

ADOPTER Media | Podcast Advertising That Works

From Spreadsheets to Success: Podcast Movement 2024 Panel Highlights*

Event Recap: Podcast Movement Aug. 19-22, 2024

The Podcast Movement panel "*From Spreadsheets to Success: Managing Your Podcast Ad Campaigns from Start to Scale*" brought attention to an often-overlooked side of podcast advertising—spreadsheets. Panelists shared their perspectives on how spreadsheets play an important role in their daily activities and help manage campaigns, enhance communication, and streamline processes.

Meet the Panelists

- **Shane Estrada** – Director of Media, ADOPTER Media
- **Kate Friant** – AdOps Manager, QCODE
- **Jordy Meiselas** – Co-Founder, MeidasTouch Network & Host, MeidasTouch Podcast
- **Amelia Coomber** – Chief Marketing Officer, Podscribe (Moderator)

Managing Challenges with Spreadsheets

Q: What are the biggest challenges you've faced in managing podcast advertising operations, and how have spreadsheets helped you overcome them?

From the publisher/seller perspective, Kate explained that one of the biggest challenges is ensuring effective communication with shows and hosts regarding ad implementation for optimal performance. To overcome this, Kate uses a calendar-view spreadsheet that outlines ad placement instructions on a weekly basis. This format not only facilitates clear communication but also allows for adjustments based on performance data and new ad tests. The spreadsheet helps avoid clustering ads and ensures they are strategically placed for maximum impact. Additionally, linking ad copy directly in the spreadsheet streamlines the process for hosts, making it easier for them to implement ads effectively.

Shane, representing the buyer/agency perspective, described the challenge of managing multiple spreadsheets for different clients, which often led to confusion and inefficiency. To tackle this issue, Shane developed an all-in-one spreadsheet that includes ad schedules, reporting tabs, budget breakdowns, raw data, and communication tools for the ad operations team. This centralized system has greatly improved communication with clients and provides a comprehensive, visual way to understand the entire podcast advertising process, from planning to execution.

From the host/network perspective, Jordy shared that the main challenge is manually tracking and managing campaigns across multiple shows. He uses a spreadsheet to keep track of sponsors, deployment dates, and schedules for each show. Although his spreadsheet may not be the most sophisticated, it helps him maintain strong relationships with buying groups and ensures that campaigns run smoothly.

Tracking and Measuring Campaign Performance

Q: Can you share specific examples of how you use spreadsheets to track and measure campaign performance?

Shane emphasized the importance of the spreadsheet's reporting tab, which he uses to track key performance metrics such as revenue generated, promo code usage, and return on ad spend (ROAS). These data points are essential for making data-driven decisions and optimizing campaigns over time. Additionally, tracking promo codes through the spreadsheet allows Shane's team to assess the success of specific ad campaigns and adjust accordingly.

For Kate, spreadsheets play a vital role in reporting download numbers to agencies. If a campaign underperforms, the spreadsheet can be used to analyze ad placement and identify potential issues, helping to fine-tune future campaigns. Kate also uses spreadsheets to track sell-through rates, which offer valuable insights into booking trends and the overall performance of ad inventory.

Jordy's approach is more manual, as he primarily checks downloads and views across platforms such as YouTube and audio RSS feeds. While he has access to conversion data, Jordy measures the success of his campaigns primarily through renewals and feedback from buying agencies, which he tracks via his spreadsheet.

Tips for Podcasters and Advertisers New to Using Spreadsheets

Q: What tips would you give to podcasters and advertisers new to using spreadsheets for campaign management?

Shane advised that newcomers to spreadsheets should start by identifying the specific problems they need to solve and build their spreadsheets around those needs. He cautioned against trying to create an overly complex system right away, suggesting that focusing on essential features and gradually expanding the spreadsheet over time is a more effective approach. He also recommended leveraging automation features like formulas and custom scripts to streamline tasks, with Google Sheets being a great option for teams that need to collaborate remotely.

Kate emphasized the importance of communication when using spreadsheets. She suggested that podcasters focus on what they need to communicate to hosts and use the spreadsheet to streamline that process. Features like tagging can be particularly useful for facilitating communication within the document, ensuring that everyone involved in the campaign is on the same page.

Jordy encouraged podcasters not to get too fixated on CPM rates, especially for initial campaigns. Instead, he recommended prioritizing the deal and assessing performance before negotiating rates. He also highlighted the importance of building strong relationships with buying groups and being willing to offer added value to ensure campaign success. Tools like ChatGPT, Jordy noted, can help generate ad scripts that meet specific brand requirements, making the process even more efficient.

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Quick Tips for New Podcasters and Advertisers

Q: What tips would you give to podcasters and advertisers new to using spreadsheets for campaign management?

Shane:

- Identify the problems you need to solve and build your spreadsheet around that.
- Start with essential features and expand gradually.
- Leverage automation features like formulas and scripts for efficiency.
- Consider Google Sheets for remote collaboration and sharing.

Kate:

- Focus on what needs to be communicated to hosts and streamline that process with the spreadsheet.
- Use features like tagging to facilitate communication within the document.

Jordy:

- Don't fixate on CPM rates during early campaigns.
- Focus on building strong relationships with buying groups and offer added value.
- Utilize tools like ChatGPT for generating ad scripts tailored to brand requirements.

Conclusion

Spreadsheets are a powerful yet often understated tool in the podcasting industry. They enhance communication, streamline campaign management, and provide a clear way to track performance metrics. When used effectively, spreadsheets can help podcasters and advertisers achieve greater success by offering data-driven insights and improving overall operational efficiency.

** These highlights are summaries generated from the panel transcript.*