Episode 5 – Creating engaging cultural content with Dean Shaw

**James Akers:** Welcome to the fifth episode of the Digital Culture Podcast. I'm James, the tech champion for data analytics and insight. I'm a middle aged white man in my blue room still in Preston.

I've got brown hair, very unseasonably warm on the 10th of March, 2025. And my guest today is the longest serving Tech Champion that we have in the team: Mr Dean Shaw.

**Dean Shaw:** Hello. By one month, it must be said.

**James Akers:** Yes, by one month, yeah. You got there just

**Dean Shaw:** Just got before you, yes. Yes. Hello everyone. My name is Dean Shaw. I'm the Tech Champion for Content Creation. I'm a white man, stereotypically losing my hair, today wearing a black hoodie because down South in Cambridge is, unseasonably rather chilly. for some reason up North, it's warmer.

**James Akers:** Yeah, I don't know why. It's gorgeous up here today. Beautiful sunshine.

Cambridge, it's over to the east of England, isn't it?

**Dean Shaw:** Certainly is. East of England, yes, up the M11 if you're leaving, London. And, yeah, as you said, I've been the Tech Champion now for six years. and, I've been covering the Cambridge and East Anglia region as well as the whole of England for the Digital Culture Network.

**James Akers:** Beautiful. And what goes on in Cambridge? What's East Anglia like?

**Dean Shaw:** Obviously we've got a lot of universities in the region. So not just Cambridge, but also you've got Norwich as well. So there's a real vibrant music scene, live music scene. There's lots of independent artists and also actually just thinking about it, there's more museums as well tucked away with lots of interesting artifacts as well and little stories I remember the Chain Forge Museum in East Anglia,

and a few dance as well, Dance East over in Ipswich so there's, quite an eclectic mix of things going on, but the downside of the region is the transport links, which are pretty poor, and most of the times you have to prepare to be disappointed with the trains.

prepare yourself for the worst.

And where are you from originally, Dean? It doesn't sound like a

No, I don't. I don't. What does a Cambridge person sound like? I'm actually from Essex. and as soon as I say the word Essex, people go, oh, yeah, I can tell. but, yeah, from Essex. And, I'm right on the Essex Suffolk Cambridgeshire border. So I got a toe in everything.

But yeah, originally, Essex boy,

**James Akers:** You're one of the only tech champions to own not only a campervan, but also a sports car. would you say you have a, an interest in motorcars?

**Dean Shaw:** My career started really with motorsport. So I've loved, motorsport Formula One and cars and Top gear. And, I suppose as social media developed that's where I found my niche that I was able to do short form documentaries on Facebook and YouTube and they've got lots and lots of attention.

I just like getting out and about and, when you're driving, I quite like, open road, clears your mind, you're sitting there with your own thoughts and things.

**James Akers:** And some of the best epiphanies I've ever had have been behind the wheel of a car. It's really good for listening to podcasts as well when you're driving.

**Dean Shaw:** Exactly right.

**James Akers:** Content, your specialist area, it can be many things. So talk me through those then, Dean. What, aside from podcasts, what else have you got?

**Dean Shaw:** Over the years, I would say, predominantly we started off with coming out of the pandemic with like through the pandemic everyone was interested in streaming. That's gone away a bit now because people want to re engage with their audiences in a more tactile way. Ever since we started it's always been like I've got no money, I've got no skills, all I've got is my phone.

That, to me, is perfect. as it's not like Nokia 6210, that would be difficult. That would be difficult. but if it's a modern day smartphone, even a few years old, you're able to record a podcast, you're able to take relatively nice photos and able to create pleasing videos as well.

So I don't think, there's a sort of hard and fast rule of what is the standard case, but I've seen a lot of work with, smartphones, editing on CapCut. I'm starting to work with people who have maybe started a channel or the content isn't quite getting the audience it deserves.

