

A Podcast Designed to Discuss the lives
Of students, faculty, and alumni in the San Luis Obispo community

A Senior Project
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Bachelor of Science

by

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Abstract

This project was developed to describe the process of creating and launching a podcast for students, faculty and staff of California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo to educate and inspire endeavors in entrepreneurship. The research began with the growing use of podcasting in higher education, as well as the increase in popularity and accessibility of podcasts in the last 20 years. The project was first developed by David Kozuch, a student at California Polytechnic State University in the fall of the 2019 school year and has continued to grow in the years since. Polycast is the published resulting podcast created from this study and aims to inspire members of the community in their feats of business entrepreneurship and invention.

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Chapter One

Statement of the Problem

This project aims to research, develop, and market a podcast to the community associated with California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. The research began with an examination of the accessibility, popularity, and effectiveness of podcasts on the target audience, as well as the use of podcasting in educational settings. This research resulted in the development and eventual publication of Polycast.

Background of the Problem

In studying the effectiveness and popularity of podcasting in educational environments, it is important to recognize the consistent increase in the use of podcasts across all platforms. According to an article written by Nicole Hennig, an e-learning developer, the use of podcasts for education has steadily increased since 2009. Hennig points out the new ways media can provide education and the efforts of large news corporations to contribute to this movement; “There are many established media organizations that have been investing significant resources in podcasting during the past few years. Some examples are the New York Times, public radio station WNYC, the Wall Street Journal...” (Hennig 6). Hennig summarizes a study that used both lectures and podcasts sequentially in higher education. The study found that students believe podcasts to be more effective for reviewing than their classroom materials such as textbooks or handouts. (Hennig 31) Hennig also discusses where and when podcasts are listened most frequently, an aspect of this study to be taken into consideration when producing and promoting episodes. According to Hennig’s research; “one thing people most appreciate is the ability to learn something or be entertained during bits of time where it’s not as convenient to watch videos or read.” (Hennig 7) As the community in San Luis Obispo engages with Polycast, it is important to recognize when and how to support the listeners to better receive and evaluate

the information given to them. The background of this study is to understand how to create and publish an effective podcast for this community.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this project was to create and market an educational and communal podcast for members of the San Luis Obispo community and members of the university community. Members of the university community can be any staff, student, alumni, parent or supporter of California Polytechnic State University in any capacity with affiliation to the campus. The study was conducted to research and then implement knowledge of the effectiveness of podcasts on communication and education among the target audience. Finally, this study was designed and executed to develop and publish a podcast channel on multiple platforms for audiences to learn from and enjoy.

Setting of the Study

This study is to be completed with research, development, and publication of Polycast at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo in collaboration with student David Kozuch of Orfalea School of Business and advisor Tony Prado of the Journalism department.

Research Question

How does the use of media, in this case a podcast, educate and influence a small community in idea creation and development?

Definition of Terms

- Podcast
 - Delivery approach for audio content based on web syndication protocols to distribute content to be used by mobile and digital video/audio players (Cebeci).
- Web & Audio syndication

- “A way of publishing informational feeds about the new and updated content of a Web site to other Web sites or people who subscribe to those feeds” (Cebeci)
- Digital Literacy
 - “The ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills’ (American Library Association).

Organization of Study

Chapter 1 is composed of an outline for the research and development of Polycast, including a statement and background of the study, purpose of the study, research question, and definition of relevant terms used in the study. Chapter 2 aims to review literature and outline the research on the best practices for developing podcasts, as well as the educational and communal benefits podcasts can provide. Chapter 3 describes the methodology behind the development of Polycast, such as team building and guest relations. Chapter 4 contains an example of a script for a podcast, as well as a summary of the publication process. Chapter 5 summarizes the project and concludes the study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The review of literature examines media use in educational settings, specifically using podcasts in higher education to reach students with more than one medium, as well as the accessibility and popularity of podcasts among the targeted audience of Polycast.

