

# podcast user magazine

Issue 14 March 2007

PUM exclusive:  
**Chicago Bites!**  
&  
**Podcasting  
in Germany**  
Plus podcast &  
hardware reviews

This month:  
- Naked Vobes  
- Podcamp  
- Squeezing the  
most from  
Juice  
- Flash Players

## The Hollywood Podcast

A guy. A scooter. A dream.



PUM

[www.podcastusermagazine.com](http://www.podcastusermagazine.com)

## ABOUT PODCAST USER MAGAZINE

Each month, our dedicated contributors will review a range of hardware and software to guide you to the right buying choice. We will also review a wide variety of podcasts, bringing you diversity and entertainment from both mainstream and niche.

### Advice and help

Podcast User Magazine staff have years of combined experience. So, if you have any problems or would like any information, just email us at the address below. We're here to help.

[help@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:help@podcastusermagazine.com)



## SUBMISSIONS

We are always looking for great new talent. So if you have a topic that you would like to write about, please email us at the address below.

We would be glad to hear from you.

[submissions@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:submissions@podcastusermagazine.com)


## COMMENTS

If you have a comment, criticism or even praise for what we do please don't hesitate to let us know. We can't get better at what we do without you!

[general.comments@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:general.comments@podcastusermagazine.com)

Cover designed by Mark Hunter  
Editorial support  
Linda Mills, Janet Parkinson  
Jimmy Hastell & Simon Toon

Editorial . . . . .	page 3
News . . . . .	Page 4
Review Roulette . . . . .	Page 6
Global Voices - Canada . . . . .	Page 11
Rode USB Microphone . . . . .	Page 14
Flash Player . . . . .	Page 16
Mark Hunter talks to Tim Coyne . . . . .	Page 18
Chicago Bites . . . . .	Page 21
Inside The Podcasters Studio with Jesse Thorn of Young America . . . . .	Page 24
Mark: My Words . . . . .	Page 26
Citizen Scoop talks to Christopher Penn of Podcamp . . . . .	Page 27
Lance Anderson looks at the podcast scene in Germany . . . . .	Page 30
Vobes Gets Naked . . . . .	Page 33
Rowland Cutler - Me and My Juice . . . . .	Page 35
Set Yourself Free with Gary Dring . . . . .	Page 39
Talking Voices . . . . .	Page 41
Calling All Podcasters . . . . .	Page 43



Want to capture new listeners?  
Just add a 'play' button

## Editor

Paul Parkinson  
[paul.parkinson@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:paul.parkinson@podcastusermagazine.com)

## Co-Founders

**James Hastell**  
Layout Design

**Mark Hunter**  
[www.tartanpodcast.com](http://www.tartanpodcast.com)

**Grant Mason**  
[www.threefromleith.com](http://www.threefromleith.com)

**Colin Meeks**  
[www.indielaunchpad.com](http://www.indielaunchpad.com)

**Janet & Paul Parkinson**  
[www.theflashing12.com](http://www.theflashing12.com)

**Paul Nicholls**  
[www.podcastpaul.com](http://www.podcastpaul.com)

**Paul Pinfield**  
<http://calmcast.blogspot.com>

**Chris Skinner**  
[www.foursevens.com/simulacrum/](http://www.foursevens.com/simulacrum/)

**Geoff Tinnion**  
[www.stupod.co.uk](http://www.stupod.co.uk)

**Simon Toon**  
[www.slamidolpodcast.com](http://www.slamidolpodcast.com)

**Linda Mills** Editorial Manager  
[linda.mills@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:linda.mills@podcastusermagazine.com)

## Guest Writers

**Paul & Judy Hutchinson**  
[www.TotalPodCastrophe.com](http://www.TotalPodCastrophe.com)

**Richard Vobes**  
[www.vobes.com](http://www.vobes.com)

**Marilyn Madsen**  
Podcast reviewer

**Tammy & Bridget**  
<http://www.chicagobites.com>

**Lance Anderson**  
<http://vergeofthefringe.blogspot.com>

**Gary Dring**  
<http://www.cleverlittlepod.com>

**Rowland Cutler**  
<http://www.darkcompass.com/>

The 'strapline' for Podcast User Magazine is 'for discerning listeners and productive podcasters', and we think that the articles included in this, Issue 14, continue to reach both of these audiences. Thanks for your continuing support as we try to meet our goals.

But what about the audience that hasn't been reached yet – specifically, the audience that still needs to hear about your favorite podcast, whether it's one that you listen to or one that you produce?

Here's where we can all help each other. Make it your goal this month to show one new listener how to hear a podcast. Find a show that will catch that person's interest and that has a player embedded on its website, and then show that new listener how, with one click, that podcast can be heard.

Talk with a colleague at work, or a neighbour, or a family member about a favourite show of yours, and then take the time to demonstrate how easy it is to hear it, too.

If you're a podcaster, put a player on your site – perhaps even the one that Colin Meeks writes about in this issue – and tell your listeners how easy it now is for them to show others how to listen to your podcast. Talk about other shows you love, because chances are that your listeners will love them, too, and will appreciate your recommendations.

Sharing makes the community strong. Sharing the pleasure of a show you enjoy with someone you know strengthens not only your own community but also the larger one of podcast listeners and producers.

Is there any better recommendation than hearing a friend say, "You've got to listen to this!"?

Linda Mills  
Co-Founder and Editorial Manager,  
Podcast User Magazine

Podcast User Magazine invites and encourages submissions from all regarding podcasting. Any opinions on any subjects expressed by the co-founders or contributors in their podcasts are theirs alone and do not reflect the editorial opinion of the magazine.



## DER PODCASTER

Published on the last weekend of the month DER PODCASTER presents current reviews, innovations and events both in its home country of Germany but also internationally. Produced as a PDF in German by Christian Grau and Thorsten Anders.



<http://www.der-podcaster.net>

## PS3 Podcast - 1st March

The Podcast Network is launching a weekly PS3 podcast featuring interviews, game reviews and news roundup.

<http://ps3.thepodcastnetwork.com/>



## Next Podcamp

**March 16-18 at Emory University**  
Miller-Ward Alumni House  
815 Houston Mill Road  
Atlanta, GA 30322  
<http://podcamp.pbwiki.com>

## Free Education

Jimmy Ruska has put together a site of collective links to University pod and webcasts from Berkeley to Utah State. [http://www.jimmyr.com/blog/Online\\_Education\\_Free\\_201\\_2006.php](http://www.jimmyr.com/blog/Online_Education_Free_201_2006.php)

## WinJournal

Mariner software have developed the 'WinJournal 1.0' presently in beta. Designed as an all-round feature rich package for Blogging and/or Podcasting. You are invited to test out the product and give feedback.

<http://www.marinersoftware.com/sitepage.php?page=115>.



**REGISTER ONLINE QUOTE "PODCAST USER" & SAVE AN ADDITIONAL 20%**

# Corporate Podcasting Summit Europe

[www.podcast-summit.com/europe](http://www.podcast-summit.com/europe)

**19 – 20 March 2007 - Cophorne Tara Hotel, Kensington, London, UK**


Engaging Presentations > Podcasting-in-action Case Studies  
Interactive Panel Debates > Expert Analysis

## How organisations can apply the podcast to their business activities for profitable gain

**PLUS!** Key issues that will help the community capitalise on this emerging channel

- > **UNDERSTAND** how you articulate the podcasting value proposition in business terms
- > **HEAR** exclusive podcasting-in-action case studies from trailblazing organisations
- > **MONITOR** the success of your podcasting campaigns and find out where we go next
- > **IDENTIFY** the podcasting strategies that have worked best, and what made them successful
- > **DISCOVER** how podcasts can help you prompt word of mouth excitement about your products & services

HEAR EXCITING PRESENTATIONS AND LIVELY DEBATE FROM TOP ENTERPRISE PODCASTERS:

Jenny Southwell,  
Head of eMarketing,  
**first direct**   
Member HSBC Group


Philip Filleul,  
Banking Sector Manager,  
Finance Industry Marketing,  
**SUN MICROSYSTEMS** 

Mark Prescott,  
Head of Cultural Campaigns  
and Liaison, **Mayor of London  
and the Greater London Authority** 

Genie Lutz, Partner,  
**PricewaterhouseCoopers** 

Pascal Roobrouck,  
Project Manager, **Alcatel-Lucent** 

Dr Jo Wills,  
Director General, **European  
Food Information Council** 

Guillaume du Gardier,  
Director Online  
Communications Europe,  
**Edelman Paris** 

Kylie Johnson,  
Multimedia Liaison Officer,  
**CSIRO Communication** 

Platinum Sponsor



Co Sponsors



Exclusive Podcast &  
Internet Audio Sponsor



Supported by



Organised by



**GET INVOLVED! VIEW THE AGENDA & REGISTER ONLINE AT: [www.podcast-summit.com/europe](http://www.podcast-summit.com/europe)**

CONTACT: [anita@podcast-summit.com](mailto:anita@podcast-summit.com)

CALL: +44 (0) 20 7375 7196

Marketing Partners



# Keep the Home Feeds Burning



The **Podcast Nation** directory is an entirely pain-free podcast experience.

**Easy** to navigate sections, with **featured** and **newest** podcasts, plus **top ten** listings.

A breeze to **add new podcasts** and all content guaranteed **100% UK produced**.

Don't get us wrong; we **LOVE** the rest of the world and all the **fabulous** podcasts in it.

But somebody has to **keep the home feeds burning**, and that is ...

 **Podcast Nation**

[www.podcastnation.co.uk](http://www.podcastnation.co.uk)

## Review Roulette

Finding interesting new podcasts to listen to is hard work. We in the Review Roulette team risk punishing our ears every month by choosing podcasts completely at random from Podcast Alley and Podcast Pickle, and then forcing ourselves to listen to them, whether we like them or not! It can certainly take its toll on the Roulette reviewer, so we are constantly looking to strengthen our ranks. This month we are joined by a new team member, and if you want an experienced podcast reviewer, who better than podcastfanatic.com's very own Bernadette?

This month's podcasts were reviewed by:  
Bernadette from podcastfanatic.com  
Grant Mason  
Linda Mills  
Marilyn Madsen  
Simon Toon

The ratings given are the average of the scores given by our team of reviewers.  
All marks out of 5.  
Edited by Simon Toon.



## Nashville Rock Radio

<http://nashvillerock.net/NRRadio/tabid/199/Default.aspx>

Apparently I'm not the only person in the world who believes (or believed until recently) that the only style of music to come out of Nashville is country. Nashville Rock Radio, hosted by Josh Jackson, aims to dispel that myth.

The music content of this show ranges from roots to pop rock to thrash metal and most things in between. Shows that feature such a range of genres suffer from the reality that most people aren't fans of such a wide assortment of music. For example, if I never hear another thrash metal song between now and my death, hopefully 40 or 50 years away, I will be perfectly content. Of course there's always the fast forward button and the show does feature some genuinely great non-metal music, but specialist episodes featuring a single genre might draw more listeners. On the plus side, each half-hour episode is jammed full of songs with only a smattering of show-related chat in between sets.

Josh is a musician and displays the kind of enthusiasm for the music he showcases that only other musicians can muster. In addition, he's been living and working in the Nashville music scene for nearly 20 years so he's able to share interesting facts and gossip about the artists he plays. Some of his between-song patter is a bit too much like the FM radio DJs I've stopped listening to since podcasting came along, but the overall feel is professional and passionate, and the sound quality is very good.

The show is new to podcasting although the Nashville Rock website has been operating for five years as an online community containing reviews, band news, and musicians' blogs. This makes my one major gripe sound a bit odd in that it's the website that lets this show down. The site fails quite spectacularly to facilitate the process of finding out more about the artists played on the show. There are playlists for each episode



but they look awkward and contain no contact information or links to the websites I'm sure most of the artists have. The site could make it much easier for interested listeners to connect directly with the artists played on the show like many other music podcasts already do.

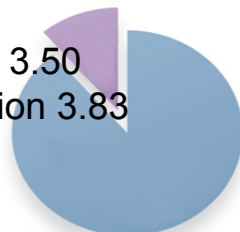
This podcast rates a podcastfanatic rating of: will listen again; maybe not religiously to every episode.

by **Bernadette**

**Marilyn Madsen:** Great if you live in the Nashville area. A little too much like a regular radio broadcast for my taste.

