



2023

THE MOST

POWERFUL

PEOPLE

IN PODCASTING



Aaron Mahnke

FOUNDER

GRIM & MILD ENTERTAINMENT

One of the most successful podcast producers, Aaron Mahnke began his career in 2015 with the launch of the breakout hit Lore. Over the years since, the show has racked up nearly half-a-billion downloads, has been adapted for two seasons of television on Amazon Prime, and also published as a three-book collection. Mahnke leveraged that success to create Grim & Mild Entertainment, the podcast studio which focuses on historical productions. And in a partnership with iHeartMedia, Mahnke created and executive-produced several other hit podcasts like Cabinet of Curiosities, Noble Blood and Unobscured. Most recently Aaron has added several fiction projects to his body of work, including the annual horror anthology podcast 13 Days of Halloween which leveraged Spatial audio – sometimes referred to as 3D audio – creating an experience that puts a listener in the middle of the action. It nabbed Mahnke a 2021 Best Fiction Podcast win at the iHeartPodcast Awards.



THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

Alie Ward

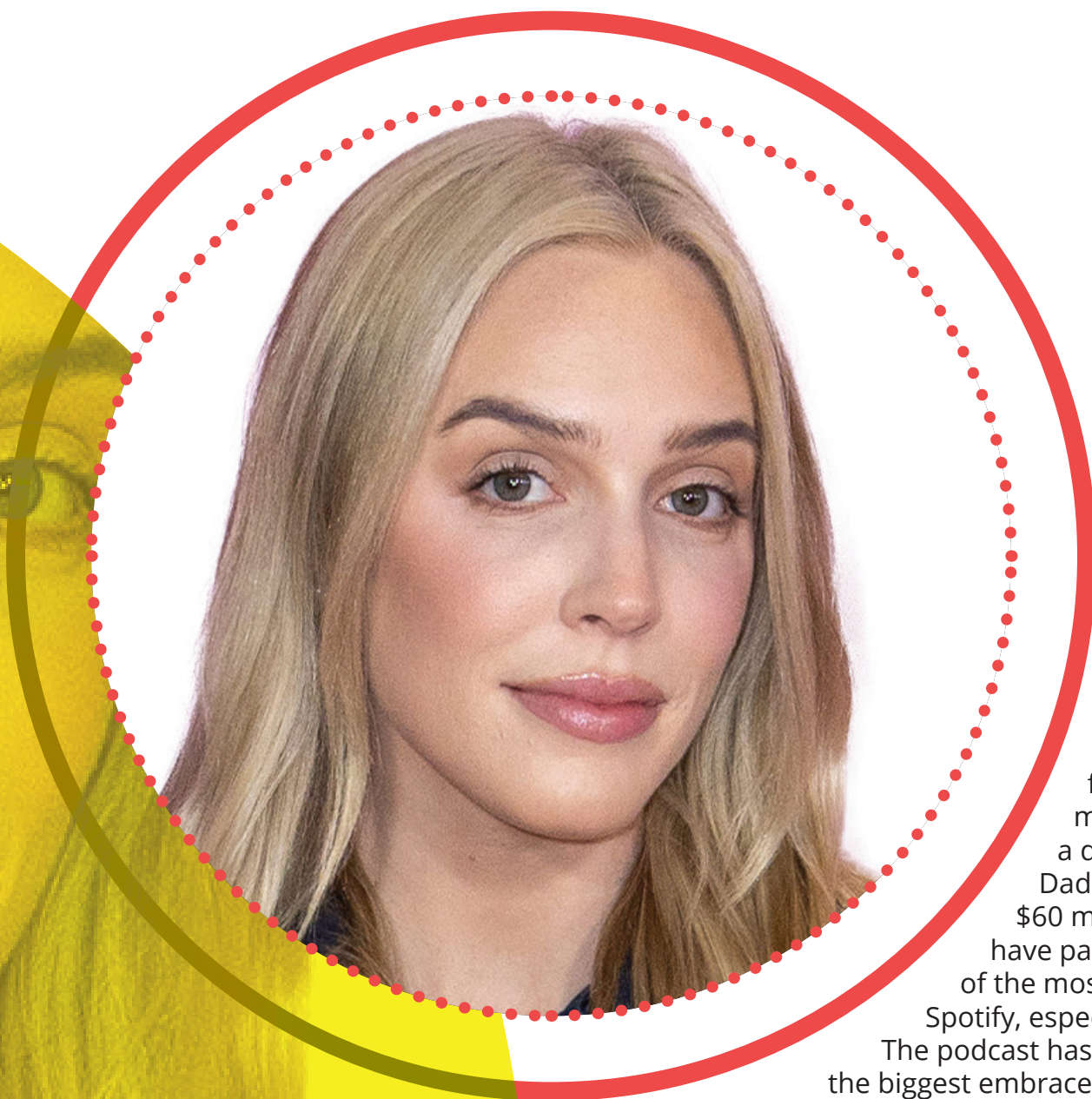
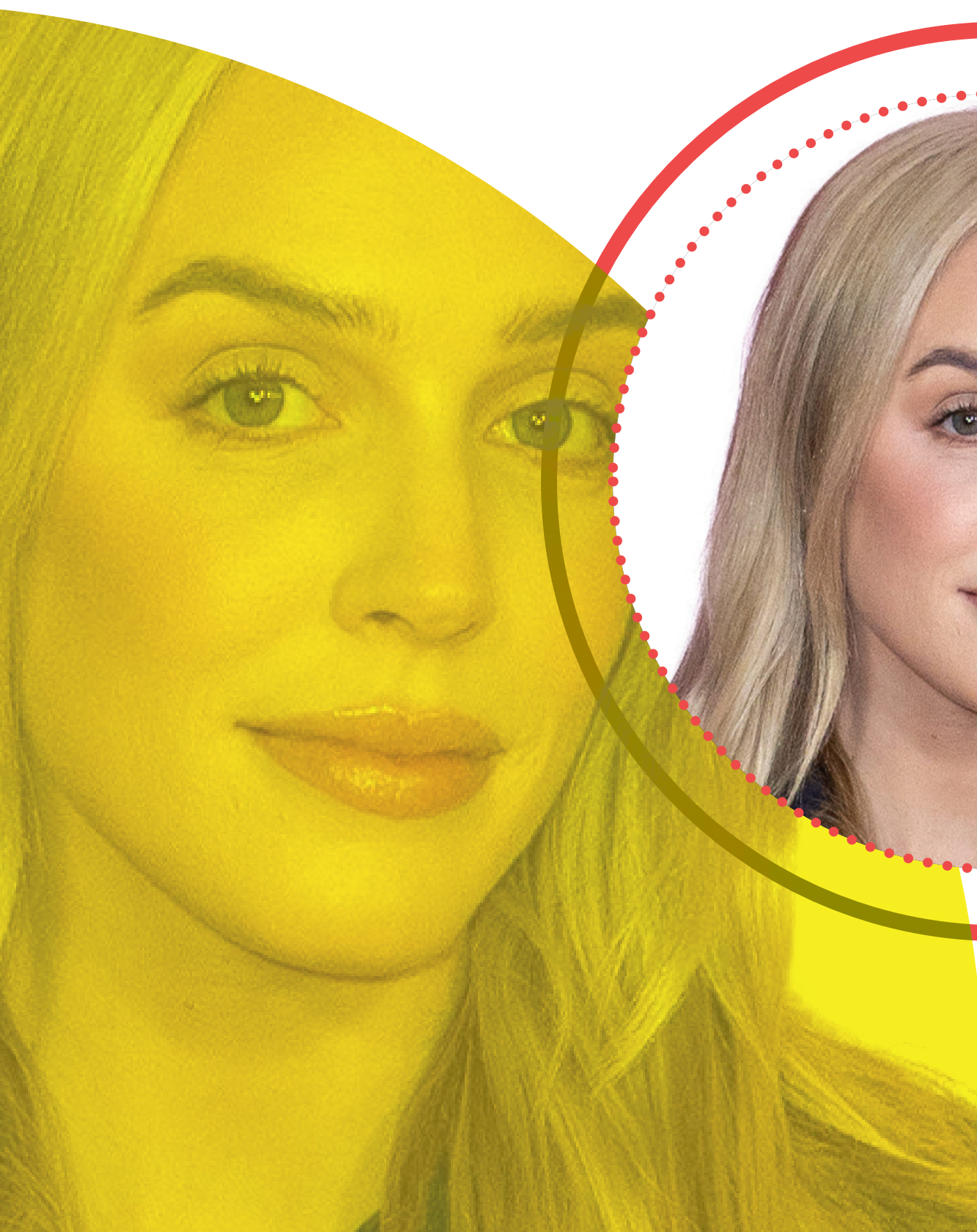
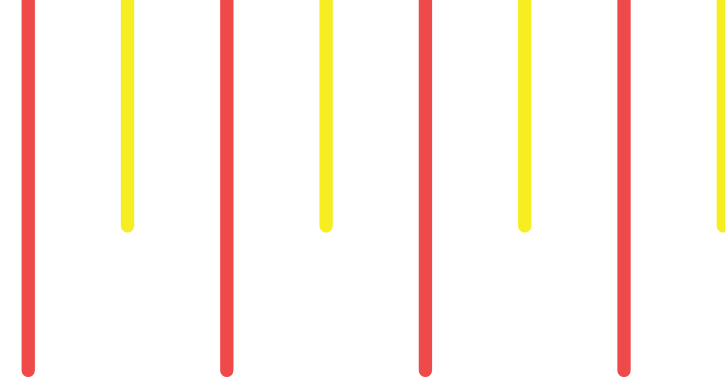
HOST

