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Tips To Be a Podcast Host or Guest

Are you tempted to jump on the podcast bandwagon? Have you taken a ride as a guest on another's podcast? In her Best Practices for Solo Practices column, Janet Falk provides insights into what it is like to host your own program or be a guest on a podcast.

By **Janet Falk** November 25, 2020 at 09:30 AM

Podcasts are a source of timely insights and best practices, as well as a vehicle for solo attorneys to promote their own ideas and law practice. You can also demonstrate your extensive background in a type of transaction or litigation, or highlight your focus on a specific industry.

With a low cost for purchasing equipment (less than \$75), almost anyone can establish a podcast and promote it. Are you tempted to jump on the podcast bandwagon? Have you taken a ride as a guest on another's podcast? Gain insights into what it is like to host your own program or be a guest on a podcast from these solo attorneys.

Sarah Gold has been the co-host of [Gold/Fox: Non Billable](#), a podcast of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA), since September 2019. The weekly Wednesday program features attorneys, judges and elected officials who reflect on their interest in a career in the law, as well as their *nonbillable* activities. The podcasts were initially recorded in a NYSBA studio; now the shows are recorded on Zoom. Gold advises companies and nonprofits on business contracts, leases and other transactions at [Gold Law Firm](#) in Albany.

Eric Sarver, with a practice in employment law and business law at [Law Offices of Eric M. Sarver](#) in New York City, launched [Employment Law Today](#) in September. “With the COVID-19 pandemic, there are new employment laws and regulations regarding hiring, firing, paid leaves of absence, and workplace practices and protocols—all of which can increase business owners’ anxieties about regaining traction or thriving again. My guests discuss solutions to common employment law challenges that business owners face in these uncertain times. Other topics related to running a successful business during the pandemic include cyber security, video marketing, financial strategies, and employee relations.” Sarver records his programs on an Internet radio station.

Both Gold and Sarver promote their podcasts using social media. Gold has an active presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, where she regularly promotes upcoming and previously recorded shows. NYSBA also mentions the podcast in its mailings and on social media. Indeed, this was of the objectives in creating the program, namely to “expand NYSBA’s reach into the podcast sphere.”

Sarver consistently posts on social media via “LinkedIn, Facebook, Alignable and Twitter, both in the main posts and in specialized groups for business owners, small businesses and startups” that are likely to find it of interest. In addition, he mentions the shows on his website and YouTube channel and his newsletter. Sarver mentions it in networking events and group meetings. He also asks “guests and colleagues to share their appearance on Employment Law Today on their social media accounts.”

For those who wish to be a guest on a podcast, consider the marketing paradigm of push and pull. Some hosts invite their own guests, while other would-be speakers contact the podcast hosts directly. Barry Heyman, with a practice focused on entertainment, music, new media and IP at [Heyman Law](#) in New York City, has been on a few podcasts. “The opportunities all came about differently. With one, I was part of a faculty at an institution and another professor launched a podcast. A second

opportunity came about from a long-time entertainment industry colleague. I was also invited by someone who located me on the internet and wanted to discuss evolving technology and its effect on music licensing and royalty streams.”

Here’s a step-by-step approach for those who wish to appear on a podcast.

- (1) Identify the programs that are of interest to your target audience.
- (2) Contact the host by email.
- (3) Demonstrate that you are familiar with the program and state why you are an appropriate guest.
- (4) Suggest sample topics for discussion.
- (5) Indicate that you are experienced in public speaking; cite examples that you have spoken on similar programs or given lectures and workshops.
- (6) Mention that you are prepared to promote the podcast appearance on your social media and newsletter before and after the broadcast.

In preparing to be a guest, follow these tips:

- If you are appearing remotely, make sure you have a good quiet location and decent microphone/headphone access for good sound quality.
- Consider lighting for video broadcasts.
- Ask for questions in advance.
- Prepare a few topics and have examples and anecdotes to illustrate your points.
- When you list a series of ideas, circle back to summarize them.

- Conduct and record a mock session. Review and critique it to help improve your performance.
- Know the length of the podcast, so you can prepare how much to say on a given topic.

What are the outcomes of podcast appearances? Public speaking engagements often lead to an increase in client inquiries and new matters, which is undoubtedly a motivator for solo attorneys. Yet there are other surprising and less tangible rewards.

Heyman acknowledges that, “As far as I’m aware, it has not led to anyone reaching out for legal services. Nonetheless, I enjoyed participating and will continue to do so. It provides another way to connect with the public and, if someone happens to listen to a podcast and finds it insightful, then I consider it a worthwhile endeavor. I’ve also enjoyed connecting or reconnecting with the host of the podcast. It’s provided me an opportunity to reflect and possibly re-consider our thoughts regarding the various topics and issues that are presented in our areas of practice.”

Sarver agrees with this latter assessment. “Each time I appeared on a podcast, I came away with a better and deeper insight into the topic that we were discussing -whether it was about applying wage and hour laws to a virtual workforce, addressing employer / employee conflicts over COVID-19 regulations, or related matters.”

In addition, Sarver *has* received referrals of employment law matters from attorney colleagues, plus a few past clients have contacted him regarding new matters requiring his counsel. “I believe that the combination of the podcast and my promotion of it positioned me to be top of mind with these colleagues and clients.”

Finally, a note on *legal issues commonly faced*. Adam Weissman, with a practice in media, entertainment and corporate law at [Adam Weissman Law](#) in New York City, often advises clients in the podcast space. “While it’s never been easier or cheaper to

create and distribute a podcast, creators still need to consider the same legal issues any television, radio or web-show producer faces:

- If you're collaborating with others, be sure you make note of everyone's role and ownership in the show *in writing* in a contract.
- If you have guests on your podcast, don't forget to get releases signed by each one *before* you record. (The last thing you need is a guest refusing to give you permission to air your podcast after you finished interviewing them.)
- Before releasing your podcast, ensure you review each episode for copyright and clearance issues (for example, if you're including any music or film clips), so no third parties come after you for material you should not have included."

In sum, Weissman advises, "Look into these issues when you *start* producing, rather than after the fact, and they'll become almost second nature as your podcast grows."

By following these tips to launch your podcast or appear on one, you'll make an even greater impression. Hearing you speak about best practices, solutions and trends in a given industry may drive listeners to your website and then to seek your counsel.

Janet Falk is the head of **Falk Communications and Research** in New York. She provides media relations and marketing communications services to law firms and consultants. This is her final column in the series, which will be continued by Carol Schiro Greenwald of **CSG Marketing Partners**.

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