

# Podcast Monetization with Jeff Mendelson

## Jeff Mendelson

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## SEO Leverage Podcast Intro Music

Welcome to the SEO Leverage Podcast, where we talk about search, marketing, and conversion.

## Gert Mellak

Welcome back to Seoleverage.com. My name is Gert Mellak. This is episode 101 and today I'm very lucky because we have an expert here, the superhero, podcast superhero Jeff Mendelson. Welcome to the show, Jeff.

## Jeff Mendelson

Thank you so much for having me. It's gonna be a great episode.

## Gert Mellak

I was really looking forward to this. And people who know me know I'm very much about podcasting. This is the third podcast I have published, I had great experience with a couple of podcasts I did in Spanish years ago. One in the fitness industry, one in Ecommerce, both got really good connections going. We're going to talk about this a little bit. I've obviously done some research and we have been in touch, we had a great conversation over on your podcast and the one big tip, as well. I really enjoyed the conversation with you. I could sense that you know your stuff around marketing and obviously, especially podcasting. It was interesting for me to see how you came from WordPress and Joomla, and a little bit of web design to Google ads, to ads to marketing because this is very much the journey I have gone as well, with my technical background and coming to marketing as like as the best website doesn't help if you can't promote it, if you can't, don't get it in front of people and ending up then, in my case in SEO. Can you maybe summarize in your words a little bit how you ended up being like a marketing consultant or podcasting expert?

## Jeff Mendelson

Sure. So first of all, thank you so much for having me on the show. What this really came from was me being bored out of my skull in corporate, right? I would go into these jobs, and they

would never give me more than I don't know, I would always finish my work by 11:30 in the morning and I would always be like, 'Okay, now what?' Okay now what, you know, it's like after I dominate everything, it's like they hire me for customer service, hire me for pre-sales engineer, marketing, it would always come down to 'Okay, now what?' And what happened was, at some point I started getting this twinge of, I don't want to be building someone else's dream anymore. And I was searching really hard for how I could make something for myself. So basically what I did, so this is going back a little bit and what everyone else in the state of Florida does, is that they go and get a real estate license. So here's a fun fact, one out of every eight citizens in the state of Florida has inactive real estate license. Which is, yeah, I mean, only like 2% of those people are actually actively selling real estate, right? But everyone thinks like, oh, just sell real estate and make a lot of money. Yeah, it doesn't work that way. So what happened was, I decided that I wanted to join into that. And I knew I needed a website. So I spent the first three months building a website, but not selling any real estate. And, you know, that's when I realized, like, you know, this isn't selling real estate isn't really my thing. But I built this great website. And that was really my first jump into, like, if I did this for myself, I can do this for others. And I got lucky by getting one client who was rocking about 20 different websites for different clients at the time. And I was just like, listen for \$500 a month, I will help you manage them all for one price. And she said, Yeah, and it was like, boom, that's it, the Red Sea parted the clouds, everything became sunny outside. And I'm like, wow, this is really cool. And that's really how I got started into it. So I started building websites, but the thing about websites is that they're like one hit wonders. You get a big check for starting out the website and for completing it, but then it's like, okay, well, you're done. And I didn't like that, because you always have to start selling again right after you complete the project. So that's when I started looking for different ways to do more recurring income, like website hosting, providing search engine optimization services, paid ads, things like that. And that's really where it started out from. And I would do this at my desk in corporate because anyone who walked by my desk would just see me furiously typing away on the keyboard. I was winning awards as the most productive employee of the month when they didn't realize I was really just building my own business. And when I got fired for the last time, that's where I was ready. I was ready to go out and really make a go of it and I haven't looked back since. So basically what I did was I built a digital marketing agency with all the trappings of working with clients and working with contractors and like programmers in India and writers here in the US and in Europe, and really providing full service type of marketing to people. Fast forward to about 2019, I started getting really bored with it. I was just like, I don't want to be working on websites anymore and I was thinking, like, how do I get out and start meeting more interesting people. So I figured, like, Okay, I gotta go do this podcast, I gotta figure out a way, uh, you know, like a name. And it took me like two years just to come up with the whole structure, in name and modalities of everything that I wanted to do. And what happened was, when I finally landed on this interview style of podcast, I was like, 'Okay, that's it.' Now I get to meet interesting people and at first, it was like, how am I going to get four people a month to talk to me. Four turned to 10, 10 turned to 20, 20 turned to 60. Like, wait a second, there are only 52 weeks in the year had to increase the cadence, and more people kept on coming. And the big revelation that I found out of this whole story was that you put this microphone in front of your face, and people want to talk to you, they seek you out, right? And it doesn't matter whether you play a doctor on TV, or whether you are a doctor, or whether you think that you're some

marketer that nobody's heard of, or you are the ace marketer out there. What happens is that podcasting gives you a platform, podcasting gives you a voice and if you can get other people to bounce your ideas off of, it just makes the conversation so much richer. And when I started doing this, at first, I was like, why am I given all these other people a platform? I was really kind of in this dark space and I'm like, why am I doing this? And 40 episodes later, I realized, like, I met some really interesting people, I met some really high caliber people that I would not have had access to otherwise. And once I realized that, that this is the ultimate lead generation tool, that's when it all clicked and I went full force into this, because this really is the way of the future. All of the social networks, or all of the channels are demanding audio and video, not just cute pictures of your desserts, and not just great travel pictures that you have, all the cool places you visited. But they really are demanding that you bring more value in the form of multimedia content to your channels. And this is probably the easiest way to do it for just about anybody.

### **Gert Mellak**

I think this is amazing. I think we have covered a summary of what I want to talk about today. I want to bring you back to this moment when you started because I know a lot of my clients are definitely are either they have a podcast, or they're definitely having it in their head of launching one. Everybody leverages the podcast in a different way. I think I want to take you back a little bit to this decision of getting a podcast. What was your first touch point with podcasts anyway? How did you first come across a podcast Do you remember?

### **Jeff Mendelson**

So my big thing is that I've always been a fan of podcasts. But the ones that I would gravitate towards are the ones that would be these really value packed, like, hey, we have this ace pay-per-click guy, and he's gonna give you the whole download on everything that he does to make a great pay-per-click campaign. The only problem with that is that it's usually like an hour, hour and a half episode. And the only time I ever really had time to really listen to those and really pay attention is when I'm driving. And when I'm driving, and you're really not supposed to be taking notes, right? Not a good idea, you know, when also I would find myself doing it, like when I'm driving my kids to Orlando or to go to Disney. So the kids are bored, they're complaining in the car while I'm trying to concentrate on all of these value bombs that these people are dropping. And I was like, there's got to be a better way. So one of my core tenets is that I wanted to make a shorter form episode, right? So in order to do that, how do you pack enough value into a 10 to 20 minute conversation as opposed to a 45-minute to an hour conversation? I'm not saying that 45 minutes to an hour conversations are bad, they're just not for me. Sometimes I can go a little bit long. What I'm trying to do is really bring in something so that one person can listen to one episode and go. That's it. That's what I got.

### **Gert Mellak**

Which was one takeaway, right? So you get one takeaway. I just heard someone I think it was Dan Martell talking in a presentation about him buying a lot of courses. And he just says he just expects one takeaway. So if there's just one thing in the course you do, or an episode you listen to it's okay, I can take this away and make my business better with this idea. It's already enough it's not necessary to take a lot of notes and get too much input without execute on. It's very

often, this is just one little tiny idea. I got one today from my mentor and it was actually a book recommendation based on my current situation on what I want to improve and he just said, hey read this book, it's going to be great for you. And this is just one takeaway like it's the day is already a win. And you will take this with you, right? You mentioned something, I can really relate to this. Okay, this podcast it gives you a platform to talk to a lot of interesting people. I'm a big believer of filtering what goes into your head. I didn't learn this before my 30s, unfortunately, didn't get a lot of crap into my head before. But I definitely, it started to be in my 30s, where I consciously tried to expose myself to smarter things, and smarter people and people at a different level, I think. So I'm trying to do this with getting coaching, getting into masterminds, talking to interesting people on the podcast, and clients are amazing, the very, very good level are across the board. This is really interesting, whereas like, can you give it, I have a platform to talk to interesting people, how do you get to talk to them? How do you establish this first contact?