Media use for Education

In the literature review for this project, it was found that more often than before in higher education professors are incorporating podcasts into their curriculum to give the students more than one way to process information. Some of the benefits to be found by using podcasts in higher education are the students ability to rewind and replay podcasts, as well as listening at times most convenient for their schedules. (Hennig 32) upon further review of literature regarding media use for education, it is clear that content developed for text-based learning can also be published in any electronic format, making it possible for learners of all abilities to access the same information, at any time; “The basic advantage of podcasting in education is the portability and convenience of listening to learning resources anytime and anywhere without requiring extensive technical knowledge...Learning materials downloaded into mobile devices can be listened to by learners in their own time and place” (Cebeci et al. 49)

Accessibility of Podcasts

One of the benefits of developing a podcast is the accessibility amongst any group of individuals. The key component of podcasting is the ability to publish content on a multitude of platforms including any mobile audio player and the internet. The literature on the topic enforces the ability of podcasts to reach listeners in a mobile environment; “The flexibility of merely listening is a technological advantage of podcasting...listening may be more attractive and less

tedious than reading. It is well known that human beings have used listening as a primary method for thousands of years in learning process” (Cebeci et al 49) In a study of the attitudes, behaviors and self-efficacy of students using podcasts, researchers found that students who are more confident learners use a range of resources to get information for their classes. (Chester, Andrea, et al 9) The study determined the primary reasons for using podcasts were not necessarily related to missing an in person lecture for most students. The literature emphasizes the necessity for students to have more than one platform to learn and engage, as well as the accessibility of podcasts being beneficial to both self motivated students and those with less drive but a need to pass the course.

Popularity of Podcasts

Data shows the development of podcasts has steadily increased since 2008. (Hennig 6) It is evident there are many different podcasts coming to the surface for education, entertainment, news media and more. On Spotify alone, there are over 2 million different podcasts to choose from with over 48 million episodes. (Winn) Because of the increase in accessibility, podcasts are available on any device able to connect to the internet or a range of streaming services. Users are able to access podcasts whenever they please, some of the most popular choices being at home, during a monotonous job, or while working out. Media outlets are investing heavily in podcasts to increase listenership across audiences; “Podcasting has increasingly differentiated itself from the radio industry, with distinctive formats and business services and practices, including dynamic ad insertion and search recommendation engines...it has grown to become a small but increasingly important part of the U.S. media landscape” (Aufderheide, Patricia, et al. 2)

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter will be a discussion and explanation of the methods used to develop Polycast, including a brief outline of how each episode is created as well as an example script. The design of Polycast was carefully developed over time with the help and work of many students and faculty at California Polytechnic State University. Each guest is carefully selected and asked preparation questions to gear up for a 30 minute or hour-long interview with the host of the show, David Kozuch. The production team was then in charge of adding the background music, natural sounds, final credits, and audio adjustments to each interview. After edits are made, the podcast is set to release and each episode is available to stream on Spotify, Apple Podcast, and Google podcast.

Team Agreement

As David and I continued to work together to develop Polycast, we wrote a team agreement to sign and reference as business partners.

Team Agreement

As of July 1, 2020, David Kozuch and Sienna Addison are agreeing to work together under these terms and conditions to create and produce the brand of Polycast. The terms and conditions are as follows;

1. Team Check-In; Team members will check in once per week to report progress and updates.
2. Communicate openly and honestly. There are no bad ideas or questions.
3. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know." There are going to be times where we don't know what's next, but if we work together we can come to a solution.

4. Constantly ask questions and see what others are thinking.
5. Respect others' views and appreciate their contributions.

Expectations

1. Weekly check-in
 - a. What did you accomplish this week?
 - b. What worked and didn't work? Questions/comments/concerns
 - c. What's next?
 - d. Feedback
2. Work Log
 - a. Update Spreadsheet
 - b. Summer Weekly expectation; 3 hours per week
3. Communication Methods
 - a. Stay open on project progress and team involvement
 - b. Keep shared documents up to date
 - c. Respond to calls, texts, emails, slacks within 24 hours
4. Team Involvement
 - a. Delegate projects to team members according to desire and ability
 - b. Hiring new members requires approval by both of us
5. Feedback Methods
 - a. Provide feedback constructively and honestly
 - b. Be kind to each other
 - c. Dedicate time during meetings to address concerns

X Davy Kozuch

X Sienna Addison

Davy Kozuch

Sienna Addison

Guest Relations

With each guest, we created a series of emails to reach out, confirm interview times and provide information and questions in preparation of recording an episode. All email interactions take place over gmail, and are tracked on Notion.

Reach Out Email

Subject line: WELCOME TO POLYCAST

Hi NAME,

Welcome to Polycast, a podcast that explores the lives of students, faculty, and alumni in the Cal Poly community.

The goal of Polycast is to provide a platform for students on campus to learn more about their community members. This is an opportunity to showcase yourself and your ventures in the hopes of inspiring young students to delve into the world after college.

The Polycast team is passionate about storytelling and would love to hear yours! The host, Davy Kozuch, is a fourth-year General Engineering major and created Polycast in the fall of 2018 to establish a platform for students to connect with their fellow Mustangs. Sienna Addison is a fourth-year Journalism major and joined the team earlier this year as the production manager.

