

podcast user magazine

Issue 15 April 2007

Quittin' the day job...

This month:

- Hayden Black
of Goodnight Burbank
- Scott Williams of
The Nightnurse Show
- OCP: One Click Players
- Orange County Podcasters

PLUS

Shownotes & RSS - should we ditch them?

It's Keith and the Girl!

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



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

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

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Linda Mills, Janet Parkinson

Jimmy Hastell & Simon Toon

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This month's cover by Mark Hunter is from an original picture by Matthew Bray of Truth Films/Keith and the Girl

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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.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this the fifteenth edition of PUM. We have been fortunate enough to have been able to interview some of the 'names' in the podcasting world, and this month is no exception, as our cover picture shows. Read Mark Hunter's interview with the one and only (or is that two and only?) Keith and the Girl. And it doesn't stop there, oh no. Lance Anderson catches up with the Orange County Podcasters, whilst guest writer Douglas Welch profiles Hayden Black from Goodnight Burbank. In Inside the Podcasters' Studio we throw some questions at Scott Williams from The Night Nurse Show, care of Paul and Judy Hutchinson, and that's just a taster.

The often outspoken and to-the-point Richard Vobes takes a critical look at the need (or not) for RSS, and I have to admit a desire to make life a little simpler for the first time listeners, too. Grant Mason starts to question the validity of show notes, whilst Colin Meeks burns the torch for the indie brigade, and rightly so.

What we have always enjoyed about our magazine is the ability for you to say just what you think, and we really do invite you to take part. Your opinion is of value; we might not agree with it, but we'll give you the opportunity to put it in print. For us it is important to cover the widest spectrum of the podcasting world, and the magazine is moulded around this very aspect. Those that have followed us from issue one will have seen the changes.

PUM is totally independent, written by podcasters and readers for no reward other than being able to spread the word and put a friendly face on a perhaps geeky subject.

So, what does the future hold for us? Reports suggest an 18% increase in podcasting. Certainly a surge has been seen in the business and commercial world, independent music is going from strength to strength (thanks in part to the RIAA!) and affordable technology is now appearing in the home. People are discovering that there's a lot more to life than force-fed radio; people have a voice, and they are starting to use it.

Jimmy Hastell



Podango

<http://www.podango.com>

Scott Bourne, President of Podango Productions, has announced that they are opening a state-of-the-art, professional production studio “decked out with the best high-definition video and broadcast-quality audio equipment available today. ... We’ll be opening up part of our production facility to all podcasters every Friday as part of our Free Friday program. Use of our audio production suite will be free of charge. Access will be by appointment only and on a first-come, first-served basis....We’ll have more details later. BSW and Aphex have helped us to put together a great facility and we can’t wait to show it off.” Check out - <http://www.podcastingtricks.com/2007/03/22/743/#more-743>



PODCAMP NYC

Podcamp New York City - April 6 & 7, 2007

PodCamp NYC has moved to a new venue! Due to the increase in scope and audience of the event, the venue has changed. Pod-Camp NYC will now be at: The New Yorker Hotel (481 8th Avenue at 34th St). The Friday and Saturday night gatherings are still at Slate (54 West 21st Street) <http://www.podcampnyc.org>

Street Stories: Podcasting from the Squad Car

“In the Street Stories Podcast, real police officers tell real stories about their work.” If you’re a fan of ‘police-story television’, or if you just want a view of law enforcement that doesn’t make it into the popular press, check out Street Stories, a new podcast from the Tulsa Police Department. Informative and entertaining, Street Stories is yet another example of the limitless subject matter for podcasting.

www.tulsapolice.org/podcast.html

Where’s Ewan?

When the person who helps you expand your podcast to an extra day then moves to a place where there’s only dial-up internet, you have to come up with a way to fill that day’s show with music. Ewan Spence, host of The Rock Show on The Podcast Network, solved just that problem with TPN Rock Takeover, available on Mondays at <http://rock.thepodcastnetwork.com>. Ewan’s serving up lemonade treats each Monday by showcasing hosts who are active as podcasters or bloggers or new-media folks but who have not yet tried their hand at a rock music show. The identity of Monday’s host is kept secret until the show is ready for download, and so far it’s been a wild mix of genres, personalities, and opinions. Who’s next?

Olympus DS 40

In next month’s edition we have a full field test of the Olympus DS 40. Read and hear how Phil and Mike of the Brit and Yankee put it through its paces at a beer fest in Chicago.

The **Podcast Nation** directory is a beautifully simple 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**.

So if you are busy around the house, with all those mundane chores or travelling back from a hectic day at work, tap into

Podcast Nation

for some seriously wonderful entertainment

www.podcastnation.co.uk

Podcast Peer Awards

The winners of the second round of the Podcast Peer Awards have been announced: Ask A Ninja took home two of the most prestigious awards: Favorite Video Podcast, and Best Comedy Video. The podcast novel 7th Son, was honored as the Best Paudiobook. The award for Best Video Production went to Tiki Bar TV. Dan Klass's The Bitterest Pill won the Best Audioblog award. The Radio Adventures of Dr. Floyd, which won in the Family Friendly category last round, was honored again, this time with a Best Fiction trophy.

The Podcast Peer Awards are the only podcasting awards where the winners are chosen solely by other podcasters. There are two rounds a year, with different categories for each round. Over 500 podcasters selected the finalists, and then the winners, using a unique voting system that lets shows with small audiences compete with popular shows and makes cheating virtually impossible. This round included the categories Best Parenting Podcast, which was won by Manic Mommies. The popular Grammar Girl won Best Education Podcast. The Couplecast category was won by newcomers The Wicked Good Podcast, and the Newbee award went to Desperate Husbands. Love Long and Prosper was declared the best Fan cast, and Little Red's Writing Hood won in the Poetry Category.

A complete listing of the winners and finalists, along with links to their podcasts, is available at <http://www.podcastpeers.org/>

Review Roulette



Looking for some interesting podcasts to add to your subscriptions list? Well, you've come to the right place. Most podcast reviewers take great care in choosing the right podcasts to review, but that can be a little restrictive. So, here at the Review Roulette team we take no care at all! We just randomly choose podcasts from Podcast Alley or Podcast Pickle, and as long as they haven't podfaded, then we listen to them, no matter how good or awful they are. That way, we hope to find for you some unexpected gems! This month, lady luck plucked for us a typically mixed bag...

This month's podcasts were reviewed by:
Bernadette from podcastfanatic.com
Linda Mills, Marilyn Madsen, Simon Toon
and Paul Nicholls.

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

Bandana Blues

Beardo Is Back from The Boat!!!

BANDANA BLUES

<http://www.bandanablues.com>

I found the website and chased my tail around a little to find the podcast - we've mentioned at PUM that it's always a good idea to have an automatic player or prominent player available right at the top of the page. Without clicking around too much I found the podcasts easily enough and a podtrac player.

What struck me immediately was the obvious care that "Beardo" and "Spinner"; the hosts weaved into the programme. The music was superb and I was genuinely hooked and tuned into listening to the show straight away. It was wonderful for me to hear guys talk with passion about music they'd obviously researched and cared about - that's what podcasting is all about.

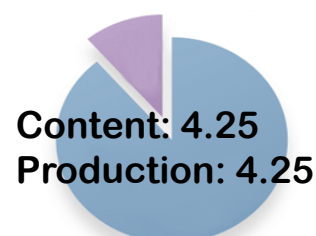
It was pleasing to hear a good professional audio though the only tiny criticism I have is the reverb on the producers voices, just a tad too much for me. Close your eyes and Beardo could well have been producing the show from the inner sanctum of St.Paul's cathedral.

This is a brilliant drive time show - if you've an hour's drive, and you love good music, crank up the volume, sit back and enjoy it. I did and I loved it. Bandana Blues certainly has another subscribed listener.

Bernadette says:

There's 3500 songs on my iPod and, until now, not one of 'em could remotely have been labelled country or blues or anything in a similar genre. However I loved the music on this podcast so much that I am busily tracking down the songs I need to own. Which brings me to my only gripe about the show: there is a decided lack of show notes, which means the only place to access the names of artists and songs is while listening - which is a bit of a nuisance.

Text by Paul Nicholls



The Engaging Brand blog



The Engaging Brand

<http://theengagingbrand.typepad.com>

Review
Roulette

The Engaging Brand, hosted by self-professed Business Coach and Motivational Speaker Anna Farmery, is dedicated to helping people develop personal branding skills in the workplace. In particular Anna is concerned with assisting managers to develop leadership skills that attract, retain and inspire good workers. Episodes generally run around 25 minutes and each one contains an interview with a coach, author or business leader as well as some thoughts from Anna.

