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TAKE CONTROL OF PODCASTING

by **ANDY AFFLECK**
\$14.99

2ND
EDITION

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Read Me First

Welcome to *Take Control of Podcasting, Second Edition*, version 2.0, published in September 2024 by alt concepts. This book was written by Andy J. Williams Affleck and edited by Geoff Duncan (first edition) and Joe Kissell (second edition).

This book gives you all the information you need to begin your first podcast quickly and without spending much (if any) money by suggesting which software and hardware to buy for better results and teaching you how to use it. It covers macOS, iOS, and iPadOS.

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Updates and More

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What's New in the Second Edition

Here is a quick rundown of what's new in the second edition:

- Updated the discussion of GarageBand to reflect the latest versions available at publication time
- Added information about monetizing your podcast using Apple Podcasts Connect's subscriptions as well as offering sponsorships: [Monetize Your Podcast](#)
- Added a case study of preparing multiple episodes before releasing your first episode: [Case Study: Cyrano in Space](#)
- Updated [Add Your Podcast to Apple's Podcast Directory](#) to reflect changes in their user interface
- Removed steps for creating a WordPress.com blog to host a podcast. They change the onboarding process so often that I can't keep up with them!
- Updated all mentions of iTunes to say Music—yes, it's been that long since the last version of this book!
- Updated screenshots and instructions as needed as various apps have evolved in the last few years and look different now

Introduction

When I was 11, I was a DJ on WZKU in Bronxville, New York. That is to say, I had a tape recorder and I created tape after tape of radio shows, skits, copies of music I recorded off the radio, and more. My next door neighbor, David, helped me out, too. It was a lot of fun creating those tapes, and I dearly wish they were still around today. Later, in college, I studied and composed electro-acoustic music in Dartmouth College's Bregman Music & Audio Research Studio through multiple classes taught by the wonderful (and, sadly, late) Jon Appleton. My interest in sound equipment, music composition, and having fun with audio tools has waxed and waned over the years, but never left me completely.

And then 2004 arrived. In August 2004, Adam Curry, a former MTV VJ, began producing a daily show from his home in the Netherlands in which he talked about topics that interested him and he played music he felt like sharing.

Others had produced “audio blogs” before, most notably Dave Winer, who created subscription and update standards first for text and later for attachments—including audio—without which podcasting couldn't exist. But it wasn't until Curry wrote some primitive software and Winer popularized it that something gelled, making podcasting a fad, then a trend, and now a part of tens of thousands of websites.

During the COVID lockdown, podcasting underwent something of a renaissance thanks to people being home needing hobbies and wanting to communicate with the outside world.

In its simplest form, a *podcast* is a downloadable audio file. It could be as simple as a song that a podcaster wanted to share, or it might be a full-blown audio show edited together in the style of a radio program. Most podcasts are free to listeners.

Subscription and automatic downloading capabilities make the podcast listening experience distinct from the experience of listening to

audio files linked from websites. Listeners typically retrieve individual podcast files, also known as *episodes*, using tools such as Apple's Podcast App, Spotify, or any number of podcast apps on iOS, iPadOS, Android, and other platforms. A podcast file is usually in MP3 or AAC format, though some podcasts use other audio formats. The publishing side of podcasting is *syndication*; the retrieval side is *subscription*. Most podcasts can also be downloaded manually.

Podcasting combines elements of several disparate technologies—audio recording and editing, content syndication, and internet file transfers—into a single process that retrieves audio from a website onto listeners' computers or mobile devices. One click or tap can often initiate the whole process.

Note: You can read about the history of podcasting in a TidBITS article I wrote called [Podcasting: The People's Radio](#).

Creating your own podcasts can be highly rewarding. Podcasts don't need the professional veneer of a commercial radio broadcast. Just start recording. If your content is worthwhile, you'll find an audience. You can always improve your format and production as you discover what works and what doesn't.

What's in a Name?

The name "podcast" came about only because Apple's iPod was the most popular digital audio player on the market at the time. iPods have passed over the rainbow bridge but you can use virtually any device on any platform to listen to podcasts.

Apple's GarageBand app is a major player in this book. To keep pace with Apple, I've provided directions on creating podcasts using GarageBand 10.4.11 for Mac and GarageBand 2.3.16 for iOS/iPadOS. These versions of GarageBand run on macOS 13.5 and up and iOS 17.4 and iPadOS 17.4 and up respectively. I also cover a variety of other tools useful for recording and producing podcasts on macOS, iOS, and iPadOS. See [Choose Your Audio Software](#) for the full list.

