



How to Pitch Yourself as a Guest for Internet Radio and Podcast Interviews

Stephanie Chandler

The Benefits of Internet Interviews

There are many benefits to delivering interviews via internet radio shows and podcasts. Aside from the fact that you can almost always conduct them from home, you can also reach a broad audience with your message.

Internet radio shows, such as those found at BlogTalkRadio.com, as well as podcasts found on iTunes, provide wonderful opportunities for authors to reach a niche audience. You can find shows about everything from business blogging to parenting. Shows typically feature guests for 15 minutes up to a full hour, and archives can remain online for years.

Compare that to traditional radio where you might be interviewed for five to ten minutes during the morning commute. Though the listening audience may reach tens of thousands, most listeners will be in their cars, barely paying attention, and will not be in a position to take notes or go online and make a purchase.

With the right listening audience from an internet program, you can watch your Amazon sales rank climb in the hours following an interview. Often times the audience is listening while sitting at their desks or with a nearby internet connection or phone, making it easy for them to buy on the spot.

To pitch yourself as a guest to radio shows, you can send a standard press release, however, press releases aren't always the best way to get media attention. Sending a simple e-mail can be even more effective.



Sample Radio Show Pitch

Greetings <first name>,

My name is Stephanie Chandler and I am the author of *The Nonfiction Book Marketing Plan: Online and Offline Promotion Strategies to Build Your Audience and Sell More Books*. I have reviewed your show archives and given your focus on covering topics related to small business and entrepreneurs, I believe that I can cover a topic that will be a great fit for your audience.

Proposed Topic: Marketing your business by writing and publishing books and ebooks.

Did you know that a recent survey showed that more than 80% of Americans would like to write a book? And that self-publishing makes it easier than ever to get a book into the marketplace? At the same time, business owners are looking for new marketing strategies and ways to stay competitive. Promoting a business with a book can be a powerful way to gain a competitive advantage.

As a guest on your show, I propose discussing the following key points:

- How businesses can use books for marketing purposes
- Simple strategies for writing a book quickly
- Publishing options including traditional and self-publishing
- Options with ebooks for the Kindle, iBooks, Nook and more
- Methods for promoting books online via blogging and social media

I have over a decade of media experience and I can assure you that our time together will be well-spent and focused on delivering value to your audience. I would also be happy to provide you with sample interview questions and a complimentary copy of my book at your request.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Warm regards,

Stephanie Chandler

<insert contact information: e-mail, phone, website URL, social media links if impressive numbers>



Some additional considerations when sending a pitch:

- Always address the host or producer by name, when available.
- Write a compelling introduction that captures interest immediately.
- Provide a simple list of three to five discussion points.
- Mention previous interview experience if applicable since it increases confidence with the host or producer and lets them know you'll be a good guest. If you don't have previous experience, assure the host that your goal is to provide an informative interview for his/her audience.
- Offer to provide sample interview questions. Radio hosts may or may not use them, but this demonstrates professionalism. Make a list of eight to fifteen questions that you think the audience might enjoy. Put these in a nicely formatted document and include a brief bio (that will likely be read on-air) and your contact information. More on this coming up...
- Offer a complimentary copy of your book for review. This can help hook the producer or host and give them more reasons to talk about your book on air.



Create Your Media Sheet with Sample Questions

Providing programs with a media sheet can help you stand out as a potential guest. In fact, you can even attach your media sheet with your email pitch.

A media sheet for radio and podcasts should include sample interview questions as well as short and long author bios. This helps the host prepare for the interview, and makes sure they have the most up-to-date information available.

Not every host will use your proposed interview questions, though in my experience, many are grateful to receive this information. Simply send it along once you've booked an engagement and be prepared for anything. The host may ask you a few questions from your list or none at all. Radio guests should be prepared to take curve balls!

Your media sheet doesn't need to be fancy, though including some graphic elements will help it stand out such as a professional header design and a headshot of you. The document can be created and maintained in Word, though ideally you should save it as a PDF before sending it along. As a general rule, PDF documents look more professional. PDFs can also be read across all kinds of platforms including PC, Mac and mobile phones.

The example I've included on the following pages is a media sheet I've used for years, based on one of my earlier books (*From Entrepreneur to Infopreneur*). I've conducted countless interviews on this topic and this media sheet has always been well-received. Also note that I continue to update it over the years so that it has the most current bio information.

Sample Media Sheet



Stephanie Chandler

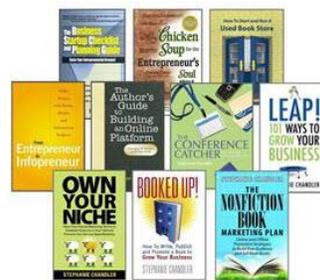
Author ~ Speaker

877-800-1097

www.StephanieChandler.com

www.BusinessInfoGuide.com

www.NonfictionAuthorsAssociation.com



Stephanie Chandler is the author of several books including *The Nonfiction Book Marketing Plan: Online and Offline Promotion Strategies to Build Your Audience and Sell More Books*. She is also CEO of Authority Publishing, specializing in custom publishing for nonfiction books and social media marketing services for authors, and the Nonfiction Authors Association, a community providing marketing education for members and a year-round nonfiction book awards program. A frequent speaker at business events and on the radio, Stephanie has been featured in *Entrepreneur*, *BusinessWeek*, and *Wired* magazine, and she is a blogger for *Forbes*.

Sample Interview Questions

- You've authored nine books to date and have been both traditionally published and self-published. Can you tell us a bit about your publishing journey?
- The number of people turning to self-publishing has been increasing each year. What are your thoughts on this trend?
- Your book is called "The Nonfiction Book Marketing Plan." Why did you choose to focus on nonfiction instead of all types of books?
- What are the first steps a new author should take to begin building an audience?
- Can you share with us some strategies for leveraging social media?
- Are authors still using traditional publicity strategies or is everything online now?
- What are some other strategies for building an audience online?
- It's been said that publishing a book can generate a lot of opportunities for an author. What kinds of opportunities can authors create with a book?
- If you were starting your author career over today, what would be the first thing you would do?



Extended Bio

Stephanie Chandler is the author of the following books:

- *The Nonfiction Book Marketing Plan: Online and Offline Promotion Strategies to Build Your Audience and Sell More Books*
- *Own Your Niche: Hype-Free Internet Marketing Tactics to Establish Authority in Your Field and Promote Your Service-Based Business*
- *Booked Up! How to Write, Publish and Promote a Book to Grow Your Business*
- *LEAP! 101 Ways to Grow Your Business*
- *The Conference Catcher: An Organized Journal for Capturing Ideas, Resources, and Action Items at Educational Conferences, Trade Shows, and Events*
- *From Entrepreneur to Infopreneur: Make Money with Books, eBooks and Information Products*
- *The Author's Guide to Building an Online Platform: Leveraging the Internet to Sell More Books*

Stephanie is also CEO of the Nonfiction Authors Association, a vibrant community for trail-blazing writers, and the Nonfiction Writers Conference, an annual event conducted with fifteen speakers over three days each May.

A frequent speaker at business events and on the radio, Stephanie has been featured in *Entrepreneur Magazine*, *BusinessWeek*, *Inc.com*, and *Wired* magazine, and she is a blogger for *Forbes*. She resides near Sacramento, California.

Websites:

- StephanieChandler.com – Official author/speaker website.
- NonfictionAuthorsAssociation.com – A supportive community for members to connect, learn, and support each other.
- NonfictionWritersConference.com – The only online event of its kind for nonfiction authors.
- AuthorityPublishing.com – Custom publishing for nonfiction books.
- BusinessInfoGuide.com – Resources for entrepreneurs.

Social Media:

- [Twitter.com/bizauthor](https://twitter.com/bizauthor)
- [Twitter.com/NonfictionAssoc](https://twitter.com/NonfictionAssoc)
- [Facebook.com/AuthorStephanieChandler](https://facebook.com/AuthorStephanieChandler)
- [Facebook.com/NonfictionAuthorsAssociation](https://facebook.com/NonfictionAuthorsAssociation)



How to Be a Great Radio Show Guest

Being invited as a guest on a radio show of any kind is an honor, and if you want to dazzle the audience and the host, there are some simple guidelines you should follow to ensure your interview is a success.

Let the Host Lead

Your job as guest is to make the host look good. That means following the host's lead at all times. Avoid talking over your host. Be patient and wait for questions. Never offend or talk down to the host. Instead, be gracious and professional at all times.

Talk in Sound Bites

Things move fast in the media. The goal is to keep the audience's attention, which means that interviews often move in rapid-fire fashion. To get an idea about how this works, listen to interview on popular podcasts or radio programs. As a guest, your answers to interview questions should be brief and to the point.

Guests are expected to talk in sound bites—which essentially means that thoughtful answers should be conveyed swiftly. If the producer were to edit out bits of your interview for promotional purposes, they will want to capture information and ideas in short quotes.

To shine as a radio guest, be mindful of time. Avoid going on and on in interviews and instead keep your answers to a few sentences or less, unless the question warrants a longer response. There's often more leeway on internet radio shows, especially if you're the featured guest for thirty minutes or more, but you should still make sure you're sticking to the topic at hand and keeping pace with the host.



Tell Great Stories

When asked questions by your host, make the interview more interesting by giving interesting examples and real-life stories. You can do this by sharing stories from your own experiences, examples from the media, or from your clients. Great storytelling can captivate an audience and contribute to an excellent interview. Be sure to know what stories you plan to tell prior to your interview so that you come across polished and prepared.