Anyone who has spent any part of the last five years in the corporate world and/or undertaking a single unit of an MBA will be familiar with the leadership and management themes of this podcast. That's not necessarily a bad thing because there are undoubtedly many people for whom those themes make brand new listening. However, I'll wager those ideas won't be fresh to anyone listening to this show for long. I listened to four randomly selected episodes and heard the same buzz words and phrases repeated over and over by Anna and her guests. While Anna seemed to find this confluence of message wonderfully serendipitous I found it predictable and vaguely disturbing. I understand that repetition can be a basis for learning, but this show's constantly repeated urging for listeners to 'be authentic' reminded me of the awful occasion when a colleague duped me into attending a buy-in session for one of those pyramid selling schemes we all know and dread.

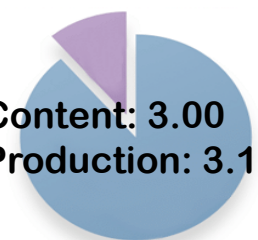
The other problem I have with this podcast is one of trust. I have confidence in what Leo Laporte has to say about technology on <http://www.twit.tv/> This Week in Tech or what CC Chapman says about marketing on <http://www.managingthegray.com/> Managing the Gray because, in the time it takes to click a mouse, I can find evidence that these people have real-world experience in their respective fields. Anna may well have years of solid experience as a coach but I searched the entire Engaging Brand blog and found no evidence of it. For me to trust this kind of podcast I want evidence that the theories it espouses have successfully been put into practice. In Anna's case a few testimonials from business leaders who have been effectively coached by her would go a long way towards me perceiving her as something other someone who's jumped on the latest bandwagon of organisational psychology. I find it a little contradictory that someone who produces a show about personal branding has failed so basically to provide evidence of her own claims to authenticity.

With respect to non-content issues the audio quality is above average for a show that relies heavily on Skype and similar technologies although some variety of tone (such as some introductory music or bumpers) would be appreciated. The show's blog is a little busy and it's not easy to find the basics such as the show's archives or an iTunes subscription button.

In podcast fanatic terms this show rates a not my cup o' tea but try it for yourself.

Text by Bernadette from Podcast Fanatic at <http://www.podcastfanatic.com>
bsquaredinoz@gmail.com

Content: 3.00
Production: 3.17



EXIT50

A People Profiling Podcast



Review
Roulette

EXIT 50

www.Exit50.com

Buy, Sell! Bulls, Bears! Options and Margins, Oh My!! Andrew Coffey keeps the airwaves up to date with the world wide stock market.

This month's turn of the wheel served up a pick that has so many layers it was the most confusing and challenging that this reviewer has ever encountered. I still am not sure that I have gotten to the bottom line of this podcast.

The wheel chose for me Podcast Alley #2727 which was listed as Exit 50. Clicking the link to the Exit 50 at the Alley led me to www.exit50.com which said it was a people profiling podcast by a cynical stockbroker with a digital camera and attention deficit disorder. So far, so good. Finding only a listen here link on the page I select it. This connects me to my QuickTime Player and the MP3 file <http://www.mn1.com/mp3/coffeygnnds2022007.mp3> - okay, guess I will listen to this. There I find Andrew Coffey speaking knowingly about the stock market and matters financial but it seems to be a show for www.mn1.com, Market News First Radio. Alright, let's see what this is about. I attempt to connect to Market News Radio but it is for Windows Media Player and the one I have installed on my Mac does not want to establish communication. Clicking around Market New Radio I find a link to www.coffeygrinds.blogspot.com which tells me that I can see the show LIVE at Market New Radio at 9 AM CST and 12 NOON CST. The good news is that at this page is a subscribe via RSS link here. I try that and there is an iTunes link!! HALLELUJAH!! But does it work??? No.....

Went back to Podcast Alley and tried the Podshow Feed it connected but kept cutting out midstream. I am thoroughly frustrated!! But being a dedicated and intrepid PUM reviewer I carry on. I went back to the original Exit 50 page listened to the shows posted there with the Listen Here button. What I can ascertain is that Exit 50 is really CoffeyGrinds, a show about the stock market that is broadcast LIVE on Market News Radio twice a day.

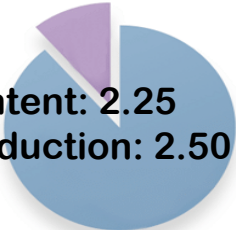
Once one finally gets to the listen to the show whatever it is really titled, Andrew does have up to the minute and topical information regarding the stock market and financial matters. The sound quality is adequate as many shows are recorded on Andrews travels around the USA.

In conclusion, whether it is Exit 50 or CoffeyGrinds, this is a specialty podcast for those who are in the know about the stock market with some good insights for those who are players. But please, Mr. Coffey, some cohesiveness and clarity would be greatly appreciated !!!

Text by Marilyn Madsen

Bernadette says:

General rambling about stock prices, music and life all of which completely failed to entertain or inform me.



Content: 2.25
Production: 2.50



MUGGLECAST

Mugglecast: "no theory is safe..."

<http://mugglenet.com/mugglecast>



For the previously uninformed, Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muggle> provides many definitions of 'muggle', but I'll assume that the usage here refers to the non-magical characters in the community portrayed in the 'Harry Potter' books. Regardless of anyone's opinion of these works of J.K. Rowling, no-one can dispute the popularity of the series and the enthusiasm for reading that it has sparked in many children and young adults. That effect has been practically magical.

The principals in the Mugglecast sell themselves short by their name, for their effect is magical, too. Each week, a varied group of young podcasters gather to discuss news, topics, themes and speculation within the 'Harry Potter' series with a surprising level of sophistication and insight. Upon listening to the last five of 80 podcasts, I was left with the hope that there is a future for critical thinking in our hype-barraged society - could these Mugglecast podcasters be encouraging their peers to take a closer look at everything they read? I certainly hope so. I'd also be interested in what these podcasters thought of other, older literature, for these are certainly scholars in the making.

The enthusiasm of the hosts for their subject and for debate itself is obvious, and I suspect that is what has propelled this podcast to the popularity it enjoys. Add the fanatical enthusiasm of 'Harry Potter' fans, and the result is this podcast's seat near or at the top of the Podcast Alley 'Top 10' for a very long time.

When you're a fan, you can overlook a lot, though, and there are a few things about this podcast that could merit more attention. Most have to do with the site itself. First, the automatic player isn't entirely intuitive: if it actually looked like a common player, I would have found it a lot earlier than I did. (Kudos to the site and listeners, though, for providing transcripts of each episode.) Because not everyone uses Odeo or iTunes, ease in finding the RSS feed would also help the site, as would updating the instructions on how to subscribe. (It's 'Juice' now, not 'iPodder'....) Any extra revenue from the sidebar, pop-up and podcast-embedded ads should go toward pop filters; they're not expensive, and they would make the listening experience so much better for the real muggles out there.

I'm hoping that when the 'Harry Potter' series is over, the members of the Mugglecast put their talents into other podcasting ventures. Their research and debating skills are well worth sharing elsewhere. Well done!

Text by Linda Mills

Content: 3.67
Production: 3.67

Bernadette says: News, discussion, opinions and predictions about the books, the movies, the author, the actors and anything else to do with Harry Potter. The panel seem to be well-informed and I can understand why Potter fans love this show although if you're not a die-hard fan a lot of the content is completely incomprehensible.

Marilyn Madsen says: Wonderful podcast for those well versed in the world of Harry Potter. Averaging over an hour in length I found this one a bit too long winded to hold one's interest, though an avid fan would most likely disagree.



PODCASTING IN AFRICA

Global Voices by Janet Parkinson

As I had given myself the task of reviewing podcasts from Africa, excluding South Africa which I have already covered in a previous issue, I did expect independent podcasts to be a little thin on the ground, and this was in fact the case. So I chose three very good examples of the power of podcasting used by organisations to create awareness of Africa, its beauty, its people and also the difficulties it faces.



Insideafrica.tv
www.insideafrica.tv



This is an initiative by Out of Afrika, which is a UK-based charity organization, and Tim Metz, who is a Dutch film maker. Its aim is to show the different sides of Africa which you won't find in the general media - focussing on the people and cultures of this amazing country. This is a video podcast which is beautifully shot, narrated and powerful in its style.

Production: 4.5
Content: 4.5



PAMBAZUKA NEWS

WEEKLY FORUM FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN AFRICA

Pambazuka News

www.pambazuka.org/en/

Pambuzuka means 'arise' or 'awaken' in Kiswahili. It's produced by Fahamu, an organisation that "uses information and communication technologies to serve the needs of organisations and social movements that aspire to progressive social change", and the podcasts and more recently videocasts they produce are very much an integral part of this. The videocasts show the latest news and views about human rights and social justice from across Africa, while the weekly podcasts have great interviews with a range of speakers from Professor Kwesi Kwaa Prah about the history of Chinese engagement in Africa, to Hope Raisers, a local Kenya group of 'conscious musicians' living in the slums of Nairobi. Very interesting content and well produced.

Production: 4
Content: 4



Medicins Sans Frontieres

www.msf.org/msfinternational/content/podcast/

Medicins Sans Frontieres is an independent humanitarian medical aid agency and is extremely well known for the work it does globally. They produce many podcasts from Africa, reporting on the situation there, but they also produce podcasts from many other countries, too. Quite recently they have also started using enhanced podcasts, which does add to the experience, though I wonder how long it will be before they also start using videocasts.