### **Jeff Mendelson**

So there are a number of ways to do it. First of all, you can leverage your LinkedIn, I think all of us at our age have a pretty robust LinkedIn profile. We're connected to people above our pay grade below our pay grade and at our pay grade. Right? That would be the first thing so at least the way I started, friends and family, right? So not that I'm telling you to do this, please do not go back and listen to my first episodes, right? But that's what those were. Right? Those were people that I already knew, that I was already somewhat comfortable with, that were more forgiving, if I messed up stuttered, or what have you. And that's really a start. If you needed to do some training on it, another way is to just do a, do a Facebook Live, but change the privacy to only me, right so that this way, you know, you get some practice looking at the camera, you get some practice talking to people, but it doesn't get broadcast anywhere, nobody can see it. All those are really like ways to really get started. Now after that, you have a plethora of podcasts guesting directories like matchmaker.fm, PodMatch, Guestio, just to name a few. And basically what they're aiming to do is to match people like you who are hosting a podcast with people who want to be a guest, and would want to come on your show, and give value as well. Then it just becomes more functional trying to figure out okay, is this person interesting enough for me to talk to? Or are they not, right? And depending on how wide or narrow the scope of your show is, you can then make that determination if you're gonna message 50 people, or if you're gonna message 10, or just message two, because at the end of the day, you really want to make sure that you are talking to the right people at the right time. Because there's nothing more boring, right, than talking to somebody who is just not that interesting. No, you just go into that conversation with low energy, you'll come out of that conversation with low energy, it's gonna come across, you know, both in the way your guest is projecting and the way that you're trying to fight for things to say, I mean, yeah, I've had a few where it's just like, 'Alright, dude, if you're not going to wake up, like, we're not going to use this.'

### **Gert Mellak**

It's really interesting. I tried to, my personal filter is, am I really looking forward to this podcast? Or is this just, just to get another episode out? And I definitely did those in the past as well, whereas, like can now we have another episode that needs someone on the show. I do a lot of

solo episodes as well, just sharing my experience in SEO. But if this is podcast, like today, I was really looking forward to some preparation, some thoughts I had about this show, etc. And I tried to do this, like with my audience in mind. We have a small audience, but it's really consistent that is really interested and engaged. Just like what, what are the things I know from my conversations with my clients, for example, that they are interested in, right? And then when you really look forward to this, it seems to be a good filter of who you should have on the show. The podcast directories have been working great for us, as well. Absolutely and especially the beginning, when you're not really sure, a little bit shy, hardly had any guests on the show, and you want to reach out to some people. I think it can give you a lot of practice and experience, as well.

### **Jeff Mendelson**

You know, one of the interesting things just in the side about those directories is that every once in a while, I'd say about one out of every five you come across somebody that just puts their name, their title, and yeah, I can talk about sales, right? And you're just like, Dude, please leave me alone. And all the people that put some effort into it like no, you don't just talk about sales, like Yeah, I can talk about sales, but I'm not an A-salesman. You can talk about sales, but that's not your thing. Your thing is SEO, right? So what happens is, you really need to figure out like a - what is your zone of genius and being able to articulate it, you know, because you don't want to go on any and every show. You want to be really targeted as well, because at the end of the day, these are all networking opportunities, whether it's Gert and Jeff talking about marketing nerding out on all this stuff, or who will happen to be listening to this. So I'm trying to be conscious of your audience. And I'm also a little bit conscious of mine as well, because I want both of our audiences to get some value out of it, even if there is just a little bit of an intersection and not a complete overlap.