**Grant Mason:** Good site, with clear and obvious links which play when you click on them. Good show notes listing the bands played, though my slight niggle here is that there are very few actual clickable links from the notes to the actual bands' sites, which does the bands a bit of a disservice as it doesn't make it easy for listeners to click through to get to them. Production-wise, the vocals occasionally had some distortion on them which grated slightly, but not too often.

Content 3.50  
Production 3.83



**Duck! and Gather: a podcast from Peter Savich**  
<http://petersavich.com/Duck/Podcast/podcast.php>

As the author explains on the webpage supplied here, this podcast is a companion to his blog: "Basically, I got lazy about typing in my blog entries, and a good friend of mine encouraged me to continue it using the podcasting medium."

This is a true audio blog. It's highly personal and idiosyncratic, and it's clear that the author is rarely at a loss for words. There's no editing, no attempt at improving the sound quality, and no sense that once it's recorded, it's ever listened to by the person who produced it. At the very least, the 'good friend' should have warned about holding the mic too close, watching out for explosive consonants, and not trying to talk when doing strenuous work. Subscription information is rudimentary, at best, and the author relies on podcast directories to provide information about previous podcasts.

Full of contradictions and pronouncements and theorizing, this audio blog is probably best appreciated by those who know the blogger and follow his work. For the uninitiated, though, his arguments may be harder to grasp. For this reviewer, the contradictions and lack of attention to detail overshadowed any interest in wanting to learn more from the podcast. For example, at one point in a discussion of the conspiracy theories surrounding the collapse of the World Trade Towers, the podcaster criticizes an official's inability to use English correctly but in the very same podcast makes his own errors in grammar, undermining the argument about how a native speaker should know how to use language. Such are the dangers of opinionated commentary.

As an audio blog, this podcast also relies heavily on prior knowledge and collective understanding. Allusions to previously mentioned references and topics abound, and it may be difficult for the new listener to catch up with the rest of the audience. However, it is not clear if this podcast has been continued past episode 117, which was produced in late January 2007. From the website it appears as if the focus has shifted to a forum, where the discussion continues.

by Linda Mills

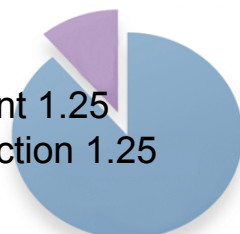


**Grant Mason:** No player on his page and no podcast listing either. Sigh. When I went, as directed, to listen on his Podcast Pickle page, he turns out to have encoded his shows incorrectly so he came out sounding like a chipmunk on the player and the 'listen here' links there. Deflated and having lost interest, I decided I couldn't be bothered wasting my time subscribing to listen if he couldn't be bothered putting in the effort to get (a) a decent podcast site or (b) encode his shows properly.

**Bernadette:** I have a recurring nightmare about getting stuck at a dinner party next to a bloke like this. His narcissistic, rambling, buzz-world filled discussion topics are either hackneyed standards along the 'money is the root of all evil' line or poorly presented arguments to support his dull theories on health, human personality and September 11, 2001. As far as production goes he could, for a start, turn off his mobile phone while recording and buy a pop filter.

**Marilyn Madsen:** One man's random ramblings with no particular point or cohesiveness. I'll totally take a pass on this one.

Content 1.25  
Production 1.25





## 100 Word Stories Podcast

Short, amusing tales you can threaten to read to your kids at bedtime if they misbehave.

100 Word Stories podcast

<http://podcasting.isfullofcrap.com>

Laurence Simon is a man whose obsessive-compulsive nature forces him to write, record and publish 100-word stories for all the world to enjoy or ridicule. Occasionally he's joined by other hosts to help him combine brevity with wit. In addition he posts a weekly challenge, with a topic to allow the listeners to come up with and submit a 100-word story of their own.

It's a marvellous idea for a show - it's short, funny and the storytellers are the perfect narrators for their own work. It makes an ideal daily diversion for the two to two-and-a-half minutes each show lasts, during which time the storytellers often act out the roles (reminding me of childhood times in front of Jackanory on TV), with suitable soundbed music and effects, which adds that extra layer of enjoyment and professionalism to their endeavours. Marvel at the amazing adventures of Abe Lincoln, wince at tales of toothache, make friends with Mr Thimble and witness monsters with Nes-sie!

There's a definite knack to getting a good story down in such a short space of time and with such a limited wordcount, and it's a skill that the storytellers have mastered with aplomb. It's not easy - I've tried! I was so inspired that my 21-year-long writer's block is in danger of being cleared, though the additional challenge of 100 words makes the going tough. Perhaps I'll get there eventually and work up the courage to submit. If I do, then Mr Simon deserves a knighthood for services to Masonkind!

In his own words though, I really should 'keep it brief', so it's on with the review. I'll start with the website, which is clean, clear and has a very obvious feed link - though in keeping with current drives to make podcasts more accessible, I'd love to see a player on the page so that listeners can hear the show without downloading it first. Moving to the production quality, Laurence is really on the button with his recording techniques and levels, and there's nothing to quibble about here. The background music is always well behind the vocals, leaving them clean and perfectly audible.



So - here's my own little 100-word closer, just to keep in with the vibe of the show. Pity I'm nowhere near as good as Laurence and his guests. Please subscribe and enjoy - they deserve your support (and possibly your contributions!).

"I've never owned a laptop before now, so I've no idea whether or not a warm bottom is normal. Not my bottom, you understand; the laptop's bottom. It's warming my knees in a quite alarming manner and they're starting to get moist as I put together my podcast review. Perhaps it's the sultry voice of Laurence that's getting my knees all hot and bothered as it oozes from the speakers above each patella. He has that effect, you know. With a silver tongue and his little bag of words, he gets us there in exactly 100 steps; no more, no less."

Text by Grant Mason

**Marilyn Madsen:** Interesting concept. Quirky and very concise stories often leaving the listener wanting more. Due to the short duration of each podcast this is not one to which one should listen to whilst driving on the freeway. Too much repeated button pushing required for safety this reviewer found out. Best to listen and enjoy at home or on the train....

**Bernadette:** This podcast is wonderfully creative & unpredictable. The Wacky Adventures of Abraham Lincoln stories are the icing on what is an already delicious cake.

Content 4.13  
Production 4.38

# Technopriest

The Ramblings of a Technologically Enabled Roman Catholic Priest

Technopriest

[www.technopriest.org](http://www.technopriest.org)

Gather up your books of prayer and your audio players. Spend a while with Father Bill for a podcast of worship, podsafes music and technology.

Coming to you from the parishes of Saint Francis of Assisi and the Blessed Trinity in Calhoun County, Illinois, Father Bill Kessler produces a weekly podcast entitled: Technopriest: The Ramblings of a Technologically Enabled Roman Catholic Priest.

This podcast was inspired by the one of Fr. Bill's parishioners who asked if he could record and share the homily which he prepares each week for his congregation. A homily being a "sermon intended to edify a congregation on a particular matter and not intended to be a theological discourse". This suggestion was taken seriously and thus the creation of "Technopriest". Fr. Bill records his homilies "live" as he is preaching them and later incorporates them into the show. With a lesson to be learned from each reading, they give one fodder for reflection and contemplation. Initially just the homily was posted but now this podcast has a consistent format. Each episode includes an audio opening followed by an update of what is happening in the parishes and the life of their priest. The main body of the show is a thematically relevant track of podsafes music and then the homily. Fr. Kessler has a good ear for inspirational music and this reviewer was soon checking out the artists that he had chosen to play. The show then carries on with discussions of technology and a "You've Got Mail" segment that closes the cast where listener's e-mails are read out.

When recording his "live" homilies, Father Bill experiments with different audio setups and microphones which creates a variance in the sound quality. He is very open about this and warns the listener when things may not be at an optimum.

The Technopriest website is very straightforward and easy to use. The RSS feed link is prominently displayed. The lack of a show archive was



a disappointment. It would have been nice to go back and listen to some early shows as Father Bill has been producing podcasts since 2005. The 100th show was posted while this review was being composed. Technopriest is also a member of the Star Quest Podcast Network, an affiliation network that produces "the best in Catholic Podcasting".

Not sure what to expect when the roulette wheel served up this podcast, I must say that I found Technopriest, with its weekly lesson and well chosen music, a welcome respite in a busy life.

by Marilyn Madsen

**Bernadette:** Being as objective as possible given that I'm a lapsed Catholic I thought this would have been much better if he'd either stuck to playing his weekly homily followed by a deconstruction or doing the "Catholic Priest as human who watches superbowl" routine. Doing both in the limited time available made the show seem rushed and superficial to me.

**Grant Mason:** Technopriest at least had a decent podcast site with short and concise show notes and an obvious feed link. Yet again, however, immediate accessibility was hampered by the lack of a player on the page. If you want people to quickly check you out without having to go through the hassle of subscribing to find out of the show's worth sticking with, get a player. It also makes a quick review easier for the reviewer!! Good production, though I'm a bit fed up hearing the synthetic voice announcing podcasts by now as everyone does it!

Content 2.50  
Production 3.25



# CANADA



GLOBAL VOICES by Janet Parkinson  
C a n a d i a n P o d c a s t s

Unsurprisingly, Canada is awash with podcasts of all types – but it was a nice surprise to learn that, according to a survey published in 2006 (<http://www.canadianpodcastlistenersurvey.ca/>) by Sequentia and Caprica, it appears that 52% of podcast listeners are women! (Yes, you guys – looks like we snuck up on you there...). So just for a change I thought I'd aim at reviewing a few podcasts with women in mind – it's just so nice to get the opportunity once in a while!

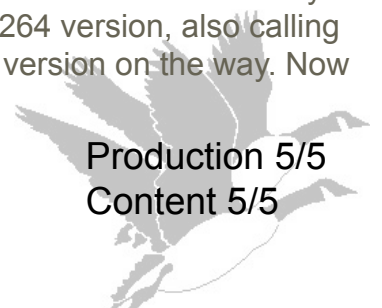



CommandN

[www.commandn.tv](http://www.commandn.tv)

CommandN is a video podcast hosted by Amber MacArthur, who was interviewed in PUM #9 (October 06). This is one of the best video podcasts I've come across – she loves to pick the grungiest, coldest, alleyways in downtown Toronto to record the show! Key sections include a quick round up of the Tech Headlines, TechTips introduced by Jeff MacArthur (Amber's brother), which often teaches an interesting factoid or three, and Web Picks, which outlines an interesting site and discusses it in some detail. From time to time she also slots in product reviews, web-related development tips, interviews and special guests and viewer mail, feedback and questions. Supporting all this video techno geekiness is Brian McKechnie, who does a great job in knitting all the segments together. CommandN is ad-supported but they are clearly offered up and not overly long or obtrusive. It's available in many download formats, from an iPod-friendly 320x240 right up to a very large H.264 version, also calling at MPEG4, XviD and DivX, and it appears there's an xBox360 WMV format version on the way. Now that will be interesting!

Production 5/5  
Content 5/5





**TWO BOOBS** and a baby<sup>+</sup>

Meet Dave, Heather, Sam, and introducing Ella Delaney. Follow the trials and tribulations of two boobs, as they discover parenting one step/blunder at a time. It all started in October 2005 with the birth of their first child. Now join the boobs as they try to figure out how to juggle another baby!

Now With ...  
More Babies!

## Two Boobs and a Baby

[www.davemadethis.com/twoboobs/](http://www.davemadethis.com/twoboobs/)

Dave and Heather Delaney had a baby in October 2005. They started a podcast simply to share their experiences with friends and relatives but soon realised that the 'audio-diary' was also a way of reaching other first-time parents, too. From then on it's been a constant up, and this year they have been nominated as finalists for the Podcast Peers Awards. As a team they work really well together, having a relaxed and fun style with the occasional interruption from crying babies. The experiences they recount will be recognised by anyone with young children! How they handle two small kids, produce a bi-weekly podcast and a newsletter and run a forum is beyond me!!