Production: 4
Content: 4

Thanks very much to Kevin Walsh for the picture of the elephants. Next month I'll be heading off to Spain, so let me know if there's anything you think I should be listening to or watching!

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Keith and the Girl



by Mark Hunter

The reasons for starting your own podcast are varied, but often the need to express oneself is cited, the need to create something and reach out to other people. The need to have a voice. Factor in that podcasting does not have censorship, isn't constrained by conservative governing bodies, doesn't require training and expensive equipment and has a truly global reach with no transmitters and licenses needed, and the appeal to those with something to say and the need to say it their way is obvious.

But what if your reason for starting a podcast was because the number one show listed on Podcast Alley was, in your opinion, crap? What if you've made it clear from the start that your podcast is a vehicle to earning money and not because you have something deep and special to say?

When Keith Malley heard about podcasting from his girlfriend Chemda's tech-savvy brothers, he dismissed it. But when Chemda encouraged him to start a podcast as a means to distributing his novel as an audio book, he decided to give it a try. Like many new podcasters they checked out who was already out there, scoping the top 10 list at Podcast Alley to see who the competition was. They were not impressed.

"Our goal from day one," explains Chemda, "was to produce an honest and funny show that people would come back and listen to. We took that goal very seriously. We've never hidden the fact that the number one podcast at the time, Dawn and Drew was, in our opinion, crap! We knew we could do better." The format they settled on was a traditional couplecast, although they prefer to refer to their podcast as a talk show.



Top of the Charts

From the start Podcast Alley has remained important to the podcasters. Keith explains, "It's always been one of the main podcast directories and for a while it was the only place that you could find information about podcasts. It was also, and still is, a major, if not the major place where the media gets the names of who they think is on top at the moment. The best podcasts." As a result they target the top 10 list each month, their listeners voting for them at the start of the month, votes that have kept them in the top 10 for well over a year. Does it work? Does a high position on Podcast Alley's chart result in media attention? Perhaps the fact that they've just been interviewed for Business Week magazine would help to answer that question.

Business Week's interest in the podcast is justified because Keith and Chemda take running their podcast seriously. It's a business to them. When they started in March 2005 they hoped that they could use the podcast to get the word out about Keith's stand up shows (he's a stand up comic), DVD recordings of said shows and CDs of bands that Chemda was singing with (she's a singer). Two years on and podcasting is paying the necessary bills.



"Keith has all these 'if I had money' ideas, things like buying the New York City \$1,000 cavier-topped pizza and video taping a bum's reaction to the taste. Paying for stunts like this via the podcast is a goal we have. Personally, I'm looking forward to the podcast paying for some great vacations," says Chemda.

For Keith, the podcast is now his day job, a fact that was recently driven home when he visited the hospital for a check up and gave his job to the nurse as "talk show host". His ear-to-ear grin at being able to do this emphasises his satisfaction.

Money

But where does the money come from?

"Right now we're making money mainly through our store, where we sell branded t-shirts, key chains and the like, along with DVDs of my yearly stand up show. We also receive donations from our listeners and we've had some advertising deals from Time Warner, Sony Pictures and HBO", Keith explains.

"We're heavily involved with Kiptronic," Chemda adds, "They've sent some ads our way and we're talking with them about a few big campaigns in the near future. An interesting note is that some of our listeners have advertised with us".

And here lies one of the truisms about podcasting. Build a relationship with your listeners and they'll act on what you say. When Keith and Chemda have a stand up comic on their podcast as a guest, listeners will follow through by going to one of his shows. A website the couple mention will experience plethora hits from their listeners and so forth. Canny listeners switched on to this and bought advertising as a result.

"We're hoping more and more companies understand this about podcasting in general. It's not just a channel that you happen to click on in your car. People listen because they chose to put the material on their mp3 player."

The Show

When one of your listeners gets a tattoo of your podcast's logo, you realise you've got a rabid listener base. But when several of your listeners get similar tattoos you know you've either got a listener base of nut cases or a very successful talk show-format podcast. Maybe it's a little of both. So how do Keith and Chemda create and maintain such a podcast?

Firstly, they put in the hard work. Keith outlines a typical podcast day.

"All day is a collection of notes. Something funny happens to us, around us, to other people; it all gets written down as a reminder to talk about on the show. In the rare occasion that we're not around each other and something happens, we usually hold back on telling each other what happened so that we can get the other person's honest reaction on the show that night. We might be chatting with each other or with a friend who'll be a guest on the show that night and we'll actually stop the conversation and say 'save it for the show'. Then of course we check the newspapers, online news sites, read emails from listeners to see what else we should talk about."

But the show is much more than witty asides on news stories and a Seinfeld-esque 'what happened on the way to the launderette.'

"We've openly fought with each other, revealed secrets, personal stuff," says Chemda, "In a way it's therapy."

All the while their listeners pay such close attention that often they'll be called on to settle arguments over who said what on a previous show. And of course there's the forum.

"We were originally opposed to forums. They can so easily turn into a big mess where no one actually talks about anything," opines Keith, "But one day a listener started a forum for us and right away our fans made it an important place to visit for people who are not only regular listeners but people who are just curious about the podcast and about us."

Chemda adds, "It's a place where you can not only discuss the show, but you can post about your day, your habits, pictures of your Keith and the Girl tattoos! Fans have helped each other get

medical advice as a few of our listeners are doctors. Other have gotten jobs via the forum, made friends and started relationships."

"Are we saying that we recommend using our forums for all your medical advice? Yes. That's exactly what I'm saying.. It's free and it's smart. Our forum is the Craigslist of our community", grins Keith.

As the show starts at a different time each week-day apart from Friday, when it starts at midnight EST, the forum is used to post when they're about to go live. The podcast is streamed live via their website and they have live feedback from the listeners, both from a chatroom and telephone calls, but also from a PalTalk webcam chatroom. If you've signed up for text alerts, then you'll receive a text message to your phone telling you when the show is going live too.

When it's time, they turn on the cameras, do a mic check, play some music as they get drinks for themselves and any guests that may be in their home studio, and make last minute bathrooms trips. All of this behind the scenes activity is available to the webcam chatroom users. And finally, they have an 'on air' sign that displays prominently on their homepage, MySpace page, and of course on the forum, courtesy of Chemda's brother Michael.

The show is unedited, so when they're done recording they check the sound, name the show, put a quote in the show notes and post it online via Libsyn.



Podshow

For many, their first experience with Keith and the Girl was when the couple infamously read out the Podshow contract. This particular episode spread wildly through the global podcast community and featured Keith and Chemda deconstructing Podshow's term and conditions for new producers. But this was only one occasion when their distrust of the podcast network has reared it's head. Keith consistently refers to the company as "shady", citing the time when, he claims, Podshow hijacked their RSS feed, putting the Podshow name in it.

"It's was nothing short of putting your name on a book I wrote and re-selling it," he says.

And there's little love lost for them with Podshow, Adam Curry referring to them as the clown-cast (a reference to their earlier jobs as party clowns) and comparing them unfavourably to Dawn and Drew, the very podcast the inspired them to start their own show in the first place.

While some podcasters are careful not to publicly criticise Podshow, Keith and Chemda have no such wariness.

"They will not help our situation," Chemda offers with frankness, "We've worked too hard to have someone promise nothing and own all of our material in exchange for our signature. We're not here to 'belong'. We're here to make a mark and make a living."

Frankness and plain speaking are hallmarks of their podcast, and it's this freedom to say what they want about whatever they want, not answering to anyone, that are obvious attractions to them. Controversy is rarely far away from a Keith and the Girl episode as they tackle subjects both delicate and gauche, often revealing a hard New York underbelly. However, coupled with that is a warmth that has drawn in thousands of loyal listeners, some of them becoming close friends of the couple.

While the topics they discuss may not be to everyone's taste, their work ethic, their drive, their determination to make their podcast the best it can be without compromise, their reliability, passion and talent are all things that want-to-be-successful podcast producers should emulate.

Looking back on 2 years of podcasting, seeing their hobby go from a couple of cheap Radio Shack mics to a proper radio standard home studio complete with cameras and phone lines, all the while remaining fiercely independent, they recognise how their lives have changed.

"Podcasting has changed everything. We've never worked harder on anything before in our lives. We've also never had more fun doing anything else," muses Chemda. "It's amazing to be in a relationship and work towards, not only the same personal goal, but the same creative goal. To have that be the way that we make a living is a dream come true."

"And how awesome is it that several people are walking around with our logo tattooed on their bodies? Now that is a dream come true!" laughs Keith.