Podcasting Quick Start

This book shows you how to plan, record, edit, encode, and publish a podcast. You can learn about these steps in any order, but I encourage beginners to read the material in sequence.

Plan your podcast:

- Understand the process; see the [Introduction](#) for an overview of what podcasting is, and then [Plan Your Podcast](#), [Establish a Production Schedule](#), and consider ways to [Monetize Your Podcast](#).
- Brush up on your vocabulary in [Learn Podcasting Terminology](#).

Record your podcast:

- Make sure you have the hardware and software that fits your needs and budget; see [Set Up Your Studio](#).
- Consult [Use Good Microphone Techniques](#) in order to avoid common mistakes.
- Find advice and procedures for how to [Record Your Podcast](#) on your Mac, iPhone, or iPad.

Edit and encode your podcast:

- Learn basic audio editing techniques in [Edit Your Podcast](#).
- Decide which encoding settings you want to use and encode your podcast for uploading; read [Encode and Tag Your Show](#).

Publish and promote your podcast:

- Upload and host your show; see [Upload and Publish an Episode](#).
- Syndicate your show; consult [Understand Syndication Formats and Promote Your Podcast](#).

Plan Your Podcast

Proper preparation produces podcast prosperity.

Listen to Podcasts

They say that to become a writer, you need to read a lot. The same is true for being a podcaster. You need to listen a lot. Listen to as many podcasts as you can. Find podcasts about news, comedy, drama, politics, science, art, technology, and anything else you are interested in and give them all a good listen. Take notes if it would help. Find out what it is that you really like, and notice what doesn't work for you. This is important: if you don't like a certain style of podcasting or topic, then making your show in that style or on that topic, will not be enjoyable for you and your audience will know it. Love what you want to podcast about and the audience will pick up on your enthusiasm.

Decide What You Want to Say

Do you want to talk politics? Music? Cooking? Make an audio version of your blog? There's no restriction for what a podcast should and should not be. Of course, you may find it harder to find an audience if you cover all these topics at once than if you focus on a narrower range and cover it well.

Finding listeners is simpler if your podcast can be summarized in a sentence. More people will sample your show if it fits in a category in a podcast directory—like that found in Apple's Podcasts apps in iOS and iPadOS, and the Apple Music App in macOS—than if it ends up lumped in a catch-all list. Listeners aren't likely to tune into your random thoughts unless the podcast is recommended, or those random thoughts happen to fall very neatly into the listeners' areas of interest.

You also need to decide if you want to do a show where you record everything carefully (re-recording when you mess something up) and then editing everything together, or if you want to do a live recording, possibly even a live-streamed recording where you have an online audience listening in.

Should You Use Video?

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but before you start building a film set in your basement, there are some things you should consider.

First, most video production is much more time- and resource-intensive than audio production. I've edited 4-minute-long videos for my community theater that took days, whereas I've edited hour-long podcasts in just hours. Similarly, today even modest devices have more than enough power to produce audio podcasts, but producing video often requires an order of magnitude more horsepower and storage.

Second, depending on your show, you may need a set (and lighting!), or at least a green screen. These can be expensive and take time to set up.

Third, you need to ask yourself if your show warrants video at all. Most conversations work just fine as audio. But showing how to use an app or how to make a macrame umbrella stand (sure, why not?) would require video. Just be sure video is worth the extra cost and time and there are real, tangible benefits to doing so.

Establish a Production Schedule

I do not listen to many podcasts anymore, though I used to. I work from home and do not have a commute during which I can listen. However, with the podcasts I follow, I appreciate knowing when episodes are going to be released. For example, I love [*All Songs Considered*](#)'s weekly new music episode and make a point of setting aside a half hour every Friday morning to listen to it.

Set Up Your Studio

The format for your podcast determines the technical setup of your studio. Some people want to record while mobile. Most people podcast in front of a single computer with a single microphone and mix in sounds from other applications, such as Apple's Music, Skype, and Zoom.

Pick a Platform for Podcasting

If you have only a Mac or an iPad or an iPhone, then your decision is pretty much made for you. But if you have more than one, you have some choices to make.