Production: 3.5  
Content: 4






Nora Young and Cathi Bond present

*the sniffer*  
Because the future smells funny.



## The Sniffer!

[www.foursevens.com/thesniffer/](http://www.foursevens.com/thesniffer/)

Presented by the two good friends Cathi and Nora, this is a conversational show about their take on news items, trends both within the online and offline world and where they see the future going. Both Cathi and Nora are writers and broadcasters – but as Nora explains 'podcasting lets her say all the bad words she can't say on the country's national broadcaster'. Each podcast is like entering into, or sometimes you feel even overhearing, seven minutes of a conversation.... An interesting listen.



Production: 3.5  
Content: 4



### A Storied Life

[www.soniabrock.com/](http://www.soniabrock.com/)

Here's a gem from a 70-year-old lady who is a cloth doll maker – and web designer. What's so unique about her is the depth and scope of Sonia's podcasts. From the fascinating stories recounting her life growing up in Ontario and her passion for knitting and sewing machines, she'll move you swiftly on to discuss one of her many other favourite hobbies – Guild Wars. Yes, she's an avid online gamer! She'll sing you the odd song too – you see, Sonia also makes frequent guest spot appearances as the "Blues Mama" on Danny Marks' BLUZ FM on jazz.fm in Toronto! Here is a woman with stories indeed to tell – and I fully admit to being a fan. Rock on Sonia!

Production: 3  
Content: 4

Heading off to the warmer climes of Africa (excluding South Africa, as I've already been there) in April I hope to be finding some interesting podcasts – so let me know if you're podcasting from there as it would be great to hear from you! Thanks also to J. Glazer for the fab photo!



## SUBMISSIONS

We here at PUM welcome letters and suggestions and also invite submissions for inclusion in the magazine.

If you have a story to tell, an insight or even advice for the podcaster or listener why not email it now at:

[submissions@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:submissions@podcastusermagazine.com)

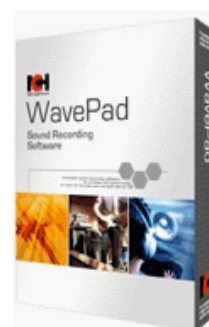
## ADVERTISERS

PUM are prepared to take a limited amount of advertising. For our rate card please email:

[help@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:help@podcastusermagazine.com)



<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>



Note : some features in WavePad are time limited until a licence is purchased.

[www.nch.com.au/wavepad/masters.html](http://www.nch.com.au/wavepad/masters.html)

# Rode Podcaster Microphone



reviewed by Paul Nicholls

Isn't it funny how equipment grows on you? I obviously don't mean that literally. I've no harvest of mixers, headphone adapter jacks and filters sprouting from a nearby orifice, but this 'growing' has been the case with the Rode Podcaster Microphone.

If you're anything like me, you'll love wires, dials and faders - you feel like a pilot on the ill-fated Concorde as you podcast away, twiddling and punching buttons to suit. Again, if you're anything like me, you largely ignore all the techy info on anything you want to buy and hunt around for someone independent to give you the low-down. So, here goes:

Aeronautic analogies continued, you feel like you're a passenger in a jumbo jet with the Rode Podcaster Microphone because you simply plug it in and you're off. It's disconcerting at first, as the Rode just plugs into the USB of your PC and your headphones plug into the integrated microphone jack. No dials, knobs, flashy bits. Nothing.

I took possession of the microphone at Podcastcon in November from Howard Jones, Director of Distributed Brands at Source Distribution (<http://www.sourcedistribtuion.co.uk>), and I couldn't wait to use what looked like the behemoth of all microphones.

The first thing that struck me about the microphone was how incredibly heavy it was, weighing in at a good two pounds. The boom arm of my microphone stand needed continual tightening to keep the Rode in place. Fortunately I was provided with an additional shock mount - more of that later.

It's odd to say this now, but I wasn't that impressed with the Rode on its first trip out of the box. I couldn't really understand why, and then, with time I began to learn what I was doing wrong.

Not having any knobs, dials or twiddly bits to fiddle with, as the Rode slots straight into the USB of your PC, you get a bit of a one-size-fits-all sound - or so I thought.

I like crisp, loud audio, and curiously you'll get this from some of the cheaper microphones available around the £25 / \$50 mark. My audio seemed...insipid.



The build quality of the Rode is fabulous, and I couldn't understand why it wasn't performing as well as I thought it should. I found that with the use of a decent pop filter, you get great, rich audio - but you really do need to get in very close, with your lips touching the filter, and the filter virtually touching the grille of the casing.

With time, I realised that inbound audio in my recording software (Castblaster) needed tweaking down a touch to get the balances right. Once the levels were equalled, I was cooking on gas and the ease of set up was just remarkable: plug in the Rode, fire up Castblaster and hey presto.

One of the most innovative features of the Rode is the integrated headphone jack - I found it was easy to use my iPod earbuds and found this particularly useful, knowing that the sound I was hearing was going to be identical to the sound on my iPod following recording.

With time, I loved the ease of set-up and began to learn the way the Rode worked. This is a microphone that really does play to its strengths, but you need time to settle in with it to get the best sounds.

I'm sitting listening to podcast 148, recorded with the Rode, and podcast 149 at [www.podcastpaul.com](http://www.podcastpaul.com) recorded with an open dynamic microphone in a hard-tiled room. The mixes are worlds apart, and you can hear the smooth audio from the Rode against a pretty harsh, but loud alternative.

I'm not alone in discussing the quiet pick-up; a number of other reviewers mention this. I'm pretty much certain it's a virtue now, rather than a hindrance.

So, what do I think about it now? I love it. It's taken time to understand, but I'm well pleased with the audio quality and ease of use. The shock mount is a must if you do purchase the Rode - this equipment is heavy and needs the additional mount. You'll also have a tendency to knock into it as you need to get in close for that rich resonance we all look for in our audio recording.

Priced around £140 - £150 this is a good investment, unless you like twiddling those knobs and dials...

I'd give this a good 9/10, a great piece of equipment.

<http://www.rodemic.com/?pagename=Home>

Rodes Podcasting site

<http://www.rodemicrophones.com>

<http://www.rodemicrophones.com/page2.html>



# Not Necessarily a Flash in the Pan



by Colin Meeks

Podcasters in general are simple folk; they do it for the sheer love of it. However, most podcasters would not be answering truthfully if they said the amount of people listening to their podcasts was unimportant. Every time I check my feed stats, I get a buzz seeing extra subscribers. Yes, it's true that it's not all about the listening figures, but it sure plays its part, when motivating you to create a podcast, when you have many other things happening in your life.

There are many ways to increase your listener base, but one of the least adopted methods is one of the most instantly gratifying for the listener, and that's having some method of listening to your podcasts directly on your website. There are several ways to implement this on your website, but one of the simplest and most feature rich is to have a flash player. Flash players use the Flash plug-in from Adobe, formerly Macromedia. The Flash plug-in is installed within the browser of the majority of computers including Windows, Linux and Mac. It basically allows listeners to click on your podcast and stream the file without having to wait for the file to fully download. This allows the listener to hear your podcast within seconds of clicking on the 'play' button.

There are numerous flash players available, and most are free. I'm going to concentrate on the one called FeedPlayer from BigContact. This is a fairly feature-rich flash player. Here are some of its features:

- o Streams podcasts on your site, blog or your MySpace page
- o Displays show notes and links
- o Listeners can subscribe to podcast from within the player
- o Listeners can share this player and help you promote your show
- o Every time you update your podcast you update your Feed Player

The feature that's of main interest to me is the ability to stream a podcast directly from my site. This enables listeners to begin listening to an episode almost immediately, as it plays while downloading.

So you now want to put the Flash player on your website; what next? Big Contact have made this ultra easy. The first step is to decide whether you want the Standard or Slim version. The main difference is the

size of the player, so you'll need to pick the one that fits your site. You then need to click on the relevant link.

### Step 1. Enter Feed

Here you enter the URL of your podcast feed. This will need to be an RSS 2.0-compatible feed. You can cut through the complexities of finding out if your site is compatible by just entering it. If it doesn't display, go to <http://www.feedburner.com> and set up an account. This will allow you to convert your existing feed into an RSS 2.0-compliant one. Your feed will then have a URL similar to <http://feeds.feedburner.com/nameofyourshow>.

### Step 2. Copy and Paste

You need to copy the text to your web page. This may look like gibberish if you are not used to HTML and Javascript, the languages used to help make Internet pages. You'll probably move the player around a bit. Before you make any changes, make sure you have a backup of the page, just in case you have any problems.

Once the player is in situ, there are a few things you can do to customize the function of the player, such as turn auto play on or off; enable the whole playlist to repeat and enable a standalone button. To do this you need to adjust the code that was generated for you. Don't be afraid, it's really rather easy, but it's probably best to make a copy of the code before you start tinkering.

So if you go to my podcast page, <http://podcast.indielaunchpad.com>, on the right of the page you will see my new, fancy-schmancy flash player. I'm still not sure if this flash player is the right one for me. I think I prefer the little button flash players, so that they can appear in each podcast entry, but I'll be sticking to it for a while.





# The 'Casting Couch:

## Tim Coyne

by Mark Hunter

It's the town that makes and breaks dreams. Thousands of dewy-eyed teenagers all over America dream of moving there and becoming famous, having their picture in celebrity magazines, making a fortune, making their dreams come true. But for most the reality of life in Hollywood is very different from those daydreams, and a life of mundane, minimum-wage jobs broken up by the occasional audition - for the fortunate ones - quickly dulls the keen ambition that brought them to Tinsel Town in the first place.

News stands and TV shows feed the insatiable appetite for celebrity and Hollywood success, but one man has spent the last two years slowly lifting the lid on the world's most glamorous city, bringing us the gritty reality behind the red carpets and Oscar statuettes.

His name is Tim Coyne, and he's an actor and writer, living in Los Angeles, and he produces the Hollywood Podcast.

What makes the Hollywood Podcast so special is its lack of pretension. Coyne calls it as it is, his choice of subject more often than not exposing the all-too-often story of 'what could have been' 'nearly made it'. Whether he's interviewing Pamela Anderson's 'stand in', attending a 'pitch-fest' along with hundreds of other sweaty palmed screen writers, or talking to a primetime TV primadonna who charts his slide into depression and bankruptcy, Coyne always brings the listener the reality of Hollywood, the human element. And more often than not we learn about tenacity of the human spirit, the determination to keep battling that rarely fails to uplift the soul.

"I've always been influenced by Ira Glass's *This American Life*," he explains. "That was my jumping-off point. My only goal is to conduct interesting interviews, trying to find that story or profile that really illustrates what life's really like in Hollywood."

### Chasing Gwynth

Each of Coyne's podcasts is a story. For example, his first two podcasts were the real story behind the paparazzi. And while telling that story, riding shotgun around Hollywood in pursuit of Gwynth Paltrow, we as the listener start to sympathize with these pariahs of society. But that just illustrates the nonjudgmental approach Coyne takes to his subject.

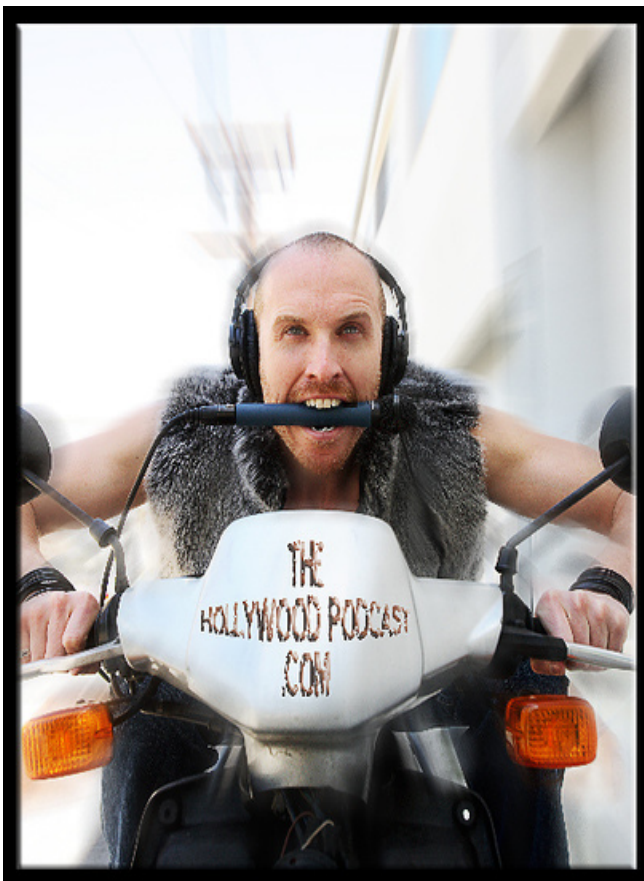
"I happened to know someone who was dating a paparazzi photographer and I knew there was an interesting story there. I ended up riding along with him for a weekend as he chased Paltrow," he remembers. "That weekend became a two-parter called Chasing Gwyneth."