Keith and the Girl photographs by Matthew Bray of Truth Films

KaTG tips for podcasters and listeners

3 tips for productive podcasters

- 1) Take your sound seriously. You have to care about things like sudden loud noises in your show. People are listening on headphones. Don't blow their ears out.
- 2) Make sure you have content. If you have nothing to say or play or whatever, you don't have a show. Nobody likes when the host says things like "I don't know why you're listening to me. I suck." If you don't know, they don't know.
- 3) Don't promise things that you can't deliver. For example, if you say it'll be a weekly show, make it weekly. If you want your show to take off, remember that it's a job, and a job is work.

3 tips for discerning listeners

- subscribe to our show for free at www.keithandthegirl.com
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- subscribe to our show for free at www.keithandthegirl.com

What is the Keith and the Girl Show?

A talk show produced in New York featuring a guy, stand-up comic and writer Keith, and his girlfriend, singer and musician Chemda.

What's it like?

Caustic talk radio that's often brutal in its honesty and humour.

When it's available?

Monday - Thursday: Times vary.
Friday - Midnight EST

Rating?

R (18)

Where?

www.keithandthegirl.com



Inside the Podcasters' Studio



Paul and Judy from TotalPodcastrophe ask questions of Scott Williams

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 Scott Williams.

Scott is co-host of The Night Nurse Show, a group of hospital radio volunteers comprised of Scott, John, Natasha, Steve and Stefan. They apparently got sick of just ill people listening to them, so they came up with a podcast to say all the things that the ill people wouldn't want to hear. It's an unique blend of topical conversation, humour and music for your enjoyment, and it is recorded each week from a secret bunker in London, England. Episode 1 debuted on December 11th, 2005, and the crew now have more than 40 episodes under their collective belt. The show is geared toward a mature audience.

Let us begin with a brief self-introduction...

Scott: My name is Scott, and I was born on Long Island, New York, 30 years ago to British parents. After spending my formative years in Cleveland, Ohio, I moved to London 13 years ago with my mom and brother. Since moving to London, I have worked lots of different jobs but have managed to find myself working in accounts. I have always had ambitions in broadcasting and have been volunteering at hospital radio stations in London, which has included Great Ormond Street Hospital. I love music, mainly of the Heavy Metal and Rock variety, and I occasionally DJ whenever I am asked. I am a big fan of live concerts, and I have a fondness for Stella Artois and good company.

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

Scott: It was back in November 2004 when my partner at the time showed me a link about this new thing called podcasting. It was something that interested me but it seemed all a bit complicated and a little out of my range in technical knowledge, so I have to admit, I found it somewhat intimidating in the sense of creating them on my own, which is what he was encouraging me to do.

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

Scott: Well, I put the idea on the backburner of actually making one, so I didn't really stand up and notice them 'til I saw the Podcast Directory on iTunes. We saw The Dawn and Drew Show, so we decided to check it out, and I have to admit, I really liked them. Dawn reminded me of a lot of girls I grew up with, so I enjoyed listening to them and I subscribed to them, however, I don't listen to Dawn and Drew anymore as I am more of a Keith and The Girl fan.

What do you look for in a podcast?

Scott: I like presenters that are engaging and that make me laugh. A good mix of news and music helps, but it helps if you like and identify in some way with the producer of the show. I like it when podcasters get personal, and I like to hear people that are open and honest about their experiences and knowledge. It has to be a bit

outside the box and nothing like traditional radio at all.

What puts you off a podcast?

Scott: Cheesy wannabe radio presenters. Waffling about nothing. There is nothing more boring than someone that sounds like they are just staring at their computer the whole time and they are telling you what they are doing. It's important to have something to say.

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

Scott: Since I got that link all those years ago and wanted to do something with the idea, it hit me one night volunteering at the hospital radio station whilst doing a show with John, Natasha and Steve, that the chemistry between the four of us was too good to keep it confined to such a small audience and that everyone should be able to hear the things we wanted to say and get out there.

What motivates you, currently, to continue podcasting?

Scott: The world in general is such a messed up place. It's always good to have your own little platform in the world to have your own little say and to share that with people. We have gotten such good feedback from listeners, and just knowing that there are some listeners out there that look forward to our shows like I know I look forward to some... it's a nice feeling.

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

Scott: For me, it's showed me how fake the 'reality' that is given to us by traditional radio and TV actually is. With podcasting, it feels more real. It's a lot easier to identify more with podcasters than with wannabe heat magazine fodder and talentless celebrities. I know that I have been listening to music a bit less now that I have podcasts on the ipod, but I will still watch TV and DVDs as

much as I used to. I usually listen to podcasts when I am out and about or going to and from work.

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

Scott: The biggest change is that I have a project that I have really sunk my teeth into like I have never had before. I have such passion for the show I am part of, and for other shows that I listen to and support, that it's become part of my life. I met some really interesting people and even made some new friends. I have also expanded my technical knowledge, and I have been able to expand on any broadcasting knowledge I had and been able to experiment and challenge myself creatively.

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

Scott: The fact that there is more choice and we, as people, don't have to consume the content that people that are paid more money than they are worth are telling us we should like. Hopefully it will open the doors to a wider range of content that is available to the mainstream and give people out there with talent to produce content that will challenge and sit alongside the mainstream.

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

Scott: We have started to recently see some more exposure for our show, and more people are discovering us everyday. I would like to see it grow, and I would like to see where it takes us as broadcaster/podcasters. So, ultimately, world domination!

Scott Williams can be found at:
<http://www.nightnursesshow.com>

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



Profile: Hayden Black, Writer/Producer/Actor, Goodnight Burbank

by Douglas E. Welch

Born in Manchester, England, Hayden Black moved with his family to Fort Lauderdale, Florida in the early 80s. Little did he know at the time, in days long before podcasting existed, that this would lead to a very popular video podcast that has boosted his entertainment career to new levels.

As he sat at Art's Deli in Studio City, California, enjoying bagels and lox, Hayden beamed as he recounted his latest publicity success, a 'Best of the Web' mention in the print edition of TV Guide. Hayden's light and proper English accent lends a sense of elegance to his speech, despite his California casual attire.

The TV Guide mention is just one of the enthusiastic responses to his video podcast, Goodnight Burbank. USA Today has said the show is 'Funny...Well done. It's a lot better than 99% of the stuff on TV' - welcome praise for someone who came to California in 1994 to pursue the television and movie dream.

"I saw my move as an opportunity to pursue a writing career, but I ended up creating a career in writing, producing and acting," said Black. "Podcasting has provided me freedom. I'm not beholden to someone reading my script or their mood, or how tired they are that day, or how stressed. It is just so much easier to show someone a five- or six-minute episode than expecting them to read a 120-page script."



The show was originally entitled Goodnight, Fort Lauderdale, drawing on his childhood experiences of watching his parents watch the local evening news. “They took the local news so seriously, but I knew that there were just normal people, with foibles.”

Black describes himself as the ‘funny kid’ who could ‘make everybody laugh.’ One of his early influences was seeing the original Star Wars movie. “My reaction was to write my own version, but I realized I just basically wrote the same movie while changing the names around.” Even so, this led to more writing projects as he was growing up. “During my childhood, I lived in areas where I was a kid with no peers whatsoever. I was alone a lot and had to come up with ways of entertaining myself. I realized I would write and make people laugh. It excited me to learn I could affect people’s emotions, and that is what made me decide to be a writer.”

These early experiences have grown into a weekly video production where Black continues to entertain himself and a growing audience of viewers. Black writes and produces each episode, along with portraying his alter ego, Gordon Winston-Smythe, a dysfunctional news anchor who must deal with a highly religious and right-wing co-anchor, inter-office relationships and a quirky staff who each have their own foibles.

Goodnight, Burbank continues to garner attention, coverage in the traditional press and a growing audience. Black quickly credits his excellent collection of actors, director and technical staff for the continued success of the show. “I am not a tech person,” says Black. “I don’t even know how to spell HTML.” A complete list of credits, and all the past episodes of Goodnight, Burbank, can be found on the show’s web site at <http://goodnightburbank.com/>.



A member of



Detailed shownotes - added value or a waste of effort



by Grant Mason

Shownotes. Something I usually tend to prattle on about when I'm taking part in the Review Roulette each month, since I consider them to be a vital component of a podcast. Some might ask why I attach such importance to them, so let me explain:

Rather than have to spell out every URL you mention during your show, it's far simpler to refer listeners to the shownotes on the podcast website which will give them one-click access to the sites you mention • Shownotes save the music podcaster from having to tediously mention the artists' websites, MySpace pages, email addresses and merchandise pages after every song in every show • They give you a chance to expand upon topics you mentioned during the show or say something you forgot about during the recording • Non-music podcasters often use their shownotes to precis what they've discussed during their shows, or to point to sites which will broaden or expand upon their subjects.