OLOGIES



For everyone that slept through science class, Alie Ward is the comedic answer to a refresher class. A student of both science and film in college, and cofounder of the science communication collective Nerd Bridge, Ward uses humor to produce a series that entertains as much as it informs. From the science behind beer making to how slugs mate, and why we should care, Ward gives a platform to scientists working in their particular “ology.” An Emmy Award-winning science correspondent for CBS and host of educational shows on Netflix, CW and the Science Channel, Ward keeps the conversation flowing.





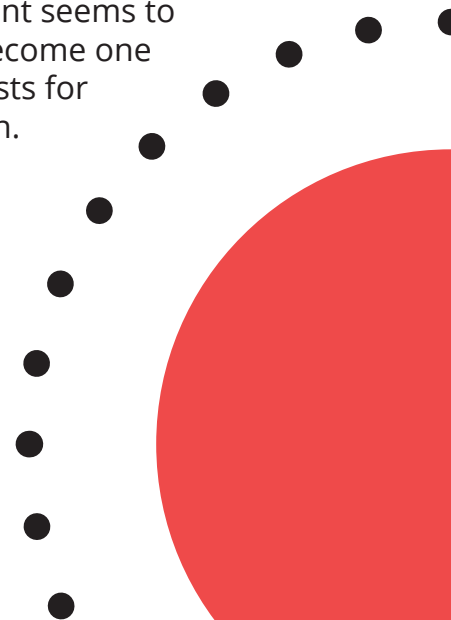
Alex Cooper

HOST

CALL HER DADDY

As creator of the Call Her Daddy show, Alex Cooper has secured a dedicated following of Gen Z women who have grown with the host as the podcast has transitioned from risqué talk to one that speaks more to overall wellness. Cooper signed a distribution deal with Spotify for Call Her Daddy in June 2021, paying her a reported \$60 million. The investment seems to have paid off since it has become one of the most listened-to podcasts for Spotify, especially among women.

The podcast has also been among the biggest embracers of video on the app. Not satisfied to grow her own audience, Cooper recently launched The Unwell Network. It will be the new home to her show, as well as other new Gen Z-targeted shows that she produces with other hosts. “We live in a world where we are inundated with content,” says Cooper. “But The Unwell Network will be the source everyone can go to for unique perspectives exploring what’s top of mind today for this generation.”





PODCAST
NEWSDAILY

THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

Dr. Andrew Huberman

HOST

HUBERMAN LABS

Dr. Andrew Huberman may be among the most unlikely podcast stars. A neuroscientist and professor in the Department of Neurobiology at Stanford University School of Medicine, he specializes in neuroplasticity—the brain’s ability to reorganize and repair itself by forming new neural connections throughout life. In 2021, Huberman launched the Huberman Labs podcast. Despite producing episodes that often top two hours, the show is frequently ranked in the top 15 of all podcasts globally and is often ranked No. 1 in the Science, Education and Health & Fitness genres. Huberman has shown the podcast industry that the sort of programming that would never work on the radio, can find a passionate audience in podcasting. He has even started hosting live shows and is now making paid premium content available. Huberman has also signed a two-book deal that will see his first title released in 2024. For a host whose daily uniform is a black button-down shirt, black jeans, and black sneakers, that is a lot of flash.





Anya Grundmann

SENIOR VP OF PROGRAMMING AND
AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

NPR

Month after month, NPR is where more than 18 million Americans turn to hear something on-demand. Anya Grundmann has much to do with what they are hearing as the public media company sees its downloads surpass 160 million each month. There have been plenty of changes at NPR during the past two years, with some long-time series winding down as Grundmann faced some tough choices like a lot of other executives. "We've tried very hard to sustain the essential things that will keep us moving forward," she told staff recently. That includes its Embedded podcast, which has become a showcase for deeper investigations and limited-run series, has also take on greater importance. Things may be changing at NPR, but under Grundmann the network remains a force in podcasting. Grundmann will leave NPR at year-end. "It's time for my next adventure", she told co-workers.



LIBERATE YOUR VOICE

 **libsyn**
libsyn.com

Libsyn's Hosting Platform

- Easy browser-based, multi-track remote recording
- Easy monetization — subscriptions & advertising
- Easy podcast recording & creation

libsyn
ADVERTISECAST
MARKETPLACE

advertisecast.com

AMPLIFY YOUR BRAND



Libsyn's AdvertiseCast Marketplace:

- Brand safe | Highly Measurable Automatic Ads
- Dynamic Ad Insertion with Contextual Targeting
- Host Read Advertising & Automatic Ads



THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

Ashley Flowers

FOUNDER/CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

AUDIOCHUCK

Just weeks after Crime Junkie celebrated its fifth anniversary this year, host Ashley Flowers transitioned to a new role at Audiochuck, the company that was borne out of the success of the true crime series. Flowers relinquished the Chief Executive role to become Chief Creative Officer for the studio that is said to have more than one billion downloads since the first Crime Junkie episode dropped in December 2017. Audiochuck has grown to more than three dozen employees at its Indianapolis headquarters. Flowers is now focused on developing not only new podcasts, but also television and film projects as well as publishing. Flowers has also stretched her creative wings beyond the true crime podcast realm. She has released a murder mystery novel called “All Good People Here” that became a best-seller that appears likely for adaption for television or film.



PODCAST
NEWS**DAILY**



Ben Cave

DIRECTOR OF APPLE PODCASTS

APPLE

Even as Apple Podcasts has continued to drop new original series, the company's true strength is its ubiquity. Most publishers say more than half their downloads come from the land of iOS. Ben Cave, Apple's Global Head of Podcasts, is again among the industry's most powerful not for any one show. Instead, it is for his role in making sure Apple Podcasts continues to be appealing to users.

That has meant a succession of updates in recent months, like the first update to the Apple Podcasts category lineup since August 2019 that introduced nine subcategories to its portfolio in a move the company says will make it easier for listeners to discover new shows among a wide array of genres and topics. The release of iOS 17 is also bringing several new product and design changes that will deliver a new look along with several functional updates.



Ben Shapiro and Jordan Peterson

HOSTS

THE DAILY WIRE

A top ten publisher with more than 75 million downloads each month, The Daily Wire has proven that conservative listeners are big fans of podcasts too. Best known for The Ben Shapiro Show podcast and Westwood One syndicated radio show and The Jordan Peterson Podcast, The Daily Wire also is advancing into entertainment, setting its sights into film, television, and publishing to grow its new revenue streams beyond its successful subscription DailyWire+ service. Plus the company has committed to spending at least \$100 million to develop children's programming. The Daily Wire has also tried its hand at non-media ventures that included the launch of its brand of razors after another brand pulled its ads off The Daily Wire shows. And they recently expanded to chocolate. Sweet success seems probable.