His own arrival in Hollywood is an embarrassing one, he says. Working as a Sex Education teacher at a New Hampshire boarding school, he found himself living in a dorm with 35 fifteen-year-old boys. When the school announced it would be holding auditions for a musical production of *The Secret Garden*, Tim decided he'd go up for a part. Twenty-three years old at the time, he confesses his mortification at getting a part. And not just any part. The lead. Like so many actors before him, this experience marked him being bitten by the acting bug, and before long he'd quit the Sex Education job and packed his bags for Hollywood. Eight years or so later Tim discovered podcasting.

“I was blown away that I could have a voice without having to ask permission first. These were very exciting times, the winter of 2004. I’d be driving around LA on my scooter with an iPod fully loaded with podcasts. I’m a rabid consumer of podcasts. I’m a refresh whore; I just keep hitting refresh on my iTunes. More podcasts! Give me my podcasts!”

As a producer he’s always on the lookout for his next subject. It’s a city where people easily withdraw into themselves, rarely looking outwards; rejection and disappointment tend to have that effect on even the most optimistic budding actor. For Tim, paying attention to people keeps him going.

“It keeps me alive,” he confesses, “I’m trying to pay attention to the people in the trenches, as it were, the people struggling. If you want to hear from Clint Eastwood talking about Letters From Iwo Jima, then go find another show to listen to. If you want to hear from the extra who’s big break was working on Letters From Iwo Jima, then listen to my show.”



And that’s what makes the Hollywood Podcast so engaging. Listening to the extra is so much more interesting. They haven’t been interviewed a thousand times before and don’t have a PR machine polishing their every word. And Tim’s there with his mic and recorder, waiting to give them a voice.

“I did a lot of research to make sure I bought the right equipment. I ended up with a Marantz PMD-670. It’s great, I’m still using it today. I also recently invested in an Edirol R-09, which I love. It’s used as a back up when I’m recording interviews.”

What does he use for post-production?

“I spent the first year using Audacity for editing but now I use Pro Tools. I figured that I might as well learn to use the industry standard.”

On the microphone front he uses a couple of inexpensive Audio Technicas, but he’s hoping to replace them at some point, even though they’ve served him well.

Two years on and Tim is still philosophical about his career and the impact The Hollywood Podcast will make. He’s cynical;

“Nobody in this town cares about my podcast. A person needs a publicist to get any media attention and it’s precisely that - media attention - that gets you noticed. Yes, some people get ‘discovered’, but the truth is you need someone to be making calls, demanding attention for your work.”

And like most amateur yet talented podcasters, Tim doesn’t have the means to make this happen. He explains,

“Publicists aren’t cheap, so it comes down to DIY. But what do you want to spend your time doing? Most ‘indie’ podcasters have day jobs, families, other commitments. It’s hard enough finding the time to put a new show together let alone spend hours on press releases and search engine optimization.”

His inclusion in this month's Podcast User Magazine is the first time a print publication has paid attention to him. But he feels he knows the reason for this.

"Journalists are lazy," he snarls, "They don't search for stories, they get pitched stories. By publicists."

## Unkempt

The Hollywood Podcast somehow flipped a switch in Tim's head. A voice told him that he could and should be telling stories. Like many of the subjects of his podcast, Tim himself has a lot going on his life; he's had ups and downs professionally and romantically, and he felt instinctively that his own stories could be universally understood. Hence, 'Unkempt' was born, a vehicle that allows Tim to bear his soul in often excruciatingly intimate detail.

A New Year's resolution at the turn of 2006 found Tim proclaiming to his friends that he'd have a four-month relationship, a humble goal by most standards. He wanted to challenge his own notion that he could not love or be loved without being where he wanted to be in his career. And in Unkempt we learn of his meeting the Hot Chick and the effect she had on his life and creativity, their turbulent relationship exposed for all to hear. Compulsive, starkly honest podcasting at its most potent. "Do I achieve my goal of a four-month relationship? Subscribe and find out," he teases.

As Tim climbs aboard his scooter, an incongruent combination of 6'2" actor and a 50cc engine, he pulls on his helmet and thinks for a second.

"The biggest lesson I've learned in the two years I've spent podcasting is simply find your story. I'm just a guy on a scooter with big dreams, looking for love...in LA! But what's your story? Who are you? What's your point of view?" He fires up the scooter's engine. "Inject yourself into your podcast, it's what'll make it unique."

And with a rev of the puny engine he disappears into the Hollywood evening.

### 3 Tips for New Podcasters:

Know who you are.

Be brutally honest.

Pod Karma. Listen to other shows and talk about other shows.

### 3 Tips for Podcast Listeners:

Listen and if you love what you're hearing then

1) talk about it,

2) blog about it, or

3) podcast about it.

<http://hollywoodpodcast.com/>



Tim Coyne is a member of

↓ LA Podcasters ↓



## Chicago Dining Podcast Caters to Social Networking



Chicagoan Bridget Houlihan isn't much of a cook, so once a week she puts her kitchen to good use, transforming it into a recording studio. She and co-host Tammy Green simply clear a space at the table, crack open a bottle of wine, and sit a small digital recorder between them.

The result is Chicago Bites, a weekly podcast that chronicles their dining adventures in the city.

The two friends launched the show a year ago to challenge themselves to eat out at new places and to learn more about emerging podcast technologies. They've since posted more than 40 episodes, accumulated an estimated 125 regular listeners, and hosted Chicago Bites social events.

"We are both bloggers and work on the Web, so technology doesn't scare us," said Green with a smile. "But podcasting has led us in some surprising directions and has opened doors to a social network we didn't expect."

Soon after they started podcasting, Green and Houlihan got a series of restaurant recommendations and inquiries from strangers, listeners they didn't even know they had.

"We were excited to know that people were listening but were also very curious about who they were and how they found us," said Houlihan. "So we started to invite the listeners who gave us specific recommendations to go out to eat and become part of the Chicago Bites experience."

That led to many fun nights out with people that they wouldn't have otherwise met, including fellow podcasters from England touring America, and like-minded diners from other Chicago neighborhoods. Using the Web as a social networking tool is a natural progression that is long overdue, Houlihan continued.



“The Web lends itself to being interactive, but techies rarely use it to its full potential,” she said. “There seems to be a disconnect between what happens online and what happens in real life. Chicago Bites has turned into an interesting experiment in bridging that gap.”

And it’s working. Friends have lent their expertise, from graphic design to video work, because they want to be part of what Green and Houlihan are doing. And folks show up to Chicago Bites events. Sometimes Green and Houlihan even get invited out to dinner as professional members of the media to review new restaurants.

Why is this something that people want to participate in? It’s because Chicago Bites is easy to relate to, well thought out, and fun.

The Chicago Bites Cupcake Crawl, which Houlihan and Green hosted in September, is a good example of their web-based social network in action. Modeled after a pub crawl, the Cupcake Crawl was a one-day, whirlwind tour of Chicago bakeries and dessert emporiums that the two cooked up to settle a bet about which place made Chicago’s best cupcake.

Green and Houlihan originally thought that 10 of their friends would attend. But once they posted the Cupcake Crawl plan on their site, the guest list blossomed to more than 400 people overnight.

“Web and mainstream media outlets started publicizing the event to promote our original content and to fill their sites and extend their networks,” said Green. “We were amazed at the response.”

Houlihan says that results like this mark a change in how people consume information.

“People are looking for something different that caters to them. They want the everyman story. And podcasting feeds right into that.”

A big part of building and maintaining a social network is creating good content that is easy to find and listen to.

“We don’t podcast just because we think the technology is cool,” said Green. “We gave a lot thought to what we wanted to do and how best to use podcasting to communicate.”



This involved a long discussion about what the women wanted to podcast about, setting up the infrastructure for a Web site, as well as figuring out the parameters of the show, Green explained.

It also involved a commitment to dine out and learn more about Chicago food, which is just one of the many perks.

“Our podcast gives us an open forum to test our ideas in a way that our conservative day jobs often deny us,” said Green. “When we think of something, we try it. There’s instant gratification.”

For now, the instant gratification takes the form a short, unpolished commentary about the overall Chicago dining experience that’s aimed at a group of 30-something, city-dwelling friends who listen to podcasts when they commute.

The fact that that it appeals to a larger audience is just icing on the cupcake.

Said Houlihan:

“We’re having fun and learning. We can’t wait to see where that goes.”

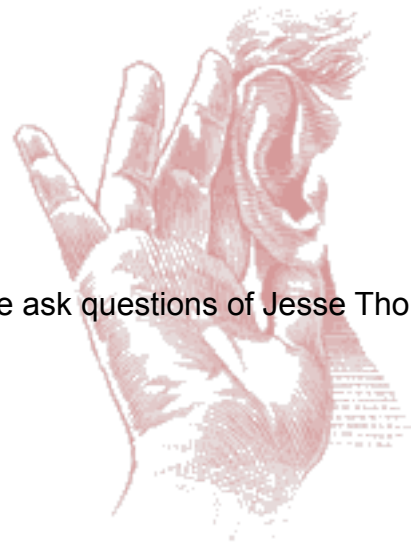


<http://www.chicagobites.com/>  
<http://www.thunderingturtleherd.com/>  
<mailto:bhou18@gmail.com>



# Inside the Podcasters' Studio

Paul and Judy from TotalPodcastrophe ask questions of Jesse Thorn



In an effort to better know our colleagues, we are taking a look 'Inside the Podcasters' Studio'. We want to know what makes podcasters do what they do, what motivates them, and where they see their podcast going in the future.

This month inside the podcasters' studio, we are privileged to meet Jesse Thorn.

Jesse Thorn, 25, is the host and producer of The Sound of Young America. Thorn's radio experience includes a two-year stint as news director of KZSC and time as the host of a contemporary soul music program. A graduate of UCSC, Thorn gained his degree in American Studies, with a focus on expressive cultures. Before entering UCSC, Thorn, a San Francisco native, spent four years studying theater at School of the Arts in that city. He currently writes and performs with the sketch comedy group Prank the Dean. In his free time, he enjoys listening to records and reading about 19th Century hoaxes.

The Sound of Young America is a public radio show about things that are awesome. Each week on the show, Jesse hosts in-depth discussions with personalities from the world of entertainment and the arts. The program is carried on five stations nationally and was the first public radio program west of the Mississippi to podcast.

## **When, and how, did you first hear about podcasting?**

**Jesse:** I have a family friend who's the type who read Wired in the early 90s. He has a master's degree in theater and runs big corporate websites when he's not designing miniature opera sets. He knew about my show and emailed me that I needed to get on board. So after a month of trying to figure out how to make an RSS feed (my website doesn't even have style sheets, for anyone to whom that means anything). Once I figured out what it was, I knew it was a perfect means of distribution for my show.

## **What was the first podcast you subscribed to, and why?**

**Jesse:** I think it may have been the Daily Source Code, though I unsubscribed shortly thereafter, completely baffled as to why anyone would listen to it. I'm not a tech guy, particularly, and a lot of the earliest podcasts were tech stuff. I'll tell you that when KCRW started podcasting, that was very exciting to me, because I've loved The Treatment for years, but only heard it occasionally online, as I was living in San Francisco, where it's not on the radio.