In my own shownotes, I provide:

- a link to click to hear the show or to download it without having to subscribe or use a player
- a preamble which summarises the mood of the show or the reason for a show's title
- a list of the bands / tracks played with links to their websites, MySpace and email, with a brief summary of the track and the band and links to buy their music
- links to the soundbed artist
- a link to record and send an audio comment using the MyChingo site
- a list of props given
- Technorati tags

In short, everything I hope that a listener might need to find and support an artist as well as get a flavour of the show. Since these notes are, in my case, also added in truncated form to the 'optional extract' box in Wordpress, they'll appear in the info panel of any podcatching software like Juice, RSSRadio and the like. This will help give the listener a summary of what to expect and perhaps help them decide that the show's worth downloading if they're not regular subscribers. iTunes is a different matter, though I still provide a basic summary of the artists and music in the info held in the ID3 tags.

Now, putting the shownotes together in various forms does take a large chunk of time out of each week and accounts for a decent slice of each show's preparation and production time, especially if - like me - you also post them as a MySpace Bulletin and on various podcasting forums in the 'New Shows' boards. Each requires tweaking of the formatting to appear correctly (some use BBCode, some HTML and some use a cut-down version of HTML - requiring judicious changes to the formatting tags you use for each). I like to think that this effort is all worthwhile and appreciated by my listeners / MySpace friends / forum browsers. In my mind I see happy people, glad that all they need do is navigate to the one page from where they will have access to everything they need. No tedious noting down and typing in URLs. No need to manually open an email client and put in an address and subject heading. I've put in all the work so that they don't have to.

And yet I often wonder if all of the effort each week is really worthwhile. Do people really take the time to visit the site and read the notes? Do they appreciate the effort that's been put in? I often feel that they'd be better served by nothing more than the bare essentials, with no personal thoughts / intro / band descriptions taking up valuable space on the feed when in reality they're never noticed. So long as there are links to the bands' sites, then what else really matters?

Other podcasts which command scarily massive audiences seem to get away with minimal notes, and I've heard that some 'superstar' podcasters now employ their very own skivvies to do their shownotes for them. I'm not sure that my 'added value' shownotes are doing anything for my show other than eat up time which may be better spent on production duties.

I know that in the past, I've posed the question about whether or not I should minimalise my shownotes and a small number of listeners have responded and said they like them as they are. I've also had bands lift what I've said about them in the shownotes and (after asking my permission) quote me in their press packs or on their websites. On the other hand, 95% of my audience said absolutely nothing, which could mean they're apathetic towards the change or they're happy with whatever form of shownotes I may decide to provide. Many, I suspect, never go near the shownotes at all so what I have written will not matter to them at all.

Don't get me wrong - shownotes are VITALLY important for a podcast; I'm just not so sure any more that spending a lot of time stuffing them full of additional and extraneous information is providing a service that validates the effort that individual podcasters put in. What do you think?



Back Issues available from
www.podcastusermagazine.com

Lets Dump This RSS Thing!

By Richard Vobes

I was listening to Rantings of A Northern Bloke a few weeks back <http://www.rantings.shorturl.com/> by Andy Taylor and enjoying his audio journal. Each day I would visit the bookmarked website, hit the play button and listen on line. I do that a lot, especially at the BBC website. They have a great feature called Listen Again. It's not strictly a podcast, I suppose, but it is a way of accessing their excellent programming in a time-shifted way, so that if you miss a broadcast or simply want to listen again to something you heard on, say, Radio 4, you can at a touch of a button. It's fabulous.

Anyway, as I was explaining, I was listening to 'Rantings', only I wasn't. I clicked the play button and an error message came back saying 'File Not Found'. It's irritating when that happens, but I decided all was not lost, I would simply download the file and listen to the MP3 in the old-fashioned way. Well, I would have if the website could have found the wretched file. It turns out that Mr. Taylor, as I have done many times in the past, accidentally mislabeled the MP3 file and so the super-quick and highly not-so-intelligent internet couldn't work out what to do and fell over. Bless!

I was talking to a friend who also listens to Mr. Taylor's exploits and said it was disappointing that we were unfortunately not going to get to hear this day's episode, and he said that he assumed there hadn't been a show as it hadn't come down the RSS feed. And then something curious clicked with me!

I suddenly realized just how limited and restrictive this RSS feed can be. I emailed Andy and told him that the web page was not finding his podcast, and he immediately rectified it, but likewise had no idea that people were not getting the show, because in RSS it would not show up. No one would have known that a show was missing or the file was unfound. People would just assume that there was no show made that day. Grrrrrr.

All this brings me to my main thrust of this article: the need and over reliance of the RSS feed. Yes, it's a useful device, and I am not completely knocking it, but I do think its dependence and status is overplayed.

I was debating whether I should call this little mind wandering 'Reaching out', because I do feel that the podcasters out there should be reaching out much better than they are to the mass public. Not only should the podcaster producers tell...no, shout about their show and it merits and availability online 24/7, but they should equally make their content accessible to newbie listeners and potential audiences.

RSS confuses the hell out of me, and I have been producing a podcast since January 2005. I never use it to access my favorite podcasts. Like most people in the world, non-techy, non-geeky people, I use websites as my first port of call. I still do. I bookmark pages and go there to pick up new shows. I also look eagerly for an instant way to play said shows from a Play Now button. I don't like downloading stuff unnecessarily, so if I can play the podcast immediately, so much the better. (Ok, I know that technically you are still downloading it to a temporary cache, but I haven't had to make the decision of where to download it to and then whether to delete it afterwards or not!)

The advantage of visiting a website is that many podcasters are using digital photography to illustrate items in their shows, and you can instantly see to what they refer to than listening to complicated descriptions. I do this all the time in my audio tours or audio walks. There is usually a photo album to accompany the audio, which many of my listeners appreciate.

The way I see it, and I know I could be very wrong, there are two types of audience (and potential audiences); namely, those that love to listen on the move using their MP3 players and those that enjoy the online entertainment experience at their PC while surfing the web. Of course, there are some that do both, in as much as they go to the website and download a podcast and move it to their MP3 player for later. I do this myself occasionally.

Those that rely purely on RSS feeds could be missing out. They are not getting the photographs and other stuff that accompanies the podcasts, they perhaps are missing a podcaster's own forum and message boards or are unable to leave a comment or feedback on the website for the podcaster.

www.vobes.com

More important, though, is that the podcast producers provide an instant and easily identifiable Play Now button. I believe many web surfers will arrive at such a site and pass by if they are not able to instantly connect with the audio instead of having to wait for it to download fully first or subscribing to the RSS feed.

As the internet and web surfing is fast overtaking television as the primary home entertainment, more and more people shall discover podcasting from the web pages produced by podcasters. These will need to be much better designed and enticing if podcasters really want to build an audience. The days of boring Wordpress generic blogging style podcaster websites thankfully will be over, and the all-important Play Now button will come into its own!

So, ok maybe we don't need to dump the RSS feed completely... Let's not make it the be all and end all of podcasting, but just one of the many tools in the podcasters armory!



Your Podcast is You

I was inspired reading a blog post of Chris Penn's recently where he discussed the notion that your podcast is you, but you are not your podcast. He reasons that unless you're part of a podcasting team - if there's several of you producing and presenting the podcast, or you're one half of a couplecast - then your podcast is you. And it's a very succinct point for podcasters to remember. You provide the personality, the voice, the opinion, the taste, the nuances of what your podcast is, both from the viewpoint of a new listener (they download, listen to it, hear you) but to a greater degree to your long-term, loyal listeners. You will become completely and totally associated with, and wrapped up by, your podcast.

Let's play a game to illustrate this truism. Rob Walsh of _? Dan Klass of _? Adam Curry of _? Lance Anderson of _? Grant Mason of _? Were you able to fill in the blanks? Usually when a podcaster's name is mentioned it is almost always immediately followed by the name of their podcast.

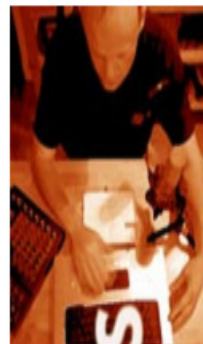
I've experienced this often. And I've done it myself about myself. By way of introduction, and for fear of not being recognised, I've introduced myself as Mark Hunter of the tartanpodcast. And equally I've been listening to podcasts where I've been mentioned by the host. Never by name alone. Always with the adjunctive "... of the tartanpodcast." And it's understandable. Our voices, our accents, our vocal nuances and ticks all become wrapped up with whatever name we chose to call our podcast.

Chris in his blog post comments further about this notion, claiming, correctly in my opinion, that while your podcast is you, you are not your podcast. And he explains this by saying that if you've chosen a topic or running theme for your podcast, in his case financial aid, then you're not allowed to bring in new themes or topics just because they take your fancy. It's not what your listeners want or expect.

I experienced this recently, too. As mentioned here, I'm best known for the tartanpodcast which is, by genre, a music 'cast, the niche element being the focus on indie Scottish bands. However, after two years of producing and presenting this podcast, along the way making the indie Scottish music podcast genre my own (it's a genre of one), I was presented with the chance to produce and present something completely different. And thus was born the Playstation 3 Show. However, I decided that to gain a bit of traction in the downloads stakes, I'd put the first edition of this new podcast into the tartanpodcast's feed. And by so doing I broke that rule. I am not the tartanpodcast. People subscribe to, download and listen to the tartanpodcast because they want to hear indie Scottish bands. And they want to hear me talking about them. They do not, however, want to hear me talking about gaming consoles with not a note nor bar of music to be heard.