### **Gert Mellak**

Absolutely. My personal criteria for podcasting directories is how easy do they make it for you to become a guest? So my favorite these days, I'm not affiliated with them, but my favorite is PPodMatch, because they make it really hard to become a guest. So you have to fill in like it took me 10 or 15 minutes to filling in question, answers to questions, just so they could now match me better with other podcasts. And I find them getting really interesting opportunities. And in an SEO, pretty much a trained podcast for professional cleaners via PodMatch, which was really interesting. It was an industry I was particularly looking for. But we had the most amazing conversation in the industry, I had no idea about, but was still able to apply my SEO experience to their niche and what they could look for and could look into. and it was amazing, like you say, for networking. So networking, as if this barrier, this obstacle you have, when you want to reach out to somebody or connect with someone, you don't really know how to approach them, but sending someone an email and said, Look, I have this podcast, about 100 episodes, I would love to have you on the show. Seems to be a really, really good entry point. What do you think?

**Jeff Mendelson**

I agree with you 100%. So just to contrast this a little bit, I'm sure you get these all the time, how many LinkedIn messages do you get like, Hey, I see that you're in the SEO space? Let's have a 15 minute conversation. It's like, no, no, well, that's a hard No. And you're in Europe, I'm in the United States, right? How else would you and I have met, otherwise? I don't get out of this room all that often. So it's not like I'm going to a networking event in downtown Miami. It's not like I'm flying to San Diego to traffic and conversions. And even if I did meet you, at a convention like that, I would maybe get 90 seconds of your time and your business card. That's it. Now, when we do this kind of rapport, this kind of conversation, you and I are on the phone for 45 minutes to an hour really getting to know each other. And you get to know my passions, you get to know my inflections, you get to know hey, this, Jeff is a really great guy, or could go the opposite. Who knows, you know, I know I'm toxic to one out of 10 people anyways. So what happens is, you're able to create these connections, and something who knows one of these days, we may meet Mike in person or I fly out to where you are, you know, that's not outside of the realm of possibility. But the fact of the matter is, it is now the easiest method for you to reach out and contact somebody, not only just somebody I should say, but even people that you want to talk to. I'll give you an example. I interviewed Tyler Robertson, he's the CEO of Diesel Laptops. So he makes these laptops, sells rugged laptops, that you plug into commercial equipment, like commercial trucks, agricultural tractors, buses, things like that. The guy's the CEO of a \$70 million company. Now, if I would have cold called him and just said, Hey, I want to talk with you for 15 minutes, I would have gone through three gatekeepers in a no. But since we put this microphone in front of our faces, now we're able to talk he's going to remember my name. He's going to remember that yeah, this is the guy had a really interesting conversation with and we made great content together. And it's great. It's like now, I'm connected to him first degree on LinkedIn, I have a cell phone number. Don't tell him that, right? You know, it's like I have all the

**Gert Mellak**

It's going to be the show notes.

**Gert Mellak**

Yeah right. No, but that's the thing, by inviting these people onto the show, I'm collecting information. And then I'm thinking, as I'm talking with them, can Tyler be a potential client for my business? That's what it really comes down to. And if yes, then just sort of feel them out, you know, and that's no different than an elevator pitch. You meet someone in an elevator, I bumped into you at a convention, or we happen to be sitting next to each other at the airport. All of these, where the conversation really gets rich is where we are exchanging value. And the way I illustrate it is that the worst case scenario of what you and I are doing right now is that we are creating great content, right? Think about it. That's the worst case, or you're taking this, you're going to do show notes, you're going to do a transcription, you're gonna make social media assets, all that neat stuff, right? This stuff turns you into a content creating monster. And the best case is you and I work together for clients, back and forth. I become a client of yours, you become a client of mine, however, that works. But the fact of the matter is, now this is not a warm conversation. This is a scalding hot conversation. Because now you know, really what Jeff is all about. And I know what Gert is all about. And now I can make a determination. If I have

somebody who needs SEO, I don't deal with that anymore. Now I have someone that I can really pass this on to.