Please let us know if this is something you would be interested in, and we will provide you with further details!

Polycast Team

Davy Kozuch & Sienna Addison

[Polycast](#)

Consultation Email

Subject line: THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN POLYCAST

Hi NAME,

Thank you for your interest in Polycast! We are so excited to hear your story and get to know you. In this email, you will find all the information to get you ready to record!

Introduction

Polycast was started in the Fall of 2018 by the host, Davy Kozuch. He wanted to learn and share the incredible stories of his fellow mustangs and took the leap of faith recording the first episode on an iPhone 5 voice memo in his friend's backyard.

Over the past two years, the podcast has grown to over 60 episodes, was previously recorded in a professional studio downtown (pre-COVID), and has a production team of Cal Poly students including the production manager, Sienna Addison. Davy and Sienna are currently seniors at Cal Poly and are excited to hear your story on Polycast!

Prep Questions

We have a few questions we would like you to answer before the main interview. These are just to help us get to know you a little better and prepare for the recorded session, so you can email back your answers when you get the chance.

1. What led you into your industry/field of study and how has Cal Poly been involved?
2. What projects, ideas, or initiatives are you currently working on?
3. What would you say are three big ideas in terms of education, career success, and life habits that you want listeners (Cal Poly students) to learn from your experiences?

Schedule a Recording Time

Here's a link to our Calendly to schedule your interview time! We will meet virtually through an online recording platform for about 45 minutes. You can expect to hear from us three days prior to your scheduled interview with more instructions on accessing the recording platform.

Fall recording times will be held:

Tuesdays: 11am, 12pm

Thursdays: 9am

Fridays: 9am

<https://calendly.com/polycast/booking>

Please let us know if you have any questions, and we look forward to speaking with you!

Best,

Polycast Team

Davy Kozuch & Sienna Addison

[Polycast](#)

Recording Day

After an interviewee confirmed their time slot and answered the preparation questions in the consultation email, we sent a recording day email to remind the guest of their scheduled time and explain how they can access the recording platform.

Subject line: TODAY'S RECORDING

Hi NAME,

Today is the day!

You can reference the recording link [here](#) for your podcast at **TIME**.

Once you click the link you will enter the "green room" where you will have to click "join session" to enter the call. Please use the Google Chrome browser and connect to a set of headphones before joining the call.

If you have any issues logging on, you can reach us by email or call directly to (925) 989-2341.

Talk to you soon!

Polycast Team

Davy Kozuch & Sienna Addison

[Polycast](#)

Follow Ups

After each interview, the Polycast team made an effort to thank the guest and include them in the publication process of their episode. Each guest received a thank you email after their slot with David, as well as an email updating them on the release of their episode. It is important each interviewee knows how the Polycast process works, not only for transparency but to create and sustain beneficial relationships with these members of the San Luis Obispo community. These emails were not templated like the others, but were tracked through notion and personalized for each guest.

Chapter 4

Drafts & Revisions

Each episode is placed into Adobe Audition to clean up the audio before it is published. The basics of producing a podcast are adding natural sounds to the track, an introduction of the host and guest, and ending with credits, sponsorships and thank yous. It is extremely important that each podcast has the same introduction and music to display consistency and uniformity among the audience. As a team, we developed an outline for how to best edit audio on audition, as well as created templates for the introductions and outros of each episode to ensure they were all the same. It is important to listen to each interview all the way through to ensure the audio of both the host and the guest are consistent and clear. Though the interview does not undergo much editing itself, sometimes problems occur with background noise, faulty microphones, or other issues that can usually be resolved with some tweaking of the audio on Audition. Each episode needs to have clean, clear audio and remain consistent so that listeners know what to expect out of each episode. Most episodes are published within a week of recording.

Most of the episodes are published without a script, meaning the introduction and outro is added to the raw interview. Every so often, we have released an episode that is scripted and clips from the interview are carefully chosen to tell the best possible story of the interviewee. This process is much more grueling and time consuming, but the product shows the benefit of that. The process starts by listening to the full interview to get a feel for the guest and what about their story is the most interesting and important to include in an episode. Next, a script is written for David Kozuch to record as the narrator for the guest's story. As an example, here is a script for a short, 4 minute Polycast episode I produced. In this example, I was the narrator for the episode and I pulled audio from the original interview with the guest to include.

Host; Sienna Addison

Guest; Tyree Cochrane

SIENNA: Welcome to Polycast, I'm Sienna Addison and in this episode we will take a deeper look into the life of Tyree Cochrane, the Cal Poly 2019 Rodeo Queen. You'll hear the host of Polycast, David Kozuch, asking Cochrane a few questions throughout the podcast.

