

Jon Savage gets real on content creation and podcasting

Jon Savage has, for years, been at the forefront of content creation. Inspired to think differently, he continues to push boundaries when it comes to creating content that is memorable, exciting and out-of-the-box.



Image supplied

After his years on 5FM ended, Savage started an online radio platform called 'The Eye' which housed the popular show 'What's Your Poison'. The segment saw him candidly speaking to guests over a bottle of whisky. Now, the segment has evolved into a podcast of its own.

As 'What's Your Poison?' continues to gain momentum, Savage opens up about his journey in the podcasting space and shares some insight into how you can start a podcast of your very own in just a few quick and easy steps.

■ ***We know you as the former 5FM presenter and content king, but who is Jon Savage away from his profession?***

I'm one of the founders of InBroadcasting, a very exciting company that specialises in innovations in digital broadcasting. We are deep in the trenches of podcasting, digital retail radio, live-streaming, Youtubers and even Whatsapp - anything that can be used as a broadcast channel, we use it - we are developing and creating and monetizing content through innovative channels and also integrating in to traditional channels like TV and radio.

In addition, I work with [HaveYouHeard](#) - an extremely agile through-the-line agency with offices in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban and London - as head of content where we have created incredible projects together such as AMPD Studios by Old Mutual.

I also have my podcast series, run The Eye Radio, a feature film (*Stone Cold Jane Austen*) and founded BUSQR - a live donations payment solution for artists and performers. But my main job is dad and husband!

■ ***What was the turning point in your career that led you to start 'What's Your Poison'?***

When Covid-19 smashed the world into pieces, the digital space was set alight overnight. I was working crazy hours for the first few months and combined with not being able to leave the house, I was feeling a lot of pressure building up, and it was

becoming untenable. One day, I just started up the podcast (it used to be a radio show on my radio station, The Eye). It wasn't really a thought, I just needed an excuse to drink whisky and have ridiculous chats with awesome people to take my mind off things. It immediately took off so I just kept going. It's still the thing I do to relax.

■ ***What was a defining moment in the beginning phase of the podcast that you still look back on today?***

During my very first episode, I had booked a guest who didn't arrive! I was live-streaming on Facebook waiting for him to jump on for about an hour and I was getting drunker and drunker until I was a total mess live on Facebook. My friend (and genius comedian) Nik Rabinowitz saw this happening and sent me a message that he'd be happy to jump on. So, my first guest was Nik and I tried to interview him but while I was absolutely up-the-tree! It was a ridiculous interview, but it set the tone for the podcast, and I've never looked back since. Thank you Nik!

■ ***How did your previous experience in broadcasting prep you for your podcasting journey?***

To be honest, great content is all about the art of storytelling. To me, I'm mostly platform-agnostic. I want to tell the story on the medium that will best tell the story. So podcasting, radio, film, tv, YouTube are all the same to me. They're just different ways to reach people that require slightly adjusted ways of telling the story.

At HYH, we practice something called "Splitting the content atom". This means that you can start with an interesting conversation and turn it into a TV show (short and concise), a podcast (long and unedited), a YouTube video (longer than a TV show but edited and with the ability for commentary), an Instagram post (a bite size piece), a TikTok video (a provocative bite-sized piece), a FB post, a Clubhouse meeting, a WhatsApp broadcast, a branded digital radio piece, etc. - all from one single event.

■ ***What are some of the challenges you face when it comes to podcasting?***

There are two major challenges: consistency and quality niche-focussed content. If you can figure out those two, then you're off to the races.

■ ***Throughout your career, if you had to pick out a few special moments, what would they be and why?***

Launching AMPD Studios by Old Mutual has been a dream come true, upsetting Kings of Leon tremendously and making them hate me was terrible but special, debuting my feature film *Stone Cold Jane Austin* at the Cannes Film Festival was life-affirming, presenting The PowerNite of Rock on 5FM was amazing, and my band Cassette opening for Pink on her South African tour with 30,000 people singing our songs back at us stands out as a career high point.

Oh, I'm proud of every episode of What's Your Poison and not for any egotistical reason but because every week I think the podcast format has managed to capture something historic that people will still listen to in years to come :)

■ ***How easy is it to start a podcast?***

Ri.diculous.ly.

■ ***What advice do you have for someone who wants to start podcasting?***

Stop wasting your time reading this and do it. There is nothing stopping you except you.

■ ***You are also a director at InBroadcasting. Tell us a little more about that.***

InBroadcasting is an exciting business in which we are forging new ground in the digital universe from retail radio through to podcasting to live-streaming. At our core, we focus on building powerful content strategies for our clients and building platforms for brands to start to own their own audiences.

Some of our current projects include launching Nasty C's latest podcast which is number one on the national podcast charts (and the number 1 business podcast throughout Africa) as well as building Sportscene Radio, a combination of digital and retail radio. Their online radio station is getting tremendous growth and we believe we will be contending with some of the biggest radio stations in the country within the next few months.

'What's Your Poison?' has new episodes premiering weekly on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and on YouTube and can be found www.jonsavage.com.

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