But let's get this out of the way up front: while it is *possible* to do an end-to-end production process (recording to publishing) on an iPad or iPhone, it's markedly easier on a Mac—especially for mixing and publishing. Even iPad advocates (myself included) have found that production on iPads is still limited at times. While the [Ferrite](#) editor is wonderful to work with (especially if you have an Apple Pencil), the recording process is remains clunky. Jason Snell of [Six Colors](#) podcasts a great deal and posted a few years ago about the limitations of iPads in [A Week of Podcasting with only an iPad Pro](#). It's well worth a read.

I find that I use my iPhone or iPad (depending on what is handy and where I am) for recording—much the same way journalists do with their own phones. Both devices are capable portable recording devices, and the audio quality of their built-in mics is surprisingly good. Both iPhones and iPads support separate USB microphones for even better audio quality.

I personally wait on editing until I return home to my Mac. I find it's easier because it has all the tools I need, and I have the muscle memory for common actions. You may find you do just fine working fully end to end on an iPad or iPhone.

An issue I encounter on iPads and iPhones is that you can't always have a different input and output device like you can on a Mac. If you connect a USB microphone, by default iPhones and iPads use that microphone for both audio input and output; fortunately, GarageBand provides a way to split your inputs and outputs on either device. Further, on an iPad, you can monitor your recording by connecting wired headphones via the audio jack, but you can't do the same on an iPhone as there is no audio jack (though there are headphone adapters for both USB-C and Lightning ports). You *can* monitor iPhone recording with AirPods, but you may hear your voice with a disconcerting quarter-second (or longer!) delay. If you use an app like Voice Record Pro, you can use the onscreen volume meters to ensure your sound levels are good without having to worry about live monitoring your recording, but issues like these can be frustrating when working with an iPad or iPhone.

Tools evolve constantly: what's important is that you find a workflow that works for you. If you can do your complete show on a portable iDevice, that's great! I hope you'll let me know what you did!

For myself, I plan to use my iPhone for on-the-fly recording when I'm out and about and the Ferrite editor when I do not have my Mac handy. Otherwise, I'll continue to do the majority of my work on my Mac for the foreseeable future.

Choose a Mic and Supporting Hardware

The only essential tools for podcasting are a computing device and a microphone. An audio interface might be a helpful addition: they're designed to provide external inputs that aren't built into your Mac, iPhone, or iPad, like connectors used in analog audio. Some podcasters use an external mixer to control multiple sound inputs. Let's start with the mic, and then [Decide on an Audio Interface or Mixer](#).

Record Your Podcast

Ultimately, recording a podcast is about capturing audio. You may record your voice, include a song, interview somebody over Zoom or Skype, or play sound effects. No matter the source of the sound, it has to be captured and recorded by software on your computer.

In this chapter, I start with good microphone techniques and using audio plug-ins and effects, then walk you through several apps I recommend for audio capture: GarageBand for Mac and iOS, Audacity for Mac, Ferrite Recording Studio for iOS/iPadOS, Voice Record Pro for iOS/iPadOS, Audio Hijack for Mac, and Ecamm Call Recorder for Skype on Mac.

Use Good Microphone Techniques

Before recording, let's talk about a little physical reality: setting up and speaking into a microphone. There's an art to using a mic, but these quick tips cover most of what you need to know:

- **Keep the mic away from your mouth:** If you do not have a pop filter, position the mic a few inches away and somewhat above or below your mouth so you do not breathe directly into it. This helps prevent plosives and sibilants (see [Learn Podcasting Terminology](#)).
- **Angle the mic:** If possible, point the microphone down toward your mouth from above, or to the side at about a 45° angle, to reduce plosives, nasal tones, and lip-smacking sounds.
- **Set the appropriate input levels:** Almost all recording apps offer input level monitoring directly in their interface so you can raise or lower the input signal to avoid *clipping* (see [Learn Podcasting Terminology](#)). Test your levels by starting a recording, then speaking normally. You want to fill most your app's input indicator, but never all of it. Indicators in many apps turn red if you're too loud.