Bill Simmons

CEO & FOUNDER

THE RINGER

Sports remains one of podcasting's hottest segments and Bill Simmons is leading the charge at Spotify where his The Ringer has not only continued to pump out hit shows but has also moved into video with a deal to begin producing a wider array of content for FanDuel TV. It will also develop a slate of new video-first shows. In addition to his management duties, Simmons also hosts The Ringer's flagship shires, The Bill Simmons Podcast, which is said to be the most downloaded sports podcast of all time. Now Spotify-owned, The Ringer hosts a lineup of more than 75 podcasts with its portfolio that today includes more shows about pop culture topics.



Blake Thompson

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

RAMSEY MEDIA

Blake Thompson is one of the pioneers of multi-platform media creation and distribution in the last 30 years. He was the original producer of Dave Ramsey's The Money Game radio show in 1996, which soon changed to The Dave Ramsey Show in syndication. Today, Thompson is the Executive Vice President of Ramsey Network and serves on the Ramsey Solutions Operating Board. He is responsible for distribution and content development of all programs and platforms for Ramsey Network. He is the executive producer of Ramsey Call of the Day Podcast and Smart Money Happy Hour Podcast. He was also the Executive Producer of the 2022 Webby Award-winning documentary Borrowed Future: How Student Loans Are Killing the American Dream. Blake has led The Ramsey Show into the digital arena as well where it has amassed 1.5 billion podcast downloads and one billion YouTube views. Blake embodies Ramsey's culture of providing hope and life change to its millions of listeners and more than 1,000 team members.



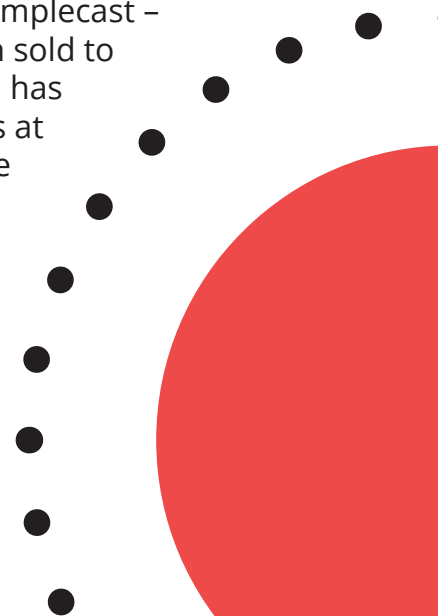


Brad Smith

HEAD OF PODCAST PRODUCTS

SIRIUSXM

Known for Howard Stern and satellite radio, SiriusXM's effort to expand into podcast during the past few years has made it a power player in not only content but also advertising sales. Brad Smith is responsible for SiriusXM's creator-focused podcast products and strategy, including Simplecast – the company he founded and then sold to SiriusXM three years ago. SiriusXM has ramped up its podcasting business at a time when other companies have been scaling back their ambitions, including bringing high-profile producers into its fold like Conan O'Brien's Team Coco and Roman Mars' 99% Invisible. And as SiriusXM looks for ways to take shows from satellite to podcast and vice versa, Smith is helping weave all the pieces together.



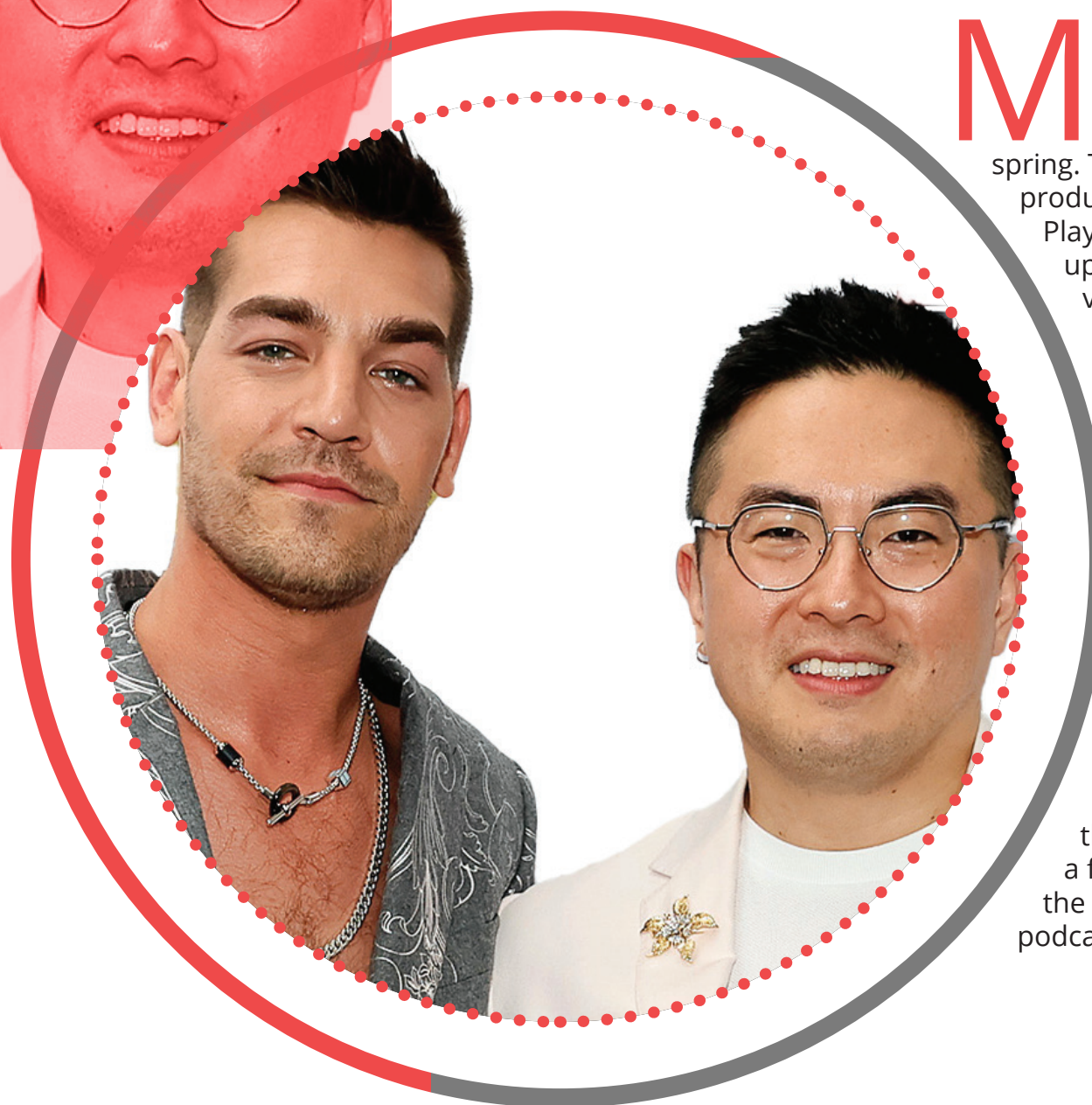


THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

Bowen Yang & Matt Rogers

HOSTS

LAS CULTURISTAS



Matt Rogers and Bowen Yang's Las Culturistas walked away with the top prize at the iHeartPodcast Awards this spring. The show, which is a joint production of Will Ferrell's Big Money Players and iHeartMedia, snapped up the most votes in the listener-voted category. "This is a special little thing that we watered for years and years and we're very happy you like it," Yang said in accepting the prize. Rogers – an actor and comedian -- and Yang – a staff writer on "Saturday Night Live" – call themselves "arbiters of taste and culture in today's America," but for fans of their pop culture driven show, they deliver the news and gossip missing from the traditional news outlets. Yang and Bowen are both gay, and their Las Culturistas has become a flagship show on Outspoken, the LGBTQ+ community-targeted podcast network created by iHeart.