### **What do you look for in a podcast?**

Jesse: I'm mostly interested in things that are intelligent and things that are funny. And of course I listen to a lot of public radio shows, which sort of comes with the territory.

### **What puts you off a podcast?**

Jesse: I don't like podcasts that are being created for the benefit of their creators and not for the benefit of their audience. It's something I saw a lot in college radio, and it's always bothered me. Even if your niche is very small, your show is for the listeners, not for you.

### **What drove you, personally, to become a podcaster yourself?**

Jesse: Public radio is exceptionally risk-averse, so it's been really difficult for me to spread my show over the air. Podcasting gives me the chance to reach listeners directly. Since my audience tends to be young adults anyway, podcasting is the perfect way to get to people who might not even listen to their local public radio station, even if that station carried my show.

### **What motivates you, currently, to continue podcasting?**

Jesse: As a producer, I love the feeling of community in podcasting -- both among podcasters and between a podcaster and his or her listeners. Podcast listeners feel like they're part of the show, and that's wonderful for me. Folks who comment on the blog or email me every week are the greatest, and it really keeps me going when I wonder how long I can produce the show every week when I'm not really getting paid.

### **How have podcasts changed your attitude toward, and consumption of, traditional media?**

Jesse: I want to consume the media I want, not the media I'm willing to tolerate. I don't have cable anymore, I download TV shows from the internet. I listen to podcasts when I'm working at home. I'm excited to live in a world where I choose my entertainment, rather than having it choose me.

### **How have podcasts changed your life in a more general sense?**

Jesse: It would be difficult to overstate how important podcasting has been to my life, and to The Sound of Young America. My podcast is more popular than many of the most expensive public media programming around. Shows that are produced by teams of people and broadcast on hundreds of stations trail me in the podcasting arena. That's made public broadcasting folks really take notice of me and my show, and I couldn't be more grateful.

### **What, in relation to podcasting, gives you the most hope?**

Jesse: People are still getting on board. Getting the content you want, when you want it, is a big draw, even if it remains a hassle to do so. I think the technological barriers will fall, and more and more people will come to the light. And a rising tide raises all boats, or however that expression goes.

### **What do you see in the future for you, and your podcast?**

Jesse: A career? I hope?

Jesse Thorn can be found at:  
<http://www.maximumfun.org/>

Judy and Paul Hutchinson can be found at Total PodCastrophe  
<http://www.TotalPodCastrophe.com>



# Mark Hunter

March 20th marks the second anniversary of me plugging a cheap and crude little plastic mic into the soundcard of my PC, downloading Audacity, and while not having the first clue what to talk about, recording my first podcast. I already knew what it would be called; the tartanpodcast (note the lack of capital letter, people). The name was borne out of my previous experience with the residents of North America. I'd spent the four weeks or so before March 20th 2005 listening to podcasts created by North Americans, so I deduced that the audience would be mostly North American, too. And I knew that your typical Yank and...Canadian...laps up anything from the motherland. I wanted my podcast, created in Scotland, to stand out and be distinguishable from those created in Boston or Detroit. So I named it after something typically Scottish. Tartan.

Looking back on that decision with the benefit of two years' hindsight, two years being the equivalent of a decade in most other media, surely, I realise that the name is just a tad twee and probably doesn't reflect the ingredients of the podcast. But on the 20th of March 2005 I had no idea what the ingredients of the tartanpodcast were going to be. It was as if I'd gotten out the pots, pans and cooking utensils but had no idea what to cook.

I also had no idea how to make a podcast. I knew that I could record my voice and I knew how to put the resultant MP3 onto my little web server and I knew how to create a hyperlink to it. But how do I make sure that people get that MP3 file automatically, how do I make that MP3 a podcast? That's where Hilary came in.

Hilary was running a site called Podcrawl at the time. Via her site she'd review and comment on podcasts that had attracted her attention, and I was quick to alert her to the presence of the world's first, as I thought at the time, Scottish podcast. She was very complimentary but she pointed out that the RSS feed did not include the MP3 file. I was using Blogger to post the show notes, within which I'd included a link to the MP3. I thought that's all I needed to do, that somehow Blogger would understand my intention and somehow magically point the RSS feed to the file. Thankfully Hilary explained that I needed to put the link to the MP3 file in Blogger's Link field and piff paff poof I'd created a podcast!

Looking back on that time two years ago it's clear that having something to say - and somewhere online to store your recorded sayings - is not enough. Podcasting does require some technical know-how. Thankfully now, as then, podcasting has a helpful and passionate community spanning the globe, which means if you're puzzled as to how to start your own podcast, help is most certainly out there. And of course, Podcast User Magazine should be your first stop!





## John Buckley Interviews Podcamp Co-Founder



podcamp  
the new media UnConference

# Christopher Penn

CS: So Chris, how did the idea for PodCamp come about?

CP: PodCamp came around as an idea that Chris Brogan and I created in May of last year, after attending 'Barcamp Boston.' There's a group here in New England called 'New England Podcasting.' We'd been talking for a while about having some kind of expo or event because the first real US podcasting event was the 'Portable Media Expo in 2005' and that was heralded as the podcasting conference, but it was held on the west coast.

'Barcamp' is a localised event where developers and technology people get together and share what's cool and new and what they're working on. It's free to attend and very chaotic, as all X-Camp events are. For people in new media, going to a technical event was kind of tricky. I understood some of what was going on, but I know most folks who are into podcasting just go into mental shutdown. No slam against them, but very few people want to hear about Java compilers!

So we said, wouldn't it be cool to have an event like this just for new media? That flowed into this idea of a New England podcasting expo and the two things came together. Chris Brogan and I said, "okay, let's just do it and see what happens." We'd been talking about it in the group for a while. It was really iffy in the beginning; it was just the two of us. We started bringing on some really smart people. Guys like Steve Garfield, Brian Person and Adam Weiss (from the Museum of Science). The Museum sponsored the venue at Bunker Hill Community College, a couple of other folks jumped in and that was how it all got started.



CS: So how would you describe those early meetings?

CP: (Laughs) Well everything was done online, digitally. We had a Wiki that we all edited together, lots of emails back and forth and stuff like that. As an organisational team we never actually met face-to-face until the day of the event. We were actually very disorganised, but it worked well enough to get all the pieces lined up.

CS: Was there ever a moment when you thought it wasn't going to work?

CP: Yeah a couple! When the venue pricing and some of the costs came together. We originally planned for a five or six thousand dollar budget. That quickly went to ten thousand. We wondered how we were going to get people to donate \$10,000. In the end we ended up with about \$15,000 dollars!

CS: So how did you get from this idea of an event to the actual reality of putting it on?

CP: Everybody who was on the organising team had been to multiple conferences so we could see how to do it from a user perspective. We figured we could reverse-engineer it. Barcamp was a good model, because the folks behind that had actually published a guide showing how to put on a Barcamp. We took that and tweaked it a little bit.

CS: What were the biggest challenges?

CP: Getting the venue was one of the toughest things to do. In the end we got Bunker Hill. If you're a fan of American cinema you might know that the movie 'Good Will Hunting' was filmed there. It fitted nicely into the whole theme of brilliance that you don't discover. It was, to use a business word, kind of good synergy. So, venue was the hardest thing, followed by money. The two kind of go hand-in-hand.



CS: So was there any division of tasks within the organizing group?

CP: There was a little bit. Someone would take the lead on a thing but it wasn't compartmentalised. We were all looking for sponsors; venues, and attendees, all promoting it on our shows; it was definitely not specialized.

CS: How did the Boston event go?

CP: Very well, much better than we expected it to. With X-camp meet-ups, because it's free to attend there's no commitment on the part of attendees, so you generally have about 40 to 50 percent of the people who sign up actually showing up. We ended up with about 75%, which was fantastic.

We had between 250 to 300 people, we had five rooms plus the big room and we put up the schedule and told people "okay, whatever it is you want to present on, present it."

There are three rules of PodCamp; number one all content at PodCamp has to be Creative Commons licensed. Number two, the event must be free to attend and number three, and anyone must be free to speak. The whole concept of the 'unconference' was really encapsulated by Dave Winer, he basically said, the amount of information and intelligence in the audience is always greater than the amount that's on stage. So the unconference idea is that anyone can speak, and then we try and structure the session. We gave people a 45-minute block and said we'd like you to keep your presentation to about 20 minutes, so that there's a good 20 minutes of discussion time, where people can share ideas. If we just wanted talking heads we'd have had people submit video in advance.

CS: How would you sum up the two days?

CP: Energetically, it was one of the highest energy conferences I've ever been to. People were enthusiastic and they were excited to be there at the start of something. There was a sense that this was something different, something that the new-media community had ownership of. The presentations were unbelievably top-notch.

CS: So given the explosion of energy and events that the PodCamp concept has given birth to, what do you see it becoming and what do you

CP: What I hope will happen is exactly what has been happening. Other people in other cities are basically taking up the idea, running with it, doing it based on the three PodCamp rules, but they're doing it with their own style, their own flair and I think that is awesome. I can't wait to see more of it. Toronto's coming up at the end of this month [February], Atlanta's next month [March], New-York City in April, PodCamp Minnesota; Pod-Camp Kingston, PodCamp Mid-West, PodCamp Pittsburgh, PodCamp Philly, PodCampUK, all these places where people are saying "we want to have this new-media event in our area!" The one thing that I really can't say enough is that I want to see people take it and make it their own. They can put twists on it, as long as they obey the basic rules.



CS: Did you ever expect this kind of response?

CP: No, actually I expected us to be really tired and have fifty people to show up!

CS: Could you sum up what you've learned and tell us what PodCamp means to you now?

CP: Wow that's a lot! What I've learned is pretty well documented on the PodCamp Wiki and the PodCamp blog, especially when it came to the fundraising stuff, one of the crucial parts to make it all work.

Overall I learned that people, given the opportunity to get together and have a conversation will, because we're social creatures and as long as you have a forum in which they feel free to do so they will. I think that's awesome.

What it means to me now... It's almost a move-

ment, it's a way for people to gather and bring things together. Someone half-jokingly said that 2007 is the year in podcasting and new media that we all stop being friends, because money is coming into the space. Anytime you start introducing money you introduce a whole host of other things. Money introduces the idea of a zero-sum game, where for me to win, you have to lose and that's not true. I view PodCamp as being a force that can help keep that at bay a little bit, where people of similar minds and similar feelings, who are still enthusiastic about the space can gather and find ways to work together.

It's not a zero-sum game, there are still so many people in the world, who have never heard of a podcast, who don't listen to podcasts, who don't blog and have no interest in blogging but could be exposed to the new-media environment. Not only to be a consumer of it, but to be an active participant in it. I think PodCamp is a great way to get more people in and to help each other to share ideas, so that we can reach out and get more people into this world. Because that's going to benefit everybody and that's what PodCamp is, it's a chance to share ideas, get together and find out how we can grow this thing!

CS: Chris, thank you very much.

Visit the Podcamp wiki at <http://podcamp.pbwiki.com>

Chris's site and podcast at

<http://financialaidpodcast.com>

Listen to the full unedited interview at

<http://citizenscoop.co.uk>



Live Cam capture: Podcamp Toronto

# Searching for the Podcasting Scene in Germany



by Lance Anderson

## Pre-Ramble

Trying to understand the podcasting scene of another country has been much more of a challenge than I would have imagined. Tack on top of that a language barrier. Thank God, so many Germans are fluent in English, or I would have been up the proverbial creek.

Still I am learning bits and pieces, not only about what is happening in New Media in Germany, but also about a better understanding of my own scene in [Los Angeles](#), which ultimately was one of my goals.

## Meet Nicole Simon



When the editors first suggested that I do a story on Germany, we agreed that we should start with Nicole Simon of the podcast [Useful Sounds](#). From the U.S. perspective, Nicole seems to be the omnipresent German podcaster. Add to that the fact that Nicole is a forceful presence who is not shy to speak her mind, we knew she would be a great source for the story. "Although from the outside I am perceived as the female podcaster, it is indeed somebody else - Annik Rubens who runs [Schlaflos](#) in Muenchen which has had a daily running show with a pause and now is back."