Interview People Successfully

Many podcasts include interviews. Regardless of your topic, you can almost always find people who can add value to your show by sharing their unique perspectives with your listeners. Good interviewing is an art. Consider the following tips:

- **Research:** There is nothing more painful than an interview where the host isn't familiar with the guest or even with the subject matter. Take the time to research your guest and the topic that you will be discussing in as much detail as possible.
- **Prepare:** Carefully think about what you want to ask your guest, and write down questions beforehand. Check off the questions as you go through the interview.
- **Ask your guest for topics:** Before you begin an interview, ask if there are specific points or topics your guest wants to cover. Add these to your list of questions if they aren't represented already. Also ask if your guest would prefer to avoid any subjects. If so, respect their wishes.
- **Consider getting a release:** You may want your guest sign a release so you are covered legally if something goes wrong down the road. This usually applies only to interviewing famous or controversial people, and you should consult a lawyer if you feel there's any risk of a guest alleging libel, invasion of privacy, or even copyright infringement. Some podcasters obtain a simple, verbal form of release where they say something like, "I am now recording, but we have not yet started. When I say 'we are live' we will begin the interview. Is this okay?" and wait for their guest to say "yes." Remember, a guest may not be famous (or infamous!) when you conduct your interview, but that could all change tomorrow.
- **Let your guest know if you plan to edit:** If you plan to edit your interview (and, generally, you *will*, for reasons I describe in this book), let your guest know before you begin. Tell your guest not to worry about stumbles or messed-up answers: it's fine to just stop

Edit Your Podcast

Once you've recorded all the pieces of your podcast and moved them to your computer—if they weren't there to begin with—you may want to edit them, either to sequence pieces together or to remove anything accidental, like stumbles in your (or your guests') speech and other mistakes. You could decide *not* to edit, too, but editing is a great way to tighten and polish your podcast episodes with professional effects like fades, ducking, stingers/bumpers, sound effects, and more.

Edit with GarageBand

GarageBand provides great flexibility for mixing and modifying different tracks, including adding filters, equalizers, echo, and reverb. GarageBand mixes and processes effects on the fly as it plays back the audio, without altering the original, underlying audio data. You can also make permanent edits to remove gaps, speech stumbles, and other unwanted content, as well as cut, copy, and paste audio bits into other locations.

Add Audio

To include additional audio in a GarageBand project, simply drag in any audio file in MP3, AIFF, WAV, Apple Lossless, or AAC format. You can also drag in music, sound effects, and more from within GarageBand. GarageBand includes a large collection of fun (and cloying) sounds you can use to spice up a podcast. You can drag sound effects or audio files into existing compatible audio tracks, or have GarageBand make a new, unique track for your additional audio as you drag it in.

Drag each audio file from the Finder or GarageBand's Media Browser into the GarageBand timeline. Unless you drop the file into a compatible audio track, GarageBand puts each dragged-in sound in a separate track at the point in the timeline where you dropped it. As you drag in

a file, a vertical line appears showing the audio's start position. You can move the audio left or right as you drag it to get it close to where you want it.

In **Figure 52**, I have an episode of the [podcast I did for Swamp Meadow Community Theatre](#) in Foster, Rhode Island.