Charlamagne Tha God & Dollie Bishop

FOUNDER & PRESIDENT OF
PRODUCTION & CREATIVE
DEVELOPMENTS

THE BLACK EFFECT

Radio personality Charlamagne Tha God's The Black Effect Podcast Network, which he created in a partnership with iHeartMedia, continues to serve as a destination for content for Black listeners produced by Black creators. Since Charlamagne launched Black Effect in 2020, the African American-targeted network has launched shows across a variety of genres, from music and comedy to true crime and sports. The Black Effect Podcast Network now boasts more than 30 podcasts at a time when research shows that Black podcast listening is growing more rapidly than among whites while listeners complain there are too few shows targeting their community. MTV veteran Dollie Bishop, who jumped into the project, oversees Black Effect's team of producers and editorial direction. That has gone beyond the download as the network has started hosting the Black Effect Podcast Festival to celebrate, uplift and amplify Black voices in the podcast industry.



Colin Cowherd

FOUNDER

THE VOLUME & THE HERD PODCAST NETWORK

Colin Cowherd, who helms two separate podcast networks, says there are two kinds of sports broadcasting. One tells listeners what happened with wins and losses, while the other – which is where he largely operates – is explaining why it happened. In a format where hot takes and strong opinions dominate, Cowherd says by keeping the focus on a quest for the truth behind the headlines, he has been able to create an authentic sports media brand. Cowherd launched The Volume as part of an expanded alliance with iHeartMedia. The sports-focused studio offers a slate of podcasts including his own The Colin Cowherd Podcast. The network is a companion to The Herd Podcast Network, which he launched in 2018 with iHeart's Premiere Networks and Red Seat Ventures to launch The Herd Podcast Network. It includes The Herd with Colin Cowherd, the on-demand version of his daily syndicated Fox Sports Radio show, has more than 100 million downloads a year.



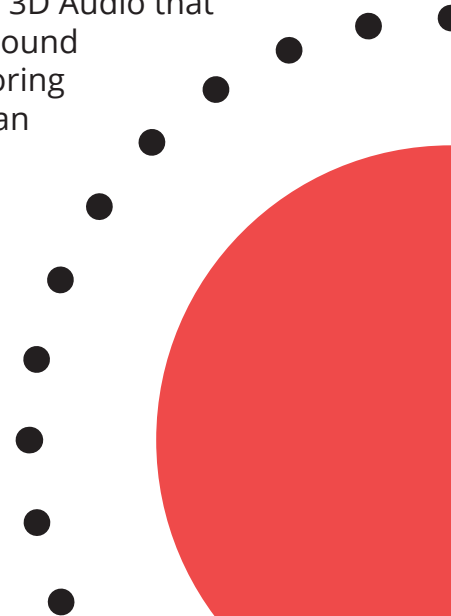
Conal Byrne

CEO OF THE IHEART

DIGITAL AUDIO GROUP

IHEARTMEDIA

As head of the biggest podcast publisher according to Podtrac, Conal Byrne has in recent months overseen several new initiatives at iHeartMedia. They include iHeart's launch this spring of Ruby, its in-house studio to produce branded shows, and the B2B Podcast Network, designed to use audio to reach a large addressable audience of media executives. Byrne's efforts are also focused on new ways to use emerging technology, ranging from 3D Audio that is changing how podcasts sound in listener earphones to exploring ways that artificial intelligence can be leveraged to keep iHeartMedia's podcasting and digital business moving forward. Byrne's also proven to be an outspoken advocate for the industry. "Don't believe everything you read," he fired off in an op-ed earlier this year to address speculation that podcasting's best days were in the rearview mirror. "It's clear audience growth has not slowed down," Byrne said. "There is double-digit growth in audiences across every age demographic." He is doing his part to make sure that remains true.





Conan O'Brien

FOUNDER AND HOST

TEAM COCO

It may be too soon to say Conan O'Brien is better known for his podcast work than his late-night television series, but each year he gets a step closer. O'Brien's podcast adventure started with a single show called Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend in October 2018 and it grew into a full-fledged podcast studio under Team Coco. Since its launch, O'Brien's show has pivoted through a pandemic and attracted a loyal following with the show accruing more than 430 million downloads since its launch. After SiriusXM ponied up \$150 million to buy Team Coco, including its flagship podcast and other digital media business, O'Brien finds himself in a position to create new projects that will also air on satellite radio. But he told the IAB Podcast Upfront in May he is taking a quality over quantity approach. "We've been trying to take it really slow and find people that are very good at this," O'Brien said. "We're not going to unveil 35 podcasts this year because it's just not tenable. You want to make sure they're good."



Dave Portnoy

FOUNDER

BARSTOOL SPORTS

He calls himself El Presidente. But he is also once again the owner too. For the first time in a decade, Dave Portnoy is now in full control of the sports and bro lifestyle brand that is among the biggest publishers of podcasts. Podtrac says it has more than 30 million downloads each month, putting Barstool in its top ten. After a deal that allowed Portnoy to regain control for just a dollar, he said recently that he plans to breathe new life into the content Barstool produces. "For the first time in forever, we don't have to watch what we say, how we talk, what we do – it's back to the pirate ship," he said. "This is now going to be a place for content." Portnoy has also shown a willingness to cut his losses. Last year Portnoy canceled his own podcast after 101 episodes. "To be honest, it was terrible," he said.

THE
R RAMSEY™
SHOW

1.5 BILLION *Downloads* & COUNTING

Donald Albright and Payne Lindsay

COFOUNDERS

TENDERFOOTTV

Atlanta director and independent filmmaker Payne Lindsey, and music industry veteran Donald Albright, have produced a string of number one hits like *Up and Vanished*, *Atlanta Monster* and *To Live And Die In L.A.* with more than 800 million downloads to date across its portfolio since launching in 2016. Profitable since year two and reportedly on track to have \$10 million revenue this year, the pair has shown that independent creators can work with a variety of partners, including Spotify, iHeartMedia, HBO, Netflix and Audible. With the true crime space more crowded than ever, Tenderfoot has stretched its creative wings this year. It dropped a UFO-focused show that became a hit with about 300,000 downloads per episode. And in a creative departure from past shows that rolled out in seasons, Tenderfoot's first weekly talk series is slated to debut this fall in a partnership with iHeart. Lindsay promises it will be a "fresh new approach to covering true crime topics and discussions."



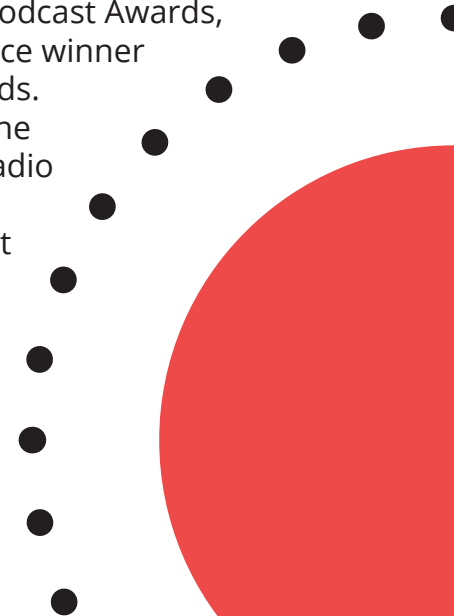
Draymond Green

HOST

THE DRAYMOND GREEN SHOW

Golden State Warriors player Draymond Green has plenty of reason to flex over his side hustle, not that the star player who just signed a four-year, \$100 million contract with the NBA franchise has reason to. This spring Green not only grabbed the Best Sports Podcast trophy during the iHeartPodcast Awards, but he then grabbed the People's Voice winner for sports series during the Webby Awards.

Green's weekly show is part of The Volume, the podcast network co-founded by syndicated sports radio host Colin Cowherd and iHeartMedia. And Green has also signed on to serve as a strategic advisor for The Volume as it looks to expand its lineup of shows. As for the side hustle, Warriors head coach Steve Kerr said during last season's playoffs he has come to accept active players can also be podcasters. "Twenty years ago, coaches would have been furious," Kerr said. "Those days are long gone and 2023 is a different time. The players are media members themselves in many cases."





THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

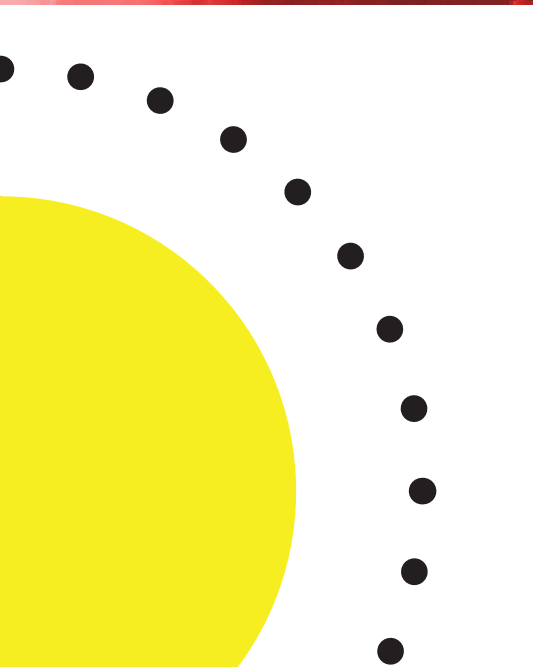


Emily Rasekh

SENIOR VP OF PODCAST BUSINESS

DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS

SONY ENTERTAINMENT



Spoken word content is not entirely new for the big record companies, but it has not been until the rise of podcasts that the labels have put so much focus on it. Sony Music Entertainment has even launched a Global Podcast Division where for the past four years Emily Rasekh has been responsible for managing the company's day-to-day relationships with various podcasting partners and overseeing its podcast sales and marketing teams. Today, SME is home to more than 100 podcasts covering a range of genres. It has also led the way on subscriptions with creation of The Binge, a first-of-its-kind subscription channel providing fans with binge-access to full seasons of new podcasts each month from across SME's slate.

Gisselle Bances

SENIOR VP/HEAD OF

PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

MY CULTURA

When iHeartMedia launched the My Cultura network, a slate of Hispanic-targeted podcasts, the company discovered that a third of Latinos who had not yet become a podcast listener said their reluctance was based on a belief there was no content for them. It wasn't a discovery problem; it was a content problem it discovered. Gisselle Bances, a veteran of TV networks including Telemundo, E! and CBS, is helping to change that. She has led the charge to develop a slate of shows that appeal not only to Spanish-speakers but also to bicultural and bilingual LatinX listeners. It has also teamed up with outside partners like Exile Content Studios to develop shows like the hit true crime series Sacred Scandal. My Cultura has also struck a chord with high-profile talent who have looked for a home for their shows, including actress and activist Eva Longoria and "CSI" actor Wilmer Valderrama, who has hosted and executive produced podcasts for My Cultura.



Glennon Doyle

HOST

WE CAN DO HARD THINGS



Glennon Doyle's book "Untamed" was released at the very start of the pandemic and became a lifeline for millions and it made her mantra "we can do hard things" a worldwide rally cry. It also became the title of her two-year old podcast. On the show, Doyle, along with her sister Amanda Doyle and her wife Abby Wambach, shares stories of her life and explore topics including love, relationships, parenting, mental health, recovery, boundaries, redefining family, sex, and more. Doyle says their goal is to "drop the fake and talk honestly about the hard" on the podcast. Based on its success, it seems lots of people are up for the challenge.



Jason Bateman, Sean Hayes & Will Arnett

FOUNDERS

SMARTLESS MEDIA

In a year when celebrity-hosted podcasts are under closer scrutiny, the smart money is on Jason Bateman, Sean Hayes and Will Arnett. Since they launched SmartLess for Wondery three years ago, the show has become a multimedia juggernaut for the trio. Not only did they sign a reported \$60 million dollar distribution deal with Amazon, but SmartLess has proved to be among the most popular live shows when Bateman, Hayes and Arnett hit the road. Earlier this year HBO Max said it would develop a six-episode television docu-series "SmartLess: On The Road" as the podcast attracted celebrity guests like Matt Damon and Kevin Hart. The podcast, which consistently ranks among Podtrac's top ten most listened-to series, was also named Webby Podcast of the Year for what organizers say is their show "bringing nostalgia and laughter to listeners on their podcast." Based on that success, Bateman, Hayes and Arnett have launched SmartLess Media, the full-scale media company that will develop other podcasts.

Jason Flom & Jeff Kempler

FOUNDERS

LAVA FOR GOOD

Record industry executive Jason Flom has had a passion for justice reform as much as music and that led him to build Lava for Good into a content company focused on true crime and social justice. Today the company is best-known for podcasts Wrongful Conviction and Bone Valley that focus on the epidemic of wrongly accused people who are incarcerated in the U.S. Flom, who is a founding board member of the Innocence Project, and Kempler say they are committed to shining a light on the stories of social injustice. It has found an audience too. Since Lava for Good launched in 2018, it has had more than 50 million downloads with a lineup of true crime and social justice podcasts that has been credited with influencing exonerations, clemencies, pardons, and legislation reforms nationwide.





Jay Shetty

HOST

ON PURPOSE

Launched in 2019, On Purpose has been ahead of the curve with a show that is a mix of conversation with guests and a quest to help listeners “find purpose.” Since the pandemic, listeners have been flocking to health and wellness. Shetty’s show has been among the biggest hits with a series that has more than 20 million monthly listeners, making him one of the most influential voices in podcasting, especially when it comes to conversations around mental health and wellness. It attracts celebrity guests, from Oprah Winfrey discussing childhood trauma to Kevin Hart tackling fame as a drug. “On Purpose is on a journey to help make people happier, healthier and more healed,” Shetty said of his podcast. “Through insightful and vulnerable conversations with icons, experts and cultural figures and weekly workshops, On Purpose is dedicated to giving our community the habits and tools to live a more fulfilling life.”





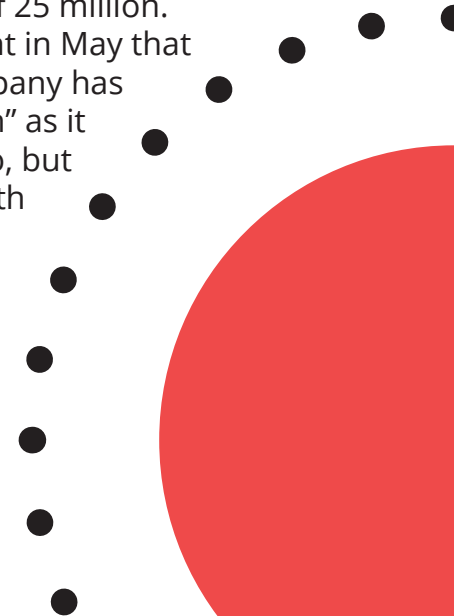
Jen Sargent

CEO

WONDERY

With one of the best hit-making batting averages in podcasting, Jen Sargent has used the base of shows like Dirty John and Dr. Death to build the Wondery portfolio with newer hits such as Morbid and Over My Dead Body. The result is month after month, it is the second-biggest publisher on Podtrac's monthly rankings with a unique U.S. audience of 25 million.

Sargent told the IAB Upfront in May that during the past year the company has "dramatically expanded its reach" as it is no longer simply a podcast studio, but rather a podcast network as it works with outside creators including NBC, Bloomberg, Gen Z Media, and Pineapple Street. Sargent has also led Wondery to build its kid-targeted content. "Through content distribution partnerships with top podcasts established this year, we now reach more than twice as many listeners," Sargent told ad buyers. That growth has made Wondery's listener base even more diverse, she added.





PODCAST
NEWSDAILY

THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

Jenna Weiss-Berman

EXECUTIVE VP OF PODCASTS

AUDACY



With an audio career that began in public radio, it is fitting move for radio broadcaster Audacy to turn to Jenna Weiss-Berman to lead its podcasting efforts. This year she took on an expanded role managing the company's podcast network and studios, including Cadence13, Pineapple Street, and 2400Sports. Weiss-Berman now oversees strategy and development of new podcast content and distribution partnerships at the studios as part of a streamlining of Audacy's podcast efforts. "We have a real opportunity to build a cohesive podcast brand that is greater than the sum of its parts," she said. Weiss-Berman has been with Audacy since 2019 when the radio company bought Pineapple Street Studios, where she was a cofounder. Prior to starting Pineapple Street, Weiss-Berman was Head of Audio at BuzzFeed and worked in public radio for almost a decade.