Pace Yourself

Talking too fast can be overwhelming for listeners, and talking too slow can hurt the pace of the interview. Pay attention to your pace.

Have a Conversation

The best interviews are the ones that aren't forced. Talk to the host as if you're talking to a friend. That rapport and camaraderie can translate into an excellent and entertaining interview for listeners.

Use a Reliable Land Line

Avoid taking interviews from your cell phone unless you are traveling and have no other option. Ideally you should have a functioning land line with a corded handset or *high-quality* headset. Turn off call waiting or just get rid of it altogether.

Prepare Your Answers

Whether or not you decide to provide a media sheet with sample questions to your host, be sure to make a list of potential questions that you think a host might ask you, along with thoughtful answers. Preparation in advance can make a big difference in helping you stand out as a great guest.



Never, Never, Never Sell

As a guest, your job is to entertain and inform the audience. The show is not there so that you can give a commercial, otherwise you would be paying for placement. If you make the interview all about your book, you'll never be asked back. Worse, you will turn off the audience.

Instead of blatantly selling, find ways to gracefully mention your book during the interview—without being too obvious. For example, you might answer a question and then add, "In my book, *From Entrepreneur to Infopreneur*, I interviewed a number of people and discovered that..."

Be Prepared for the Close

Often times the host will ask the interviewee to share where the audience can learn more about them. This is your chance to give your website address along with a call to action. For example, you might offer listeners and special bonus if they log on to your website and sign up for your mailing list or offer a special coupon code valid that day only.

It's a good idea to run promotion ideas by the host or producer ahead of time. For example, you might want to give away an ebook to all listeners who sign up for your mailing list. If that's the case, make sure to ask first so you don't cross any lines. You might also partner with the show to do some kind of book give-away to listeners. This gives the host added incentive to promote your book and makes it fun for the audience.

Practice

If you're just getting started with radio interviews, enlist a friend to do some mock interviews with you. Nothing removes fear like preparation and this will also help you sound like a seasoned pro when it's time to do the real thing.



Take a Deep Breath

Your first few interviews may seem a little scary, but with practice it will get much easier. The audience can't see you, so you can sit at your desk with notes all around you (your sample interview questions AND answers!) and nobody will be the wiser.

Remember to treat it like a conversation. Take a deep breath and have fun with it. And don't forget preparation beforehand. If you've prepared interview questions and answers, you've won half the battle. When it's all over, you'll realize that you were more prepared than you thought.

Bonus Tip

Have a glass of water (minus the ice since that makes too much noise) nearby during interviews since your mouth will get dry when doing a lot of talking!



Frequently Asked Questions

When will I begin hearing from radio shows and how many shows can I expect to book?

Ideally you will begin hearing from radio producers and hosts immediately, though note that it's not uncommon for shows to keep you information on file and contact you weeks or even months later. Generally speaking, you should expect to hear back from 10% to 25% of the programs you pitch, provided you are pitching to programs that feature topics you cover.

Also, the results will depend on many factors—whether your topic is timely, whether it has been written to optimize potential booking opportunities, and whether it captures the interest of the producer or host.

Nobody working in publicity can guarantee placement. However, if you're sending out pitches and not receiving at least a 10% response rate, then consider changing your pitch.

What should I do when a radio show contacts me?

First of all, be available! If you miss a call, return it immediately. Things move very fast in this business and if a potential guest doesn't respond right away, the producer may move on to another guest.

Once you make contact with the producer or host, be flexible and willing to work. Schedule the event on your calendar and offer to send your media sheet over with sample questions. Also ask for dial-in instructions. Most programs will provide a toll-free number for you to dial in to at a specific time.

How should I prepare for radio interviews?

- Start by creating your media list with sample questions.
- Write down any additional questions you think a host might ask.
- Next, write down your answers. Use this preparation time as an opportunity to include real-life examples and stories that will make it more interesting for the audience.
- Develop a list of talking points. These are separate from your questions since you can't anticipate all questions that will be asked. The purpose is to be clear about what messages you want to share. For example, if you're promoting a new book on how vitamins can improve your life, create a list of details about the importance of vitamins, plus interesting data that the audience will enjoy. Be clear about what information you want to share and how you can mention your book in a natural way during the interview. For example, you might say, "Vitamin B is great because it... I also discuss this at greater length in my book: *Vitamin Nation*."

What is the interview process like?

In most cases you will call in to a toll-free number. You may be greeted by the producer or host or you may simply hear hold music until it's time for your interview to begin.

The host will introduce you, likely with some or all of the bio you provide in your media sheet, and then welcome you to the show. The conversation begins with the host asking questions and you giving your well-prepared answers. Treat it like a conversation and you'll be just fine!



There may be breaks for commercials and you may be asked to take questions from callers. Be flexible and prepared for anything. Time will pass quickly and before you know it, you will be wrapping up the interview and thanking the host!