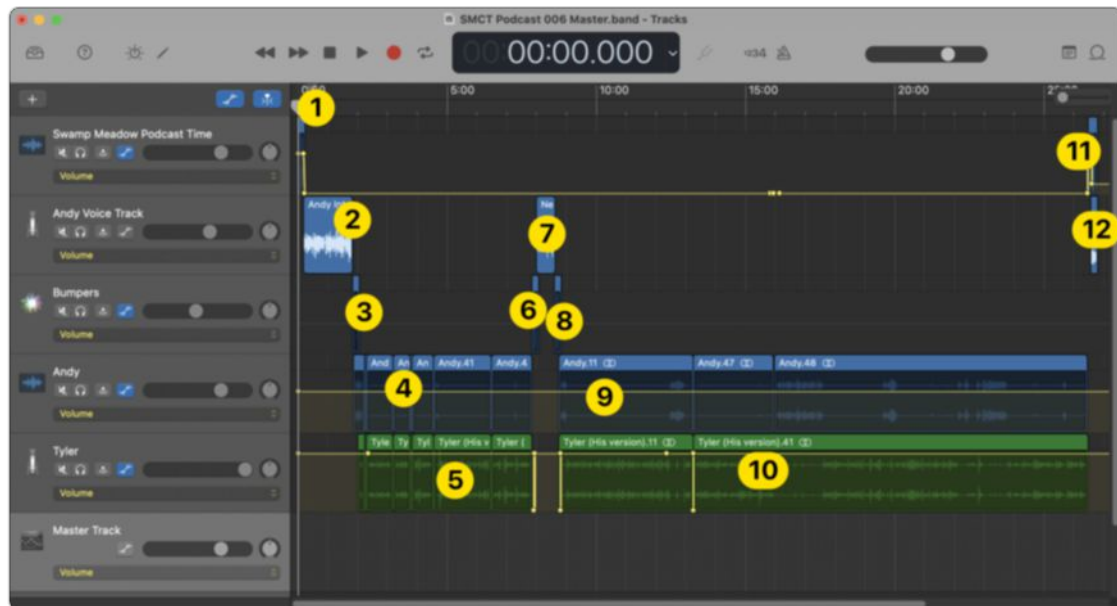


Figure 52: Example podcast tracks in GarageBand. The numbers in the image correspond to the items in the list below.

The podcast is spread over 5 audio tracks in 12 basic chunks. The tracks are listed vertically, and time is expressed horizontally. The numbers correspond to **Figure 52**, above:

1. Intro music recorded by some members of the theater community.
2. My introduction, recorded in my home studio in another app and imported into GarageBand.
3. A stinger sound effect of a phone being rapidly dialed to segue into the interview. This sound effect comes with GarageBand.
4. My audio track from the interview I did with Tyler, one of our directors and actors. The different blocks indicate where I cut out something I felt wasn't needed. I recorded this track using Audio Hijack while on a Zoom call.

Encode and Tag Your Show

Now that your podcast show is recorded, editing, and mixed, you need to encode it and add identification tags before releasing it onto the open internet. *Encoding* means selecting an audio format and compressing your show so it downloads faster and consumes less of your listeners' storage space. Adding tags (like titles, episode numbers and guest lists) helps listeners manage your podcast in their audio software and on their devices.

Encode Your Podcast

Before you start encoding, determine what file format to use for your podcast and what settings are most appropriate for your show.

Pick an Audio Encoding Format

Always record directly to AIFF (even when recording outside of GarageBand) and edit using those AIFF files. Then, encode to either MP3 or AAC (also called M4A). Here's why:

- Encoding to a compressed format requires a lot of processing power. Making your computer encode on the fly while you try to manage audio from multiple sources (and apply effects like compression or reverb) may overpower it. Some of your audio could be lost or corrupted if your computer can't keep up.
- You can encode, but you can't decode. Once your audio is in a compressed format, you can't undo that encoding to return to your original master recording. I prefer to have full-range, uncompressed masters of my shows, and to experiment with encoding options using only the uncompressed master. It can be hard to know what will work best *before* you record and edit your show. If one episode is mostly talk, I might encode it in a manner that preserves clear speech but saves space so that the episode downloads faster. If an episode has a lot of music, I might encode it differently to preserve

stereo mixes and sound quality at the expense of it taking more space and having a longer download time.

Once upon a time, MP3 was the dominant format for online audio files. Formats like AAC and M4A are more modern and supported almost everywhere, but if you have any specific concerns about people using old media players that can't use those formats, the old MP3 format is a lowest-common-denominator alternative. Note, however, that Spotify doesn't support MP3.

Adding Chapters

Some apps (listed below) allow you to add chapters to MP3 or AAC format files. When played on devices that support it, these chapters provide a way to skip around inside a podcast to get straight to the content you want.

Apple called this *Enhanced Podcasts*. Enhanced Podcasts could have chapters, embedded graphics, and embedded links. iTunes and iPods supported them, but few other apps or devices did. Some people still produce Enhanced Podcasts, and they're especially nice for long podcasts because users can skip around chapter by chapter.

You don't see much support for this these days and I do not see much point in adding chapters any longer. However, if you feel your podcast would benefit from it, a few tools are available to you:

- ✦ **Fission:** Rogue Amoeba's [Fission](#) (\$35) is a simple audio editor for macOS that supports enhanced podcast creation.
- ✦ **Auphonic:** The free [Auphonic](#) website provides sound editing and mixing as well as the capability to add chapters to your podcast.
- ✦ **Ferrite Recording Studio:** Wooji Juice's [Ferrite](#) for iOS/iPadOS (Free, \$39.99 in-app purchase for pro features) provides recording, sound editing, mixing, as well as the capability to add chapters to your podcast.
- ✦ **Forecast:** [Forecast](#) is a free, simple macOS tool for adding chapters to an MP3 file. Forecast is still in beta, but a number of podcasters have been making regular use of it for years.