So we like looking to YouTube and what we can learn from the audience behaviour because you can do a lot with like search engine optimization, you can put keywords and tags and descriptions, but sometimes it might just simply be down to, the video doesn't get started quick enough, or it doesn't get to the point, it doesn't reaffirm what it's about, it doesn't reassure the audience that it's going to be about a particular thing, and they get lost, and they're there to find out some information or to be entertained.

So therefore, you can lose an audience like that quite quickly. And that sometimes is a difficult conversation to have with somebody. oh yeah, your video would be great if you just the first two minutes off of it. And they go, what? I spent ages doing that. And you're like, that's tough, isn't it?

it's cut to the chase. the audience, appetite for being strung along is non existent. They just move straight on. And with YouTube shorts and Instagram reels, the cross pollination between those two is like the amount of organizations I speak to do lovely Instagram reels and get maybe a thousand views.

And I go, have you thought about putting it on YouTube Shorts? And they're like, no. YouTube's just used for some place that we put our stuff that we don't know what to do with. And I'm like, second largest search engine. if you're looking for a more global audience, probably it's a good idea to put that video that you've done on Instagram, drop it onto YouTube and just see what happens.

And those that have seen like a thousand or so different views from a different type of audience. if you allow me to James, I came up of this analogy a little while ago, right? Instagram is like the, advertisement board in your local village or town at the bus stop.

Everybody's on the bus, knows it's there. They know about the guitar lessons, they know about the free drinks on, or the drinks on Sunday at the village hall and that's it. That's, you're just preaching to the converted already. But what YouTube is, is that billboard that you see on the bus as you're going down the road and you go, Oh, that's different.

When I think about it more, you've got more chance of reaching out like national, international audience that might benefit your business model even more than just preaching to those people have already chosen to follow you. And you know what? Instagram's like they don't, you'd never ever publish a video and it goes to the 100 percent of your audience.

It goes to like maybe 10 percent of them. So it's a closed circuit, so it's it's a, it's like the feedback loop that doesn't exist. It's not going any further.

If you're putting out these videos on Instagram, it might be an idea just to put them on YouTube Shorts and just see what happens. you may find yourself with a thousand more views, a thousand more followers than you had before.

**James Akers:** Great. So real good tip there for reaching new audiences.

So with those platforms, you talk about YouTube shorts and Instagram reels. That's obviously been kick started by TikTok and everything there. Is that something you're helping organizations with? Potentially using that as a channel, creating content for that?

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah. Yeah. I think with TikTok, it's one of those ones where, you know, as I said at the opening, I'm a middle aged man, right? The chances of me being on trend on TikTok are few and far between. Don't get me wrong. I've been in a couple of my daughter's TikToks and we've done incredibly well, but I don't understand what lends itself to be in a trend more than the next 46 year old man.

So when I get people who are of a similar sort of age or demographic, they're like, we know that there's an audience probably for our content on TikTok, but we don't know what to do. We don't know how to do this and so on and so forth. Sometimes it's a good idea to look at another organization or another artist that you like or doing well on there and seeing what they're doing and try and get a steer from that and just try and think, is this something that we can invest our time into?

A lot of the videos that work well on TikTok are trend based. They are trends for. Inexplicable reasons, you just, sometimes you're like, how, what, And some of them are started by companies like Curry's, where they, or PC World, where, you know, they do something.

And then everyone jumps on that and then all of a sudden, you've got your sort of five minutes of fame, or 15 seconds of fame, maybe even. The longer, the longevity stuff that really helps boost your brand. I still think is that stuff that either does one or two things, entertains or informs.

And if you can do both of that in there, then you've got a chance of that video living a lot longer. So Instagram is great. YouTube's great. TikTok, if you've got the capacity to do and you're prepared to spend a bit of time on the platform and learn how to do it, which is difficult because anybody who works in an office and see somebody on their phone constantly will automatically assume that they're not actually working.

And I get this a lot with a lot of the people that do social media marketing. They're like, Oh, is there a way I can edit on desktop. If they're talking about editing on CapCut, I'm like, Oh yeah, get the desktop version. It's just that if my manager sees me on my phone all day, every day, just scrolling endlessly, they're going to assume I'm not working.

