

A survey analysis of listeners of an equine science podcast aimed at bridging the gap between scientists and horse enthusiasts for knowledge transfer and improved horse welfare

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Abstract

Background Podcasts have become a popular digital forum for discussing scientific information with peers, as well as with the non-scientific community, often referred to as ‘edutainment’. It is unclear how science-based podcasts can support the veterinary industry through, for example, supporting good husbandry practices. Objectives To understand the influence of ‘edutainment’ on equine owners’ husbandry decisions Study Design The sample population was listeners of the Conversations in Equine Science (CES) podcast recruited to complete an online survey via a link promoted by the CES hosts. The survey contained Likert-like questions assessing how listeners rated the importance of different forms of evidence when making husbandry decisions and questions relating to husbandry changes made. Methods A mixed methods approach was used to analyse the data. The Likert package for R was used to explore importance ratings. Free text questions were analysed via a content analysis with a constructionist epistemological position. Results The experience of veterinarians and scientific evidence was considered the most important forms of evidence that owners used when making decisions about their horse’s management (93% agreed and 91% agreed they were important respectively). Additionally, 74% of respondents had made a change to the management or training principles prompted by an episode of CES, suggesting edutainment can be a prompt to management change. Of these, the majority (55%) had done so based on a joint discussion of the podcast and their own reading of the evidence. Main Limitations This was an opportunistic sample of those already invested in the edutainment format, and may not represent those owners with no interest in scientific evidence. Conclusions Podcasts are an easy-access, low-cost medium to convey research and current trends in the equine/equitation science genre. They may be a valuable tool for the veterinary industry to employ to support horse welfare.

Hosted file

Submitted_EquinePodcast_v2.docx available at <https://authorea.com/users/629657/articles/649804-a-survey-analysis-of-listeners-of-an-equine-science-podcast-aimed-at-bridging-the-gap-between-scientists-and-horse-enthusiasts-for-knowledge-transfer-and-improved-horse-welfare>