It's an important lesson in both the power our voices have - they carry a projection, an approximation of our personalities, along with our tastes, our passions, our opinions - but that power isn't omnipotent and shouldn't be abused.

Anyway, if you do desire to hear me opine about gaming consoles, then <http://ps3.thepodcastnetwork.com> is where to find me.



Mark: My Words



The OC Podcasters Story by Lance Anderson Verge of the Fringe

OC is shorthand for Orange County, California, an area between Los Angeles and San Diego whose most famous resident is a massive rodent with white gloves who lives in a Fantasyland. Beyond that, Orange County is known for being a good place to raise a family, its conservative politics, and a lame soap opera that helped to coin the name 'OC.' What is less well known, I hope until now, is the fact that Orange County is at the very root of the American podcasting scene and, by extension, podcasting itself. If I were to guess, the phrase 'monetizing your podcast' was probably first uttered in public at an OC Podcasters Meetup.

It all started back in December 2004 because Tim Bourquin (Podcast Brothers) "really wanted to see how other people were using podcasting and to learn a bit more about RSS feeds. The next day, Michael Geoghegan called me to find out who the heck I was, and that's how we met."

Michael Geoghegan's podcasting career began with his very successful shows Reel Reviews and Grape Radio. As a driven businessman he later began producing the official Disney Resort Podcast and co-founded, with Doug Kaye, GigaVox Media. This is how Michael remembers those early days: "I first heard about the OC Podcaster meet-up via a Google alert I had for podcasting. Tim Bourquin was arranging the group, and I decided to give him a ring. We had a good chat on the phone and decided to set the first meeting date. This was in December 2004, early in the world of podcasting. In fact, the only other podcast meet-up group at the time was the London group, which had just had their first meeting. So we were second in the world and first in the US.... It was a rather auspicious occasion with four attendees: myself, Tim Bourquin, Emile Bourquin (Tim's real and on air "Podcast Brother") and Steve Holden.

We drank good beer and had a good time. I talk with all those guys to this day. All true pioneers of podcasting." According to Tim, "The first meetings were very useful just because I got a chance to talk to people about podcasting and gauge their level of excitement. I already had the idea for the [tradeshow](#), so it was a good way of seeing what people were talking about and what questions they had."

Michael added, "I do know that the direction Tim, myself and a few others wanted to take the group was not terribly popular at the time.... Tim and I wanted to charge a small fee, say \$20, so that we had funds to secure an appropriate meeting place and bring in a speaker who could share information on topics of interest - audio recording techniques, for example. Both Tim and I thought this would improve the value offered to the group. Unfortunately, the majority of members wanted to keep it a no-cost affair, and we deferred to their opinion."

By the time I drove south on the 5 Freeway to their April 2005 Meetup, the transition in leadership was already beginning to take shape. As Tim puts it, "I had started to get really busy with the [Expo](#) and decided it was time to hand it off." Craig Patchett (Godcast Network) agreed to take over as interim leader. Craig is a very friendly and

"Don't let their Polo shirts and PowerPoint presentations fool you, Orange County Podcasters represent a bastion of podcasting creativity."

Bill Palmer, Publisher of iProng.com

helpful guy who drives up from his place in San Diego. Craig says, "Despite its growth, the group has remained relatively close-knit and prides itself on its casual and friendly atmosphere. Podcasting veterans mix with those still learning about podcasting's potential, and new group members often comment on being pleasantly surprised at the accessibility of each member and how willing they are to share their time and knowledge."

The group has met at various points in bars, studios and even a church. But the welcoming atmosphere has always remained. Jeremy Vaught produces the [Second Life Podcast](#) and says, "the OC Podcasters group is so supportive and helpful. I talk with other podcasters and they long to have a group like ours in their location. It has meant so much to me to have this group I can come to lean on when times are rough, and rejoice with when times are great."

Tom Jordan agrees, "when I started my podcast, The Unreal OC, I was overwhelmed by the technical aspects of producing a podcast. Two months into this 'adventure' I was about ready to throw in the towel but discovered The OC Podcasters Meetup and came to a meeting. That first night I heard about an RSS creation tool, the right microphones to use for my studio, and so many other tips and tricks that I had to take notes on a scrap piece of paper so I wouldn't forget all the great information flying my way."

When Craig Patchett drives north from San Diego, he often carools with Adam Christianson, who hosts one of the most popular shows, the [maccast](#). Adam's show helps Mac users, yet he

says it is the OC Podcasters who helped him: "My show would not be as high quality or as successful today without the knowledge I learned from the group. The ability to share information and bounce ideas off others who share your passion is priceless."

Adam added that "the two guys currently leading the charge and working to really grow the group are Scott Stys (The Curbside Investigator) and Jason Tucker (GeekFit)." Jason Tucker credits Steve Webb (Life Spring) who "shows that one man can create a network of shows in his spare time and can get his family involved. Ron from GriddleCakes I think has the best 'sound' in podcasting." Scott Stys says "The group has welcomed me with open arms. I've been able to bring new and old ideas to the group and have them improved or rejected, but always in a great spirit of fun and camaraderie. It's been fantastic so far... We've got big plans in store. Being generally a social group with a narrow agenda, it's hard to take on big plans, but we've started thinking big and I expect exciting new ideas to be developed here in Orange County."

It appears things are already starting to develop, according to Michael Geoghegan. "I attended a few OCP meet-ups last year and appreciated the fact that they moved towards a more formal learning event. I remember one that I attended focused on remote recording techniques. I think this really added value to the group and was closer to what Tim and I had initially envisioned. I know that Craig Patchett, Ron Ploof, Victor Cajiao (Typical Mac User), Steve Holden and many others worked hard to bring this about. The group owes them all a debt of gratitude."

<http://www.ocpodcasters.com>



THE 3Nd Of M4!N57R34M COMMUN!C47ION

by Vergel Evans, from his limited-edition publication, 'Assembler Techno Fanzine, the Direction Issue' Spring, 2006

Do you watch TV or use Tivo? Listen to the radio, or are you more a fan of digital audio files? Did you catch the latest headlines from a website? Forwarding the most interesting items to your friends online?

"It was a dark and stormy night..." that is if you're a major news network, record label, or media company; trapped in an over-saturated mainstream-media universe. The old-world companies still believe that every episode is sacred and every issue is scarce. That every product requires teams of people to craft each one into part of a unified image, marching in step at the same speed. That they are the ones with the rights to create our content. And that in the beginning there was the 'word', and it came down from the mountain to be distributed by the 'chosen' people. That they are the only people who can do it right.

But those days are changing... websites, messaging technology, and the emerging global networks are changing the way we consume media, changing the way we look for and share our interests. The church of mainstream media is losing the battle to keep control. Download a song, a movie, a picture, a book, anything off the internet and you've already beaten fifty years of an established distribution system.

There is no packaging, no shipping, no wholesaler, no retailer,... just the media and the consumer. A private affair without the clergy of old world companies trying to push their agenda. Not even the confines of time matter, no waiting in lines, waiting for the end of the month, or even "prime time". What you want when you want it!

And that *IS* the end..... the end of mainstream communication. The end of an era where everybody is watching the same shows, reading the same news and following the same top 10 lists. The end of people waiting patiently to consume their next episode of momentary amusement.

Some may feel the need to maintain order in this chaos. That this is a perversion, and not an evolution. The reality is, we find the things we value.... we share the things we believe in. As individuals we finally can create and share the messages that matter most in our own media.

Vergel Evans is an author, musician and podcaster from Toronto. His blog and podcast, 'Something in the Square', can be found at <http://www.Lx7.ca>



By John Buckley

<http://citizenscoop.co.uk>

Why Podcasting Isn't Radio!

Recently, I heard someone with a long and prestigious broadcast background say that podcasting was simply another form of radio. At first, I didn't give it much thought, but the idea stuck in my subconscious and I continued to mull it over. After due time and consideration I've reached a conclusion of my own - I have to respectfully disagree.

My radio doesn't broadcast just for me, but my podcast playlist does. The network, not me, selects the shows playing on a radio station. If I'm listening to radio and I want to hear a short ambient-electronica show, followed by the news headlines, two geeks talking about tech and then maybe a poetry-slam, I'm probably out of luck. Radio doesn't cater for my specific (and fluctuating) tastes. Podcasting, however, gives me an infinite dial; subscription lets me tune it to a bespoke station, one that I can tailor directly for my needs. With radio I hear what the station gives me, at the time they transmit it. With podcasting I hear what I want, where I want; I select the voices and I manage the programming.

I can't rewind or fast-forward a radio show if I want to hear a specific section again or if I'm unsatisfied with what I'm hearing, and searching randomly through the radio dial may never find me the exact show I'm looking for. Every podcast on my MP3 player is there because I put it there. I have a large measure of control over all aspects of the experience. I can fine-tune and adjust my listening patterns as I wish, moving through my media in a seamless manner. This creates a different, more subjective attitude in me as a listener. I am pulling down the content I want; it's not being pushed at me.