I hadn't even considered that as a problem at first. So you do need to spend a lot of time on these platforms to understand them and to understand what makes them unique. YouTube is competing against TikTok in the sense it's now doing vertical videos that are, short form.

That's competing with Instagram Reels as well. You've now got Spotify who are doing videos as well. So that's eating into YouTube's market share. So I expect eventually YouTube is going to push podcasts a lot more. You've just got to keep an eye on the competition and whatever they're going to be promoting like YouTube shorts a couple of years ago was unheard of, but now all of a sudden it's a main mainstay of their, of their viewing figures.

if you could have jumped on that bandwagon early, you'd have had a march on anybody else starting because there was just simply not enough content to to meet the demand. So I think if you can keep an eye on what these platforms are offering and jump on that, then you're in a better position to get yourself noticed.

**James Akers:** And it's not always about creating brand new content, is it? these things you could reuse little snippets from existing work.

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah, definitely. I think with a lot of organizations, they've got a rich library of content\ they probably don't realize what to do with. They're like, okay, we've got this, I don't know. 10 minute long chat with somebody and we it was, it was a great monumental moment for us. It was a really positive, interview, but now what do we do with it?

Nobody's really sitting through the 10 minutes. there is software out there that can edit it down for you, and pick out the soundbites that would work well on, on social media. Some of it's free or with a trial. Some of it's, with a paid subscription, but it's actually relatively easy now to upload a video to this sort of service.

Then have it run through the entire video and pick out the best clips for it Which you can then repurpose onto instagram reels and youtube shorts. It even adds the captions as well So it gives you that that full ecosystem to doing it.

So there are solutions out there. If you have a library of work that you want to explore the possibility of reworking into some sort of vertical. It's really consumable content it works so well on the phone and you can repurpose existing long form content that's going to really drive more attention to your channels, wherever they may be.

**James Akers:** And I think what's really good about them now is that they are all web based. Instead of having to contact an IT team to install something on your computer, it's very different now. You can do a trial, or as you say, a subscription on an online platform, upload your video to that, and everything is done in the cloud, which, massive, massive efficiencies there, isn't there?

**Dean Shaw:** Exactly. how many times have we spoken to an organization that says, look, I'm running off of a, I. T. Department, basic Windows 98 computer that barely can open word. And I want to start editing. Video and it's first things first, where you, there's a real sort of software, hardware problem there.

but nowadays, we'd like to say with the power of cloud computing, I was talking to an organization just this morning who was started their edit off on the cloud, and they were running an entire edit on there. different cuts and transitions and it was doing it in real time whilst streaming, over Teams with me.

So that shows you that sort of the power of that. That's something unimaginable just even a couple of years ago.

**James Akers:** And aside from the editing and using the platforms for that and maybe using your phone to capture content, are there any tools that can create nice, fancy, transition things with your logo and stuff like that?

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah, I've, I've been using CapCut was probably for like last three years. I've started off with Final Cut Pro, and I always found that to be simple, relatively professional. I know my friends in like broadcast use Avid and Adobe, and they're very complicated.

And for what you're looking to do, you really want it to be quite intuitive. And you don't really want to be sitting there struggling to try and understand why the crossfade dissolve is only at 30 percent when you want it at 35%. And, it's too precise.

You just want it to go from what you imagine to what happens on the screen as quickly as possible. And I think CapCut is by far the probably the best one out there. I know there's people out there who are using Canva video, so sometimes it might be. They've got no idea where to start and there's like a template available that gets them started and then they just basically drop the video in there and so on and so forth.

With CapCut it's a free version entirely at the moment, there's no restriction on that. The only restriction is it's like all of the good stuff, like the voice isolation, some of the transitions, some of the animated text.

That's part of the pro package. After a decade and a half of experience, I still can't mix audio as good as an AI can. I've done so many workshops where we'll go, right, use your phones, go out there, film something.

I'll give them a few examples of stuff that works and they off they go and all go off in little groups. They go and do some filming and then they come back. And then you realize that one group, for some reason, unbeknownst to anybody decided to do the whole piece to camera on a dual carriageway in London.

