

# PAGAN PODCASTING

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## Creating your own Pagan Podcast

### ❖ Pagan Podcasting specs

- There have been dozens of pagan podcasts which have come and gone over the years.
  - Some of these are still available to download
  - Some become rumors and float on iTunes even though they are unable to be downloaded.
- Some shows for some reason or another only do a couple of episodes and then are never heard from again.
- Some grow and become long term podcasts creating over 30 to over 100 episodes!
- Pagan podcasts are done all over the world, but most are done in the USA and Canada.
- There are new pagan podcasts premiering every month and there are currently approximately over 36 shows available at this time!
- On the east coast of the USA there are roughly 10 shows and only one pagan podcast coming out of NJ!

### ❖ Benefits of being a Pagan Podcaster

- Meet interesting people, musicians, authors, other podcasters, listeners, etc.
- You may be able to interview people you never thought possible.
- You get to share yourself and your thoughts with the world.
- You become a part of an international community of pagan podcasters.

### ❖ Unforeseen aspects of podcasting

- It can be a lot of work.
  - Between preparation, answering emails, post production podcasting may not simply be record a show / publish a show.
  - The amount of time and attention you put into your show will reflect the production quality and success of the show as a whole.
- The number of downloads may not reflect the amount of feedback you receive.
  - This can be disconcerting.

### ❖ Books on doing it...

- *Podcast Solutions* by Michael W. George Hegan and Dan Klass
- *Podcasting: The Do it Yourself Guide* by Todd Cochrane
- *Expert Podcasting Practices for Dummies* by Tee Morris, Evo Terra, and Ryan Williams

❖ **Things to consider before doing a podcast**

- What will your show be about?
  - Are there other shows about a similar topic?
  - What are they like?
  - How can yours be different?
  - Is this a topic that can provide material for a long time?
- What will your show's name be?
  - Is it catchy or marketable?
  - Does it convey your show theme accurately?
  - Does it sound similar to another show name?

❖ **Format: can compile an assortment of show approaches**

- Chat and rambling
- Segment orientated
- Interview based
- Theme episodes
- Music based

❖ **Show layout**

- Show Length
  - Shows are often either 30 minutes or 1 hour in length, but some have been 15 minutes or less for each episode.
    - Length doesn't matter, but consistency does.
      - Listeners will develop an expectation of your show so you will need to live up to it with each episode if you want to keep them.
      - Keeping people interested is the key to show length. If you can keep them going for an hour then do it!
    - Some shows are regularly two or more hours in length.
      - This is often the result of them being public radio shows that become offered online as an mp3.
      - It's tough to listen to a show that expects your constant attention when it's two or more hours long.
- Doing a show is about dividing up time
  - For example: one of my episodes is similar to this
    - Intro 10 minutes
    - Break 30 seconds
    - Segment 1 10 minutes
    - Break 30 seconds
    - Segment 2 10 minutes
    - Midway Break 10 minutes
    - Segment 3 10 minutes
    - Break 30 seconds
    - Segment 10 minutes
    - Wrap up 5 minutes

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  - Totaling 51.5 minutes

## ❖ Recording Software

- To be a podcaster you will definitely need recording software.
  - Does not have to be expensive
    - **FREE!** → Audacity
      - Darkly Fey from The Dark Side of Fey uses Audacity
    - **I USE!** → Adobe Audition
  - Other programs available
    - BIAS Peak
    - Garage Band
    - n-Track Studio
    - NCH Software offers a multi-track podcast program
    - Ubercaster
    - Soundtrack Pro

## ❖ Show Production Quality

- Very important
  - Good production quality does wonders for your listenership.
  - It's all about quality not quantity.
    - If you're about quantity then no matter how many shows you have if they're poorly done no one will want to hear them; no one will want to download them; and no one will speak favorably of them.
- Quality includes
  - Pre-Production
    - Have an idea of what the episode is going to be about.
    - Scripted / Notes / Adlibbed
      - Scripted
        - Scripting a show allows you the most control over your content and show direction.
        - If you're alone doing a show a script may be your best bet.
        - Reading into a microphone can be tricky.
        - 3 minutes per full page of content.
        - Its takes time to write a script.
          - My shows have been about 20 pages each.
      - Notes
        - Allow for show organization, but you then need to rely on your ability to speak using notes.
        - Overall, the better you are able to speak and control your speech (breathing, slurs, ums) the less post production you have to deal with.
      - Adlibbed
        - Not for the squeamish.

