

Manoush Zomorodi on the personal power of podcasts

 By Leigh Andrews

12 Mar 2019

Last week, YPO hosted the world's largest gathering of CEOs right here in Cape Town, on 6 and 7 March 2019, for its Global Leadership Conference and YPO Edge, with the theme, 'Life of Re'. I spoke to *Bored and Brilliant* author and podcaster Manoush Zomorodi about the popularity of media with a personal touch.

“ Bye [#Capetown](#) and thank you for having me [@YPO @YPOEdge](#)! I saw a different side of CEOs this week. Very educational. Sorry to have missed YOUR talk, [@Trevormoah](#)     [#YPOEDGE](#) [pic.twitter.com/6OuB2FVExk](#)— Manoush Zomorodi (@manoushz) [March 7, 2019](#) ”

You may have noticed a rise in the amount of podcasts on offer at the moment. They appeal to today's constantly distracted consumer, as you can stream them live while working, or download to listen while on your commute or even while exercising after hours.

It's an interesting move as most media are suffering from 'split-screen status' at the moment. The fact that it's 0% visual and 100% sound-based could be the reason why.



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As former host of WNYC Studios', *Note to Self* podcast, which the Academy of Podcasters named Best Tech Podcast of 2017, as well as current host of *Zigzag*, New York-based Zomorodi has taken home The Gracie award in both 2014 and 2018 for Best Radio Host, with a Webby awarded to her team last year for The Privacy Paradox, an interactive digital project about personal data.

Zomorodi certainly knows her stuff in this regard.

Meet Manoush, the modern-day mom-journalist

While filling that modern-day journalist role as well as author and founder of her own entrepreneurial passion project, Stable Genius Productions, she says that work-life balance is a daily struggle, but the hardest part is balancing her parenting demands, which she describes as “a whole other job in itself.”



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Luckily she belongs to a co-working space just a block away from her home, which makes a big difference, as does her supportive partner, who was “on kid duty” when she attended YPO in Cape Town as well as her helpful mother.

For Zomorodi, it really does take a village to raise a child, especially for single parents.



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That’s why her newest baby, *ZigZag* at Stable Genius Productions, is aimed at helping people navigate personal and global change, with 'StableG' using podcasts as a form of lab to test new ways journalists can educate, entertain, and inspire through narrative.

It’s a seamless new media method of connecting to those ever-distracted consumers, all the more fitting as investigating how technology is transforming humanity is Zomorodi’s particular passion and area of expertise.

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So much so that in 2017 she wrote the book *Bored and Brilliant: How Spacing Out Can Unlock Your Most Creative Self*, while also presenting a TED Talk on surviving information overload and the “attention economy.”

On how Stable Genius Productions got started and what they focus on, Zomorodi and her former executive producer left New York public radio a year ago to start their own production company, because they felt there was a need for more stories around the impact technology was having on individuals and more broadly, on society, families and communities.

It was about having control over their home schedules while also taking advantage of the amazing moment that podcasting is in right now.

Why we're in the podcasting moment

[INMA](#) confirms: "The true value in this compelling content is in reinforcing the value of excellence in journalism and excellent storytelling. [Podcasters] are helping reconnect listeners to the value of journalism — the importance of the craft in exposing truth, challenging norms, and holding officials accountable."

Zomorodi herself has been on the traditional broadcasting road for 20-odd years and has never seen such a connection between host and listeners as you do with podcasting.

It's an incredibly intimate medium, which makes telling stories that way all the more impactful.

“ What if women build the internet? — asks [@manoushz](https://t.co/kbCOcCG51y#InternationalWomensDay#IWD2019) <https://t.co/kbCOcCG51y#InternationalWomensDay#IWD2019> — The Web Foundation (@webfoundation) [March 8, 2019](#) ”

Zomorodi says she has seen tens of thousands of listeners change their personal habits, attempt to buy cryptocurrency and more, all because they have heard it being talked about in her podcast.

“ It's like podcasters are their own mini-YPO in some ways, as they don't necessarily see each other often but there's a strong sense of community to it that I've not seen replicated in any other forum. ”

Here's to the continued success of podcasting, in building a sense of community where it's most needed. That's the YPO way.



How Cape Town's YPO 2019 brings meaning to a 'Life of Re' for creative CEOs

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[Click here](#) for the Stable Genius *ZigZag* podcast and be sure to follow YPO's [YPO Edge](#) on Twitter and the [hashtag](#) for further insights from the global gathering.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at [@Leigh_Andrews](#).

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