day are you going to release your show on? Whatever day you choose, stay consistent! As your show grows they are going to be expecting that new episode in their queue and ready to hit play as soon as they see it.

Consistency is so important that I would HIGHLY suggest you create a backlog of finished episodes before you even launch so that you are not scrambling at the last minute to put an episode together and then creating something that sounds like nothing that your audience is used to from you.

Your audience needs to know what to expect from you and when to expect it.

Strategy #3



Be Social

Podcasting is very much a one way communication with your audience and, as your show or brand grows, your audience is going to want to interact with you in some way. Think through the various ways you might be able to accomplish this.

For **The Startup Story**, I mentioned (in every episode) that if they left a written review that I would read it in an upcoming episode. I was speaking to them in one episode, they spoke back in a written review, and then I answered them in another episode by reading their written review. It is a small conversation...but a conversation nonetheless.



This small gesture did three important things for the show:

- First, written reviews in Apple podcasts are INCREDIBLY significant for being discovered on the platform.
- Secondly, it showed all listeners...new and old...that I was looking to hear from them.
- Lastly, it showed that I follow through on what I said and this trust factor is SO INCREDIBLY powerful for the success of your show.

Another way to engage with your audience is to bring them into your social media channels. I am still so amazed at how few podcasts leverage social media for audience engagement or for simply promoting their podcasts. Seriously...look at the top 20 podcasts in the category that is relevant to you and try to find them on social media. It truly is astonishing how few are there.

If you leverage the social media channels then mention that in your episode **(consistently)** and watch your audience engagement continue to increase.

A very significant reason that your audience will grow is because the people that continue to listen are listening because they connect with you in some way...be accessible to them...be social!

Strategy #2



Be CRYSTAL CLEAR
about who your listener is

I cannot stress the importance of this strategy enough. In fact, I truly believe that the quick success The Startup Story saw was because of this strategy.

Before I ever recorded my first episode I spent a good amount of time truly thinking through the various personas of my listener. In fact, I even named my listener Erin because it was a name that (audibly) could be for a male or female...because I knew my listeners were both male or females.

If your show is solely for a male or only for females then you might want to use a name that is gender specific. But that is how specific your listener persona should be...so specific that you give them a name. From the moment I fully identified my listener I started thinking through all the other elements of my show to ensure that I was delivering maximum value to my listener...sorry...to Erin.

As you think through all the details about your listener this clarity and understanding will help you to create a show that delivers a tremendous amount of value to them as well. Again, you are asking them to devote consistent time with you...this is how you ensure that you are delivering the most value and therefore giving them a reason to keep coming back.

Now, for me...I had many different points of clarity that I had to work through to truly understand what my listener personas. You are going to have your own points of clarity to identify but I would challenge you to think outside the box a bit when it comes to understanding your listener.

For example, if your podcast is about living an active lifestyle in your 70's you might initially think that your listener consists of those in their late 60's or 70's. But as you begin to identify your listener at a granular level, you might start to realize that your true vision for your show is actually about providing tips and tactics for those who care for those in their 70's.

Being CRYSTAL CLEAR on who your listener is will make all the difference to the development of your show so don't take this step lightly. In fact, having a podcast launch coach was so powerful for me and I will forever be thankful to my coach for helping me gain clarity in this area.

Strategy #1



Be Authentic

I cannot stress the importance of this one enough. In fact, it almost seems weird to call it a strategy...because being yourself should not be a strategy. That said, the reason **I DO** call it a strategy is because of how intentional you need to be to ensure you remain authentic.

If we go back to Strategy #5 I asked you to think of your top 3 favorite podcasts and what are the elements of those shows that you love so much. Well...one of those items might be that you really like the host or maybe even more specifically...it's something that the host does that you really like.

Well...when you get down to it...it is the host being their authentic self that you love so much. Don't try to mimic that host or any host...**be you.**


The incredible thing about podcasting is that YOU will find YOUR audience as long as you remain authentic.

The flipside of this is to create a persona. You cannot keep up a persona for the long-haul. Sure, you might be able to get through 30+ episodes...but overtime you are going to reach burn-out trying to keep up a persona that is not natural to you.

I truly believe this truth with my very being. If you want to be in this for the long-haul then it has to be YOU that is in it...not a persona.

You have a very unique message that nobody else can bring into the podcast world...not miss that opportunity by thinking otherwise.

Also, once you release your first episode make sure to leave a written review for The Startup Story in Apple Podcast and plug your podcast. When I read it in an episode it's like a free ad for your show within my show.



I truly want to see you
succeed. **Entrepreneurs**
support other Entrepreneurs
and that is my way of
supporting you.