Joe Rogan

HOST

THE JOE ROGAN EXPERIENCE

Love him or hate him, there is no denying that Joe Rogan is the face that a lot of Americans identify with podcasting. The headline-grabbing show from the comedian and mixed martial arts commentator is said to have more than 11 million listeners per episode, although no official count has ever been made public. And despite stirring up controversies there has been so signs of a shrinking reach. Spotify is paying Rogan a reported \$200 million for five years exclusive rights to Rogan's show which consistent ranks at or near the top of its most streamed podcasts. It is why for all the headaches the controversies may bring, Spotify CEO Daniel Ek says Rogan is going nowhere. "Canceling voices is a slippery slope," Ek told staff last year. "It's critical thinking and open debate that powers real and necessary progress."

Josh Lindgren & Yuni Sher

AGENTS

CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY

The line to big-name celebrities in podcasting can be drawn directly to Creative Artists Agency, the Hollywood talent rep firm that has been the most active in the podcast industry. Its sway has become even bigger in the last year after CAA bought rival ICM Partners and merged the two operations. Josh Lindgren, Head of the Podcast Department at CAA, continues to be a driving force in the talent agency's sustained growth in the audio space, building a roster that includes many of the most successful podcast properties, creators, and production companies. With a team that includes four-year CAA veteran Yuni Sher, the firm has also worked to bring actors such as Cate Blanchett, Ava DuVernay's ARRAY, Jordan Peele's Monkeypaw Productions, Laura Dern and Jayme Lemon's Jaywalker Pictures, Jamie Lee Curtis' Comet Pictures, and Paul Feig's Powderkeg Media, to expand their creative footprint in podcasting.



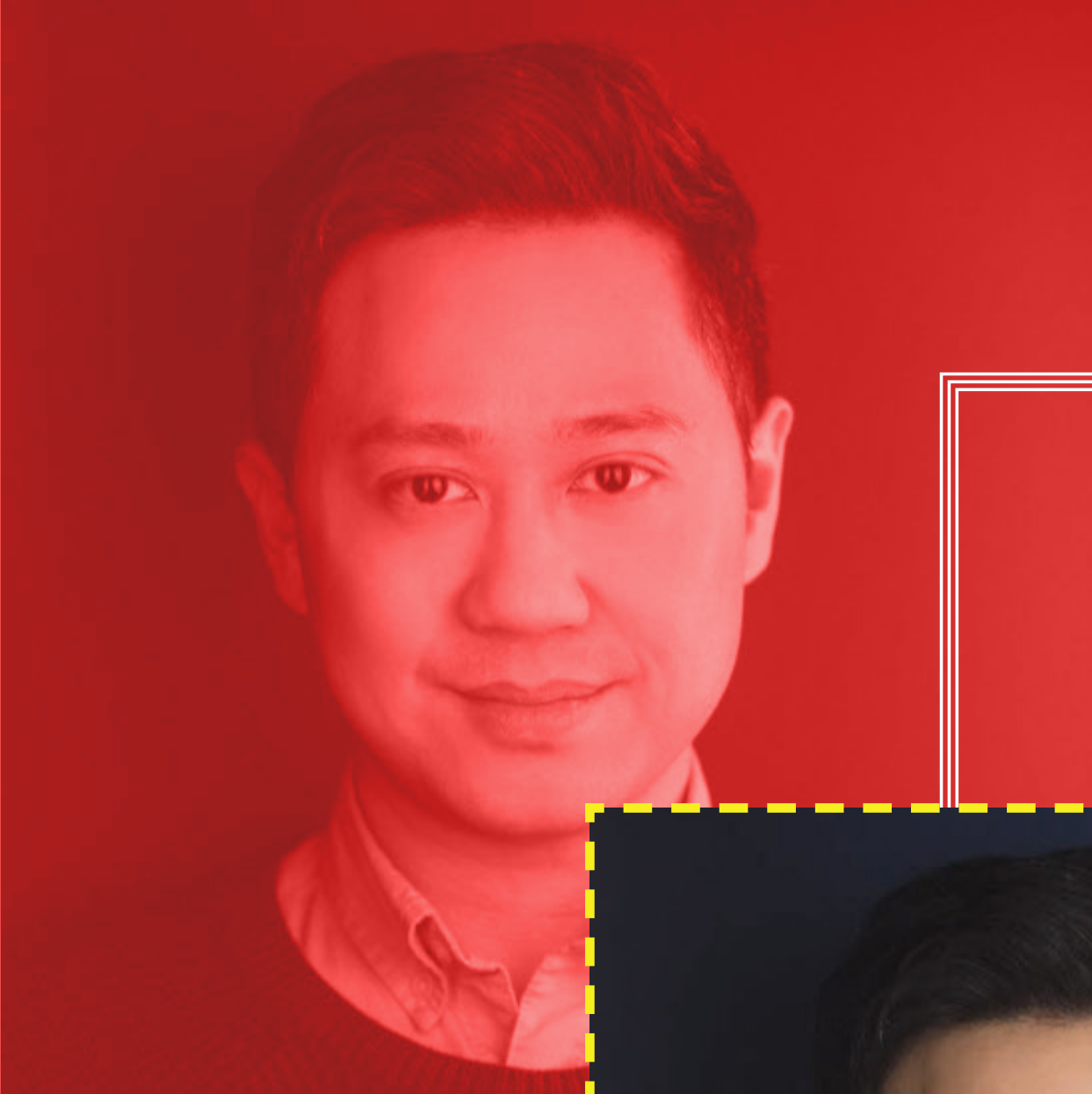
Dr. Joy Harden Bradford

HOST

THERAPY FOR BLACK GIRLS

After five years and more than 320 sessions – what licensed psychologist Dr. Joy Harden Bradford calls episodes of her podcast Therapy for Black Girls – the doctor is still in. The podcast, which grew out of the Therapy for Black Girls platform that Bradford launched in 2014, has amassed more than 26 million downloads and it continues to be among the most popular among Black women. The weekly iHeartRadio podcast helped pave the way for the current crop of wellness podcasts. It explores topics that help Black women prioritize their mental health, tap into invaluable resources and break down the many stigmas related to mental health. This spring it was honored with a Webby Award as the Best Health, Wellness & Lifestyle Series.





Kai Chuk

HEAD OF PODCASTING

YOUTUBE

In the two years since Kai Chuk was promoted to lead YouTube's podcast expansion efforts, the video streaming app has seen its sway over podcast listeners grow. That has been especially true among Gen Z listeners where among that age group 84% say they discover podcast content on YouTube first. That even beats TikTok according to Edison Research. YouTube has even gone so far as to being offering podcasts on the YouTube Music app. Along the way, YouTube has helped stretch the definition of what a podcast is as more creators now think of video as much as audio when recording an episode. But Chuk sees YouTube as more of a service provider. "Podcasting is generally an audio-first medium," he told an industry conference earlier this year. For listeners, he says YouTube will help them discover and listen to podcasts. For creators, he says they want to be a distributor allowing shows to reach new audiences. "We're trying to bridge the gap between video and audio," Chuk said.

Kara Swisher

HOST

VOX MEDIA PODCAST NETWORK

When tech and media journalist Kara Swisher left the New York Times and her popular Sway podcast last year she said she wanted more control over her content. Now firmly in place at Vox Media, Swisher is hosting the Pivot podcast with New York University marketing professor Scott Galloway and her own interview show On with Kara Swisher, which had also been one of the lures to get Swisher to leave the Times. Dubbed "Silicon Valley's most feared and well-liked journalist," Swisher makes sense of tech, business, and politics with the sort of access that most podcasters dream of. Swisher is also a writer for Vox-owned New York magazine.



Karen Kilgariff & Georgia Hardstark

FOUNDERS AND HOSTS

MY FAVORITE MURDER



In the crowded true crime genre, Exactly Right Media's My Favorite Murder remains one of the shining stars. After Exactly Right Media, the network created by Karen Kilgariff and Georgia Hardstark, signed on to Podtrac's roster of measured publishers, it was revealed the seven-year-old show is among the most downloaded in the country. While true crime shows love keeping a mystery running, the numbers helped explain why Amazon reportedly inked a deal worth \$100 million with Kilgariff and Hardstark to have an exclusive one-week window to the podcast on the Amazon Music and Wondery apps. Exactly Right has also continued to add to its roster of shows that has nothing to do with true crime, like the recent signing of a paranormal comedy podcast.



Malcolm Gladwell & Jacob Weisberg

COFOUNDERS

PUSHKIN INDUSTRIES

Pushkin Industries says its editorial mission is to expand the possibilities of spoken word audio. Since Jacob Weisberg and Malcolm Gladwell cofounded the company in 2018 with a Russian Romantic writer as its namesake and inspiration, they have delivered with a series of shows that require a bit more thought than some of what can be found elsewhere. Pushkin Industries has become one of the more active podcast producers in the audiobook world, so it is little surprise that Pushkin has become the home of new series in which Beatles legend Paul McCartney comes the closest yet to writing his autobiographic, albeit in an audio format. Pushkin has also inked a first-look deal with A24, the studio behind movies including “Moonlight” and television series such as “Euphoria,” to develop Pushkin audio into new film and TV content.



LIBERATE YOUR VOICE

 **libsyn**
libsyn.com

Libsyn's Hosting Platform

- Easy browser-based, multi-track remote recording
- Easy monetization — subscriptions & advertising
- Easy podcast recording & creation

libsyn
ADVERTISECAST
MARKETPLACE
advertisecast.com

AMPLIFY YOUR BRAND



Libsyn's AdvertiseCast Marketplace:

- Brand safe | Highly Measurable Automatic Ads
- Dynamic Ad Insertion with Contextual Targeting
- Host Read Advertising & Automatic Ads

Mel Robbins

HOST

REINVEST YOUR LIFE

Mel Robbins is one of the world's most widely booked and followed podcast hosts and authors. She has amassed millions of followers online, with her videos going viral almost daily. In her podcast, Robbins' message is simple: you can change your life. Her media company, 143 Studios Inc, has sold millions of books sold, racked up billions of video views, scored seven No. 1 audiobooks, and her TEDx Talk is one of the most viewed of all time. It's little wonder that her podcast has appealed to listeners in 194 countries by going small as it features Robbins sharing her personal stories and behind-the-scenes peeks into her life twice a week.



Michael Bosstick and Raina Penchansky

COFOUNDERS

DEAR MEDIA

Five years ago, Michael Bosstick and Raina Penchansky saw the possibilities in podcasting, and they launched Dear Media as an arm of their influencer management firm. Flash forward, and the pair have assembled a network of podcasts that they say represents a seismic shift in the way women's stories are told. Dear Media has seen the number of podcasts under its umbrella grow to more than 60 female-centric shows focused on issues like career development, parenting, health and wellness, comedy, sex and relationships, activism and advocacy. Audiences have responded as Dear Media says it had more than 200 million downloads last year while its revenue has doubled in each of the past four years. The company has also leveraged its influencer past when this past May it hosted its first ever day-long fan event.

The Dear Media IRL: Doing Audio Differently event brought together some of the network's most notable hosts for the first time under one roof for a day of conversation, interactive panels, and networking.



PODCAST
NEWSDAILY

THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING



Michael Gluckstadt

DIRECTOR OF PODCASTS

HBO AND HBO MAX



Did you hear the new episode of Game of Thrones? Thanks in part to Michael Gluckstadt, that is a question that does not seem as off-kilter as it once may have. HBO and HBO Max have embraced a strategy of not only using podcasts to promote their original content on television, but they have also offered listeners a good reason to listen by going behind the scenes with the big names that appear on screen. The Official Game of Thrones Podcast is just one example of how that gameplan has played out for the network. So too is the Succession podcast, which enlisted fellow Podcast Power List recipient Kara Swisher as host.

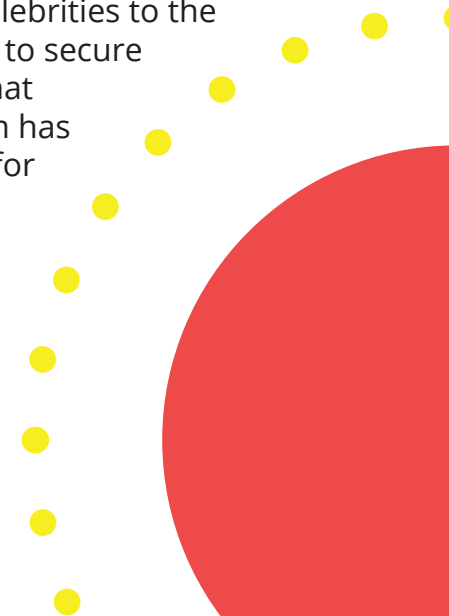


Oren Rosenbaum

UNITED TALENT AGENCY

PARTNER & HEAD OF AUDIO

For nearly a decade UTA's Oren Rosenbaum has been one of the biggest champions of audio in Hollywood and beyond as he has helped bring some big celebrities to the medium while also helping to secure new outlets for the content that studios are creating. Rosenbaum has also worked as scout of new talent for the industry, such as his work to bring model and author Emily Ratajkowski into podcasting. It took three years, and a bit of persistence, but eventually she said yes. "The medium works best when you have someone that is willing to be vulnerable, and wants to be very authentic, and has this sort of curiosity that continues to push boundaries," Rosenbaum told an ad buyer's conference.





Paula Szuchman

DIRECTOR OF AUDIO

NEW YORK TIMES



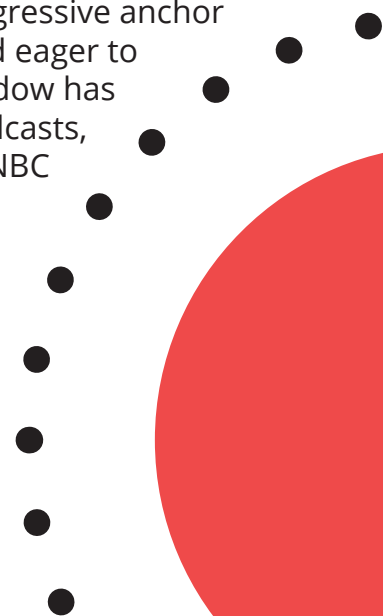
The New York Times is nicknamed the “gray lady” and today that image would include a pair of headphones as the 172-year old newspaper continues to make investments in reaching its readers through audio. While it has has one of podcasting’s biggest shows with the morning news series The Daily, the Times has also continued to add other shows to its lineup. Under Paula Szuchman, that has included new podcasts that are testing whether shorter is better like a daily audio show called The Headlines to appeal to listeners too busy for The Daily. The Times has also launched its own dedicated audio app branded New York Times Audio, that includes the newspaper’s podcasts, plus a daily playlist of news and other spoken word content.



Rachel Maddow

HOST
MSNBC

When she stepped back from her role on nightly television, in part to work on podcast projects, Rachel Maddow probably had some observers scratching their heads. But after her latest series *Deja News* debuted at No. 1 on Apple Podcasts in June, there was little doubt that the progressive anchor has a dedicated audience waiting and eager to gobble up the stories that she tells. Maddow has also carved out a storytelling style on her podcasts, which also includes *Bag Man* and *Ultra*. Like her MSNBC monologues, she digs into history to illuminate new angles on modern-day political issues. The result is not only a consideration of ways in which history repeats, but also showing there can be a more rational way to view some of today's most perplexing problems.





PODCAST
NEWSDAILY

THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING



Rebecca Kutler

SENIOR VP OF CONTENT STRATEGY

MSNBC



Podcasts have been a growing part of the strategy at NBC News, especially as its Dateline NBC podcast raced up in the charts in the U.S. and beyond. Helping lead the digital audio efforts at MSNBC is Rebecca Kutler. At the start of the year, she added audio and digital to her role overseeing content initiatives across the MSNBC portfolio, including leading its streaming strategy and developing new programs for broadcast TV and the MSNBC Hub on Peacock.