Host Your Podcast

Podcasters generally host their shows on their own websites or blogs. Episodes might be a part of a larger blog where some entries are articles and others are recordings, or they may be on a blog all about the podcast that only contains recordings. There are many options for hosting your podcast's blog, but let's lay some groundwork first.

Choose a Hosting Service

There are many options for hosting a blog for podcasting. Here are just a few of the more common ones:

- [Apple Podcasts Connect](#): Apple hosts your podcast media and gives you a presence in their podcast directory that can be viewed in Apple's Music and Podcasts apps. This is about as easy as it gets but you're limiting yourself to people only finding and listening to your show on Apple devices.
- [WordPress.com](#): You can create a site and host your show's website for free. The audio files would need to be hosted elsewhere in the free plan, but a \$48 per year paid plan can handle them and has no bandwidth limits, but it does have a 6 GB max storage (more expensive plans have higher maximums). This plan also lets you register a new domain (free for the first year). WordPress.com handles virtually every aspect of managing a blog and a podcast, including an RSS feed.
- [Squarespace.com](#): Squarespace is a website hosting service similar to WordPress.com. There is a limit of 160 MB per audio file uploaded (that would be a *very* long podcast so most people will not have a problem). Pricing starts at \$25 per month (\$16 per month if billed annually, or \$192 per year).
- [LibSyn](#) and [BluBrry](#): These services are designed for podcast hosting and provide a basic blog and create the proper RSS feeds. Most

people appear to prefer hosting their blog elsewhere using Libsyn as the audio delivery service. These services are not free. LibSyn starts at \$7 per month and BluBrry at \$12. Pay special attention to the terms you agree to when hosting with these services. There may be hidden gotchas, especially if your podcast starts bringing in ad revenue.

- [SoundCloud](#): The SoundCloud service is devoted to sharing recordings. Many musicians and bands use it to publish music for free downloading to get attention and build a fan base, but some podcasters also use it to host their shows. SoundCloud's free plan limits you to three hours of recordings—that's a lot for musicians, but not necessarily much for podcasts. For \$8.25 per month billed annually, or \$99 per year, SoundCloud expands that to unlimited recordings. SoundCloud also offers a specific set of features for podcasters.
- Self-hosting: If you have the resources and the know-how, you can self-host your blog on your own site using a blogging engine, such as Wordpress (the same software used on Wordpress.com but you manage it yourself). [Bluehost](#), [HostGator](#), [DreamHost](#), and [Pair.com](#) (which I use for my own personal website and blogs) are all examples of services that host sites for you. Prices can vary widely. As an example, with Pair.com, I host over ten sites under my account and pay \$30 per month for the server and email services for all the sites.

Another approach is to host your blog in one place but to host the audio files in another. For example, you could use Wordpress.com for your site but host the audio files on LibSyn or DreamHost. You need to figure out what is best for what you are trying to do. It can be exceptionally difficult to move a podcast from one host to another once you're up and running, so it pays to plan ahead. It may be tempting to go for the simplest, easiest solution right away, but going with a more sophisticated (and permanent) solution might be worth the effort from the start.

Publish and Promote Your Podcast

Now that your show is ready for the public, you can make it available and let people know about it.

Upload and Publish an Episode

The general instructions for uploading and posting an episode of your show is:

1. Upload the file to the site where you plan to host the media (which may be different than the one hosting your blog or website) using the web interface provided by that service. (Some hosting plans also let you upload via secure FTP.)
2. Create a new blog entry or web page with your show notes and anything else you want to say. Link to the podcast file in the entry. Show notes provide an episode synopsis, and they should include the size of the file and the duration of the podcast. For example:

Number 7: Interview with Jim Van Verth of The Vintage Gamer (<https://thevintagegamer.net/>) about microphones, mixers, portable rigs, and more! Details: AAC, 28:23, 19.7 MB

3. When you post the entry to a blog, the system should create an RSS entry. If the platform supports podcasts, it adds the required enclosure tag to your feed so subscribers can get the audio file. If you are using FeedBurner, it creates the enclosure tag for your podcast's audio file in its own feed.

After this, it's up to you to tell the world about your episode!

Add Your Podcast to Apple's Podcast Directory

When you first establish your podcast, you should get it listed in the major podcast directories. First and foremost, you want to list it in Apple's Podcasts Connect. Apple has an excellent podcast directory, which you access through the Podcasts app in macOS, iOS, and iPadOS.

Apple lets you create new podcasts (or *shows*) as well as *channels*. A channel is a way to group multiple shows together in a single subscription feed.

Follow these steps to get your podcast listed:

1. Visit [Podcasts Connect](#) and sign in using your Apple Account (see **Figure 92**).

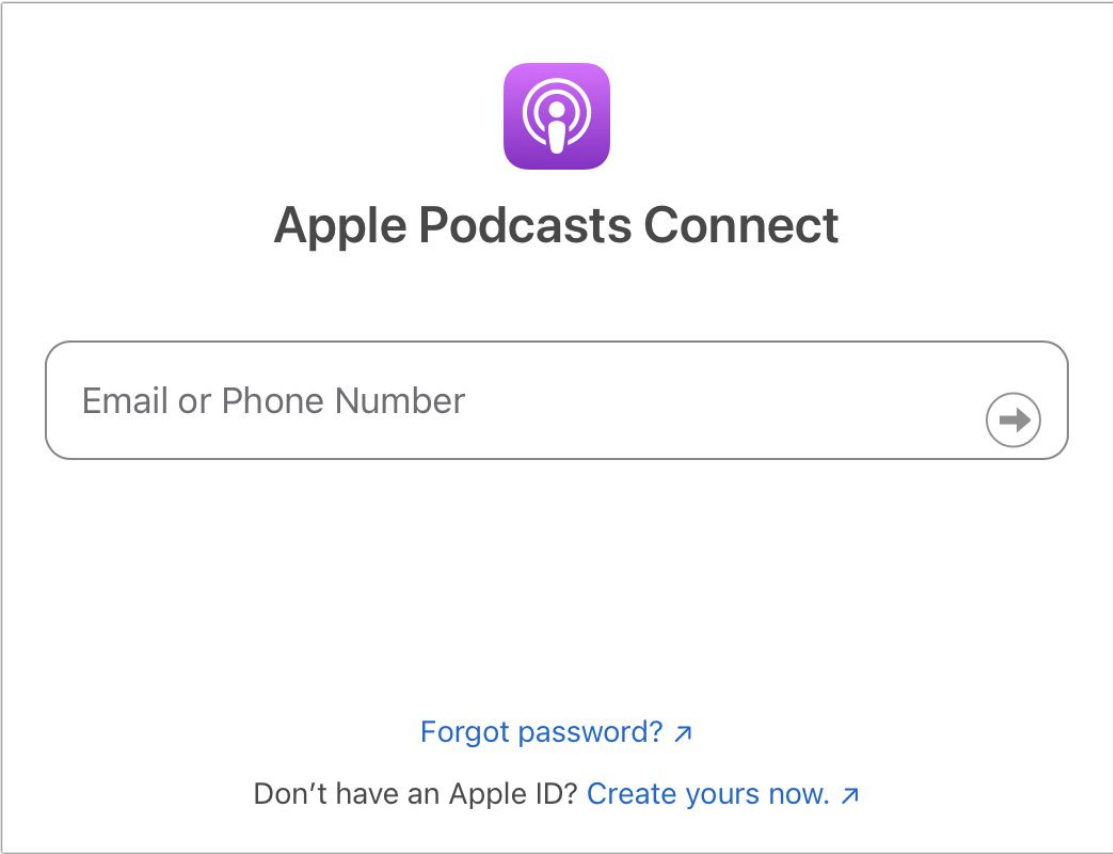
The image shows the Apple Podcasts Connect sign-in interface. At the top center is a purple square icon with a white person silhouette and concentric circles. Below the icon, the text "Apple Podcasts Connect" is displayed in a bold, dark gray font. Underneath this is a large, rounded rectangular input field with a light gray border. Inside the field, the placeholder text "Email or Phone Number" is visible on the left, and a circular button with a right-pointing arrow is on the right. Below the input field, there are two links: "Forgot password? ↗" in blue text, and "Don't have an Apple ID? Create yours now. ↗" in a smaller, gray text.

Figure 92: Sign in using your Apple Account (or create a new one).

Monetize Your Podcast

Aside from publishing this book, I have never made a cent off of podcasting. But I've seen a few ways other people have earned money from their podcasts.

Advertising

Advertising is a simple and common way to make money on your content without requiring your listeners to pay you anything. It's rare that anyone makes enough to quit their day job, but it can happen. Advertisements can take a number of different forms in podcasting.

Here is a survey of the various ways you can advertise on your show:

- **Run Advertisements:** Many of the larger podcast networks (Maximumfun.org, Libsyn, Blubrry, and Spotify to name a few) have services that, if you meet certain requirements (usually how many subscribers you have), either automatically insert ads or let you select ads to run in your podcast.
- **Perform Advertisements:** This is similar to the item above, but instead of the ads being inserted into your recordings automatically or an advertiser delivering pre-recorded audio files for you to insert yourself, you get a script and/or specific points the advertiser wants you to cover. Then it's up to you to present it to your audience. Many podcasts use these ads between sections of their show. They can be quite entertaining when done well.
- **Offer Sponsorships:** Similar to advertisements, sponsorships are chances you to promote people or businesses for a fee. The main difference between sponsorships and just plain advertising is that advertisers come and go, often on a per-episode basis, whereas sponsorships tend to be over a period of time or number of episodes. With the right partners, they can provide a more steady stream of income. Sponsorships are not something you can get

starting out. Usually they come from building a loyal audience and making connections through people. In many ways, they're not unlike the networking you might do while trying to find a job. For further information, see these sites:

- ▶ Lower Street's [How to get podcast sponsors in 2024](#).
- ▶ Sponsorable.com's [Podcast Sponsorship Intelligence](#), a directory of sponsors

Donations

If you do not want to run ads, you can always rely on direct listener support. Asking in each episode to help defray the costs of your show and providing easy-to-use ways for listeners to donate can help. Of course, people are unlikely to donate regularly, so this strategy may be somewhat limited.

One alternative is to use a service such as [Patreon](#), which enables people to subscribe to your content at various price points. Many podcasters use it to provide subscribers with benefits like exclusive premium content and direct access to them (in a forum setting), while still providing their main podcast for free. It essentially amounts to a donation program where subscribers commit to a monthly donation.

Paid Subscriptions

You can require subscriptions to listen to any of your content. If you are well-established and have a loyal audience, this could work. If you don't, you almost certainly need to provide something for free to entice people to try out your show. Direct subscriptions are most practical for producers who already have subscription-based service and a solid audience, but if you have the right marketing acumen and a quality show, you may be able to make this work from scratch.

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About the Author



Andy J. Williams Affleck (the Affleck part was stolen from his wife) has been using Macs since 1984 and has always been obsessed with any new medium that improves communication. At first it was mainframe-based chat systems (Dartmouth College’s XYZ for anyone who would remember that), then email, instant messaging, and newsletters, then finally the web. He built Dartmouth College’s first website in 1993, put together the original website for the sitcom *Friends*, and started a virtual community that celebrates its 30th birthday in early 2025.

He has a master’s degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in Technology in Education, specifically online networks for teaching and learning. When he’s not figuring out new ways for people to communicate online, he works at Pfizer as a project manager. He blogs about random stuff at AndyAffleck.com. He’s also the Executive Director of [Swamp Meadow Community Theatre](#) as well as an actor, director, and sound-guy. He lives in Rhode Island with his wife, daughter, two cats, and a lot of LEGOS.

Acknowledgements

Thanks, as always, to my wife and daughter for understanding why I had to vanish for long hours to write and demand quiet in the house while I tested audio equipment and recorded podcasts.

Special thanks to Chuck Joiner, Kirk McElhearn, and Jason Snell for agreeing to be profiled in this ebook.

Shameless Plug

If you are ever in driving distance of Harrisville, Rhode Island, check out [Swamp Meadow Community Theatre](#). They're a seriously talented group!

About the Publisher

alt concepts, publisher of Take Control Books, is operated by [Joe Kissell](#) and Morgen Jahnke, who acquired the ebook series from TidBITS Publishing Inc.'s owners, Adam and Tonya Engst, in 2017. Joe brings his decades of experience as author of more than 60 books on tech topics (including many popular Take Control titles) to his role as Publisher. Morgen's professional background is in development work for nonprofit organizations, and she employs those skills as Director of Marketing and Publicity. Joe and Morgen live in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, with their two children.

Credits

- Publisher: Joe Kissell
- Editor: Geoff Duncan (first edition), Joe Kissell (second edition)
- Cover design: Sam Schick of [Neversink](#)
- Logo design: Geoff Allen of [FUN is OK](#)

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Take Control of Podcasting, Second Edition

ISBN: 978-1-990783-56-2

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