And you're like. What were you thinking? And they're like, oh yeah, you can't really hear them. And it's no, you didn't have a microphone or anything. You just used the microphone built into the, to the phone. I put it through a CapCut voice isolation and it took the background noise out. So all of the cars rushing past the HGVs, all of that.

And it just concentrated on the person's voice. And I thought, That would have taken me days and it would have never have sounded half as good as that. and it's that kind of innovation that, I don't want the world to be taken over by AI. I'd like to preserve the creativity for those individuals that can do it and do it themselves.

**James Akers:** I don't like AI created art, but as a tool, yeah, of course, use it. it's like building a house and saying, I'm not going to use a cement mixer because I don't believe in it. It's actually, it makes your life a lot easier if you did. That's a good analogy, that one.

**Dean Shaw:** I try James, I try. But yeah, honestly, so with regards to some of the tools that you can use on CapCut, it's just far beyond what even some of the most expensive software options. If you're looking to do more longer form stuff, where you've got a documentary head on, and you don't want to be sitting there using CapCut because the interface is more designed for short form content.

I would look at something like DaVinci Resolve. There's a free version that covers probably 90 percent of everything you're going to need. And I've got professional friends who are making feature films and music videos and they're using DaVinci. So if you're looking to maybe personally upskill yourself.

Download DaVinci Resolve from Blackmagic. it's a free piece of software. that has colour grading, audio, it's an editor, it's just, it does everything. It's a wonderful piece of, software. There is a paid version, but I doubt probably any, anybody would really need to download that to get started with.

And that works on PCs, and that works on Macs as well. And that's a really good piece of software.

**James Akers:** One of the things that we do at the Digital Culture Network is that we start from free. If we can give you some advice and options for free, that's the one. And then maybe you'll need to pay for different services. And you mentioned there about Canva and the editing tools in that.

That's a very design based tool, isn't it, Canva? But if you're a non profit organization, you can get it for free. You can get the premium version of that for free, so do check that out if you've not got it already.

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah. And in terms of, thumbnails which are really important for like, YouTube and for having a cover, for your short video. You can really design it with your own brand colours, your own brand identity. just like we're going to do with the thumbnail for this, podcast.

We can jazz it up and we can put our own brand identity and our own branding on there. And that's something that Canva does incredibly well.

CapCut also has a feature where you can edit the cover as well. So you can pick the frame that you want. You can add your font, you can add your brand, you can add your colours. And that is the first. Frame that you see when you scroll up the before it starts there's like a freeze frame and then the video starts that brief Millisecond and that sometimes can be just enough for your audience to go.

Ah, that's from blah blah blah. That's another video from XYZ. So that's another free tip as well But I totally agree with you whatever we can do for free to start with and if you need to pay for the extra bit then by then you've already exhausted the free option, and it's gone as far as you possibly can with it.

**James Akers:** Do you get similar requests when you speak to individuals and organizations in the sector?

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah, I've been doing quite a bit of YouTube audits, which has led on to actually more interesting conversations about content in general. So a lot of organizations maybe have a YouTube channel, or individuals as well, individual artists, people who are in themselves quite great personalities to have on a video.

And then for some reason their videos are just not quite getting the audience that it deserves.

So the YouTube audits has been very popular. Also the editing side of things as more people have got the confidence to put themselves in front of a camera or even behind a camera and film and do a voiceover.

They're trying to get a better understanding of, what it takes to see their vision on screen. Are they missing a trick or how can the edit be improved? And sometimes it could be the quickest conversation you ever had. It's they go, Oh, I don't know how to do X, Y, and Z.

And I go, Oh, share your screen. Or I share my screen. And I just showed them how I would work in CapCut or Final Cut. In my industry, like a colleague would say to me, Oh, how would, how did you get that shot?

And then I'd be more than happy to share that with them and, Oh, I used an ND filter, I used a blah, blah, blah, or I used this lens or whatever. And I feel like that just happens with the Digital Culture Network. I get people turn up and say, Oh, I've seen this, and they show me it. How do I do that? And I go, Oh, that's easy.

