

PODCASTING

A RADIO SHOW IN YOUR POCKET

If you have a hobby or an interest, chances are there's a podcast about it.

A podcast is like a radio show you can download—onto your computer or, more commonly, your phone. You can take it with you and listen to episodes wherever and whenever you want.

Podcasts, because most people listen to them using headphones, often make the listener feel like they've stumbled across an interesting conversation and are just listening in.

Podcast episodes can be short, quick-hits on topics to hours-long, depending on what kind of podcast it is. Most are weekly, but some have monthly or even daily episodes. Podcasts can be about anything—comedy, true crime, gardening, and of course, news.

The Toronto Star runs a news podcast called *This Matters*; each daily episode is about something happening in the news or politics.

On *This Matters*, a host interviews a guest who is either a journalist or an expert in something. For instance, a doctor may be interviewed about the pandemic. A politician may be interviewed about an upcoming election. Or a journalist may talk about what it's like to cover a certain event.

Raju Mudhar has been a journalist at the Toronto Star for about 18 years. On March 23, 2020, when *This Matters* began, he joined colleagues Adrian Cheung and Saba Eitizaz as a host/producer on the podcast.

The "host" part of his job is thinking up the questions he'll ask the guest and conducting the interview. But he also "produces" each episode; coming up

with the episode topic and angle, deciding on the guest, doing the research and gathering sound bites to spice up the podcast.

Mudhar says news podcasts work hand-in-hand with news reporting. News articles and posts give "the facts," but a podcast can add more information, background and context.

It doesn't just tell about something happening, but it asks why it happened and what is likely to happen next.

More and more, people are getting their news from podcasts; "particularly young people," says Mudhar. "We're trying to get the news to young people in a manner they prefer."

Just as with any type of reporting, a podcaster's reputation is based on trust, says Mudhar. The need for accuracy "is ingrained in me." Podcasters carefully vet their guests to make sure they are qualified to talk about the subject they're being interviewed for.

Every once in awhile, however, a guest says something that's not accurate, either because they remembered it incorrectly or didn't have accurate information. Inaccuracies can be a challenge

when the podcast has already been recorded and posted. In that case, Mudhar may put a note on the podcast's website or add a correction to the beginning of the podcast episode itself.

There are more than 1.75 million podcasts available today, and the medium is getting even more popular as people discover that a radio show in your pocket is a very good thing to have.



"Wanting to talk to people—curiosity. And listening. I love talking to people, period."

— RAJU MUDHAR ON WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A PODCAST HOST



THIS MATTERS

With an adult's guidance, you can download and listen to **This Matters** on thestar.com website or you can download it from a podcast listening app such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher or Google Podcasts.

CLICK HERE for one of Raju Mudhar's favourite episodes:

Murder Hornet hunters: How one beekeeping couple tracked and terminated a nest in BC.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Fill in the blanks using words from the Word Bank to learn more about podcasting.

The first _____ started in the early 2000s. The term "podcasting" was suggested by Ben Hammersley in 2004, in The Guardian.

You can _____ podcasts from a listening app such as Spotify or Stitcher.

In 2006, one of the most popular podcasts began as a spin-off from the This American Life radio show. It still averages about 2.5 million downloads per _____.

Many people listen to podcasts on their phone or computer, through _____.

People say they like podcasts because it's like listening in on a private _____.

Many young people get their _____ from podcasts.

A _____ such as Raju Mudhar decides on a topic and guest and conducts the _____.

_____ is very important, says Mudhar, because every journalist's reputation is built on _____.

WORD BANK

accuracy

episode

host/producer

podcast

conversation

trust

interview

download

headphones

news