- Adlibbing on command is different than just talking on the phone with a friend.
  - A microphone can be very intimidating because of the stigma attached to it.
- Recording quality
  - Is primary dependent upon having a decent microphone which can cost anywhere from \$70-
- Sound
  - Audio levels are balanced creating pleasant transitions between all parts of your show.
  - Background music does not take away from foreground content.
- Content
  - Are you creating a show that you think people want to hear?
  - Are you offering your listeners something of value?
  - Do you enjoy your show?
- Post Production: Show Aesthetics
  - Are your volume levels even?
    - Are they loud enough?
    - Does the listener need to turn up the volume to an inadequate level hear the show?
  - If you have background music is it too loud?
    - Is it loud enough?
    - Is it appropriate?
    - Does it have singing?
  - How are your segment transitions?
    - Are they clean?
    - Are they smooth?
    - Is there any dead air between segments or moments in the show?
    - Do they sound awkward, clunky or controlled?
    - Are particular elements timed in a manner which make you laugh or cry?
  - Overall...
    - The better you are able to speak and control your speech (breathing, slurs, ums, etc.) the less post production you have to deal with.
    - Provide show notes for each episode.
      - These often just form out of preparation for an episode.
      - Show notes help listeners to follow up on an episode as well as draw listeners in to a particular episode because they can see what to expect from it.

- This can be your actual notes that you used to record or this can be an episode summary containing a listing of the episode segments, music played, promos played, links mentioned and any other credits relevant to the episode.
    - This can also be an index of the show revealing time signatures as to when elements of the show begin an end.
  - Try and keep to a production schedule
    - The more reliable your show is overall the more successful it will be.
  - The most important thing you can do for your show is to be a listener as well as a producer.
    - Critiquing your own show will only help it get stronger.

#### ❖ **Carry the listener through your podcast**

- As a host also act as a proper guide as well.
  - Between segments acknowledge things that were just said or done in the episode and inform the listener what is next and what is still ahead.
  - By doing so you help the listener through the show while also adding relevance to the show and its individual segments.
- As the host your job is...
  - To present material.
  - To carry the show and make it what it is.
  - To thread the episode together by what you say.
  - Not to simply be person talking and the center of attention.
- Realize that as a host you can take on certain roles depending on the part of the show you are recording.
  - During the intro be a greeter
    - Be friendly and chummy
  - During a segment be a presenter
    - Allow the tone of your voice reflect the tone and content of the segment.
  - Between segments be a commentator
    - The show could almost sound as if you are having a conversation with yourself.
- If you are doing the show alone, realize that people will be listening to what you are saying so be aware of what they may be thinking as you create your episode.

### ❖ **Online sound and music resources for your show**

- There are a lot of online resources to help you with your show.
  - Podsafe Music Network, Sound Snap, Garage Band, Loop Sound and more can be utilized to add a level of professionalism and depth to your show.
- Most of these resources can be found in the podcasting books mentioned earlier.
- Some of the available podsafe music, sound effects websites along with free programs and more can be found on the *Links* page of The Infinite and the Beyond website under *Production Links*.
  - <http://www.infinite-beyond.com/links.htm>

### ❖ **Creative Commons License**

- A free, easy obtainable license which permits the manner of usage of your show. You set the terms.
  - <http://creativecommons.org/>
- Having a license allows you to use other creative commons material like music.
  - Jamendo - <http://www.jamendo.com/en/>

### ❖ **ID3 Tags**

- These are added bits of information and files that get attached to your show. Like icon graphic, artist, album, and genre info, show description etc. These tags are how iTunes, for example, categorizes your show in the file listing and why some shows play with a graphic icon associated with them. You need to add them yourself or your show won't have them!
- **FREE!** → I use: *STAMP ID3 Tag Editor* by NCH Software
  - Visit <http://www.nch.com.au/> scroll down and search for "Stamp"

### ❖ **Publishing - getting your show out there**

- Shows are able to be syndicated due to an RSS Feed
  - RSS means (Really Simple Syndication)
    - It is a page of code that points to an mp3 file in the case of the podcaster.
      - In a fishing scenario, the RSS feed is like a line cast into the water. The line connects the fisherman to the fish, similar to an RSS feed.
    - It acts as a means by which subscribers and podcast directories can learn of new episodes.
  - Podcast hosting companies provide RSS Feeds when a podcaster creates an account with them.
  - This feed is then used when adding a show to an independent podcast directory.
- You will need to use a podcast hosting company.