### **Gert Mellak**

Right and it's something interesting came up with this, and for me, in this is a one to one conversations, right? And it's something funny, right? When I started out as a freelancer, one of the first tools I had was a broadcasting software. So my idea was capture as many email addresses as possible and send them automated emails. The more people the better. The more services I can offer, the better, the more I can shoot out, the better. Every day, another email even better, and even more higher numbers, higher statistics, etc. The bigger we got, and we are now a team of 30 people, the more we're doing one on one conversations. So this data thing, we have our sales system, obviously, we get the leads in, etc. But chances are the most leads to come in get a personal message from me. They might get a loom video from me. People who just randomly download my book, get a personalized message, because we have just found that this one on one conversations are so valuable. And if this is just email back and forth three, four times, I had an email back and forth with someone with an Ecommerce store the other day. I was just giving them some tips, and he was sharing some insights on what he's doing and that's fine. And the conversation stayed there, but we had a good time and email, I think it was valuable for both. And it was one-on-one, right. And it's podcasting just means like you say, it's a conversation, but it's one-on-one. I was part of local networking group at some point here in Madrid and it was all small businesses definitely not like a great, amazing conversations you have with big successful seven, eight-figure companies, but what I learned was this confidence build up is really one-on-one conversation. So even if there's a group and it's a local group with 15 people, unless you had like a few conversations, 10 minutes, 15 minutes here, 20 minutes there with one person individually, nothing happen. Nothing. Because there was just not enough contrast there, there was just not enough knowledge about what the other person was doing. So this is why I like podcasting so much, like you say, it's just one-on-one conversation. It's this specific focus here and we can just do it great stuff. I have one final conversation when it comes to networking, really, because I really want to keep this punty. Once you build your network, how do you keep it alive? Because you talk to a lot of people, you're connected with a lot of people, obviously connections cool down, I would say in the person you had an interview with two years ago, might not maybe remember you so well, or really to remind them or maybe they don't open up an email, if you send it two years later, how do you keep your connections alive? Do you have a system for this in place?

### **Jeff Mendelson**

Sometimes the manual system is really the best, right? So I really wanted to circle back to what you were talking about with the loom video. So just to put the question out there, how many people have done what you've done, like send a loom video to you in the past 30 days? Maybe one?

### **Gert Mellak**

Maybe, maybe one.

**Jeff Mendelson**

Maybe one, it's zero to one, right? So the fact that you took the time to do that, really makes a positive impression. Now, even if you were to mix in some LinkedIn automation, with setting aside an hour or three hours a week in order to just crank out these one-minute videos to all these people, that is a necessary sales activity that you and I need to be doing, right? So there are different ways that you can make that happen. Have Zapier, add each new connection to a spreadsheet so that you'll remember to go back and go and message these people. It doesn't necessarily need to be time sensitive, people will remember that. The fact that you took the time, you read their profile, you mentioned something that's in their tagline, you mentioned their name, because anyone can smell and taste a canned loom video at any one time. But the second it's like me taking the time to learn how to pronounce your first name. And the fact that I nail it, in that video, you're gonna remember, uh, yeah, this guy, Jeff, yeah, he's cool, right? So what happens is just being able to put those processes in place, it doesn't necessarily need to take in an ordinate amount of your time. What it does require is intention, right, because just requires you to be intentional, and to have a process in place so that you're not flailing. Like when you open up your LinkedIn and you want to start sending out these videos, that you already have a list and you're not wasting time going through the 150 messages that happen to be in there. If you have a list and you know exactly who you need a message and what you need to say and why it's important, those are very easy things to put together. And even if you're not going to do it, like with Zapier, you can have your assistant maybe do it for you, you know, like put in like a call list or something that you do Thursday afternoons, before you go pick up your kids from school, whatever it is, right? Just being able to go out there and create those kinds of relationships, people will remember you. I just had a conversation today for someone that I interviewed a year and a half ago. He came back into the market for, for podcast guesting services and he remembered me and it was set up a time to speak with me. Why because he had a great positive impression a year and a half ago. Well, right now, which was great. It was a complete surprise all of a sudden open on my calendar. Oh, I have a call at two o'clock. You know, with this guy, I remember him, right and he remembered very fondly our conversation that we had a long time ago. And I think that's probably the best form of flattery. Because I like you very much, I'm playing the long game here. Because there is no formula for x number of episodes equals y number of dollars, right? It just doesn't work that way. I get these questions all the time. Well, how much you make from your podcast? It's like, well, some months are 10s of 1000s, other months are, you know, goose egg, you know, nothing. But you know, what happens is that it's still the game, it's still the intention. It's still the process. Because if I just, even if I stopped taking interviews today, first of all, I have six months worth of content in the can, right? So even if I stopped interviewing today, I still have enough content through June. So I have enough there. But also just being able to think about, okay, like, how is this going to benefit me? How is this going to benefit my guest. And it's so much easier to do it when you have a process in place, just like McDonald's, right? There was a whole training process. And he told you exactly what to do step one, step two, step three, step four, and then you are able to produce 12 hamburgers at the same time. And that same formula happens here, happens in Madrid, happens in Taipei, right? So it's no different than the type of content that you and I are creating here. We're recording this conversation, then you send it off to your video guy, or you send it off to your audio guy, and then your content creation person, you know, will go and write