Podcasting isn't radio, anymore than a DVD recording of a live concert is the television transmission of the event itself. Watching a digital recording of a film on a computer is not the same as viewing it at the cinema. Time, place and device are crucial. The what/where/when and how of my media consumption is at least as influential

in determining the type and quality of my experience as the informational content of the media itself. A blockbuster Hollywood production doesn't look or sound anywhere nearly as impressive watched on my video iPod on a crowded rush-hour train as it did crashing out of a surround-sound system and appearing on a giant screen in a darkened cinema.

Radio and of podcasting may approximate or compliment each other, they may even re-purpose content that appears in one form for direct use in another; but the user experience is not the same. Radio, by virtue of its broadcast nature, naturally attracts a different type and quality of audience interaction and attention than a podcast does.

Podcasting may even turn out to be a medium that displaces attention directly away from radio. There are some indications that this is already beginning to happen. If it does so, it will shift the real-time consumption and attention pattern, implemented by the localized antenna technology of broadcast radio, to one that is time-shifted, web enabled and narrowcast. From mass to niche, from the many to one. These are important differences that will have long-term cultural effects upon the way both mediums develop in the future.

Of course, radio has a set of specific cultural values that are difficult to reproduce on podcasts. It is very good at capturing a sense of immediate shared experience by reporting in real time upon news, sports, and emergency and traffic data, national or local events. In this sense, there is a real need for the real-time experience of radio. But radio is not podcasting and podcasting is not radio. The two may share certain elements of the same audio DNA, they may cross over, compliment and enhance each other, but I believe that as podcasting develops and pushes ever further into the long-tail of niche content, the differences between the two will become far more clearly defined.

Getting Your Kicks With Soccer Podcasting

by Christopher Harris, a.k.a. 'The Gaffer'

Soccer star David Beckham's recent multi-million dollar transfer from Spanish legends Real Madrid to L.A. Galaxy illustrates the rising interest in the sport stateside. But American soccer's dirty little secret is that more fans watch the English variety on television than attend homegrown Major League Soccer games. Podcaster Christopher Harris, aka The Gaffer, explains more and describes why he traveled 3000 miles to England to record several podcasts for Americans who have an insatiable craving for the English soccer experience.

The world's most popular sports league in the world attracts more than 1.3 billion TV viewers a year. It's not the NFL or Major League Baseball. Instead, it's the English Premier League, the soccer league that's so popular in the USA that three of the 20 teams are now owned by Americans.

While the English Premier League (better known as the EPL in the States) continues to attract millions of new viewers each year, only a small percentage of those viewers have actually experienced an EPL game in person. In the United States, viewers can watch as many as 10 live games from England each week. What's attracting these American viewers to the EPL are concepts foreign to traditional American sports such as promotion and relegation of teams, 90 minutes of non-stop action with only a minimal commercial break at half-time, and the incredible noise and support that these English teams capture inside their historic stadiums.

In the US, meanwhile, the homegrown Major League Soccer brand is played at a much slower pace that is frankly, at times, boring to watch. Even David Beckham won't change the sport overnight in the States.

With a backpack loaded with a plane ticket to England, an Olympus digital voice recorder, a sturdy laptop, digital camera and a Logitech headset/microphone, I had everything I needed to record and publish a daily podcast from England. The rest was up to me.

Here's an inside look at what it was like podcasting just one of the eight episodes from England, and some of the lessons I learned.

Podcasting From Liverpool

Arriving at Manchester Airport after an overnight flight from Fort Lauderdale, six hours remained before the kick-off between Everton and Bolton Wanderers. I took the train from Manchester to Liverpool, arrived at Everton's Goodison Park stadium, and quickly began my work.

Without a doubt, one of the most historic stadiums in English football is Everton's Goodison Park because it still features pre-WW2 stands built by legendary football ground designer Archibald Leitch. Goodison is also the only stadium in the world to have a church within its walls, tucked between the walls of Goodison Road Stand and the Gwladys Street Stand.



It was outside this church where I interviewed an Everton fan named Liam Fogarty who expressed his concern about Everton wanting to move away from Goodison Park, and how the soccer clubs are now so out of touch with the fans due to exorbitant ticket prices.

With the interview 'in the can' and press pass in hand, I made my way inside the Goodison Park Stand and marveled at the expanse of the green pitch and the incredible coziness of the four stands enveloping the field. Of course, I also marveled at the architecture on display. After all, this is a cathedral of soccer where World Cup matches and FA Cup Finals have been played.

In the build-up to the match, I was able to walk back outside and capture the sounds of the increasing number of fans making their way to the stadium. When I grew up in the UK and went to matches as a teenager, this was something I remember with great detail as the throngs of soccer fans swarmed towards the ground, singing with enthusiasm and creating a wild carnival atmosphere.

But that was in the early 80s. On the afternoon of the Everton match, I was disheartened to hear no singing outside the stand. Instead you could hear the buzz of the crowd, the programme sellers making their voices heard over the fans, but the overall volume was far quieter than I expected. A lot had changed in 20 years.

Lessons Learned

Fast forward three hours from then, and I was in the home of my aunt who lives in Liverpool. After watching the uninspiring match between Everton and Bolton – only punctuated with greatness by Everton's Mikel Arteta scoring one of the goals of the season to win the match for the Toffees – I rested my weary legs and proceeded to download all of the audio I had recorded throughout the match on my Olympus digital recorder, and I began to edit it with WavePad software.

Some of the challenges I encountered included the interview I recorded earlier in the day. The audio picked up the sound of the wind much more than I anticipated, so I had to edit out some of the conversation that was inaudible. Next time I'll know to conduct the interview indoors rather than outside.

After the podcast episode was recorded, the other challenge I encountered was trying to get an internet connection. The dial-up account through BT (British Telecom) wasn't working correctly at my aunt's house. Luckily, though, I was able to find a wireless internet connection (Liverpool is a big city, after all) and uploaded the file to my Libsyn account.



Overall, the podcast episode was well received by the listeners with a few thousand people downloading it. The feedback was mostly positive, with many soccer fans in the States commenting how appreciative they were. Many of them, for the first time, were able to get a better understanding of what the experience was like going to a live Premiership game instead of seeing it through television. That alone was worth the trip.

The Gaffer's web site and podcast can be found at <http://www.EPLtalk.com>



Greetings, Pop Pickers!

by Colin Meeks

Undoubtedly one of the biggest winners in the podcasting revolution has been the numerous independent and unsigned musicians, who now have a viable alternative route to get their music heard by hundreds of thousands of eager listeners, hungry for great music. Many of these artists have been otherwise ignored by the major record labels, but they work relentlessly to build a reputation for themselves, ultimately getting their CDs into the hands of the people who matter most - the fans.

There are numerous music podcasts about, but the real difficulty is finding the good ones. I just wanted to cover a few of the ones I listen to, just to give you an idea of what's about and, I hope, point you in the right direction.

Three from Leith

<http://www.threefromleith.com>

From PUM's own Grant Mason, this is a great podcast that plays many great Scottish artists, as well as a smattering from around the world. Most tracks are usually on the lighter side. His show generally comes out once a week and runs around 30 minutes.

PC Podcast

<http://pcpodcast.blogsome.com>

If you're looking for eclectic, this is the place for you. Pete Cogle, your host, does an amazing job of digging up some music you'll be hard pressed to hear anywhere else. Admittedly some of the tracks raise my eyebrows in the best tradition of Roger Moore, but he also uncovers some absolute gems.

Dark Compass

<http://www.darkcompass.com>

Rowland Cutler, the grumpy old sod of podcasting, has a style all of his own. He recently came back from an extended hiatus, and it's good to have him back. Rowley's musical tastes are on the heavier side of rock. I have to say there have been a few songs that are just a tad too wild for my delicate ears, but I love to keep my musical ears open to a bit of everything.

Binary Starcast

<http://www.binarystarcast.com>

Not a podcast for your granny, unless she's used to drinking down the docks, but nonetheless very entertaining. Hank and Carlos are the brains behind the Binary Star Music record label. While they do indeed feature artists from their own label and have one artist, Rayko, as a regular on the podcast, their main interest is the music, no matter where it comes from. In a podcast probably aimed at the teen to 30-year-old age group, the musical genres covered are pretty much what you'd expect for that kind of demographic.

CBC Radio 3 Podcast

<http://www.cbcradio3.com>

A weekly podcast from Canada's equivalent of the BBC, covering Canadian independent artists exclusively. I've lost track of the number of great artists I've discovered in this podcast, and I look forward to it each week. Quite an interesting cross-section of genres are covered in this one-hour show.