- They can accommodate the number of downloads your show may receive all at once.
  - They'll get you instant exposure on iTunes and Ping podcatchers when you have a new episode.
  - A regular website host may drop you if you try and host your podcast on their server.
    - It may violate your original agreement with them
    - They may not be able to accommodate the bandwidth required of the amount of downloads.
- Start your show out with a hosting company you can stay with.
  - So archiving won't be an issue.
  - Changing services later on resulting in a new RSS feed won't be a problem.
- MyPodcast.com – [www.mypodcast.com](http://www.mypodcast.com) \*Not Familiar with them\*
  - Provides a free downloadable guide to podcasting.
  - Claims to:
    - Allow you to podcast for Free?
    - Provides:
      - unlimited storage
      - bandwidth
      - free podcast templates
      - Help and documentation
      - free membership
  - They may force commercials or advertisements onto your show.
    - Commercials are often frowned upon on podcasts by listeners as podcast are independent.
- Liberated Syndication – [www.libsyn.com](http://www.libsyn.com) \*Recommended\*
  - Many successful podcasts use Libsyn.
  - Provides limited upload space per month, but you pick the monthly amount.
  - But unlimited for the duration of your show.
  - Pings / Lets Podcatchers know when you produce a new episode.
  - Archives your show!
    - As long as pay your monthly fee, your show will be available for anyone to listen, no matter how many episodes you have!
- Show Blog
  - Be sure to have a place where your show notes can be
- Podcast Directories
  - There are service websites which list podcasts and allow people to subscribe to them. These websites do not usually host shows, but merely allow your show to be made available through their website. Some of these directories include:
    - Blubrry <http://www.blubrry.com>
    - Digital Podcast <http://www.digitalpodcast.com>
    - Podcast.com <http://podcast.com>
    - Podbean.com <http://www.podbean.com>

- PodcastBlaster      <http://www.podcastblaster.com>
- Podcast Pickle      <http://www.podcastpickle.com>
- Podfeed.net      <http://www.podfeed.net>
- PodNova      <http://www.podnova.com>

### ❖ **Your internet presence helps with your show**

- Official show website
  - Having a core website for your show creates a home base for your listeners. It provides them with a place by which to contact the show, learn about the show, have access to show links, and become more involved with the show.
  - **FREE!** → Webs.com (<http://www.webs.com/>)
    - Allows pictures, members, show blog, forum it's like having a whole myspace.com website just for your show!
- Show Blog
  - This can also be the show website if you have this capability.
  - The blog allows people to access old show notes, show posts, and show updates.
    - I use the show blog separately from the blog provided to me by Libsyn. The Libsyn blog just lists show episodes which get syndicated throughout the internet. My show blog has stuff from the Libsyn blog and more to exist independently from the show's RSS Feed.
  - Blogger - <http://www.blogger.com>
    - Free Blog hosting site connected to Google.
  - The Book of Blog - <http://www.thebookofblog.com/>
    - Seems to offers themes and templates for bloggers to use.
- Other elements to help with your show's internet presence...
  - You may want to have...
    - Chat room
    - Forum
    - Yahoogroup
  - Help your listener's involvement by having you show on...
    - Facebook
    - Live Journal
    - Myspace
    - Paganspace.net
    - Paganspace.com
    - Covenspace
    - Twitter
    - And other such networking websites

## ❖ Pagan / Podcast Terms

- Not entirely sure where some of these terms came from...
  - **Bumper** – a short spot that one show does for another show out of support.
  - **Podcatcher** – the program you use to subscribe to a show.
    - This also downloads and alerts you when a new episode is available
      - Ex: iTunes
  - **Podfade** – when a show no longer produces material without officially ending.
    - Meaning no notice was given to the listeners.
  - **Podiverse** – The online podcast community.
  - **Podkin** – Those who produce pagan podcasts.
  - **Podlets** – Those who help support pagan podcasts via indexing or blogging about related issues or about the shows themselves.
  - **Promo** – a short spot which advertises you show