That's a template on CapCut.

So you do a lot of your support online over, Microsoft Teams and do screen sharing, as you say there, but you also get out and about, don't

**James Akers:** you?

**Dean Shaw:** Oh, I'd love to get out and about, yes. As the transit camper van owner, self converted, of course. But yeah, I just, I'd just like to engage with, as many sort of like organizations as possible really. Because I think, like for instance, recently I was, at the Isle of White and I was working with an organization there who was able to bring.

I think it was about another 15 or so organisations or representatives from organisations on the island in as well. So that meant I got to see so many people. We had people of all ages, creating content. and they were making the videos of their own, in their own vision, and then using a shared screen and a projector, we were editing them together, and it was just quite funny to see how you can make little tweaks to it to make it more funny, or to make it sad, or to add music to it to make it, feel a different way, you can see the inspiration that people get from that, and that's not, it's not saying I'm blowing my own trumpet.

That's almost like you just, you're showing them how easy it can be done. And when somebody shows you that it's I don't know why I've been waiting so long to get this started. And your first video is going to be rubbish.

Everybody starts off with a dodgy video. I'm sure if he was to look for any of the most successful content creators look at their first content is shocking. It's going to be shocking for a long time until you get to work out what it is that you want to achieve, how it should look, what works for you, most importantly, what works for your audience.

And then also, I think. Like when you look at a lot of people say, Oh, I've only got a channel. They've got it's got 100 views on it. And it's everybody started off with zero views at one point as well. So don't worry about that. And I think when you meet people, face to face. it's easier to convey that and they think, Oh, actually, it's not a big deal if I've got no subscribers.

Nobody cares, and it's great because you can make as many mistakes as you like. And then you can then start to, once you get that audience, like you think of somebody like the Tank Museum, who've got millions and millions of views, and I think maybe over a million subscribers now, certainly a lot of subscribers.

The fear is that if they don't do another successful great video, that they could start losing audience. So the pressure is even worse for them. Whereas you've got no pressure. The bar is so high. And, just to give you some context, the person who does most of their content uses an old ish Samsung phone and edits on CapCut.

And they are making bank with their YouTube channel. They are making money from it. They are doing really well with their online store, and they've not lost sight of what works for them. They've not gone out and bought like a, an Arri Alexa, large format, 50, 60, 000 pound camera.

They've gone, Oh no, the Samsung works for us. CapCut works for us. We'll stick with what we know, and they've just concentrated on the storytelling.

**James Akers:** And they've done, an integration with products into the YouTube channel, haven't they? So whatever. Tank, for example, is on screen. That's what it links to in the shop.

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah, exactly. And that's one of the things that I think probably there's going to be more tie in as time goes, certainly throughout this year, you're going to see more tie ins with me and working with Katherine, who's our e commerce Tech Champion, because, shop, the look is a big thing in retail and a video or a product that's seen on camera and you can then go and buy the, you can then go and buy the product through the e commerce store. It's just a natural, it's just a natural progression and I think a lot of organizations could benefit from that. we're going to be doing a webinar which is going to cover product photography just using a phone.

Nothing serious. Some wallpaper, some borrowed pot plants, some props and using natural light. So we didn't rent a studio. We didn't rent a turntable we didn't rent a massive camera or anything like that.

We just simply used our phones In fact, we actually used two types of phones one which was a iPhone 12 and the other one was an iPhone 16. And the reason being is the iPhone 12 went flat because we used it so much that we didn't, we had to quickly diversify into a newer phone. But by and large, I mean we just basically got a lot of the products from the, the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol.

We shot a few of their products and we worked with the person there to try and, get the most out of it within the limitations of the building, of the lights, and of the, equipment we were using. And I think we succeeded.

I think it looks really good. The upside of that is we've now got both Katherine and I, a webinar between us that's going to go on to describe our process, what we learned, any quick tips, I'm all for that, quick tips, I don't know, if you gave me a manual to read, I'd just give me the headlines.

