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| Chalene: | Hey there. Welcome to Build Your Tribe. I'm so happy you're here. I just wanted to tell you right up from that I'm going to reference a ton of different equipment in this show, all of which is going to blow your mind how super affordable it is, and most of which you can either find on Amazon or other places online, including the free software that I use to edit this podcast, et cetera. If you would like me to send that to you right now, all you have to do is text the word "podcast" to this phone number. 949-565-4337. If you're not within the continental US, then what you'll need to do is go to my show notes, where I will include all of those links as well. You can find that by going to chalenejohnson.com/podcast. I don't always do show notes for Build Your Tribe. However, I will for this episode, and my debt of gratitute. I want to say thank you, thank you to all of you who are happy about the resurrection of Build Your Tribe, and who are also loyal listeners of The Chalene Show. |
|  | What's the difference between the two of them? The Chalene Show is really, it's about life. I talk about motivation, inspiration, how I organize my day, how to get more focus, how to be more efficient, dieting, exercise, relationships, everything you need to be a better entrepreneur. While I think every entrepreneur should be listening to The Chalene Show, not every Chalene Show listener needs to listen to Build Your Tribe, because not everybody is at a point where they realize they need their own business, but you do. That's why I pretty much totally dig you. |
|  | Anyways, just a reminder that if you haven't already, please be sure to subscribe to The Chalene Show. If you enjoy Build Your Tribe, I know that you will love The Chalene Show. Plus, I am going to talk in this episode about the sound quality differences between those two podcasts, so it might be cool for you to listen in and see for yourself. Okay. Off to your questions. |
| Rachel: | Hi, Chalene. I'm Rachel from the UK. I'm a Marketing Impact Academy member in 2014, and I've been following you for years, and years, and years. I've implemented so many of your trainings into my life and my business, and I'd like to thank you so much for that. I'm really trying to build a podcast, and your podcasts are so inspirational, and the quality of your podcast is amazing. I've had some great guests, and have interviewed some fabulous people here in the UK, but I can never quite get the quality right. I've tried recording with Skype and Call Recorder. I've also used Go-To Webinar software, Garage Band, and many others, but I'm not quite getting the quality that I need. I wondered if you could give me some tips to help me with the quality and deliverance of my podcasts. Thank you for resurrecting the Build Your Tribe podcast, because that was always my favorite. |
| Chalene: | Rachel, you are my new favorite person. It sounds to me like you are either just about to launch, or at a minimum, you're already recording interviews for your podcast, which is fantastic. Let me give you the quick answer. There are five things you need for great sound quality. Number one, a decent mic. Doesn't have to be an expensive mic. Number two, a room without echo. Number three, a wind screen or a pop filter. It's like a screen that goes in front of your microphone. Number four, your placement of the mic in relationship to your mouth, and number five, a great editor. You did mention that you're doing interviews, which means not only do you have to worry about your sound quality, but you also have to factor in the sound quality of the person who you're interviewing. I will answer that in this reply as well. |
|  | Okay. Let's first start with having a great microphone. I have a $700 microphone, and it's sitting in a box in a drawer. I don't use it. I use, and I'm recording this right now, using a $50 mic. It's called the Audio Technica, or ATR 2100. It just plugs into a USB port on my laptop of desktop computer, and I found it on Amazon after hearing a few other podcasters reference that microphone. Here's why I love it. I take it with me. It's small, it's easy, it plugs into my USB. Recently, Brett and I went on a little mini staycation, and because it was so affordable, I bought two of the mics, so I just threw the extra one in my suitcase, just in case I ended up recording, and I actually did end up recording. I love it because it's affordable, it's easy to use, and the sound quality is pretty fantastic if I do say so myself. |
|  | I don't use an external mixing board. I don't use any of the fancy equipment. I looked into all of that. It just seemed like a big hassle, and a lot of expenditure, and quite frankly, maybe if you are professionally trained, you could tell the difference. I can't. I think if you're using a decent microphone, that's good enough. Get the content out there. Number two. A room without echo. Believe it or not, a close is a great place to use as a pseudo podcasting booth. I have two places I record. I record The Chalene Show in a little, teeny, tiny converted closet on our bottom floor that was once a wine cellar. It's very small, and we took out all the shelving, and I soundproofed it with soundproofing materials that are pretty expensive. The panels, you can buy those also on amazon.com. |
|  | I soundproofed the room. I covered the walls and the ceiling, et cetera, so the sound in there is pretty dead. It doesn't echo, and it's a very tight quarters. Most people would get completely claustrophobic. You don't need to spend that. You can literally sit in the middle of your closet if there's enough clothing hanging, or soft materials like blankets or pillows, et cetera. It will deaden the sound. You just don't want to record in a room that's very open, with lots of hard surfaces, like hardwood floors, or stone floors, because you'll get echo, and the recordings tend to sound a bit tinny. |
|  | Number three is, you need a windscreen, and when I first started doing my podcast, I wasn't using a windscreen, and my editor, Nick, was like, "Hey. Can we Skype?" I'm like, "Sure," and so he's like, "Let me see what you're doing when you're recording." I showed him, and he's like, "Oh. You definitely need a pop filter." A pop filter is, don't get freaked out. It's only $6. I know. I'm looking at it right now. I'm like, how do they even manufacture this for $6? It's pretty cool. It's this little arm that attaches to your microphone stand, or you could even attack it to your table, or you could just prop it up in front of your mic, and it's like six bucks, and it's like a windscreen that filters by pops. That just keeps the levels pretty normalized. |
|  | Number four is where you're placing your mic in relationship to your mouth. Most people think that you're supposed to speak directly into the microphone, but right now, my microphone is positioned about four inches to the side of me, and it's picking up my sound that way. Here, I'm going to ... When I speak directly into it, like this, you can tell it's probably going off the charts, into the red zone, and you can hear more pops, like when I say, "Peter Piper picked the pep." You can hear all those P's and pops, so I kind of turn to the side, and it sounds just a little bit better. |
|  | Number five is a great editor. If you don't have an awesome mic, if you're recording in a room where there's some echo, and you forgot your pop filter, and you're right on top of your microphone, even the world's greatest editor can't fix those things, but they can probably make you sound a lot better. By using a great editor, and that's probably someone other than yourself ... I would love to figure this stuff out and tell you that I'm editing my own podcasts. I did in the beginning, which is really dumb, because A, I don't really know what I'm doing. B, I spent hours trying to figure it out. C, they didn't sound that great, so invest in someone who specifically edits podcasts. There's tons of great people now doing this, and you can find them on Fiverr, F-I-V-E-R-R.com, as well as elance.com. |
|  | I would give you the name of my editors, but I've done that before, and then they get so dang busy I couldn't even get in the rotation. I'm sorry. You can't have my people, but there are fantastic people out there for you. I mentioned that I record my podcasts in two different rooms. I record The Chalene Show in my "podcasting room," and this show, Build Your Tribe, you're going to laugh. I either record it in my own closet, or right now, I am sitting on my comfy, cozy bed. Yup. I'm recording this from my bedroom, for real. I love working in my bed. Oh, boy. That sounded really bad, but listen. Don't judge. It's none of your business. It really isn't. I like working from my comfy, cozy bed, but yes, there are hardwood floors in this room. The sound quality probably isn't exactly as good as it is on The Chalene Show. |
|  | I made a decision rather deliberately not to put too much time and effort into the production value of Build Your Tribe 2.0, where I'm responding to your questions and I'm producing five shows a week. I don't mean that in any way to give you the impression that I don't care about this show. I totally do, but I had to make a decision. If I'm still going to do two podcasts, I can't put in the same level of effort in production into Build Your Tribe that I'm putting into The Chalene Show. The Chalene Show is a higher quality, I'm doing a lot of interviews, and Build Your Tribe is quick and dirty tips. It's resources. It's me answering questions, and it's getting to the point and getting you the information. |
|  | I assume that my lifer, the person who is listening to this show, is also a business owner. They can handle it if there's a little bit of echo in the background, or you can hear my front door opening, or whatever. It's not completely soundproofed, and I think we both get it. Yeah. Right now, I'm literally sitting on my bed, and I have pillows propped up around me, and that kind of deadens the sound, but there are hardwood floors in this room, and yeah, it's a little bit more echo-y, but it's super comfortable, and that's important to me. I'm legit just kicking back and talking to you all, from my cozy, comfy bed. Yup, yup. |
|  | Rachel, when I'm doing an interview, I am using Skype. What I do is I go on Skype, and I just do an audio call. I don't usually do a video call, because I personally find that when someone's on video, they tend to talk more with their hands, and use facial expressions, where if it's just the audio recording, people tend to be more descriptive with their words if they know I can't see them. That's why I just do an audio call. Skype is free, so you just download the Skype program, and then to record my calls, I'm using a program called Call Recorder. All you do is go to Google and type in, "Call recorder for Skype," and you download the version that's applicable for either Mac or PC. |
|  | Let me tell you how this works. When I start to record an interview with somebody, the call recorder pops up, I click record, and it records both of our audios on two separate tracks. This is important, because you want to send both those tracks separately to your editor, and here's why. I've asked everybody I know who does interviews, and most, I'd say 90% of the top podcasters who I've asked this question to, they're using call recorder and Skype, and they all say the same thing, that the person they're interviewing, their levels tend to be much higher than your own levels, which is going to sound kind of distorted. What I do is I typically will ask the person I'm interviewing to pull back from the mic about three or four inches further than what they normally do. That's number one. |
|  | Number two is, if I know I'm going to be interviewing someone who isn't a regular podcaster, my assistant Kristen, who manages all the podcasts, she does a pre-call with them, and just helps them to make sure they've got the right microphone set up. If they don't have a microphone, we send them one. I know you might be thinking, "I'm not at that level yet," but for me, if somebody has a really terrible microphone, sometimes it's not even worth posting the interview. I've had those calls. Oh, my gosh. Sometimes it's like, you land this really amazing interview, and then you're so bummed out because it sounds like they're recording it from a tin can inside of a shoe box. You're like, "What are you doing?" They're making all these noises in the background. The dog's barking, the kids are screaming, and the cat's meowing. You're like, "Dude, really. For real? Okay, I guess I have to deal with this." |
|  | I just see it as an investment and a courtesy to my listeners to make sure that the sound quality of the person that I'm interviewing is on par. We will actually send them, via Amazon, a $50 mic. We will send many of our guests a ATR 200 mic, and it's a courtesy. It's a gift for them, and it's a gift for my listeners, because then they can tolerate the audio. Here's the other thing, is people get the mic, and they hook it up, and then they forget to go into their setting, and check to see that Skype or call recorder is actually using not the internal or built-in mic, but the external mic, the ATR 2100 or whatever mic it is that you're using. |
|  | I can also tell you that I've had tremendous success, and I'm thinking about actually releasing a podcast using this rode mic, R-O-D-E, rode mic that I just plug into my iPhone. I've been using this great iPhone app called Boss Jack, B-O-S-S-J-A-C-K. It actually records really great MP3s when you use that mic, and I'm telling you, I'm going to post up a show using that rode mic in my iPhone, and just see if people can tell. I think it sounds pretty dang good. If you would like me to email you a list of all of these links where you can find them on Amazon, the exact equipment that I'm using, all you have to do is send a text message to 949-565-4337, and use the word "podcast." You'll receive a quick text message back, I'll ask for your email address, and then once I have your email address, I'll just send you an email with all the links to this equipment. |
|  | If you're outside of the continental US like our friend Rachel, you will need to go to my show notes. As you know, I don't always do show notes for Build Your Tribe, but for this particular episode, I will. You'll want to go to chalenejohnson.com/podcast, and you look for this episode on podcast sound quality. Rachel, those were awesome questions. Thank you for your kind words, and thank you for being a lifelong member of the Marketing Impact Academy. I am just happy to continue to add content, and lessons, and everything that I've learned, so that people like you have a one-stop shop, one place where you can go get your resources, tools, information, and the tutorials to teach you how to do this stuff. |
|  | This episode of Build Your Tribe is sponsored by the Marketing Impact Academy, and Rachel, like all my other students who are part of the Academy, are lifelong students. That means they have lifelong access, which means every time I update content, there are changes to Facebook, new ways to write emails, better ways to communicate with our customers, best practices, research, information, social media changes, all of that, I am always updating my students first. Rachel, I am delighted to tell you that I have just finished recording a complete module, and how to research, record, and launch a very successful podcast. Not only do I tell you how to do that, but of course, as always, I share all of my time-saving systems. The best practices that have allowed me to streamline this process, because in the beginning, it was, shall we say, cumbersome. |
|  | Now I freaking love it. I love podcasting. It's my favorite thing. I would almost call it a hobby, because I'm kind of, I don't know if you can tell, obsessed with it. That is just one of the many advantages of being a lifelong student of the Marketing Impact Academy. There's always new content, and that's a good thing, because this landscape is forever changing. The sooner we accept that this stuff changes every day, the more fun it is, and the easier it becomes to adapt. Thank you for listening to Build Your Tribe. I hope I kept my promise to be brief, to be bright, to make it fun, and then be done. We done, you all. |