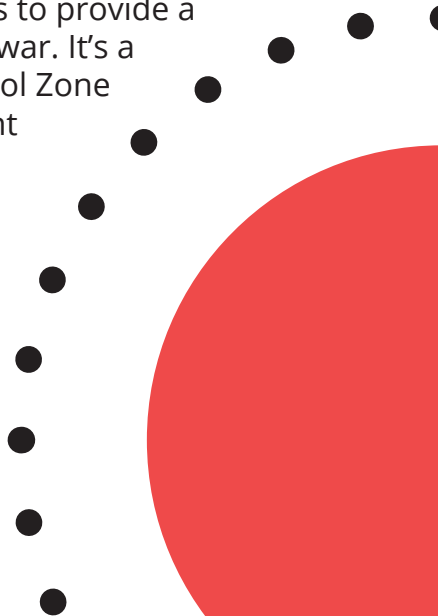


Robert Evans

FOUNDER

COOL ZONE MEDIA

Cool Zone Media doesn't mince words. It says we are living through the collapse of the known, and the birth of a new unknown. Under the leadership of journalist Robert Evans, Cool Zone Media aims to chronicle that collapse, and provide advice and access to vital voices trying to build a better future. The result is a roster of shows that take on topics like police brutality, QAnon, and how bad actors use the internet to target and silence marginalized people. Evans also hosts the It Could Happen Here show that tries to provide a roadmap to survival to a second civil war. It's a dark and BS-free zone. But Evans and Cool Zone Media say that's just what America needs right now.



THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

PODCAST
NEWS**DAILY**



Sahar Elhabashi

HEAD OF PODCAST BUSINESS

SPOTIFY



Call it Spotify's 2.0 moment in podcasting. After spending billions to build its podcast business, the company has pivoted this year with a new focus on making shows that are profitable and sidestepping the flashy deals with celebrities that grabbed headlines but often times brought in few listeners or ad dollars. Sahar Elhabashi is the executive leading the charge. The former television executive has already been making her mark. After a months-long reorganization, she told her team this spring that it was time for the "next chapter" for Spotify's podcast business as it makes a "fundamental pivot." That includes an increased focus on "always-on" programming rather than season-based podcasts, which Elhabashi have proven to be better at attracting audiences and advertisers. "Our continued success in growing the podcast ecosystem is predicated on the necessity that the Spotify Machine is always in motion," Elhabashi said.

Sarah Koenig & Julie Snyder

CREATORS

SERIAL

The now-New York Times owned podcast Serial launched its first season in Oct. 2014 and through its subsequent second and third seasons the show has been downloaded more than 743 million times, which The Podcast Academy estimates has made it the most listened-to podcast in the history of the format. Show creators and hosts Sarah Koenig and Julie Snyder are taking that success and leveraging it to tell new stories. Like this year's The Retrievals, a five-part series about a fertility clinic, and The Coldest Case in Laramie about an unsolved Wyoming homicide. As for Serial, Koenig and Snyder have not ruled out a new season. With a hit like their first season, the bar is high, and they say they are waiting for the right story to tell.





PODCAST
NEWSDAILY

THE MOST
POWERFUL
PEOPLE IN PODCASTING

Sarah Marshall

HOST

YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT

The show You're Wrong About is a weekly reconsideration of a person or event that has been miscast in the public perception. No such reexamination is needed of Sarah Marshall. The host of the series has become a poster child for the success that independent podcasters can achieve. Marshall even took home the coveted Podcast Of The Year trophy during the 2022 iHeartPodcast Award in category that is selected by listeners. "I just feel so incredibly lucky to be doing this work," Marshall said during the ceremony. "I wanted to thank everyone who has loved my little podcast baby over the years - I will be thanking you every time I get out of bed to read another out of print paperback so that I can tell you about it. That is my love language."





Shankar Vedantam

HOST

HIDDEN BRAIN

Shankar Vedantam's self-published podcast Hidden Brain continues to grow its audience and influence. It may have debuted in 2015, but 2023 has brought it some of its best listening numbers according to Podtrac rankings with more than three million downloads per week. On the show, Vedantam – a former newspaper reporter and NPR's social science correspondent – uses science and storytelling to reveal the unconscious patterns that drive human behavior, shape personal choices, and direct relationships. That may seem wonky, but Hidden Brain has proven to be a radio hit too. The show airs on nearly 400 public radio stations around the U.S.



THE
R RAMSEYTM
SHOW

1.5 BILLION *Downloads* & COUNTING



Stephanie Wittels Wachs & Jessica Cordova Kramer

COFOUNDERS

LEMONADA MEDIA



Lemonada Media operates with the mission to “makes life suck less” one podcast at a time. Jessica Cordova Kramer and Stephanie Wittels Wachs continue on that mission, showing it is a mindset that has lots of appeal to listeners and creators alike. It has allowed the studio to strike deals with the likes of actress Julie Louis-Dreyfus, former TV talk show host Ricki Lake, and chef José Andrés. The company has also embraced audiobooks. As part of the Lemonada Book Club, each month it picks a new audiobook that is discussed and promoted across its network of shows.

Steve Raizes

EXECUTIVE VP OF PODCASTING

AND AUDIO

PARAMOUNT

As the entertainment companies have grown, so too has the reach of Paramount executive Steve Raizes. He leads the podcasting efforts at CBS News, Comedy Central, MTV, BET, and Nickelodeon, as well as the other Paramount brands, which currently produce 120 podcasts. Raizes told a digital conference earlier this year that their downloads are up 42% so far this year with revenue more than double what it was in 2022. Raizes, who has been working in podcasting since he became the point man at Viacom in 2015, said that although podcast spending has “come back to Earth” in recent months it has also means a less is more strategy for Paramount. “We are being much more judicious in terms of what we’re putting out,” he said. “A good show is not necessarily a good pod. That’s a critical piece that took us awhile to figure out.”



Steven Rinella

HOST

THE MEATEATER PODCAST

Hunting, fishing, podcasting. Steven Rinella is the host of the long-running television show MeatEater who has brought his popular outdoor content to audio with the top-ranked MeatEater podcast. In an industry that is looking to grow by appealing to new demographic groups, Rinella is making noise appealing to a segment that may not be top of mind. The MeatEater Podcast Network now boasts ten series that offer an in-depth and relevant look at outdoor topics including hunting, fishing, nature, conservation, and wild foods that offer a peek of life in rural America.



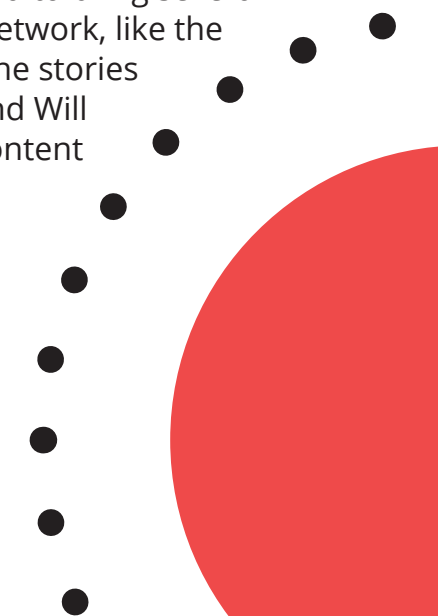


Will Pearson

PRESIDENT

IHEARTPODCAST NETWORK

With more than 800 podcasts, iHeartPodcasts has charted a substantial amount of growth during the past year under Will Pearson. That has offered an opportunity for iHeart to expand its reach to new audiences, with networks like its Black Effect, My Cultura, and the LGBTQ-focused Outspoken. The result is iHeartPodcasts has remained the No. 1 publisher with 31 million unique listeners each month and download and streams of nearly 380 million. Under Pearson, iHeart has also worked to bring several successful producers into their network, like the hit podcast Womanica, which tells the stories of iconic women throughout history, and Will Packer Media, a production and branded content company led by Hollywood producer Will Packer. There have also been new deals with producers like Martha Stewart and Abominable Pictures, the comedy production company that has mainly worked in television and film, which is now partnering with iHeart on podcasts and joining the ranks of partners that also includes the NFL and NBA, Seneca Women, and Curiosity Inc., among others.



*How were these people selected for the
Most Powerful People in Podcasting List?*

Readers, vendors and more - really anyone - could nominate Podcast Executives and Talent with no qualifications. All nominations received one entry on our list, regardless of how many people nominated that person.

Our panel of podcast experts narrowed their individual list to 50 each and nominees were evaluated, graded, checked, appraised, tossed out, tossed back in and in general, were finally chosen based on their contribution to the Podcast Industry so far this year.

Keep up with the daily changes in the podcast industry. [CLICK HERE](#) to sign up for the daily free email from PodcastNewsDaily.com