



*the prince of
podcast*

Adam Carolla Speaks His Mind

STORY BY ETHAN CHUNG

PHOTO BY BARRY DAVID MARINS

Full disclosure:

I am a fan of Adam Carolla. I used to listen to his morning radio show (he took over Howard Stern's time slot in 2005) to get me through the commute to work, and like many other fans, I was distraught when CBS removed it from the air to cut costs in 2009.

But Carolla, based in Los Angeles, decided to keep his show going on his own terms. He began podcasting immediately after his radio spot was canceled, and his fans made it Apple's Top Audio Podcast of 2009. Carolla decided to take the podcast on the road, turning it into a live show where he chats with celebrity guests, goes off on trademark rants about parking enforcement or idiot celebrities and tells stories about his testosterone-filled youth. In September, Carolla and his crew visited the Northwest again, this time at the Moore Theatre in Seattle.

On the week of his Seattle show, Carolla was supposed to call in at 10:30am on Monday to talk about the inception of his podcast, the upcoming live show and discuss his new book, "In 50 Years We'll All Be Chicks." But he was 20 minutes late. He finally phoned in only to explain that he'd need more time before he could give an interview. At least 20 minutes, he said. But 40 minutes passed without another word. Finally, at 11:45, Carolla phoned in. He greeted me kindly, but I could hear he was irritated. Thirty seconds of an expletive-ridden, mumbling explanation of why he was held up had me convinced and terrified that I'd certainly become the subject of a profanity-filled rant on the next day's podcast. Apparently Carolla's time had been eaten up when he was making arrangements to move one of his vintage cars from his garage for a race. All that and he had to call some 425 magazine editor. Me. Ugh.

But talking is what Carolla does best. Among his good natured tirades are nuggets of entertaining wisdom that have captivated a large audience in a relatively new media. When he first started the podcast, it was mostly homage to his fans that were angry and disappointed by the cancelling of the Adam Carolla Show. It was also a way for him to vent about his experience with terrestrial radio. Ultimately, the podcast gave Carolla an uncensored format, and he found creative freedom in the medium.

"Even though we didn't really make any money at it during the first year, we never approached it as a hobby. We always looked at it like a business, and people seem to respond to that quality," Carolla said.

I think us taking it seriously, putting a lot of time into it, being consistent about it and treating the listeners like we have a professional responsibility is what's made us really successful."

Carolla and his team record enough shows to supply his

rabid fans with a new podcast every day of the week. And his work doesn't stop with his own show. Carolla has built himself an entire network. There's something in the Ace Broadcasting Network for everyone – including The Parent Experiment, hosted by his wife, Lynette, (the couple have twins, Natalia and Sonny) and actress and comedian Susanna Brisk; CarCast, Carolla's car-centric podcast and Spider and the Henchman, a sports podcast hosted by former NBA star John Salley and Carolla's writing partner, Kevin Hench.

The comedian's brand-building has taken him on the road to do shows across the country. His gigs sell out everywhere, from small theaters in California to large clubs in cities like Houston, Salt Lake City, and of course the Northwest, which he claims he would move to in a heartbeat if he didn't have so

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much invested in his life in L.A. He was particularly enamored with Kirkland, where he sold out six shows in two nights at Laughs Comedy Spot in May. "I love the fact that there were flags for crossing the street in Kirkland. In L.A., we have bumper stickers that say 'Stop Elder Abuse' and 'Don't Throw Your Baby in a Dumpster.' You guys have flags for crossing the street. That tells me that you don't have any problems. And I like that," he said.

Carolla's humor is entertaining enough, but his story of going from pauper to prince, back to pauper and now prince of podcast may be one of the main reasons for audiences to connect: They believe in him. When he was younger, he worked in construction and as a carpenter, boxing instructor, carpet cleaner, and even at McDonald's before he found his way in radio with the help of Jimmy Kimmel. His background helps him reach out to the every man. At the end of Carolla's live show, he demonstrates a slide of his earnings, from the 80s

on. Before he turned 30, there are several years that read \$0 in income. He uses this as a closing point, to tell his fans to just put their heads down, push forward and live life the best they can. It's a fair message. When Carolla's morning show ended at the height of the recession, leaving him without a job, he didn't give up on his show or his fans. He reinvented himself.

After Carolla's live Seattle show, hundreds of fans lined up in the lobby to get the chance to meet him. For at least an hour and a half after his performance, Carolla signed everything that was put in front of him, and posed with everyone that stood in line. He stayed until he met the very last person — me. He seemed exhausted, and almost ornery (it was after all, almost 11:30 at night, and he hadn't eaten anything). But I introduced myself as the magazine editor he'd kept waiting on the phone earlier that week. He thought for a second and chuckled out loud, and apologized for his delay, expressing how grateful he was for the ink. I was already a fan, but Carolla's genuine graciousness won me over. It made me believe in him. Again. 📺

Carolla meeting with his fans after a show.



Listen, Laugh, Learn

If you're new to Adam Carolla's brand of humor, listen to his podcasts at adamcarolla.com. Hear him chat with celebrity guests like David Alan Grier, Bryan Cranston, Joel McHale and more. Carolla's new book, "In 50 Years We'll All Be Chicks," will be available Nov. 2 at bookstores everywhere and online at amazon.com.

Fans stand in line for autographs.