Just as we had imagined, Nicole responded to my first email query, with a no-holds-barred summary of the German podcasting scene. "Grass roots in Germany is a bit problematic - I have no clue why they do not get their act together." Nicole and others told me that there are podcasting-specific [groups that meet](#), but it is not as common as it is in the United States. Nicole and the German podcasters that she put me in contact with seem to agree on one of the main reasons for this trend: the high quality of radio in Germany. According to Nicole, "One thing surely is that in Germany public radio is huge - and in opposite to American, really good. Most of the regular podcasting in Germany is pushed by them and it is really good material." Plus many of the early adopters of podcasting work in radio and other forms of new media. In Germany, podcasting is just one component of new media, while many in the U.S are just starting to think in those terms.

## Nicole's Circle of Friends and Colleagues

Nicole also put me in touch with several other prominent German podcasters, including the very well respected and pioneering podcaster [Thomas Wanhoff](#) (Wanhoffs Wunderbare Welt

der Wissenschaft ). Thomas answered my question about meeting other German podcasters in person this way: “Whenever it’s possible. I now live in Berlin (which hosted a PodCamp in January), where a lot of podcasters are. Munich seems to be a kind of podcast capital in Germany. There also [Podcaststammtische](#), irregular city-based meetings. I was there in Hannover; there will be one in Berlin later this year.”

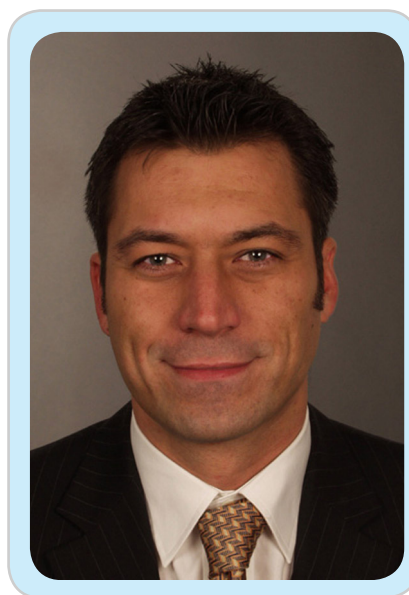
Thomas also suggested that “We need more high-quality content. Podcasts must focus on all the people, not only at podcasting audience.” [Daniel Fienes](#) (150 Fragen in Sachen Podcasts ) also stressed the need for a better quality of podcasts. He also had this to say about Thomas: “Behind the scenes Thomas Wanhoff is very important. As leader of the [Podcastverband](#), he is doing a great job: He is networking all the time just to make the podcast-scene better :-)”

**Markus Beckedahl** of [netzpolitik.org](#) (Blog and Podcasts) often meets other podcasters in person. “I live in Berlin, so there are big networks of people involved in digital media and you can meet podcasters or bloggers every day on events.” Markus also had a few ideas to help improve the community: “More broadband on the countryside outside the big cities and time. There is a growing community and like blogs in Germany it takes time. Germans are often more consumers of media than producers.”

**Fabio Bacigalupo** is the man behind the biggest directory in Germany. Recently he wrote a story about the history of German podcasting that I will quote directly: “There are around 13 podcast portals in Germany. The oldest and biggest one among them is [podcast.de](#) – Das deutschsprachige Podcast-Portal. The dmoz-like directory lists over 3.300 German podcasts with well over 150.000 shows which presents an estimated 98% of all German podcasts. The directory grows by 10 to 20 podcasts daily. [podcast.de](#) offers features like search, tagging, comments, online-listening, charts and a big community. It also hosts a [public wiki](#) for the podosphere in Germany. The site is funded privately. This is very common for all of the German podcast websites. They are either run by an individual or on a tight budget. The investors have not found their model in Germany, yet.”



**Alex Wunschel** ([Pimp My Brain](#)) has been at the forefront of understanding German podcast users with his ground-breaking [surveys](#) (Podcastumfrage). Alex thinks that it is “great that there’s some attention to the German podcast market. There’s a lot going on here.”



Also in the mix are the [CouchPotatoes](#). Their answer to my question about the most influential German podcasters was classic: “Thomas Wanhoff, Annik Rubens, The Couchpotatoes.” True or not, it reminded me of home. That is exactly how most U.S. podcasters would answer the same kind of question.

### Turning Over the Rock

Early on, I got a sense that all was not perfect in the German podcasting scene. The CouchPotatoes had this blunt comment about making the German podcast scene stronger: “Try to get rid of

the feud between the two major podcast organisations :)” This ‘feud’ maybe at the root of the problem. Of course I was also told to steer clear of this touchy subject, so I will once again defer Fabio’s story: “There are two non-commercial associations dedicated to podcasting in Germany. That is the Podcastverband and the [Podcast-club](#).... Both organisations promote podcasting to the public.”

### **Post-Ramble**

My research lead me to believe that the German podcasting scene is thriving. Obviously I was able only to scratch the surface, and I’m know there are many podcasts I missed. In the meantime you can check out [DerPodcaster](#), which is a podzine released monthly with an overview of the German podosphere and which, like PUM, is published in a PDF format.... But this much I do know, if you are in Germany and you are thinking of starting a podcast, go for it. The German podcast scene needs and wants your quality content.

Next month, I will virtually travel up North to meet my friends in the beautiful country of Canada.

Until then, Cheers, --Lance

Lance Anderson  
Podcast Producer  
LA Podcasters  
Verge of the Fringe

# Let's get naked!

*Or, the intimacy of the audio blog.*

by Richard Vobes

Every day I throw off my outer arrogant and opinionated skin and strip down to the inner core of my persona. Yes, I record an audio blog. This podcast is a very personal affair and not aimed as a wonderful piece of entertainment or exuberant show with music and effects to amuse and enthrall. It's just me, a recorder and a voice.

I call the blog The Naked Englishman because as the title suggests, I am English and I do away with all the normal clothing that swaddles a personality when facing the world.

The podcast is raw, and I don't hide anything. It gives a daily insight into my life. It reveals my innermost thoughts and wishes, my worries and self-doubts. It doesn't pull any punches. The breakup of my marriage is discussed, the rejection from a lover painfully retold and anticipation of new ideas and projects explored. Some days it is dull, uninspired and just plain boring, the ramblings of a forty-something man in the South of England going about his life doing normal things, the same sort of things that many other men in their mid life do. Other times it's short, hastily recorded with subjects not fully explored and teasingly left in mid air. Yet, on occasion, something very personal happens, some thing individual to me, and I react. Somewhere in the bland routine of the norm, the unexpected happens. A hotel in Brighton is mentioned and a sordid sexual encounter with a stranger revealed or tears pour as the car is stopped somewhere in the Peak District and a disastrous relationship of lost love comes flooding back to the audio blogger and he is for some reason compelled to express his harrowing emotions.

But the real question is why do this and so publicly? And that is a hard thing to properly answer, for I am not sure I even know. The iRiver that I use to record my Naked Englishman show has become my best buddy, someone who listens and doesn't answer back. It offers no solutions to problems, no advice or platitudes. It just listens and records my voice. It allows me to work through my thoughts and get the burden of life off my chest and I actually feel better for it.

Curiously, I don't listen to it back. I save the file, upload and place it on the server and let it be discovered by the subscribed audience or anyone who stumbles across the website.

I don't ask for feedback from this show (or, very rarely). It's not for debate. It's just a recording of what is and that's it. Like it or leave it. It's a record of a guy in the UK who is struggling against the challenges that life throws in front of him.

One of the hardest things to counter is the fact that, like many blogs or personal journals written online or published, I may well talk about people I meet and what I think of them. I am aware that of course some of these very same people actually listen to the podcast. I believe in 'truth' and have considered this for a while. If I mention a person then I should still tell the truth of my feelings towards that person in the audio blog and not pretend or fake the entry. There was an occasion when I was staying at a friend's house and I was a guest on their podcast show. After the event, I stood outside the house and revealed in a entry of the NE how disappointed I was with the interview and felt how troubled I was with the treatment I had received from that interview. I knew the host in question would listen to the audio blog and may be hurt by my honest remarks, but I also felt that he would know I didn't mean him



any personal harm or disloyalty nor was I attacking him personally. It is a tightrope the audio blogger has to walk.

I have discovered other audio blogs out there in the podosphere and while I haven't listened to them all, I haven't discovered one quite as revealing as my own. That may not be a bad thing, perhaps there are things that really should be kept to oneself, I don't know.

The purpose of writing this article is not really about self promotion, but to encourage others to give it a try. People are fascinated by people, and there is nothing more absorbing than the inner working of another person's mind. The way that an audio blog differs from the written journal entry is the fact that nothing is scripted and the audio blogger can just let loose his stream of consciousness and random thoughts, digressing and meandering as much as he likes. We can hear the brain cogs churning as he or she tries to explain some times the most simplistic piece of logic. We can tune into the real person and snatch glimpses of a life we thought we knew and be surprised by it.

Stripped bare of music and bedding tracks, sound effects and stupid production sweepers, the audio blog can be recorded anywhere. I sometimes go for a walk along the seafront in Worthing, where I live. Other times I am in my studio or office. On occasions I have rambled home truths from my bed or even while running the bath. Frequently you can catch me making a cup of coffee at the same time, and as John Buckley mentioned in his audio blog when he did the same, 'How very Richard Vobes of me'.

Try it, dear podcaster. Daily, weekly or as and when you can be bothered-ly. Dare you let the world glimpse the inside of your mind? And if you do start one, let PUM know so they can promote it, too!

The NE can be found at [www.NakedEnglishman.co.uk](http://www.NakedEnglishman.co.uk)

Richard Vobes

### **Additional: Simon Toon**

I recorded my first audioblog almost unintentionally, on the morning after the London Bombings on 7/7/05. It was played on BBC radio several times, and the quality of the reaction to that recording was so great that it has spurred me on to experiment with audioblogging on and off ever since (mostly off, as I usually think I have nothing of interest to say). It wasn't until September 2006 that I experienced the epiphany of a different kind of audioblogging - not the unidirectional, one-to-many type of audioblogging that The Naked Englishman exemplifies so beautifully, but a kind of symmetric, peer-to-peer audioblogging where about 80% of the listeners are audioblogging, too. This seems to lead to a really rich omnidirectional communication, where speakers really listen, and everyone gets to finish what they're saying without interruption. It's better than a conversation in a coffee bar with some really good friends. I don't want hundreds of listeners to my audioblog - I get that with Slam Idol. For my audioblog, I much prefer to have half a dozen listeners who are my peers.



# Not everyone has an iPod. Me and my Juice.

by Rowland Cutler

There was a survey last year stating that most people listen to podcasts on their desktop computers rather than on their MP3 players. iPods have simple syncing tasks to get podcasts from computer to iPod, but what about those people who do not have an iPod? Last year over 4 million flash based MP3 players were sold. I noticed even at Christmas last year a well-known supermarket was selling 256MB MP3 players for under a tenner.

This article is to help you get your favorite podcasts out of the computer and into your non-iPod. I will explain how I get my downloaded podcasts from the computer to my player for my own delight, using Juice - still one of the most popular podcast catchers - and a batch file. I know there are probably dozens of other ways to do this, but for me this has been the easiest and cleanest.

I have been using Windows for a long while, and Juice since its inception. (It was previously called iPodder, but Apple did not like that, so it was renamed.) Juice is available at <http://www.juicereceiver.com>. I'm not going to explain how to add feeds to the program. I am, however, going to explain some of the advanced functions of Juice, scripting and how to 'automatically' get those podcasts to your player, using the minimum of fuss and cost.