Indie Meltdown

<http://www.indieemltdown.com>

From the ashes of Bitjobs for the Masses, comes Phil Coyne's new podcast. Phil's aim is to release two different podcasts each week. The Melting Pot, features upbeat tracks to 'get your toes tapping and your arses-a-shakin'. His other show, The Acoustic Meltdown, is a more sedate affair, showcasing the mellower side of indie music.

Lynn Parsons

<http://www.lynnparsons.net>

Lynn is one of the exceptions in podcasting at the moment, having come from a professional radio background. If I'm not mistaken, she and I used to spend many hours at night together. I was at work and she was on Radio 2 I think it was, on just before one my radio Gods, whispering Bob Harris. Lynn has two different shows that are released on alternative weeks, the Chalet Show, with a mix of good music and personalities, and The Red Light Zone, which is a more laid-back and mellow show.

This is in no way a definitive list of music podcasts, but you're sure to discover some amazing new music in them. Apart from the music, what really makes these podcasts is the personalities behind the mics. If you have any suggestions for other shows, please do not hesitate to contact me, colin@indieauntpad.com. Some of them may already be on my listening list, but it's always great to discover something new. Happy listening.

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

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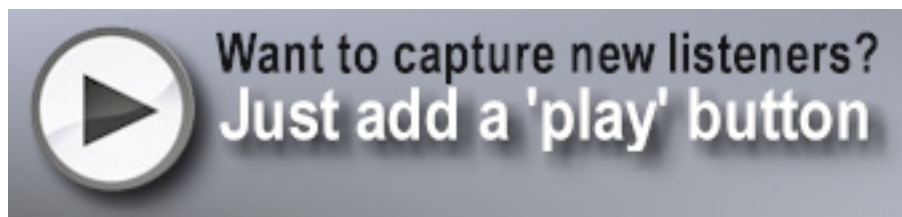


Note : some features in WavePad are time limited until a licence is purchased.

www.nch.com.au/wavepad/masters.html

OCP: One Click Player

My reasoning behind the One Click player



First of all, forget the geeks, techies and computer savvy; let's concentrate on the one target you really want - the average Joe.

Here are some accepted facts: the home computer is fast becoming the home entertainment centre. People are now sitting before a new screen, one that is multi-talented and, more to the point, controllable, but these people are both guarded and cautious. No longer will they download an unknown entity or install a new programme. The terms 'virus' and 'trojan' not perhaps properly understood but, nonetheless, they create a natural barrier of resistance. We must also bear in mind that many machines are family machines, shared by all within the household, so tampering with them is not acceptable.

Echoing the words of Mr Vobes and the thoughts of a few others, we realise that as wonderful as RSS may be, it will not 'sell' your podcast. No one would buy an unlabeled tin from a store - they need a picture on the front. Shop windows are designed to attract, so how can this be applied to the humble podcast?

The listener, or prospective customer (if you prefer) needs to be enticed, and the easiest way to do that is make your 'cast playable from the screen: the One Click Player. I have noticed that many sites now feature this simple addition of a play button that starts playing your latest creation there and then. Only last month Colin Meeks

wrote a simple 'how to' for one such player in this magazine.

There is nothing more off-putting than a poorly constructed site, and I'm not talking about the overall design here, I'm talking about putting obstacles in the way. Some sites only have an iTunes option, and if you don't have iTunes, then you have to download and install it (a barrier). Others just display the RSS logo or, worse still, the feed address (another barrier). Yes, I know it's simple to do for us, but not for Joe.

Many a time I've downloaded a media file only to find I don't have the correct player installed. What do I do? I delete the file and go elsewhere. After all, I've got three players on my machine, and I don't want any more; and let's face it, we all have a lazy streak. I don't think I'm unusual in not having an aggregator on my machine, or even iTunes. I reflect the vast majority of computer owners who just use what's there. Don't expect or assume too much of Joe. Remember, he's new to this. Ask yourself why YouTube is so successful. Do you have to install a player to watch? No, it just works ... one click.

More and more people now catch up with the world through their computer. Time is put aside to answer emails, read the news, communicate with friends and family. The computer now has a firm place in our lives and, in some cases, a room of its own - the home office. No longer the exclusive domain of the teenager, the computer scene has been crashed by us 'oldies' searching for content on our level.

I have nothing against RSS Feeds or iTunes; they serve their purpose admirably, but they are secondary tools to the computer itself. So what would make it easier for Joe when he lands on a podcast site? The site needs to identify itself for what it is, and what is its subject matter:

"In this month's show we look at what's new down on the farm, hear Eileen strangle her first chicken, Jeremy come to terms with pig slurry and Nathan network-wire the old barn. Hear a five-minute sample of our half-hour show here [button] or download here [another button] and enjoy later"



"What"

OK, perhaps a little over the top, but it does the job. It entices or teases with the subject matter. You now know the show is monthly and it lasts half an hour and it's based on farm life, but most of all, you can hear it or a sample, with an option to download for later. The important thing is that you have been invited, and all the information you need to know is within 15 seconds of reading. Attention is held.

As time passes, Joe will learn about RSS and podcatchers; after all, we had to. Let's make it simple. Joe likes it that way.

An interesting item recently Digg'd on the subject

http://thepisstakers.com/weekly/webtech3oct06_files/RSS-Really-Sad-Statistics.html

The quirky Podcast List

BRAN

<http://www.bran.com.au>

Australia's diverse and very off-the-wall look at technology - "and probably some other stuff" - clinched it for me, just let it flow over you. (May contain some Adult Content)

It's a Purl Man

<http://www.itsapurlman.com/>

A podcast about a guy knitter with yarn issues. (What more can I say!)

The Kissy Bits

<http://kissybits.blogspot.com>

Reading, writing and enjoying romance. (Ahhhhh)

History According to Bob

<http://www.summahistorica.com>

Rastputin, Cleopatra, Barbary Pirates, it's all here, folks.

Dare to Danish

<http://theprint.vox.com/library/posts/tags/danish+lesson>

Learn those important phrases you'll never need in Danish, such favourites as - "My ham is frozen - and not to forget the classic - "Lumps in my gravy"

Tune In Real Estate

www.tuneinrealestate.com

A new web based system, free to the public and easy to use couples Podcasting/Google Map/Blogging and a new Telephone-to-Podcast technology in order to make available instantly, details of the quickly changing real estate market on a micro neighborhood level. (Open-house days by wifi?)

The quirky Podcast List

Reveal Yourself

Each month we ask an artist to supply their answers to a scientifically selected set of questions (well, OK – we lied – they were selected by resident PUM boffins Grant Mason and Marilyn Madsen), in the hope that their responses cast a little more light on what makes them tick...

(With thanks to Alastair Taylor of Edinburgh's finest alt-country-power-popsters Dropkick – find out more at www.dropkickmusic.co.uk and <http://www.myspace.com/dropkickmusic>)

Who are you? **Alastair Taylor**

What do you do? **Audio-visual technician/professional pervert**

How long have you done it? **7 years**

Do you have a hidden talent? **I make great cheese sauce**

Stereo or iPod? **Both**

What ringtone is on your mobile phone? **I keep it on silent so I never hear it**

Favourite artist? **Buddy Holly**

Favourite album? **Full Moon Fever - Tom Petty**

Favourite track? **Runaway - Del Shannon**

Biggest influence? **Hank Williams**

What album do you wish you'd never bought? **Joss Stone's first album**

Most treasured possession? **My pink Fender Strat**

Most dog-eared book? **It - Stephen King**

Brand of coffee? **Don't drink coffee**

Food you can't live without? **Yorkie bars**

Favourite labour-saving device? **Computer**

What motto do you live by? **If you watch ITV you will become braindead**

Who is your fictional hero or heroine? **Andy Tucker**

What's the best advice you were ever given? **The salesman in Scayles music who showed me how to hold a "steel" properly when playing lap steel**

Health and happiness or fame and fortune? **Happiness and fortune**

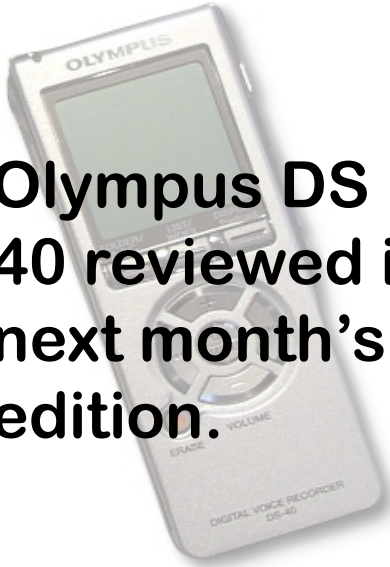


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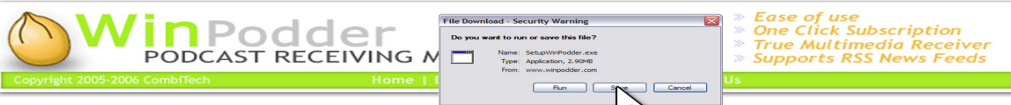
If you know of or are organising a forthcoming event centered around or including podcasting, we'd be happy to promote the event here in Podcast User Magazine.

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