**James Akers:** Amazing. I'm just looking now. So that's on the 8th of April, 2025. So come and join us on that for the webinar. It sounds like it's going to be good.

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah, definitely. I think, yeah, I definitely think it is. And I think, as I say, it's a long time coming this, it's like an Avengers team up, between, e commerce and content because you can't do one without the other.

**James Akers:** So aside from your one to one support calls and going out to see people and doing workshops, you've been writing articles and you've had a webinar recently as well.

**Dean Shaw:** Yeah, most of the time with the webinars, I'm trying to cover things that will matter to the most amount of people.

So it's not quite as niche as it could be. But obviously we've got to understand that people are coming at it from a different perspective. So if you are learning something new for the first time, or you're interested in it, and you're at that sort of entry level, or that mid level, where you maybe just need to know a few quick wins, I would say that's what my webinars are really for.

So if you see ever a webinar from that, don't worry that it's going to be super, super complicated. I just like to be able to explain things in a really easy to understand way and just give people the confidence to give it a go themselves and know that if they are giving it a go themselves and they ever do find themselves get stuck they can just reach out and speak to me.

The articles are great everybody learns differently.

So sometimes for a lot of people reading an article, it's been more beneficial than watching a webinar or watching a video that I've made. So there's different ways that we go about trying to upskill people as best I can.

Basically, I'll try and do as many articles as I possibly can, as I cover different things as they come up. One of the things I'll probably do more on is accessibility because that's something that's really important to me.

And the Digital Culture Network, of course, is to have, more organizations understand how they can present themselves better to people with accessibility needs. And I think that there's going to be more work done on that so that they can have the confidence to maybe, even if it's just running a video around the building just to say, look, this is how you get into the building.

These are the facilities. When you get here, this is where you can park. It gives people an idea of what they can expect when they get there because there's nothing worse than not having an idea of the layout of the building when you're maybe a wheelchair user or you're caring for somebody and you've got to get them from point A to point B and you just don't know the distance or the facilities when you get there.

They might only be watched by 50 people, but it'll be those 50 people that will be visiting your building next. And that is something that's quite important to make them feel welcome. so accessibility is really big, on my 2025 agenda.

But yeah, more articles, certainly more webinars and, more bespoke videos.

**James Akers:** Brilliant. you are the content tech champion, so you should be doing more than anybody, really.

**Dean Shaw:** This is very true. It's very true.

before I wrap things up, have you had a favourite support session with somebody or workshop over the last six months that you'd like

Yeah, I've got a really lovely lady who's an artist who has been producing just exceptional video content. Like the sort of content where you can see that they put so much time and effort into it, and it really wasn't getting the audience it deserved.

And we looked at the analytics, we looked at the, the thumbnails, the titles, the descriptions, everything we possibly could. And there was only like minor tweaks that needed to be done. And a lot of the What her audience were seen to be responding to was like these kind of like vlogs that were about creating art and experiencing places and going there and using watercolours to create these wonderful paintings. But the problem with that was it's just not sustainable for her personally So she needs to almost have this dual channel where she's got those opportunities where she can go out and about and then she can also do the stuff in the studio which are much more easier to maintain.

and then all of a sudden out of the blue, she didn't tell me she was going to London or to do anything like what she'd done, but she went to London, just done a little vlog. She went to a few art shops, bought some bits and pieces. And her video had 17, 000 views in a week. And I was just like and I follow her on my YouTube channel.

So I was like, Oh, look, she's uploaded another video. Isn't that cool? And I was like, Whoa, 17, 000. And then the fear steps in. What have we done? How did we do it? How can we replicate it? And what is transpired is that people love the storytelling and the experience and we need to work a way into her life being or need to show her being able to maintain that, and trying also open up to it.

potential partnerships. So a couple of the art shops that she went to, would have benefited, no doubt, by her exposure on this. 17, 000 people have all seen these little wonderful niche little art shops tucked away on these little back streets of London that she's, she's shone a light on. So if there's a way of them helping her to make more content, and this is the experience I've had, probably Maybe, I don't know, 10 years ago, working with influencers is that they might be micro influencers, but they still have the ability to connect with their audience and work with biggish brands or even mega brands and be an authentic voice to that audience.

you're not selling out. you only take on things you want to do. And I felt that there was a good tie up with that. So we've moved. into a new phase of our sort of like our support, which is like almost sharing my experience influencers on how she can contact companies that could benefit from her doing more content on them and their products.