11:21 to 11:32 It's what I do, so it's one of those things that doesn't really make me nervous anymore so I just.. you back in the box and you go rope.

SIENNA: Cochrane's parents built a ranch in Santa Margarita and then moved to SLO just before she was born. She has spent her whole life around these horses and first began competing alone at age 4. Their oldest horse is 36 this year and was raised by her mother's family.

4:02 Yeah he's the horse that I grew up riding. I call him Uno, number one, he was the first horse that I rode on my own, by myself and went to rodeos on and so he's really special and he's going to live out all his days in the pasture at our house.

SIENNA: Three of the horses are Cochrane's rodeo horses. Her bond with each of the horses is strong due to the amount of time spent training each horse to be ready for a reining pattern. In high school...Cochrane worked as a horse trainer and says that helped her when it came time to compete for Rodeo Queen last spring.

SIENNA: During the competition, the girls have to switch horses and complete a reining pattern. This part of the competition is called horsemanship, and it doesn't exist in the normal rodeo

world. First the competitors complete a reining pattern with their own horse... then comes the switch

2:54 So we just ended up switching and so that was a really cool experience to be able to just hop on someone else's horse that I'd never rode and go do a reining pattern on it so it was a really amazing experience.

SIENNA: Another part of the Rodeo Queen competition is more like what we would expect...it's called poised personality and appearance. The girls get interviewed wear fancy dresses...answer onstage questions...and do a speech for the audience.

SIENNA: When she is not busy training for Rodeo Queen...Cochrane is heavily involved in the rodeo team on campus. Usually she has one or two of her horses from her family's ranch in Santa Margarita down in SLO with her and she ropes four or five times a week. Besides feeding them, cleaning their stalls and practicing, Cochrane also has a job at the Equestrian center.

16:32 I really love it and I also work at the Equine center so that gives me a lot of just time to spend learning what I want to do and everything so it's really cool and seeing how we take care of horses and just all the work that goes into managing that big of a facility is really interesting to me. I think we have 40 colts which are just young horses under the age of probably I'd say three and then we have a horse sale at the horse unit June first this year. We have riding classes beginning riding, intermediate riding...there's just all sorts of stuff to get into up there..breeding we breed our own horses. We have foaling enterprise, so they get to foal out all the mares, see all the babies being born. It is really cool. I am in the Equine Behavior Modification class, which is also known as Colt Starting or the Quarter Horse Enterprise, so I have one in particular that I started. I saddled him for the first time and rode him for the first time.

SIENNA: As you can see...Cochrane keeps herself very busy outside of competition season.

Thanks for listening to our 2019 Rodeo Queen... and tune in for more next week from

Polycast...I'm Sienna Addison...

Publication

The final step is ensuring the podcast is available to all listeners, at any time, from all types of platforms. In order to securely publish Polycast, our team paid for it to be published on multiple podcasting platforms that are accessible on mobile streaming devices. We keep track of each episode's listens, repeats, publication date and more to ensure placing each episode on a platform that will receive the most attention and gain a following. It is important to track data on episodes to know which are the most popular among our audience and continue to cater to their wants and needs.

Chapter 5

Summary

This project was developed to study and perfect the best practices for producing and publishing a successful podcast in the San Luis Obispo community. The Polycast team began with David Kozuch, a fellow student at California Polytechnic State University, and has over a period of two years expanded greatly throughout the targeted community. The goal of the podcast is to connect members of the San Luis Obispo community with entrepreneurs in the staff, faculty, students, and alumni of California Polytechnic State University. Our ultimate desire for the development of Polycast is to provide the storytelling platform from entrepreneurs in the community to share their experiences with an audience of future business professionals. As a result, Polycast has become an accessible, diverse podcast for all types of listeners to take a deep dive into the trials and tribulations of their peers' business ventures.

Conclusions

Through the implementation of this project, our team has discovered a working model to produce a podcast in this community. It is imperative to note there can always be improvements on projects like this one, and the Polycast team is dedicated to continuing research such as this project to ensure the further development and success of Polycast. Our research emphasizes the need for podcasts in higher education and a continued push in society for accessible, ready-to-listen content on any type of mobile device. (Chester, Andrea, et al.) Given the experience in the development of the podcast, as well as the research done to complete the podcast and this project, the Polycast team is confident in our ability to showcase what we have learned and further our success in publishing more episodes in the months and years to come. We are looking forward to applying our findings from this study to our podcast.

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