the blog post about it, your social media writer will make social media notes, things like that. It's all part of the process. At the end of the day, you should not be the one writing all this and spending another four hours editing this, you should be handing this off to somebody else.

**Gert Mellak**

Absolutely.

**Jeff Mendelson**

Right? And that's what really makes this interesting, because the only thing I cannot automate out of this whole thing is me. But I can automate everything before you get on my show and after you get on my show, but the sales conversations, I still need to do them. I want to do them, I have fun doing them. I should be doing them anyways. And even if they don't turn out to be sales, they spread good karma, they pay it forward and they helped me with meeting a lot more people than I could have done otherwise.

**Gert Mellak**

Awesome. Amazing. I'm definitely big on processes just this loom video, it just set up the process and this just works. You don't, don't have to think about it. So it's, it's like automating what you can. I think it's a good moment to look a little bit behind the scenes. And a big shout out to Tricia making the writeups, Eloisa, doing the order editing, Christina managing the process. So thank you so much, my team is the best, it's definitely great, because you focus on the networking part, you focus on the conversations, you focus on getting guests invited on the show, you have great conversations with and you don't have to worry about the rest. So just upload this file into my Drive folder, give my team a heads up on Slack and they take it from there, prepare the content, make sure this gets produced and then upload it and repurposed and everything else. And I think especially if you're the business owner, and you're doing the show, it's really important to focus on those things only you can do. And this is just also the networking part. Your team can't do the networking for you.

**Gert Mellak**

I think this is where every a lot of people get it wrong as well, where they have an assistant do all the networking stuff on LinkedIn. And it's okay, they are going to establish some conversations, etc. It's not going to be the same. And you can like you say you can smell those canned responses and stuff like that. And there's not really any value in the conversation. What I personally do is I just mark them as spam and delete them from my contact list if I can figure this out, but you are going to identify what is a real serious conversation that actually is going to add long term value. I think this is exactly really, really great. I want to really capitalize off here, recap a little bit what we talked about. So this is what's really agreed, I think masterclass and pro podcaster he really appreciates podcasting. First of all, establishing your platform where you have your microphone in front, giving you some authority to actually be able to talk to amazing people, have a great time make this connection happen in a one on one conversation with people. People are going to remember you if you put enough value into such a conversation. You can get those conversations going, obviously with friends and family if you want. Otherwise podcast directories, we're going to link to them over at [SEO leverage.com](http://SEOleverage.com) forward slash

podcast. This is Episode 101, with Jeff Mendelson and we are going to make sure that you have all the information there. We are going to have to invite you back Jeff a little bit later because we need to dive into other topics around podcasting and all that are interesting, you have a lot of experience with monetization and other topics here. I will have to have you back and definitely also already looking forward to this conversation. Is there are a way for people who'll reach out to you to get your help, get in touch with you, get in touch with your team, get maybe some coaching, what would be the best way?

**Jeff Mendelson**

Sure. So the social network that I'm most active on is LinkedIn, you can definitely connect with me there, pretty easy to find. If you go to my website, [jeffmendelson.com](http://jeffmendelson.com). It has all of the information regarding coaching, the podcast production, and of course it's the home of the One Big Tip Podcast, as well. So you can definitely check out the episodes from there as well.

**Gert Mellak**

This is amazing. Thank you so much Jeff for taking the time. It was great, Jeff!

**Jeff Mendelson**

Thank you for having me man. This has been a lot of fun.

**Gert Mellak**

Looking forward to the next round. Thank you.