So I think it's quite interesting that her audience is responding so well to, to that kind of content, but it just goes to show you what they're looking for. So they're looking for maybe just a bit of escapism, they're looking forward to seeing these wonderful places that she knows exists.

And she, she looks at the materials that she's going to use and then she goes off and then she makes beautiful art with it as well. It's trying to make that content in a sustainable way that's not going to burn her out. Yet still deliver good viewing figures and hopefully a tie in which is going to need to some financial renumeration because you won't earn any money from 17, 000 views on YouTube, but she might earn a little bit of money from say some affiliative links with the companies she's working with, and it could lead on to bigger more financially sustainable future for her. So so yes, it's a new phase that we're entering and it's after six years, it's quite a lovely. It's quite a lovely thing for me to have where we've kicked up into another gear with a with a new case.

**James Akers:** Beautiful.

**Dean Shaw:** I think people like her and the work she does, it's nice to see them succeed like that and it is a lovely feeling and yeah, it makes me feel great about, doing the job I do and that's part of the reason probably why I've been here for six years because you see these success stories.

And they come around and they come around the blue when you least expect it and you work so hard for it and they work so hard, they work much harder than I do to achieve that and then all of a sudden it happens and you're like, oh, wow, that's happened, and it does put a spring in your step, so yeah, definitely, definitely one to remember.

**James Akers:** For our listeners to this episode, would you mind wrapping things up into three key takeaways?

**Dean Shaw:** Three key takeaways that I would say is: Do not be put off by not having the latest and greatest equipment. Some of the biggest names out there are using just mobile phones that are maybe a few years old. They're using free software or they have been using free software to get started.

It's better to learn your craft and to use the equipment as much as you possibly can and then get to a stage where you need to invest in a bit more. Buying the most expensive camera doesn't work it's an incentive to get you started because you're like i've put a lot of money into this equipment i've better get started, but really that it won't help you with your skills to tell a story that will still that will happen no matter what camera you use.

I think the other thing is not to be too put off by the success of others. We're all at different stages of our careers. some people have had, thousands of views and millions of views, and have got loads of subscribers and you just feel, Oh, it's far too late for me to start.

So you might find that now is the right time to start and you'll find your audience and you can maintain that growth and it's more sustainable because it's over a longer, more measured pace. So don't worry about comparing yourself to others.

But by and large, I'm just here to support you in any which way you find that is going to help your content and engage you with that audience as well. So yeah, whatever you need from me, whether it's editing advice, camera advice, it's techniques, editing, and then once you've got the video, uploading it and trying to maintain that conversation with your audience, it's incredibly important as well.

Don't just dump your video on them and just hope for the best. if somebody takes the time to comment, it takes two seconds, one second possibly even just to like something, but if they're going to sit there and write a comment, then please. Have the decency to reply back to them, especially if it's a nice comment. Yeah, I've seen some wonderful comments that are I love this video, you've really inspired me and then it's like nothing for months and that doesn't so that doesn't say that this channel is loved It says it's just forgotten about so please reply to your comments.

Tell them that you love them, You know enjoy your audience, because they can be fickle and they can leave you at any time. So yeah, treat your audience well and they'll keep coming back.

What a wonderful way to end the episode. So thank you for joining us for episode five of Digital Culture Podcast with my guest, Dean Shaw.

Thank you, James, for having me. It's been an absolute pleasure.

**James Akers:** There you go. He's here for you. If you want to develop your skills in this area, he's the man for you. So please do get in touch with us.

**Dean Shaw:**