## Configuring Juice

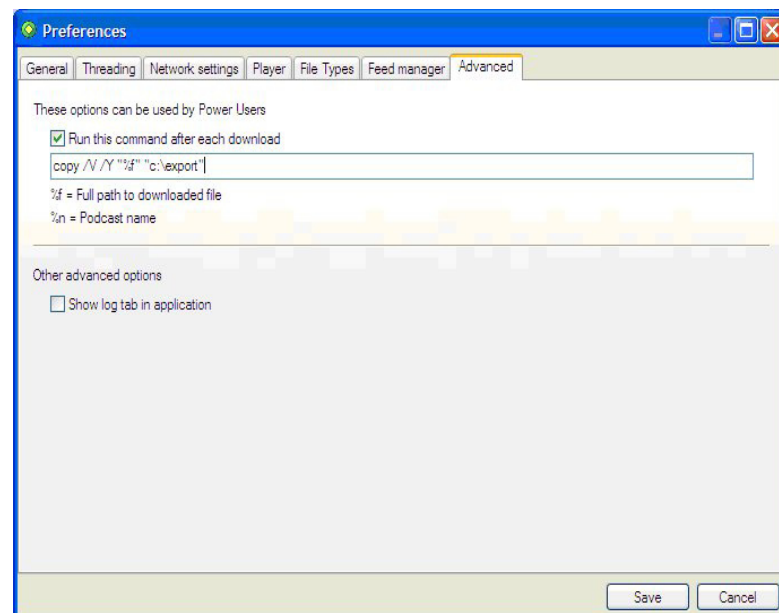
Juice downloads each podcast episode and puts it into a folder called {podcast name}, usually someplace such as

C:\Documents and Settings\Username\My Documents\My Received Podcasts

depending on how your MP3 player behaves, and believe me all the ones I've had, have behaved differently. I like to have the podcasts stored in date order on my player, so in the order they download in Juice, that's how I want it on my player.

## Merging Podcasts into one Directory

Juice has an advanced tab in options. After each podcast episode is downloaded I've set up a command to copy each show to a different folder. Juice has a couple of variables you can use to do this, the main one is %f – which is the full path and filename of the episode.



So the command is

Move "%f" "C:\export"

This moves the file to my merge folder c:\export.

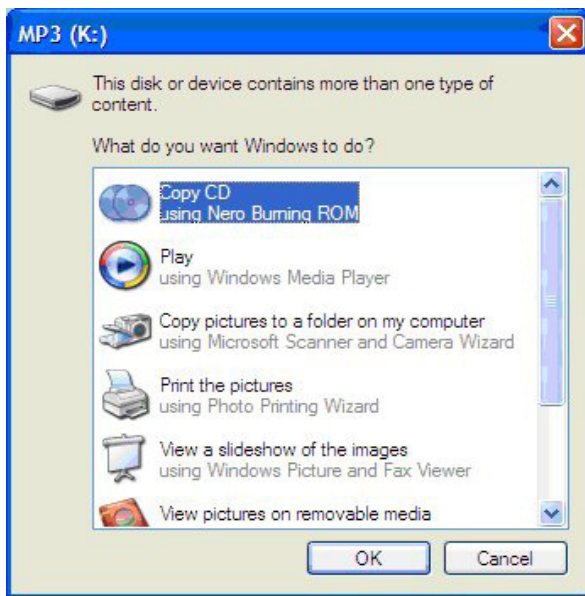
In the export folder all the podcasts from each of the different shows appears in one place.

## Configuring my MP3 player

There is a little work to be done on your MP3 player too: a couple of little files which can be opened and modified by using notepad or the text editor of your choice. These are:

### Autorun

Every time I plug in my 2GB player it becomes a disk drive in 'My Computer'. Usually a little window will appear:



This is part of the Autorun feature of Windows. This is not really very exciting, and usually people just cancel this off or go to explore the drive. However, with just two little files kept on the player, it can do a lot more.

This window can be changed by using a file called autorun.inf, which should be stored in the root folder of your MP3 player. Autorun.inf is the primary instruction file associated with the Autorun function.

Autorun.inf :

```
[autorun]
action=Download podcasts
open=upload.bat
includeRuntimeComponents=True
```

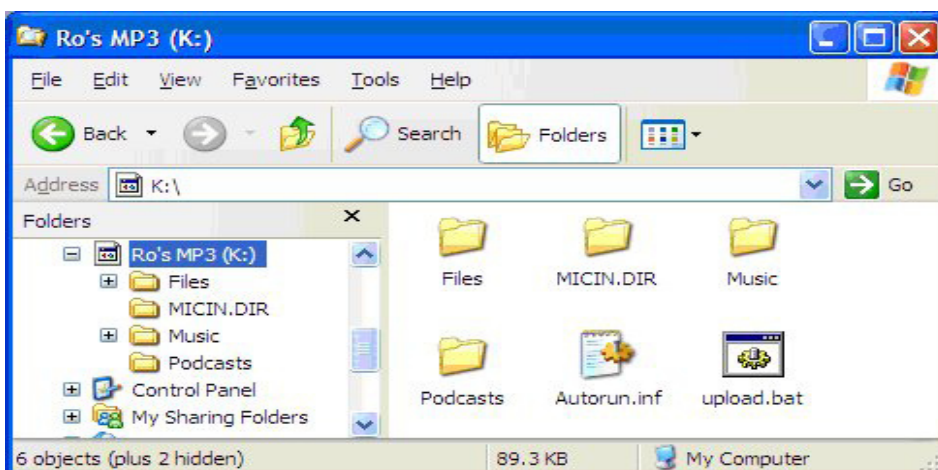
The next time the device is plugged back in, Windows will pop up a window that looks like this:



Giving you that extra option, it makes it easier to just click on that and get your latest files.

### Upload.bat

Upload.bat is a command line script. For people who do not know scripts, then do not worry. Windows has a command line function; some people might remember MS-DOS before the advent of Windows Desktop. A batchfile script runs a list of commands one by one. This one does the copying from the computer to the MP3 player, and of course you need this for it all to work..



Now that I have my podcasts in my export folder – I want them copied over in date order (oldest first) to the player into a folder called Podcasts, keeping them separate from the others things I have on the player.

Upload.bat:

```
@echo off
cls
::
::variables::
set dest=\podcasts
set source="c:\export"
::
:start
Echo Source      : %source%
Echo Destination : %dest%
for /f "delims=" %%a in ('dir %source%\*.mp3 /b /od /s ') do (
    Echo File      : %%%a
    copy /V /Y "%%a" "%dest%"
    del "%%a"
)
:end
Echo ...
Echo Finished
ping localhost > nul
::End
```

The file sets two variables: destination and source.

As the file is run from the player, you do not need to put in a drive letter, so my destination is \podcasts on the player. Windows sometimes changed the drive letter from time to time depending on what you have plugged into it in the past, so it's handy to have it this way.

The source is the export folder on the computer, as I explained when configuring Juice. I only want MP3 files to be copied over to my player, so you can see from the code that it lists in date order only the files with the MP3 extension and copies each to the player, verifying and overwriting as it goes, then deletes it from the export directory, and then repeats this operation until there are no more MP3 files left. This can always be changed, of course, to suit your needs, by using notepad on your computer to make the relevant alterations.

```
C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe
Source      : "c:\export"
Destination : \podcasts
File        : c:\export\TWiT0086H.mp3
             1 file(s) copied.
Finished
```

With the job complete, the command line window will disappear, and it's over. The player can be removed and listened to at your leisure.

Using this with other podcast catchers

Using the same two files on your player, you can always change the source location in the upload.bat file to where your catcher downloads the files. It's compatible with pretty much any catcher you can download to your Windows machine, including iTunes. Wherever you set your catcher to download the episodes, make a change accordingly in the upload.bat file, easily changeable using notepad or wordpad.

### Expanding on a theme

There are a lot of resources in the web to help you get the most out of your scripting in Windows. The autorun.inf file has a number of other options, such as 'icon' and 'label', which you can set to whatever you want, so your MP3 player can have its own icon and name.

The Juice advance command can be used to run a script each time rather than just a small command to do things to the specific episode file before it's uploaded using the script on the MP3 player, and the upload.bat can be modified to upload the files in a lot of different ways. The options are endless. Enjoy.

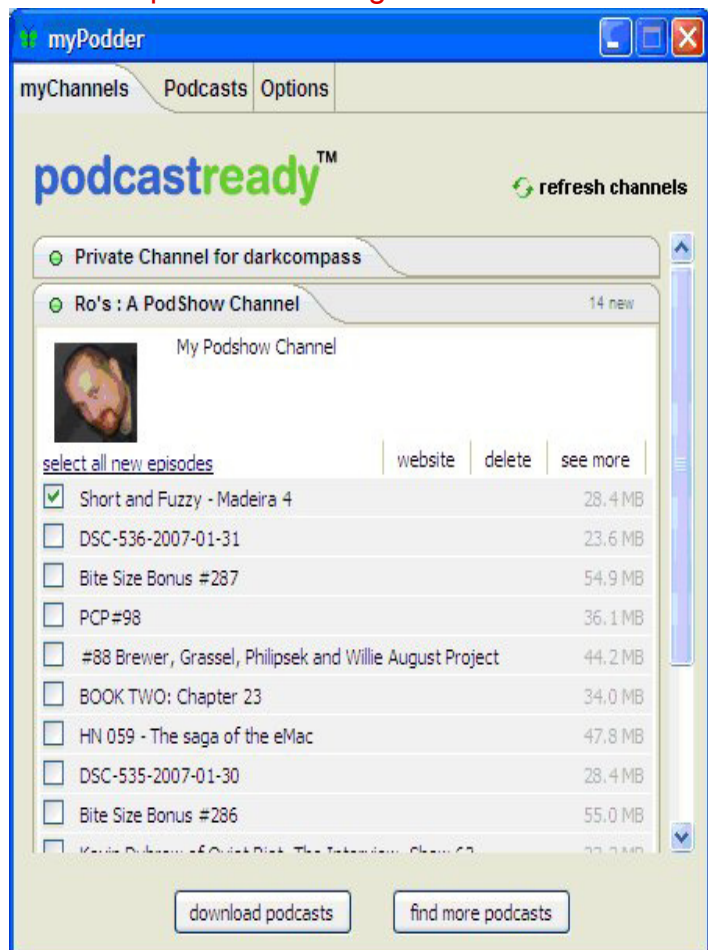
### And now, something completely different

Mypodder

No need for my scripts here, Podcastready.com has produced a podcatcher that can be run directly from your flash-based player and it's believed that iRiver are planning to have this program prebuilt into their future players.

LINE

It's called mypodder. Using Podcastready's service, subscribe to podcasts. When you run the mypodder program, it checks for new content which then can be downloaded and saved on your player.



## About Rowland Cutler

Rowland has been an IT guy for 17 years, ranging from customer support to designing automated telescope control systems on top of mountains using a multitude of operating systems. He's been a podcaster since December 2004 and is a listener of countless podcasts.

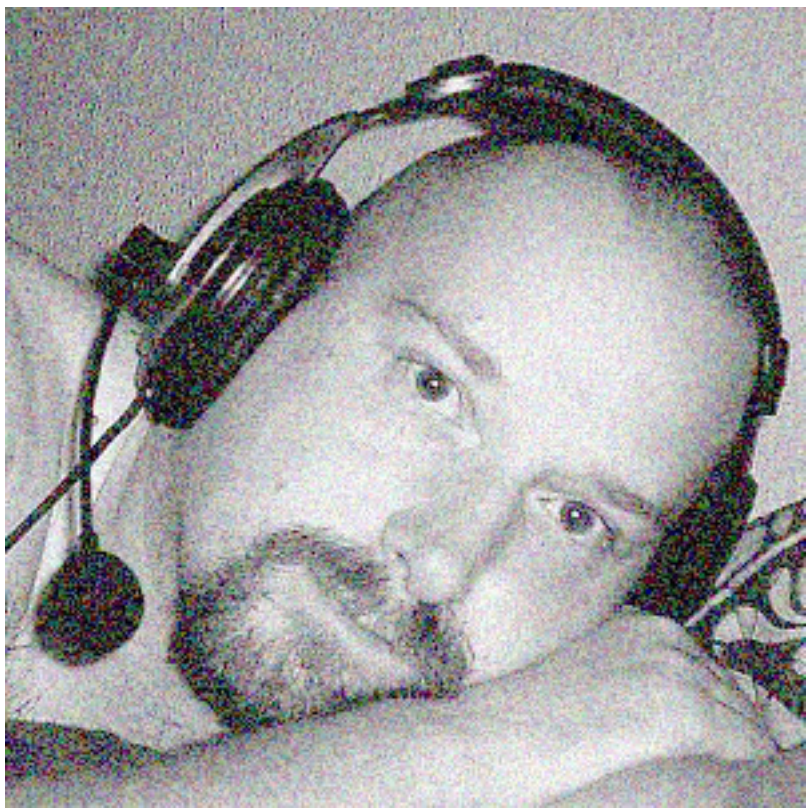
<http://www.darkcompass.com>  
<http://rowley.btpodshow.com>  
<http://darkcompass.btpodshow.com>  
<http://myspace.com/darkcompass>  
Rowland@darkcompass.com

**Pros:** It's all on your player, and it can be run as soon as you plug it in and hit the autorun option (it's supplied with its own autorun.inf file). It works with Windows, Mac and Linux, too, so you can use almost any computer you can plug it into without leaving a mess behind - ideal for internet cafes or your mate's computer.

