

[Transcript] My First Million / One Question Friday: How Do You Make Your Podcast Standout?

All right.

Quick break to tell you about another podcast that we're interested in right now.

HubSpot just launched a Shark Tank rewatch podcast called Another Bite.

Every week, the hosts relive the latest and greatest pitches from Shark Tank, from Squatty Potty to the Mench on a Bench to Ring Doorbell.

And they break down why these pitches were winners or losers.

And each company's go-to-market strategy, branding, pricing, valuation, everything.

Basically all the things you want to know about how to survive the tank and scale your company on your own.

If you want to give it a listen, you can find another bite on whatever podcast app you listen to, like Apple or Spotify or whatever you're using right now.

All right.

Back to the show.

Okay.

Hi.

It's producer Ben.

This is One Question Friday.

This is where we take one question from a listener and we answer it on air.

Today, I'm answering it because Sam and Sean took a long weekend.

They left a little early on Friday and a few of you asked questions to me because I was on the show a little more than usual this week.

So I figured I would answer one of those questions.

So let's play it.

And before we go into the question, as always, if you want to leave a question for Sam and Sean to answer, usually it's Sam and Sean, go to mfmpod.com and click on the microphone in the lower right-hand corner and you can leave a question.

And if we select your question, your voice will be on air, be on my first million.

Okay.

Let's get to the question.

Hi.

This is Jeremy.

My question is for producer Ben.

What did you do to get your podcast found by famous people like Sam and MrBeast?

And do you have any advice for how to develop a good idea for a podcast?

Okay.

So to answer the first question, what did I do to get my podcast found by Sam and MrBeast?

So the first answer that I have to give, honestly, is nothing.

I'm extremely lucky.

That's how I feel.

And yeah, I don't know.

The first time I heard Sam mention how to take over the world on my first million, you may have heard me use this analogy before, but I felt like I was watching TV and then all of a sudden the newscaster like looks out of the screen and is like, you, I'm talking

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to you.

It was very bizarre, very weird.

I had no expectations, no knowledge that he was going to mention it.

And it just totally caught me by surprise because I was already a fan of my first million.

So I don't have like a deliberate strategy or anything like that for getting famous people to find and like my podcast.

I feel like all the strategy is essentially just the content, which leads into the second question, do I have any advice for how to develop good ideas for podcasts?

And yes, I do, because I get pitched a lot of podcast ideas.

A lot of people come to me and most of them are good, but bad.

What do I mean by that?

Good, but bad.

The worst thing that your idea can be as a podcast is fine.

And that's my reaction to most people's ideas for podcasts.

I go, yeah, that sounds fine.

And there's a problem with fine.

And this is the problem.

I, so before I worked in media, before I did podcast, I did management consulting.

And I was on this one project where we worked for a security sales company.

They guys go to door to door and sell security systems.

And they had a problem, which was they had all these fraudulent sales and all these fraudulent sales as we looked into it would happen at the same time of the year.

It happened at the end of the summer.

And so as we dug into it, what we found out was that the salesmen for the security system were incentivized such a way where they had these really steep steps where it was like, if you sell nine security systems, you will make \$5,000.

But on your 10th security system, it jumps up to \$20,000, which is totally crazy, right?

So what you would get is you have all these summer salesmen who are just selling for the summer and they have to hit these certain steps.

They have to hit a certain number of sales.

And if they do, they're going to get this huge lump sum.

So towards the end of the summer, they're really trying to hit these numbers and they get panicked and they start just selling accounts like crazy, even if that means fudging the numbers a little bit, selling systems fraudulently, stuff like that.

So it's a big problem.

So we go tell them, hey, this is a big problem.

You should do a more gradual incentive structure.

And the executives at the security system company told us, we've actually tried that and it didn't work.

Sales went way, way down when we did that, not just the fraudulent bad sales at the end of the summer.

So we got rid of those, but overall sales went way, way down.

And so we thought that was interesting, so why do you think that is?

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And what they said was, panic is an exponentially greater motivator than mere desire. So you might want something and you'll work a little harder to get something that you want.

But if you're panicked, then you'll work 10 times harder, exponentially greater.

And I think that's true.

And I think that's true of podcasting and of content as well.

Too many people think, oh, well, I'll just produce something that's okay, that's good, that's fine, that's inoffensive, I'm going to try and capture as big of an audience as I possibly can.

What you really need to be optimizing for instead is not panic, obviously, but obsession. It's better to have a smaller audience with a very few people who are totally obsessed with your podcast.

And so every decision I made with my podcast, which is a history podcast called How to Take Over the World, was with that in mind.

So for example, when I first started telling my friends and family, I'm making this history podcast called How to Take Over the World, everyone told me the same thing, which is that name is like too aggressive, you need to chill a little bit.

Can you call it something like a little milder, how about life lessons from history?

And I just thought, no, I think I really, really want to make a podcast called How to Take Over the World.

And I think I would be obsessed with a podcast called How to Take Over the World.

I was just like, how cool is that?

Everyone wants to know how to take over the world, or not everyone, but I do.

I want to know how to take over the world.

That sounds incredibly interesting.

Similarly, if you go listen to the podcast, it's intro music is now iconic.

A lot of people love it, but a lot of people, when they first heard it, said, oh, that beat is like really aggressive.

If you listen to it, it's a very aggressive intro song.

And so a lot of people tried to talk me out of it, they said, it's good, but can you back off a little bit?

Can you make it like just a little less bro-y and a little less out there?

And if I had done that, it would be more agreeable to more people, but there would not be as many people who are obsessed, people are obsessed with that intro song.

People love it.

And so to me, that is the key to good content.

These really, really strong emotions.

So you need to get people obsessed.

You need people to feel panicked, if it's a podcast about a social issue, you need people to feel terrified, feel horrified, mortified that this thing is happening, that you're trying to illuminate.

And too many people go, well, this is a good idea.

This is interesting, and that doesn't cut it.

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And so I think the fact that I made a podcast that honestly does not appeal to some people, and I think a lot of people don't realize that, but some people are very turned off by a podcast called How to Take Over the World, this aggressive intro music. But that's okay, because it's more than made up for by the fact that a few people are obsessed with it, and they will then tell other people about it.

They evangelize the podcast.

And that is ultimately how people like Sam and Mr. Beast heard about it, was through the grapevine.

And so, yeah, thanks for the question, Jeremy.

That's my advice, make stuff that people are obsessed with.

Okay, next week, one question Friday, we'll be back to Sam and Sean.

Thank you for tuning in.

I feel like I can rule the world, I know I could be what I want to, I put my all in it like no days off on the road, let's travel, never looking back.