

Worksheet: Topic Identification

When it comes time to reach out to a podcast, the first thing you want to consider is your pitch.

- › What do you have to share that's new? Unique? Interesting?
- › What is the audience you're looking to reach interested in hearing?
- › What can you teach that will be valuable to them?

From work with others and conversations with podcast hosts, I've found that it's most valuable to offer a 'choice of yeses' when you pitch a podcast. That is, instead of saying:

“Hey, I'd love to be on your podcast. Can I be on your podcast?”

You want to offer the host a choice of what you can talk about:

“Hey, would your audience be interested in learning more about one of these three topics?”

The first step is to identify your pitches, the individual stories about your business, your experience, and your expertise that tie into your unique story, educate your best buyers about how to solve the problems they’re experiencing, and position you as a go-to authority in your industry.

When you think about your pitches, you want them to accomplish three things:

1. Connect with your audience — Your pitch should be relevant and valuable to the audience you’re speaking to
2. Address an expensive problem — People want to hear about things that will help them improve their life. We want to ‘learn the secret to a flat stomach’ (an ‘expensive’ or painful problem) not ‘learn the secret to eating healthy’ (the

actual solution, but not framed in an expensive, painful, or 'sexy' way)

3. Build on your area of expertise — If you have an unfair advantage, your pitches should be built on those. What craft have you been practicing for years? What connections do you have? What insider knowledge do you have?

When it comes to identifying your pitches, you want to draw on three separate areas:

1. Area of Expertise — Topics that fall into your understanding of an industry or profession as an expert
2. Common Problem — Topics that solve a common problem that people in your industry experience
3. Unconventional Opinions — Topics that differ from the standard and accepted wisdom in an industry

By thinking about your pitches as falling into these three areas, you'll make it easier to understand the type of pitch

you're crafting and develop multiple pitches to use when you approach a show to appear as a guest.

Identifying Your Topics

For your company, answer the following questions to begin identifying topics you can speak about:

- › What audience are you looking to speak to? (*Broadly, how would you define the people you're trying to reach? (i.e., 'Ruby on Rails Developers,' 'Freelance Marketers,' 'Professional Bloggers,' or 'Marketing Automation Experts')*)
- › What one or two questions are your audience frequently asking online? (*These could be questions you frequently see online, that prospects or clients often ask you, or that your audience is directly asking you.*)
- › What unfair advantages do you have? (*This could be in terms of knowledge, experience, or expertise.*)

- › What are 1-2 topics that fall into your ‘Area of Expertise’? *(These are topics that relate to the craft you practice or your experience in your industry.)*
- › What are 1-2 ‘common problems’ that you can talk about and teach people how to solve? *(These are problems that you’re great at solving and that you can teach people — in 20ish minutes — how to overcome themselves. (The more narrow the problem, the better).)*
- › What are 1-2 ‘unconventional opinions’ that you have about your industry? *(This is where you go ‘against the grain’ in terms of common industry thought. For example, I often pitch that ‘SEO is dead, what you need is outreach.’ Why? Because that’s a shocking statement that makes people go ‘What?! What do you mean? Let’s talk about that!’ What are your unconventional opinions for your industry?)*