**Cons:** 15MB in size, which does not seem much but is a big overhead for any player with less than 512MB.

### LINE

No scheduling. My desktop computer is always on, and always on the net, so I can schedule Juice to download the podcasts in the middle of the night and I just upload them in the morning using the script. Mypodder does not have this function; it can only download when a button is pressed and the player is plugged in. This might not be a problem for some; if you have only a couple of podcasts to download and have a fast connection a quick ten-minute plug-in to get the latest is fine.



# Set Yourself Free!

Gary Dring looks at the benefits of podcast experimentation and freedom over short-term financial gain.



I've just finished reading the autobiography of one of my heroes, the great Eric Sykes. As well as being incredibly talented, Mr Sykes has also been very fortunate during his career to be able to realise his comedic visions on his own terms, the most well-known of these being his classic silent movie 'The Plank', in which he starred as well as wrote and directed.

This notion of being able to fully realise a creative vision is a rare privilege in professional entertainment. To have complete control of the whole process from the formation of an idea through to delivery of it to the audience is the stuff of dreams. Most radio presenters would relish the opportunity to do their own thing on-air for an hour, without worrying about station IDs and the computerised play list. But show me a programme controller – especially from a commercial station – who's willing to allow that kind of freedom, and I'll quite eagerly devour my own piece of headgear.

As someone whose idea of heaven is to take a comedic idea and run with it until I get a stitch, there are for me only two possible ways to deliver an idea to an audience without relinquishing creative control.

The first is to write a script and deliver it myself, on stage, to an audience as a stand-up comedian. It's one of the most raw, most direct routes to an audience, and it is fantastically rewarding. It's also pant-wettingly frightening and demands a huge amount of talent and – to put it crudely – balls to do well. I've done it just once – at a student union bar in Birmingham – so I know what I'm talking about. Trust me, it's more difficult than it looks.

The second is podcasting (and thank goodness for that, otherwise there'd be very little point in this article being here...)

Podcasting is, for me, the ideal medium for delivering comedy.

I have complete creative control over the material and the way it's delivered. I gain an audience who can't throw things at me. People who like me sometimes say encouraging things, and people who don't just leave me to get on with it. It's a situation where everyone wins.

It's also incredibly motivating for me as a writer. Without podcasting, the only reward for my scripting efforts would be the inevitable stream of rejection letters, continuing in this vein until a kindly producer decides I am worth taking a risk on. With podcasting, the rejection letters still come; they just don't seem to matter as much.

I am also free to experiment. On the first edition of 'Clever Little Pod', I declared that it would be 'an experimental vehicle' for my comedy ideas. Twenty-four shows later, I am still experimenting, but thankfully the listeners don't seem to mind. I don't have the most popular show in the world, but it more than fulfills its brief for me; I'm learning my craft as I go along.

I believe that the level of control afforded by podcasting is often taken for granted by those who are keen to monetise their productions. We would all like to be able to spend our days doing what we enjoy while getting paid for it, but surely it's a little naïve to expect to achieve this in an unaltered form without some kind of creative compromise.

Once you accept your payment, there is an expectation to be fulfilled, and you have to accept that creative decisions are also business decisions. Any change in the product, any application of new ideas, of different creative expression that moves away from the original agreement will be judged by the stakeholders. This means that consideration of the stakeholders' views will always feature in some way in the creative process. If you can live with that, there's no problem, but many people do find it difficult.

For me, the opportunity to monetise comes not from the podcast itself, but from the showcasing opportunity it brings. Rather than 'sell out' with my flagship show (and put up with any the creative restriction this may bring), I can capitalise on the exposure by proposing or creating further revenue-generating projects.

This means I retain the freedom to experiment on the original; any commissions gained carry their own set of expectations, and my flagship show can still rumble along happily in the background, unchanged and unrestricted.

So before you jump onto the money carousel, have a long hard think about what you might lose as well as gain. Podcasting is that rare gift; an opportunity to communicate with the world on our own terms. That's definitely a gift worth keeping.

Gary Dring

<http://www.cleverlittlepod.com>



# Talking Voices

'Talking Voices' describe themselves as "the UK's first dedicated podcast agency, offering unrivalled consultancy and production services." Citizen Scoop popped round for a virtual chat with Managing Director Janet Parkinson and the rest of the creative team; this is what they had to say for themselves!

## What is Talking Voices?

**Janet:** Based in Covent Garden, Central London, Talking Voices was created by a group of likeminded people - all brought together through podcasting - but each one of us from different industry backgrounds. We could see that podcasting encompassed a huge range of potentials - from promotion of podcasters within media through to the production of podcasts for companies and further into online marketing services and PR all which complement podcast production. Talking Voices provides all these services under one roof.

## Why did you decide to start a Podcast Production Company?

**Janet:** Well, it's not just a production company! We have many spokes to the wheel! That's what makes us different. We all have a passion for podcasting -it encompasses various aspects we have always individually enjoyed from our previous industry roles - continual creation of new ideas for our clients, producing content to high standards, developing new concepts & formulating ideas, working within hi-tech media and being involved in the online world of marketing and social media. And of course it's varied - it keeps us on our toes - we all thrive on challenges. (that doesn't answer the question really though...)

**Dean:** A few things were responsible for us initiating Talking Voices. In 2006 podcasting grew up, didn't it, finally escaping geekdom! Podcasting was being continually promoted by the BBC as part of it's "experiment" and so it was no longer a domain of the few. In April Chris Vallance invited a bunch of us to Broadcasting House and it was there that I met Janet. I also heard Paul Pinfield utter the immortal line that if his florist wanted to know about podcasts, then he knew there was business to be done in the field, which aside from making me laugh showed me that interest in the podcast phenomenon was every bit as widespread among so-called "normal" people as I suspected.

Mark Crook and I were producing podcasts for ourselves since 2004, and we started producing John Cleese's podcast in 2005, so we were already convinced; but in terms of accessing a growing market, we knew we needed to be a bigger organisation, so we decided to put our podcasting business into a new company and see who else we could work with. Towards the end of 2006, we were fielding many, many enquiries and commercial leads, which we couldn't have followed up if we stayed the size we were. I hate to turn away work.... Having met Janet in April, as I got to know her a bit I realised that here was a woman with great drive, and with the experience and organisational skills we needed, with whom

we could really make things happen.

### **Can you tell us about the team and what do they bring to the organisation?**

**Janet:** Dean and Mark Crook have been into on-line media since its very beginning producing for companies within the media and music industries and publishing their own creative work. Mark Hunter is of course one of the widest acclaimed podcasters in the UK so is an expert in the podcasting field. I managed a London agency which included voice over services for many years selling into all industry sectors and I was involved in emarketing, while Paul Carey is well known within PR and the music business. Amir Amirani is a highly acclaimed television and radio producer for the BBC. It's a pretty interesting mix! But our common thread is that we all thrive on challenges and have a passion for creativity - from both the production and business angles.

### **Can you tell us about the companies' creative philosophy?**

**Dean:** Yes... our philosophy is, be creative! Honestly, I'm not sure we have one of those - we have several. Talking Voices is an agency, which means that we provide complete solutions - whatever our clients need, to the best of our ability. That includes being creative in project and marketing terms, but also in business - this is a brand new area, though it relates to quite a few established industries, there is no one dominating paradigm to follow as yet. Are we in electronic publishing, or are we broadcast? (line drop)

Actually podcasting is a genuinely new hybrid, both and neither, and so, business models vary from company to company, even deal to deal. Maybe be the one philosophy we do have is to remain open-minded and flexible in our approach to what we do.

### **What are you currently working on?**

**Dean:** Metropolis Studios. <http://metropolispodcast.co.uk>. A nice project, which has already benefited the band and the studio. Metropolis are the biggest studio group in Europe and trade all over the world. We are doing a lot more with them in 2007. We are also setting up seminars to introduce companies to podcasting - expertise is something we can trade, and the more knowl-

edge there is, the better for everyone involved...

**Janet:** Do we have to give away all our secrets!?

**Mark Hunter:** I've been working with a major UK cancer research charity, we're in pre-production on a monthly podcast for them. I've also provided consultation for the people behind Keep Scotland Beautiful and I'm an associate of Cal- edonian University's Spoken Word department, who are very enthusiastic about how podcasting can impact on traditional learning environments.

### **What's your take on the current state of the UK podcast scene?**

**Mark Hunter:** There's a small, vocal community surrounding a couple of online forums, but the actuality is much bigger and more diverse than a lot of us realise.

**Dean:** Flux. **Janet:** Let the community spirit reign!

### **What are your hopes for your company and podcasting in general?**

**Dean:** Success in other media as well as pod- casting. Podcasting in general: for it to become a recognised OLYMPIC sport!

### **Can you sum up in a few words what Talking Voices is all about?**

**Dean:** Talking Voices starts with the assumption that we have valuable knowledge, skills and ideas to offer, and it puts that value into a meaningful business context. It's about taking the energy of the podcasting scene into real life... It's about taking risks that need to be taken. It's a prometh- ean enterprise.

More about Talking Voices Ltd can be found at [www.talkingvoices.com](http://www.talkingvoices.com)

## International Podcast Group - A Worldwide Call



UK Podcasters Association is the single biggest non-commercial grouping in the UK. We have formed affiliations with the Irish PodRepBod and the German Podcastverband, and among us we have set up the International Podcast Group, <http://www.internationalpodcastgroup.org/> an umbrella group for existing podcast groups.

Last year, UKPA worked successfully with many other podcast-concerned groups and individuals and the Electronic Frontier Foundation to lobby the World Intellectual Property Organisation so that podcasting did not fall foul of the revised Broadcast Treaty. This showed us that a concerted international voice was definitely needed.

Our main concern at this stage is to let groups in first and then see what kind of a 'constitution' we all want, rather than do a typical top-down, fait accompli-style set up. We're going for it now in anticipation of the next WIPO campaign (whatever it turns out to be) at a time when there are no urgent and pressing demands upon us.

Many groups are organised apart from along national lines - in the USA there are many local groups, other groups are organised around language, or interest areas, and so we are open to all groups. The cost of belonging is nil, and the benefits are ultimately up to the members to determine; but we are looking towards making friends internationally, pooling information and resources, and coordinating whenever issues which concern us all raise their head.

Our first aim is to form a collective global voice, democratically run, for the benefit of podcasters. If your group is interested to be a member, we'd be glad for your involvement and input.

Please email [contact@internationalpodcastgroup.org](mailto:contact@internationalpodcastgroup.org)

Sincerely,

Dean Whitbread, UKPA (United Kingdom), Brian Greene, PodRepBod (Ireland), Thomas Wanhoff, Podcastverband (Germany)



# Next Issue April 1



Now received in 114 countries

We here at PUM welcome letters and suggestions and also invite submissions for inclusion in the magazine. If you have a story to tell, an insight or even advice for the podcaster or listener why not email it now at:

[submissions@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:submissions@podcastusermagazine.com)

BACK PAGE

## INSTRUCTIONS:

The easiest multimedia subscription software you'll ever use

### Step 1: Download

### Step 2: Subscribe



### Step 3: Listen



Free Download at [www.winpodder.com](http://www.winpodder.com)



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution - Non Commercial - ShareAlike 2.0 England and Wales License.

To view a copy of this license visit  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/uk/>  
or send a letter to Creative Commons, 543 Howard Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA