

# podcast user

magazine

Issue 16 May 2007

**“Don’t mention  
the John Cleese  
Podcast!”**



## **plus:**

- Hola! Janet takes us to Spain
- Cuddle up with Cush
- Audacity Masterclass
- “It’s not radio!”
- Mugglecast
- Vobes is Out of Sync

**New Columnists:**

**Julien Smith & Ewan Spence**

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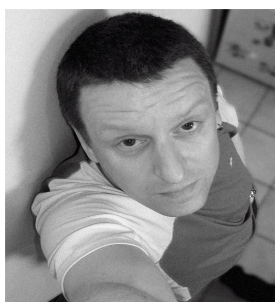
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**PROFILE**  
**Grant Mason**



Once imaginatively described as a 'mad, bike-riding, hairy-kneed Scotsman' by no less a personality than Skippy The Bush Kangaroo, Grant Mason is a shy, retiring, music lover of long standing. He began as a cellist, then self-taught himself guitar and at one point found himself standing at the edge of a stage in a sold-out venue, wearing a bullet-belt and dressed in black, playing the screaming lead solo on Motorhead's 'Killed By Death'. Age has mellowed him somewhat; he now feels about 18 and entertains people in a more genteel fashion with his weekly Three From Leith podcast, bringing incredibly good independent podsafte music to the attention of his audience around the world.

Cover designed by Mark Hunter

# Editorial



# MARK HUNTER

Welcome to the 16th edition of Podcast User Magazine and my first issue as Executive Editor. Sadly, Paul Parkinson had to step down due to work commitments, but he will continue to write for us on a regular basis and, of course, remain a key part of the team here. Thanks for all your hard work, Paul!

This issue of PUM sees the inclusion of three new columnists. We're joined by Canada's Julien Smith and Scotland's Ewan Spence, who will add their voices and opinions to our editorial team, and regular contributor Richard Vobes will provide us with his unique perspective on podcasting in his new column 'Out of Sync'.

And while I'm making announcements, here's a couple more! Firstly, I'm pleased to announce that Simon Toon and Grant Mason are contributing Editors. Simon heads up our excellent reviews team, and Grant will be building our podsafe music section. And it would be remiss of me not to mention the continued hard work of Janet Parkinson and her monthly look at global podcasting, taking us this month to Spain.

As if this isn't enough, did you like our new website? Thanks go to the magazine's Production Co-ordinator Jimmy Hastell for creating our new, clean and simple site.

Like the medium it covers, Podcast User Magazine is enriched by feedback from the consumers. So, please get in touch with us. You can write to me with your comments at [Mark.Hunter@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:Mark.Hunter@podcastusermagazine.com), send in your questions to [help@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:help@podcastusermagazine.com) and provide us with feedback at [general.comments@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:general.comments@podcastusermagazine.com). Oh, and thanks to Paul Hutchinson, you can be our friend at MySpace - <http://myspace.com/podcastusermagazine>.

## 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, we're here to help

## SUBMISSIONS

We are always looking for great new talent. So if you have a topic that you would like to write about, we would be glad to hear from you.

## 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.

## 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.

## ADVERTISERS

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## ATTENTION PODCASTERS!

- Are you a company looking to get into podcasting for your organisation?
- Are you looking for affordable studio premises where you can record your podcast?
- Are you needing a professional studio to record an interview?
- Do you need to record a group discussion or interview?
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- Do you need an ISDN interview to be recorded?

**If the answer to any of these is yes then please, get in touch!**

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Don't believe us? Get in touch! Come and visit the premises for yourself and have a **free one hour** recording session at our facility if you get in touch before June 1<sup>st</sup> 2007. Previous clients include **Talking Voices, The Curzon Cinemas, One Little Indian Records, Resonance FM, Golf Punk magazine** and more...

Contact Darren Hemmings to arrange a visit: telephone 020 7632 9674 or email [dhemmings@thecommentator.com](mailto:dhemmings@thecommentator.com)

 **thecommentator**



# What Just Happened?

## News from the Podosphere

Podcamp NYC took place in New York City on April 7 at The New Yorker Hotel and was another big success for the grassroots movement, with over 700 people in attendance and positive press from the New York Times, CNet, and the New York Sun. Focus now shifts to the PodCamp Europe (PCEU) event being held in Stockholm on June 12-13 in the Stockholm International Fairs and Congress Centre in the southwestern part of the city. Detailed directions and information about this event can be found on the PodCamp wiki .

A crowd of around 4000 people spontaneously arrived at London's Victoria Station at 6:53 p.m. on Wednesday, April 4, to join in what can only be described as an act of mass public clubbing! Organized via email, text, and private message, the flash mob arrived at the station and began dancing away for two hours to music on their MP3 players. The police weren't in a party mood, though, and eventually sent four van-loads of officers to break up the celebrations. It looks like the future of protest AND the future of clubbing is coming to an MP3 device near you!

Thanks to Carlos Tabora, of CEOExpress.com, for his help with increasing our domain-name presence on the web.

Both Apple and Microsoft have made moves this month to offer consumers DRM-free music products. Apple took the lead early in April with the announcement that they will offer EMI's digital catalogue on the iTunes Music Store worldwide from May. The EMI DRM-free tracks will be available alongside the standard DRM-protected catalogue at the higher audio quality of 256 kbps in AAC encoding and will be priced accordingly. Microsoft followed Apple's lead a week later, when Zune's spokeswoman Kathy Asher was quoted on Podcasting News as saying, "Consumers have made it clear that unprotected music is something they want. We plan on offering it to them as soon as our label partners are comfortable with it." The announcement from Apple capped a good month for the company, which announced the sale of its 100-millionth iPod, a figure reached in just five and one-half years.

A report published this month by broadcasting research firm Arbitron stated that iPods and portable media players are the fastest-growing audio platforms but that audiences for traditional radio remained strong. The US-based study concluded that sales of portable media players grew from 22% to 30% in the last year and that some users of these portable devices are now spending less time listening to radio. The study showed that 37% of the US population is aware of podcasting, which is a significant rise in recognition, but only 13% of the people surveyed had ever actually listened to a podcast. More at [http://www.arbitron.com/downloads/digital\\_radio\\_study\\_2007.pdf](http://www.arbitron.com/downloads/digital_radio_study_2007.pdf).



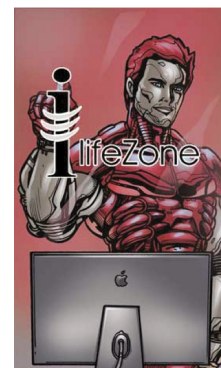
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# A Tribute to Joe Murphy

The new media world has lost one of its great voices



by Jack Mangan

Tens of thousands of listeners had come to love Joe Murphy's wit and gentle nature, as heard during his regular appearances on [Far Point Media's Slice of Sci-Fi](#) and Michael Evo's [Wingin' It!](#) podcast, as well as his stint as co-host/co-creator of the [Kickass Mystic Ninjas](#) with Summer Brooks and David Moldawer. Joe was a paradox: a quiet podcaster. His on-pod words were few, but always chosen carefully, and always the comments either struck with simple truth or brought the house down with laughter.

When Joe was diagnosed in December of 2006 with leiomyosarcoma, a rare form of cancer, the podcasting community rallied in an unprecedented display of love and support. A PayPal fund was established to help offset Joe's medical expenses, and it quickly received thousands of dollars in donations. Listener Alan Smith set up a voicemail line for fans to call in with positive messages. The indie rock band Beatnik Turtle released a song called "[Mason Rocket \(Spy Extraordinaire\)](#)", named for one of Joe's nicknames. Artist Cheyenne Wright created a touching farewell cartoon in Joe's honor. Leann Mabry, of the [Tag in the Seam](#) podcast, found a way to put famed magicians Penn and Teller in contact with Joe. He also heard from author Kelly Armstrong, as well as a few others whose work he greatly admired. Perhaps most notably, Michael R. Mennenga, president of [Far Point Media](#), and his wife Lorrie took Joe into their home to care for him during the final stages of his illness.

On April 1, 2007, the leiomyosarcoma ended his life. Joe was 34. Cancer has also taken his mother and sister; he is survived only by his father. He'd faced the end the way he lived his life, with quiet dignity and courage.

Far Point Media released a Joe Murphy [Tribute show](#) two days after his death; it featured recorded and in-studio messages from a number of Joe's closest friends, including [Evo Terra](#) and Mur Lafferty.

Leann Mabry, along with help from [Clair High](#), [P.G. Holyfield](#), and [Chris Miller](#), has also created a website to commemorate Joe's life and to help spread awareness about the terrible affliction that cut his so tragically short. Please visit <http://joemurphymemorialfund.org/> to learn more. Please donate if you can to all applicable charities. And please listen to archived episodes of the [Slice of Sci-Fi](#), [Wingin' It!](#), and [Kickass Mystic Ninjas](#) podcasts to get to know this wonderful man.

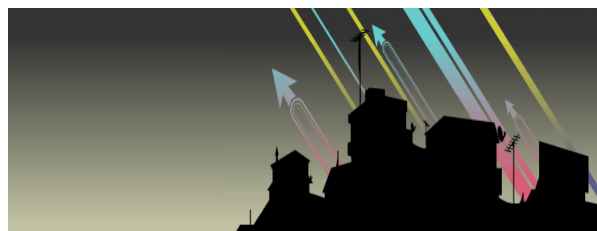
He will be missed but will never be forgotten.

# Review Roulette



If you want to find some new, unexpected podcasts, you could do it by randomly choosing them out of Podcast Alley or Podcast Pickle. It's a risky business – you never know what you're going to get! We in the roulette team take that risk for you, by tirelessly listening to them, no matter how good or bad they may be, and then we present you with our combined assessment.

This month the random podcast picker seemed to have a thirst for stories! It picked out for us three different podcasts that all happened to approach storytelling, albeit from different angles.



## Stories Mania

<http://storiesmania.podomatic.com/>

StoriesMania (<http://storiesmania.net/>) is an online community offering a wide range of activities for writers including chatting with peers, having work reviewed or commented upon and participate in writing challenges. One offshoot

of the site is the StoriesMania podcast, which contains readings of stories and poems by writers who participate in the community.

The stories and poems featured on the podcast range widely in genre and include detective stories, love poems, horror stories, comedic poems, sci-fi yarns and any other genre you might imagine. Most people would find something they like (my personal favourite was a fun poem entitled Raining Cats and Dogs) and as most episodes are less than five minutes long, it's not a huge investment of time to surf through a few randomly selected episodes.

Each episode features a single story or poem. There is no host chit chat or other extraneous content in this podcast and, depending on your preferences as a listener, this is either the best or worst feature of the podcast. I can appreciate the simplicity of a story and nothing else, but I found it a difficult podcast to connect with. Themed episodes, longer episodes featuring several stories, invitations to comment on the stories, providing information about the authors and hearing from the authors about their writing process are a few things which would make me more likely to return to this podcast on a regular basis. One of the significant benefits to podcasting as a medium is the capacity it offers to build a strong two-way relationship between audience and content providers, and this podcast seems to have ignored that opportunity entirely.

Some episodes of this podcast have background music or other audio effects, while others are simple readings; some are read by multiple characters playing the 'parts', while others are read by a single person. This inconsistency of production is another aspect adding to the disjointed feel of the show.

In podcast fanatic terms this show scores: Will listen again; maybe not religiously to every episode.

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

Concise and straightforward format with interesting stories and poems in various styles on a great variety of subjects. The audio quality varied greatly from show to show.

Text by Marilyn Madsen

**Content: 3.0**

**Production: 2.5**

# John Bell

Bell's in the Batfry  
<http://thebatfry.com/>



Zany comedy drama serial/sketch show with about two episodes issued per month. We follow the fictional adventures of John Bell in each 15- to 20-minute episode. The show features a varying cast of voices, with some regular characters and many other colourful characters we meet along the way. It's been going since October 2005, so it's certainly no podfader.

The man behind this show, John Bell, has an alter-ego known as Professor Zounds, who describes himself as "an improvisational comedian who specializes in comedy with sound effects!" This is reflected in the style of the podcast, which is partly pre-written and partly improvised by the players, allowing the show to follow a clear structure and yet have a feeling of spontaneity in its delivery.

Each show is intricately produced, with extensive, if crude, use of stereo sound to place each character in the soundscape, and comedic sound effects. It probably takes quite a while to post-produce the show, especially where the dialogues are stitched together from recordings made in different locations. The end result is pretty effective and stands up very well in comparison with the sort of audio dramas you would hear on the radio and which would cost a lot more to produce.

On the Web the show is functionally supported by a simple podcast blog with short but sufficient show-notes, RSS feed, and links to each MP3 file – all the essentials, really – plus a forum for discussions, questions and competitions, allowing for some listener interaction. A one-click podcast player would be an added bonus.

Reminiscent of zany radio comedies of the past, this show has a charming, nostalgic feel, and the scope for listener interaction gives it a worthwhile added dimension. Personally, I'm not sufficiently hooked by the storyline or fascinated by the comedic style to keep this on my playlist, but it is a likeable serial drama and could be the ideal light-hearted entertainment for those times when you have a spare 20 minutes for a listen.

Text by Simon Toon

You have to listen to a couple of episodes of this one to get into the groove of the characters but if you like quirky humour it's worth the effort. Comedy4Cast now has some competition on my iPod for favourite sketch comedy podcast.

Text by Bernadette

Found it difficult to follow the story lines with so many sound effects and voice manipulations. This was a hard listen for me. This podcast would most likely appeal to fans of old time radio shows and those younger in years.

Text by Marilyn Madsen

**Content: 3.3**

**Production: 3.8**



## HOMETOWN TALES

<http://www.hometowntales.com>

Killer Bees? Haunted Ships? Places That Don't Feel Quite Right?

The Hometown Tales Podcast covers the gamut of urban legends, strange stories and the unexplained.

Hometown Tales is created by independent producer Gene Fitzpatrick and writer Bryan Minoque on a near biweekly basis and released in many formats. Besides a podcast, it is a TV show that can be found on cables stations in the states of New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. As a videocast it is posted on iTunes, YouTube and VMIX as well as the website. As a radio program, it can be heard on KYOU-AM San Francisco and KDLL-AM 630 in Phoenix. These guys have the media covered!

Having been producing a podcast since 4th March 2005, Gene and Bryan have been consistent in their output with their 152nd show just posting. The diversity of subjects is very broad and should have something of interest for everyone. To quote our hosts: "We bring you the history behind the legends and the stories behind the facts." Each show has a loose theme for the day chosen by Gene or Bryan and then supplemented by tales sent in from listeners around the world. With a relaxed and friendly delivery, these two soon draw one into their world of oddities and the bizarre. The audio quality is good, though sometimes the levels are a bit unbalanced. With the tales piquing my interest, this reviewer ended up listening to over ten shows and watching all of the videocasts at the website!!

The website for Hometown Tales is user friendly and well organized. It was a breeze to watch the well-produced videocasts at the site. Good marks for the RSS and iTunes links being on the home page; no digging required. The site has a regularly updated blog, a column with links for the 'Tales of Today' and a shop for merchandise.

This podcast/videocast has all the bases covered when it comes to the mysteries of local culture past and present around the world....

Text by Marilyn Madsen

How can a podcast that unearths a whole swag of serial-killing mums be anything other than entertaining? This show appeals to the ghoulish interest we humans seem to have in all things mysterious and deadly and is thoroughly entertaining to boot.

Text by Bernadette

### **Content 3.9**

### **Production 3.3**

This month's podcasts were reviewed by:  
Bernadette from [podcastfanatic.com](http://podcastfanatic.com)  
Marilyn Madsen  
Simon Toon

The ratings given are the average of the scores given by our team of reviewers out of five.



# Hola España!

Global Voices by Janet Parkinson

Finding independent podcasters in Spain proved to be a greater task than expected. There are lots of radio stations and quite a few podfades (neither of which I include because this article all about independent and current podcasters), but slowly it seems the word is spreading, and it will be interesting to return in the future to see how the community is expanding. So, here's this month's selection for those Spanish lovers!



Kafelog  
<http://www.kafelog.com>

Only started at the beginning of this year, Oscar Baeza, Franciso Zaplana and Robert Shepherd (all based in Alicante) are producing Kafelog on a regular bi-weekly basis. In Spanish they chat enthusiastically about a range of subjects - mostly technical but veering off into other areas as the conversation takes them. They seem to be gathering a good following and I think it will be interesting to return to see how they are doing in six months' time, once they have a few more shows under their belt. Quite a bit of popping and breathing noise going on - remember to keep a good distance from the microphones, guys, or invest in a popper-stopper or two!



**Production: 3.5**  
**Content: 3.5**



# Comunicando podcast

Revista sonora de tecnología practica con musica libre

Communicandopodcast

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

Jose Gelado brings you a bi-weekly podcast in Spanish about technology, the latest news, reviews and comments. In an upbeat tempo, Jose moves along at a quick pace, and even though it is an hour long, the production is such that he holds the audience's attention well, has a good flow and has added music to break up the conversation.



**Production: 4.5**  
**Content: 4**



## Notes From Spain

Benjamin Curtis, who is English, and his Spanish partner Marina run three podcasts - all extremely well produced, informative and a definite must for anyone interested in the Spanish scene. Each site is very well organised - and on top of this they also run a very active forum. Their enthusiasm and professionalism has to be admired.

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

Ben leads Notes from Spain in English with Marina acting as co-host. Here they bring you interviews, travel secrets and extremely interesting sound-seeing tours from various events and places in Spain. Podcasting since 2005 on a bi-weekly basis, they are never short of new themes and ideas.

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

Marina takes the lead in English, providing some wonderful Spanish recipes. The constant sizzling in the background is mouth-watering, and the excellent transcripts of recipes provided are concise and easy to follow.

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

Here they provide the 'Intermediate Spanish Podcast' and the 'