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Episode 81:

“Starting a Podcast to Support Your Book”

Mike Michalowicz: Welcome back to the Don't Write That Book podcast where you can learn how to write your bestseller and own your authorship. Follow along with us as we give you an insider's view of the book industry. Now here are your hosts. Myself, Mike Michalowicz and AJ Harper. A quick shout out for our show's sponsor, thanks to Julie Bee, she's the author of *Burned*.

AJ, you've lived it, seen other authors with it.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Got a little tip about overcoming burnout?

AJ Harper: Well, it takes a long time, I can tell you that. But I usually think it's so focused on how we can be more productive or find more hours in the day. And I really like the way Julie approaches things, where you're thinking about your values in conjunction to not burning out.

Mike Michalowicz: Her tagline is “Burn bright, don't burn out.”

AJ Harper: I love that.

Mike Michalowicz: It's amazing. If there's a book you should get right now, it's Julie Bee's book. Check it out. *Burned: How Business Owners Can Overcome Burnout and Fuel Success*.

So one of the questions I have is if your wife is at the new place now and you're here, is there a potential that you're gonna be doing the like spouse, one spouse here, one spouse, their thing, when people own two homes, it's a common phenomenon.

AJ Harper: No.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay. All right. You heard it here first. You heard it here first. Um, so we're gonna talk about podcasts today. On this episode. I'll give you the compliment 'cause it's so easy. I've shared it with you before. My wife listened to our show, a few episodes.

She's like, AJ has the most lovely, appealing, attractive voice. So like, it just keeps you in the show. I said, ah, this is amazing. What, you know, what about mine? She's like, you know, you, you're fine. You, you know, it's just don't talk as much. She loves you.

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AJ Harper: She did not say that.

Mike Michalowicz: I swear. I swear to you. You have a very appealing voice.

AJ Harper: Thank you.

Mike Michalowicz: You're welcome. Okay.

AJ Harper: Well, I feel like I need to say something about your voice, now. I was trying to counter it.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, I've trapped you.

AJ Harper: You know, it's okay. What I have to say is relative. How many times... You hear this All the time, but I, all the people talking about your books or we'll be talking about audio books and, uh, in my author community and people will say, oh, I love Mike's audio books.

Mike Michalowicz: Mm, thank you.

AJ Harper: Yeah. People tell you that all the time. They do, but I'm also hearing that all the time.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh yeah. That's such an affirmation. I can't wait for this upcoming one for *The Money Habit*. Um, because now I really have freedom and I don't know what that means.

AJ Harper: Meaning what you felt well before controlled before?

Mike Michalowicz: No, no. I wouldn't say controlled. Penguin was understanding, but it was unique and confusing for them. So I'd say, listen, I'm not gonna do a straight read. And they're like, hold on. And they would still report to the engineering department of the studio, uh, saying, you know, straight read, blah, blah, blah. I'm like, no, no. I told 'em. It's not straight read. They're like, it says straight read. You gotta read a word for word.

I'm like, mm, not what I'm doing. Call the producer, Linda Korn, who was great, and she's like, no, our bad. It's a perfunctory for us. And oops. And I'd do it. I'm like, oh, we should have music here. Like, oh my God. Do you know who does amazing reads as, uh, Malcolm Gladwell's books? Because it's like a podcast when you listen to one of his books, he's got music transition sounds, guest voices.

AJ Harper: You gonna do that?

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Mike Michalowicz: I don't, no, I don't. I don't think so.

AJ Harper: Do you think you're going to record at the same studio? They're great.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, I think so. They're great. It's so old school.

AJ Harper: It's very old school and a little creepy if you go there at four in the morning.

Mike Michalowicz: That's how early you started?

AJ Harper: Yeah. Because they said they would do it 24 hours. They would do it any time. And my work schedule was so nutty and it's an hour and some for me hour. Yeah, it's a big commute to get there. So Laura scheduled me, she's like, can you go this early? 'cause then we can get back in time.

Mike Michalowicz: Wow. What's interesting about that studio and, and maybe we should do an episode about recording audio books.

AJ Harper: The studio is Common Mode.

Mike Michalowicz: It's called, yeah, it's Common Mode. The town, I think is. Persipany? East Hanover.

AJ Harper: That's it.

Mike Michalowicz: Does that sound right? Okay. So East Hanover and, um, it's in the industrial complex, a light industrial.

AJ Harper: What I'll say is it's a strip mall behind the strip mall.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. With a loading bay. I mean, it's an industrial, it's, it's, yeah. It's not really stores there except for a weird massage, of course, a weird massage parlor.

AJ Harper: I feel like I was in the Sopranos. I really shouldn't have been there at that time.

Mike Michalowicz: What's so funny is you'll be recording and then the producer will come and go, hold on. And by the third or fourth time, you know that there's a truck driving by that's downshifting its gears or there's an airplane flying over.

AJ Harper: That never happened to me when I was recording.

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Mike Michalowicz: Oh. Teterboro airport or just some airport nearby and he's like, ah, plane coming. Hold on.

AJ Harper: They are magic. They're so good at what they do.

Mike Michalowicz: The output's insanely good. And when they say analog method, I think they're still using analog systems, like it is a studio. There is lots of stuff. The room you're in is not much, much nicer than our studio here. No, but the output, the equipment they have, it's old. Like the guys are moving big gears and stuff and big dials. It's not like a little road cad, roadcaster podcast system. It's a freaking, real legit thing.

Okay, so today we're gonna talk about starting a podcast. And audio, I think ironically is one of the most important. I shouldn't say ironically because it is a audio platform. Audio is probably the most overlooked component of podcasts. Ironically is the most important part of a podcast, I would say is the audio quality. So we'll talk about that. Um. My first podcast was, and we changed the name, ultimately became Entrepreneurship Elevated, and then Mic Up in your business. I can't remember, but this is the studio here that we started recording.

There's another studio show we record here called GMAP, which is Grow My Accounting Practice and I hired an audio specialist. So you'll see I'm gonna turn behind me. Yeah, turn the microphone. But all this equipment back here, this is old school compressors.

AJ Harper: What are you... We're not filming.

Mike Michalowicz: I know. Oh, I'm pointing to you. I'm not telling you. No, no, I'm just so you could see it. These are called compressors.

AJ Harper: Okay.

Mike Michalowicz: What a compressor is is it control, it squashes your voice, so you don't have the, it's very hard to make it, uh, fuzz out or digitize, and it, it boosts you up. So when, every morning when you come in and I say, we gotta do our levels.

I'm doing old school dial here and I'm listening to us have a conversation to, as best as possible, match up the volume. I have a hot, louder natural volume voice. You, quieter. So I got up you and down me, so that we come across the same.

AJ Harper: So you knew, you just learned how to do that?

Mike Michalowicz: Well, the guy came in and he was, I'm like, what are you doing? He's like, oh, I gotta level you guys. I'm like, what's leveling? He's like, you're a loudmouth. And I'm like, well, that's hurtful. But they, he goes like, I squash you. And then someone like AJ is

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a normal voice tonality. And, and, and to match loudmouth, you gotta boost them up or squash the loudmouth down.

AJ Harper: What does the average person do if they're just running a podcast outta their office?

Mike Michalowicz: So buy a thing called, just made fun of it. But there's a thing called a road caster. I'll get the exact name in a second. I have one. And it has auto-leveling functions in it. Um, this system we have is, is on a rack behind me. So there's a, there's a rack of stuff, there's computer equipment and compressors.

There's these things called, uh, uh, Scarlets that kind of blend the voices together. You can get that all in a box now, and it gets you 95% of the way here. I would say five years ago, too risky. That technology. Now it's, it's, it's on it. It's on it.

AJ Harper: So. Super accessible for the average person to start their own podcast and not have to go to a studio.

Mike Michalowicz: That's exactly right. Were... Oh, did they put you in touch with Matt, um, to, for your,

AJ Harper: You did. I, I listened to you record a message to Matt about it. Okay. But I haven't heard anything since. This is just in case you're wondering and don't wanna hear private conversation for which you're not privy. I wanna set up a podcast studio in my office on island. Because I don't expect to leave that often. So wanna, you know, I wanna be able to record up there. And also then, how are we gonna figure out how to do this recording when you're here and I'm there?

Mike Michalowicz: Well, we can do across the wire. The, well, the difference we'll make and requires a little bit of editing or mixing on our other side is we'll connect over a video conferencing system. We won't use it as a recording platform. That's what people. Where they make the mistake, they say, oh, I'll use Zoom. We'll say, yeah, zoom. We'll record on Zoom. Zoom is not designed for podcasting. It's designed for communications and it will squelch certain sounds. So someone's like, oh, sorry about the dog barking in the background, and you're like, I don't hear a dog. Because it's designed to squash, dog barking, um, and other things. So it, it also changes our voice. It's hard to get robust flavor of voice because it's not necessary for a Zoom, for podcast, uh, for zooming. But for podcasting, you want the emotive components of the voice, which zoom will squash out.

So, uh, what we'll do is we'll use Zoom so we can see each other and have a conversation, but we'll also record it locally with a podcasting device that gets the real tonality.

AJ Harper: Maybe we just need to bank a whole bunch of them so we don't have to mess with that.

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Mike Michalowicz: That's even better. You know, as much as we can bank when you are here, I'm, I'm out there.

AJ Harper: Yeah. When you're out there, we can just, we'll just crank 'em out.

Mike Michalowicz: Crank and bank. So this is another point of podcasting. You can have a studio. So first let me, uh, rewind. First, you want what's called a Road Caster Pro two, there's different versions. There's the all in one and so forth. I have the Road Caster Pro two, maybe There's a new road caster. There's alternative systems too, and we have another one in our office. I can't recall what it is, but the road caster in my experience is the simplest, highest quality. It'll get you to almost what we're doing here, automatically. The equipment other equipment that's necessary is you gotta have like excellent microphones. I think we also use the road brand here. Um, so that's important. And you need the arms. I don't even know what the term is so you can swing the microphone so it's perfectly positioned for front of you.

When you and I talk in front of the microphone, you have a natural position, you're about three inches from the microphone. I sit on top of it about an inch away. And uh, that's the normal range where you need to be. And so having a microphone, people are like, oh, let's get a blue Yeti. They're great. They are great.

AJ Harper: I'm have one. That's what I use for my Zoom.

Mike Michalowicz: They are great. This audio quality, if you're listening in versus a Blue Yeti is superior. It's about positioning of the microphone. It's the type of microphone, um, these, well, whatever, it's the type of microphone and it's the, the compressors and stuff like that.

AJ Harper: What do you do cost a person to get set up for?

Mike Michalowicz: I think you can do it. For under a thousand dollars to get an okay technical setup. The road caster is gonna cost you somewhere between five to 600 bucks you're gonna need, if it's just you one microphone, ideally get two, 'cause you'll never know if you're gonna have a guest or an alternative person.

Um, so two microphones, probably another really good one. 200 bucks each and, and the connecting cable and stuff. So you're running about a thousand dollars for a really, really good setup.

AJ Harper: Do you need also the, you. This room is soundproof. You have those egg crate foam everywhere.

Mike Michalowicz: Everywhere. Yeah. So you, yeah. If you want to go kind of next level, you have to quiet the room.

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This is not ideal. The problem is we have a window, and behind us is like a, a, a utility yard, uh, for the town. So you get the beeping and stuff. Windows are notorious for transmitting sound right through it so you can hear through it. But walls are too, eggcrates are the most. Simple, poor man's version of soundproofing.

What it really does is reduces the echo. So when I say something or you say something, it hits the, the sound waves hit the wall, the egg crate kind of mixes it up so it doesn't bounce back as strongly. So if we took all the egg crates down, you'll actually hear more of an echo or more room noise.

AJ Harper: So my office on the island, I have an entire wall that's a bookshelf. Can that work in the same way?

Mike Michalowicz: Great soundproofing the way, great soundproofing.

AJ Harper: And then you want a smaller room? You don't want the big room.

Mike Michalowicz: Well, big, big. Yeah. You know why? A big, big rooms and small rooms echo exactly the same? Okay. But a big room echoes slower because it takes longer for your sound waves to get out there and back.

Oh, so there'll be, you know, we're talking milliseconds, but it's notable. So a big room gets at more of that sound and a small room just, it echoes so quickly that it almost sounds like it's not echoing.

AJ Harper: So that explains why so many of my students who are doing the at home audio poke recording are doing at home in their closets.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, and I would argue it's probably not the size of the room as much as they have clothing all around them. Hopefully they do. That is the ultimate sound buffer, because those sound ways have to go through your t-shirts that, uh, inappropriate clothing you purchased years ago that you don't wanna talk about, you know, and then the next, it has to get through all of that and then bounce back so it mollifies it.

AJ Harper: Wow, you know a lot.

Mike Michalowicz: We did a podcast. I, I think I posted a picture online. I was traveling, we were down on episodes and like, we gotta get one done. And I'm in a hotel room, uh, and it's some odd hour of the morning. And I'm like, it is so echoing here. Big room, bare walls, concrete floors. It was like an echo chamber.

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AJ Harper: The worst episodes are the ones we did on Zoom. Unfortunately, they're not the worst episodes in terms of content. So there's that whole writer's block episode. It was on Zoom. We're going to redo them.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. So that, what I did was, even though it was on Zoom, what I did was I sat. I made, I made a sound booth, so you can do this too, as it will help if you can't soundproof your room.

Um, the space that you, you're sitting or standing at where you record, build, kind of a shield around you, one that kind of arcs around and in front of you. Um. And pack it with some kind of sound buffer material. Insulation works. Uh, I use pillows, so I made a stack of, I took, I sat basically on the floor. I had, uh, the, I don't know what I had the microphone on.

I was raised up, so it was only a few inches in my mouth. Then I used two chairs leading 'em against me. I made a fort, like I was in school again, like grade school. Not college. College. I wasn't making forts anymore. I was making, yeah, I don't know. Uh, I was actually, I was still making forts. So I made all these pillows.

I put a down comfort over me and sure enough, it starts squashing the sound. It's not perfect, but it improved it dramatically.

AJ Harper: So what you're saying is a person can, for about a grand and with a small room, start their own podcast?

Mike Michalowicz: Yep. For, well, you'll, I mean, you could do it on Zoom. You don't need to do all that. You can do it on Zoom, but if you wanted to a little fancier and sound a little bit better, you can get a little bit of equipment. Um, yeah, so you could just do it with your laptop microphone if you wanted to. And if it's already built into your laptop, you already have one, you've cost you nothing. You'll need some kind of distribution platform. We use a thing called. Libson, L-I-B-S-Y-N. So liberated, syndicated, I think is what it stands for, but you put your podcast on there and then it can distribute it out.

But if you can't do that, you can get free YouTube because you have to pay for that subscription. I wanna say it's \$30 a month that we pay for this show, but what you can do is you can just put it on YouTube. Free channel and just have it, you can, you can video record it or you say, I don't, I don't wanna do any video. I can only do voice.

Fine. Then you just put static graphics over it or changing graphics over it. Uh, what else I have on the tech front? Um, I think that's it. There's a couple things we do here at this studio. My colleagues also use a space and they change things around. It was a little bit frustrating 'cause we're on the wrong devices, but they, they did it for a good reason. They were doing some filming.

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But typically I have three monitors set up here. Why three monitors. One is the recording platform, so you record locally now the software we use for is called Reaper. It is the best. Um. You buy a one-time license for say, \$200 and you got it for forever. Uh, it does what's called multi-track recording. I'm on track X, you're on track y, and so if you start coughing, we got better at the editing phase, but if you start coughing, we can mute out your track during that phase at in the post edit. So once this is done, now we don't always do that, but we can do that and that's what this affords you. You can also do sound effects.

So we have a sound effect machine, which we don't use for this show, but you can import play sounds and stuff like that, live. So Reaper is the recording platform, um, but you can also use Audacity is another really popular, uh, and I think that's freeware. Or shareware at least, uh, technology that's really good.

So you gotta have that. So one monitor is doing our recording. I'm watching our tracks. If something gets outta whack, and it rarely happens, but all of a sudden the software jams up. You are aware right away, and you, you put a stop to show and you, you get it fixed again. The other monitor is for a script.

You know, we have a script, you, you prepare in advance all these bullet points of discussion points. So helpful. So, great.

AJ Harper: Not a script-script, just an outline.

Mike Michalowicz: Outline, yeah. So we have an outline ever present. And then the last one is for research. So I wanted to find out what the equipment is. I pulled it up real quick doing research, so I, that's why I have three monitors.

AJ Harper: I don't think you need them though.

Mike Michalowicz: What do you mean?

AJ Harper: Three monitors.

Mike Michalowicz: You do on your phone, you just look down.

AJ Harper: I have my phone in my hand. You're like,

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, yeah, that's right. You don't need them.

AJ Harper: I'm just, I guess what I'm getting at is it doesn't have, there's not a huge barrier to entry there.

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Mike Michalowicz: There isn't. There isn't, and I think what makes this show great versus not is not even the auto quality recording. It helps, it's the polish, but it's the content.

AJ Harper: Yeah. Although I will say I've been listening to some podcasts about Substack. And there's a bunch of them that are clearly before going zoom, and it's sometimes really hard to hear them.

Mike Michalowicz: It's, that's frustrating.

AJ Harper: And then one person's level is completely different than the other. So one person sounds clear and the other person is faint, which is what happened when we record on Zoom.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. And that's frustrating.

AJ Harper: Because I had a Yeti. And you were in a hotel room?

Mike Michalowicz: Hotel room, yeah. In my fort.

AJ Harper: Yeah. So, you know, I do think it matters. It it's, I'll trudge through it. Through a podcast that doesn't have great audio for the content. You are right. But I dunno if I wanna listen to every episode. We've got people who listen to every episode.

Mike Michalowicz: We got Bingers. Who was I talking to? I was talking to someone that was binging on the show. I can't remember. Um, what, what's your experience with podcasts? How do you, when I say experience. The two questions about the, the, the creation of that. What do you think about it? Because it's not necessarily an easy job. Um, so tell me about that. And the second one I wanna see is the impact on you.

But first let's talk about the, the work. What do you think about the work and what do you do for this show?

AJ Harper: The work for this show?

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: Well, I conceptualize what are we gonna talk about. And write the outlines. And then my team, an extension of me, handles the transcripts, pull quotes, the stuff for the show notes. Um, and then, you know, we also have marketing that we do when the show, you know, it's part of our rotation of marketing. And then you have a team that's answering the emails and making sure that the, you do well. Yeah. Well what happens next with the files? Because the, your team sends my team the files.

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Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. We'll upload the raw files right when we're done here. We upload 'em to Google Drive, then a day will take 'em and put 'em through a, a pass. I actually don't even know exactly what she's doing for editing. Um, I think they also transcribe them to get notes, but I'm not sure if that's happening on our side.

AJ Harper: No, Laura's, she handles the transcription.

Mike Michalowicz: Laura handles transcription.

AJ Harper: Laura handles transcription. She listens every episode and she gets pull quotes. She cleans up the transcription. And...

Mike Michalowicz: Is Laura listening when she's gardening? Because she's like a master gardener.

AJ Harper: No, this is her job.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, but it's a, that's a lot. Just to sit and listen to.

AJ Harper: Because she's keeping track of what links do I need to pull for the show notes and, while she's listening.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay. She's like, should I plant at the rhubarb here or no? What did Mike say?

AJ Harper: No, when she's gardening, she's gardening.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay. Okay. Yeah. When she's gardening, that's what a master gardener would say. When I'm gardening, I'm gardening. Okay. What about the, so that's a big job. Let's talk about the outside consumption. What do you hear from consumers about this show and what's your experience about?

AJ Harper: In my little author bubble, I hear about it all the time. People are saying, oh, I just listened to your podcast the other day and I've taking these notes. Um, yeah. I mean, the people who are in my world love it. They listen to it every single week.

Mike Michalowicz: Have you gotten. New clients or exposure to new prospects through it or not? Have you...

AJ Harper: I have. I think mostly what it's done for me is when people are considering working with me. And the way you primarily work with me is through retreats. Or my class in the fall work workshop. It's a significant investment. I only take 15 students a year, but I've

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noticed that since we had the podcast, sometimes people will say. I know you from the podcast, meaning it's almost like they just wanna sign up because they trust and know me from listening to talk, listening to me talk.

So it builds, they feel like they know me already. So there's, it cuts through any sort of, Hmm. Is who is this person? Is this person legit? Because they hear, they can hear me. I'm saying the same exact stuff, you know? Yeah. The difference in the workshop is that I'm actually. Taking you by the hand through getting your book done.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: But I'm not really, I don't, I don't gate keep information. No, I'm still saying a bunch of stuff here on the podcast. I'll say it in the class. Say it all the time. Everywhere. So I'm not keeping stuff and I think that comes across. So I've had people say, uh, you know, I know, no, I'm good. I know you. I know this is what I need to do. Versus a longer process of decision making. How about you?

Mike Michalowicz: Yes. Yes. Well, I first wanna comment on yours. What I found, and this is the bane of many aspiring authors and many aspiring podcasters, is this belief that they should retain the good stuff.

AJ Harper: Oh yeah. Don't hold back.

Mike Michalowicz: Why?

AJ Harper: Because most people, okay, number one, don't hold back because you are supposed to be of service. Like, period. That's why we're doing. And number two, if people get good information from you and you shift their mindset about something or they, um, love learning from you, they're just gonna seek you out. It's, that's what happens.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. They, they are more likely to seek you out.

AJ Harper: It's frustrating to people when you won't tell them.

Mike Michalowicz: It's the ultimate trust factor.

AJ Harper: And also, by the way, uh, I said this, I don't remember, I think I was on a podcast when I said this. I don't remember who I said this to, so apologies. But I, I do say this all the time, especially privately. I think, and no offense to anybody, but I think it is just an amateurish move to act like that. And I think it's also a deep feeling inside of you when you think, oh, I can't share that. I have to wait until my book comes out. You have to hire me to hear that. I think it's a scarcity mindset of all your creativity.

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Mike Michalowicz: Yes. Oh my God. Tearing up a little bit.

AJ Harper: So, oh, I know I was on Amanda Crowell's podcast and it hasn't come out yet. She's one of my favorite people. I've been on her podcast twice. She wrote great work. She's an amazing book, and she has a second division coming out this year. And she asked me to come in and talk about collaboration. And she was very interested in how you and I collaborate, but how I also collaborate with Michael and Amy Port. And you know, she wanted to understand kind of how I set all that up. And it's funny because she brought up, why don't, you know, what about sharing all your stuff? What about your, are you nervous about giving your intellectual property and sharing that?

Like, I'm, I'm not, yeah. You know, I'm protective of it in, in terms of legalities in partnerships and things like that, but I'm not gonna be afraid to share things with people and you know why? Because I'm not a one-trick pony.

Mike Michalowicz: That's it. That's freaking it.

AJ Harper: I'm not, I got a big ol' bag of tricks. So...

Mike Michalowicz: Preach, baby. Preach.

AJ Harper: And I think when people are nervous about it, they think, this is my one thing. It's not your one thing.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh my God. This is now the best episode of all time.

AJ Harper: Well, you say that every time, but...

Mike Michalowicz: Well, it—

AJ Harper: But it is true. It is scarcity thing. We talk about scarcity, but we rarely talk about scarcity of ideas and we think, oh, this is all I've got. I'm only good for this, and I've gotta hang on with a tight fist.

Mike Michalowicz: Correct.

AJ Harper: And this serves no one. And it's also a freaking lie.

Mike Michalowicz: Once you release it, that idea put it out to the world. It also releases the space. It gives you the space to find the new idea, like Profit First. Once it was out there and we start talking about it, this is pre-book. This was Wall Street Journal article. What was so interesting is my idea, my mind started opening to other things. Plus you get feedback, which

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improves the original idea. There's, there's this cascade of benefits. A lot of people I know, and maybe this separates the amateurs from the pros, are restricting the great idea they have for this fear, which the, the, the ultimate irony is for your idea to generate income if that's your goal, to be of service. If that's your goal, you have to put it.

AJ Harper: Yeah, so put it on the podcast. There's a lot of people who got book deals from their podcast. Put it on the podcast.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. You know, one thing we're not doing, which we really should be doing, is the greatest way to grow your podcast, to support your book is to get on other podcasts.

AJ Harper: You mean the two of us going on a podcast to promote this podcast?

Mike Michalowicz: Correct. But not together. Like we, you, we could, but you, we, you and I should start getting guest appearances on other book shows.

AJ Harper: I mean, I'm on those for my own stuff.

Mike Michalowicz: Do you promote this podcast?

AJ Harper: Yeah. Any time I can. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Well then I gotta do it.

AJ Harper: Sometimes I have people book me. Well, no, they'll ask me later, oh, I didn't know you were doing a podcast. And then I'll get a message. Oh my gosh, I'm listening to your podcast. Yeah. And is it, uh, you know, a fellow writer?

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. I mean, one of the challenges we have is we don't have guests on our show until, until Steve Pressfield says Yes,

AJ Harper: But I, I hear from a lot of people say that they really like the format.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, the format is crushing it, but we can't reciprocate if we are, if you or I are in someone else's show. So there's other ways to reciprocate is by shoutouts. So you acknowledge those other podcasts, those other shows, like, here's what I listened to, or Here's where I recently appeared and that's how you do it. Uh, tell me about some podcasts, 'cause this is about starting a podcast to support your book. Tell me about some podcasts that that became books.

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AJ Harper: So a famous one is Welcome to Night Vale. That was a podcast, and it was sort of this like, um, news format about this fictional town. That became a book, with the same title. There's Pod Save America. It's a political podcast. They, the, the people who were part of the Obama campaign, and so they wrote a book called, Yes We Can. Again, they got that deal because of the podcast.

There's a fiction book, Earthcore. It was published as an ebook, but then that publisher won a business. So the author created a podcast to try and get more interest in his book and ended up with about 10,000 listeners a week. Wow. Yeah. And a print deal. And if you go check out that guy's page on Amazon, you'll see he has books with thousands of--

Mike Michalowicz: His name is Scott Sigler? I see.

AJ Harper: Yes. So he created a podcast to revive the book that he, that he no longer had a publisher for. And then of course there's The Moth, one of my personal favorite. The Moth is a live storytelling showcase that became a radio show on NPR and a podcast. And now there's several storytelling books from The Moth.

Mike Michalowicz: The Moth. Interesting.

AJ Harper: It has, there's storytelling books plus a book on how to tell better stories. So there's several of those. And then I, Rachel Maddow did something cool. So you might know her from M-S-N-B-C. Rachel Maddow show. So she did in 2018, she did a podcast that I listened to voraciously because it was like listening to a thriller, but it was about history. It was called Bagman, and it was about Spiro Agnew, the vice president under Nixon.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, interesting.

AJ Harper: You would love it. It was very good. I was like, what's gonna happen next? And it's history. It's documented. I can go look at it. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Um, it was fascinating. And then two years later, that was such a big success. Two years later, she, the book came out. Wow. It was called, um, what was it called? Lemme see. It was Bagman. And then it became a prequel. No, it's the next one. Shoot. I apologize. Oh no, that Bagman was the same title. Bagman.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay.

AJ Harper: And Bagman in the book. But then she learned from that, I think, I don't know what her reasoning was, but she released a podcast called Ultra. And that is about the rise of fascism in the US. Not now, but, but, in World War II and what Americans did to stop it.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Interesting.

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AJ Harper: But the book is called something else. The book was called Prequel.

Mike Michalowicz: Interesting.

AJ Harper: And so I noticed that she's also doing multiple seasons of Ultra. So instead of having one season of Bagman and the book, and it's just a tight, contained thing.

She's continuing on.

Mike Michalowicz: Interesting.

AJ Harper: So that's probably why she chose to call the, the podcast Ultra and not prequel because she wants to keep going with it, but she's using those vehicles because people are, people love podcasts and it's sound, you know, people say, oh, you should do a book from the podcast.

And then it becomes part of the whole marketing plan, which he did with the second one.

Mike Michalowicz: No question about it. I, I just wanna put a little footnote on The Moth. Uh, there's a guy named Peter Laughter, who is

AJ Harper: Oh yeah, Peter Laughter.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, you know Peter. That's right. You, you know him through what we call it through Heroic. He's one of the best speakers. I saw him on stage and the guy, clearly The Moth... Enhanced or not enhanced, but he's a, a master storyteller. But I think as a result of the Moth and one of the best speakers I've seen, he's speaking on leadership.

AJ Harper: I love hearing that.

Mike Michalowicz: And, uh, he came on stage and he'd blew everyone else out of the water just because storytelling. The storytelling and the gesticulation. So it's interesting, um, maybe that's not podcast related, but how when you deep dive into these different categories of how it can play out in different aspects of your life. So a little footnote there, uh, a publishing deal can come out of podcasts. Um, do, do you have any clients that have leveraged, at least you definitely put it into your, uh, proposal when you send it over.

AJ Harper: Yeah, if you've got a podcast, it's, it's helpful being on podcast and having your own podcast or helpful in getting a deal. I do have Angela Chee, she's one of my students, and her book just came out recently. Um, the Power of the Only, and actually I have a story behind that. We just did a Monday Night Reading with her, I think it was about a month ago, and she reminded me, I completely forgot.

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I knew she had a podcast when she came into my workshop. She was dealing with how much of the interviews that she had on the podcast that she gonna use in the book, right? So that became the issue. But she reminded me that we had been in an event together in the before times, before Covid, and that we sat next to each other.

She, I, she mentioned that she wanted to do a book and we started chatting as one does between sessions. And I learned more about what she was doing and she said she also wanted to do a podcast, but what should she do first? And I said, you know, what? Do the podcast, do the podcast for, you know, a couple years, just really get to know other people. Who also are The Only, because. Her book is about people who are somehow the only in the room, only woman, only person of color, um, whatever. And, uh, I said, get, just do your podcast. That's your, she's a broadcaster. She was a reporter and she, uh, she did that and I forgot that I had told her to do it, but what she ended up with was a, a incredible podcast before she even started working on her book, that did shape the book.

Mike Michalowicz: It really does shape the book.

AJ Harper: Yeah. Because she had all these interviews and stories and new ways of thinking about it. That was different than when she just had the idea for herself.

Mike Michalowicz: And I wanna argue that podcasts could have hundreds of episodes around a book and people are like, but the book is only about one thing, profit first. It's just about taking your profit first. There's this case studies of people deploying it. It's the learnings that happen afterwards. It's the things that don't work. You know, this podcast, we're in episode 81 82, and we're talking about writing. The book that you need to write, there's an endless stream.

But what was interesting was I would say episode, episode 36, 37, we met and like, did we exhaust everything? Have we hit all the topics? And then we just had a brainstorm session here in this room. And we came up with like 15 more topics and that opened up this Pandora's box of an, in cornucopia is probably a better word, of an infinite amount of topics.

And I think that the topic opportunities for your podcast are the more narrow you go, the more expression there is, if that makes sense.

AJ Harper: Yeah. There's, there's actually quite a lot, um, especially if you are gonna have guests. If you're gonna have guests, yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: That's particularly easy, then it's easier. Yeah. Um, I do wanna share about building an audience real quick. Um, if you start a podcast, it's, it's not a build it and they will come thing, you have to get the word out. One of the best ways is that podcast listeners listen to podcasts. So getting on other people's podcasts, you are talking to people that are listening to podcasts, so that's a big thing.

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The second thing is your own lists, wherever they may be. If you have an email list, make sure you're telling them you have a show. Uh, in your book, talk about your podcast, digging deeper. Um, if. If you are on social media, put out there in different social media channels. Yes, you can even advertise for it. Sponsors will support it. So we have a sponsor instrument show. It's to the sponsor's benefit for them to spread the word to their community too, because they're being featured on it. And so there's a lot of ways to get the word out at bigger levels.

AJ Harper: It's so true what you just said about being on other people's podcasts and listening. I, one of my favorite podcast people is Rachel Heron. Her podcast is Ink in Your Veins. And I found her because I was listening to a different podcast. I think it was, I can't remember, I think it might've been the Am Writing podcast, but I hashtag am writing, but I'm, I'm not sure. And they had her on and she mentioned she had a podcast, and I loved listening to her. So I went to go find her podcast and then oddly enough, I was in my, checking my email and there was an email from her and she said, I'm gonna take another stab at this. I already invited you once to my podcast and I just want to try again. And I just love your book. Like, oh, I missed that first email. And here I was already listening to her podcast driving through the back was a Wisconsin when I was going to see my mom.

And now we've become friends on little WhatsApp combos 'cause she lives in New Zealand. But also I've bought things because of a podcast.

Mike Michalwicz: Yeah. Wow.

AJ Harper: I was listening to a Substack conversation with a woman. Then I went to that person's podcast, and then on her podcast she said she had a membership community on Substack to help people growing in their substack, and it was very affordable. So it's like, oh, easy peasy. I mean, that's the stuff that happens, but you're right. That all came from me listening to podcasts and then hearing about other podcasts.

Mike Michalowicz: Same idea. If you love a book, you'll be a book reader. If you love podcasts, you'll be a podcast listener. Any other benefits of having--

AJ Harper: Testing your content. Totally.

Mike Michalowicz: I mean, this is so good. It's so good.

AJ Harper: You'd have to put in some way for feedback to, so that a feedback mechanism so people would tell you if it's working or not.

Mike Michalowicz: Email me, that's one.

AJ Harper: Email me is easy enough.

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Mike Michalowicz: And the interviews we already talked about, but you get access to people who you wouldn't have access to otherwise because of it. I'm, I'm doing five podcasts this afternoon. Five guest appearances. Um, I haven't been. I gotta check. Some may be repeats, but it's likely I haven't been on any of these shows before and I wouldn't have a connection with these people otherwise. But they've reached out, they've asked me to be on the show, and Erin lines it up.

One little tip. If you're a guest on a podcast. I'm in a very fortunate position. In the beginning I was begging to get on a podcast. Now with the popularity of the books, I'm asked, we restrict time. We say 25 minutes max for Mike's appearances, unless it's a real exception. Uh, and I actually have an update, really something cool in a second.

But, um. If you're gonna be a guest, make sure you define the parameters of what serves you. But if you're just starting out and you're looking to get on podcasts, please pitch yourself. Don't have like one of these booking agencies do it. They're horrible.

AJ Harper: Oh my gosh. They just don't deliver.

Mike Michalowicz: I got. I think over the last two weeks, you know, dozens, hundreds of those. But we got one. The person said, Hey, this is the real me reaching out. I like your show. Here's what I like about your show, and I think I'd be a great guest for it. Would you be willing to consider me? And it's like, you know what? You just, you're, you're in front of the stack just by doing that. Now there's better ways to get invited.

I always think be different, get different. But, so email's not the best way, but that did get noticed. Um, pitch yourself.

AJ Harper: But also I think it can help you build Buzz about the book. We're doing it now just naturally and organically. We're being of service to our listeners by talking about your new book, the Money Habit, and the development and writing of it. Now we're in the editing phase. We're going to talk about marketing it. As a service to listener, but also does build buzz about the book itself.

Mike Michalowicz: You can pre-order the book, by the way, the Money Habits now on... Yeah. Without the cover. There's a big to-do. So I reached out to Felicia, fq is her nickname. I reached out to FQ and said, Hey, uh, when's it going on on Amazon?

She's like, well, we're waiting 'cause we're gonna do a cover reveal. I said, well, cover's been revealed. 'cause if you go to Target, uh, it's already on Target's website and there's the cover. And she's like, oh my God. There's like the all this quick email chain. We've pulled it off of Target, we've done all these things.

She goes, now it's everywhere with the proper cover. Coming cover.

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AJ Harper: Um, that's funny. Yeah. So much for the cover reveal.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, you can go this If, uh, go on to Amazon

AJ Harper: You could still do it because the average person isn't looking for it.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, no, no, exactly. It hasn't been indexed. So you, yeah. So we're gonna do a cover reveal, but go to amazon.com or wherever you buy books. Your indie, indie bookstore and type in the Money Habit. The Money Habit by Mike Mcow. It's the pre-Order It. And while you're there, get, uh, read. Must read by AJ Harper.

AJ Harper: Thanks incidentally, you can get the paperback now.

Mike Michalowicz: The new one? Oh my gosh, that's amazing. That's so cool.

AJ Harper: So, um, build Buzz about the book, that's a huge thing you can do on your own podcast. And then also, here's something cool. The pod, your podcast is gonna be listed on Amazon. So when people search for a book, even if you don't have a book yet. Your podcast will come up in the book search.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, that's amazing. Um, I wonder if you use the register with Amazon. Do you know the technicalities behind that?

AJ Harper: I don't. Not at the moment. But I think it might be connected to Spotify.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, that makes sense. Uh, any cons with a podcast?

AJ Harper: I mean Yeah. It's time consuming.

Mike Michalowicz: And, and apparently you gotta be here at seven in the morning.

AJ Harper: Listen, I didn't wanna come today

Mike Michalowicz: And that's why you came early.

AJ Harper: No, I wanna come today because I'm, I'm not feeling well tired. But I did. I'm glad I did. Yeah. And um, so sometimes the things it's consuming for my team. You know, they have, they do a lot. If it was, if I didn't have them, I don't know if I would be doing it, honestly, if I could. You need, you need a little help. It doesn't have to be fancy though.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. So there's, you're doing show prep. Uh, you have a commute an hour, 45 minutes one way. One way, one way. Right? So that's two hours of drive time. Plus

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we do batch, we do three episodes traditionally per recording. That takes us three hours. And we like when we're done with this one, we're gonna be recording next week's episode within five minutes of this bathroom break and go.

Um, so it's time consuming. What any other cons?

AJ Harper: Well, as you said, finding an audience takes time. So yeah, it's not an instant situation.

Mike Michalowicz: So is it our number one episode is our actually first episode, but not because it, it launched so strong. It's because when people are finding us, they're bingeing and going back, and so building the audience. You may find someone, we may find a new listener today on this episode and they're like, oh, this is intriguing enough for me to listen to past episodes. So there you go.

AJ Harper: You know, um, you never know who's gonna be listening. That's something I like about it.

Mike Michalowicz: It's a little bit voyeuristic.

AJ Harper: No, you just, it could be something, you know, you meet someone you wouldn't expect. And you also never know who's listening that will need to, you're always gonna come back to that.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Yeah. You never know.

AJ Harper: You never know. And, and even when you quit your podcast. It's still hot. Yeah, it does.

Mike Michalowicz: And a podcast, because it's the internet broadcast to the world. There's people outside of your geography that're listening in. I got an email from someone in China, uh, yesterday who read one of my books and just read, wrote the most flattering email after Google Translate and it's as powerful. These are countries that maybe are, uh, political systems are not appreciating, but humans are humans everywhere. And you can be of service to people through your podcast or through your book. To people you'd never get access to otherwise.

AJ Harper: Oh, one more thing. Yeah. You don't have to do it like we're doing it. We have an, we don't have an end in sight at the moment. We wanna keep doing the podcast. You can also do just a short series. I mentioned Rachel Maddow. That's a confined the Bag Men podcast.

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It's just, that's it. It says one container. It's, that's one season. That's it. Um, so you don't have to think of it as this think never ending thing. You just do a, a season.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, I agree. I got some updates. I we're running ton of time, so I'll save 'em for next week. Um, next week we're gonna be talking about crafting a reader statement, but maybe we can open up with some updates. And I wanna remind you if, gosh, if you haven't gotten AJ's book, like that's the starting point of, of all of authorship, we, we found the launchpad. My friend's wa mar walking the, was it called the Sevia or something? He's walking in Spain where you walk 500 miles to something.

Matt. So he is walking, he does that every year. And, uh. Yours is like the start. Yours is like that first stone. You step off. It's how to write a must read and the equivalent. Um, and then ironically, in the yin and yang of life, when you get to the end, the 500 mile march, there's a big copy of your book, how to Write a Must Read.

It's like, oh, you end where you started. Um, so get that book. Also check out AJ's workshops. They're amazing. I'm gonna be up there at Madeline Island. It's aj.harper.com. Last thing before we wrap things up here is, uh, we have another author. That we, we haven't told 'em yet, but we're gonna be signing for simplified.

Yeah. So, uh, and they gotta go through your class. So I have to have a conversation with him. That's a requirement I'm gonna have. Uh, who You don't know him? Um, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. He's an extraordinary guy. He's got the, a taco a taco.

All right. His nickname's Buzz, BUZZ Does that. That doesn't ring a bell, does it? Buzz Okay. Yeah. Nickname. It's 'cause his last name has a buzz in it.

That's so, oh my God. This is what a macab to the show. Yeah, higher note is Buzz is still alive. Go to dw.tbpodcast.com. Our materials are up there. Our, uh, email us. You can join us if you have thoughts. If you have questions, you have ideas, we love to hear from you. Email us at hello@dw.tbpodcast.com. By the way, if you wanna connect with AJ directly regarding her, uh, events, you can email there if you wish.

And, and aj uh, Delo will put you in touch with AJ if you're interested in being a simplified author. You gotta be in the entrepreneurial space. Uh, you can email us there too. Thanks for joining us for today. Remember, this is the Golden Rule. Don't write that book. Write the greatest book you can.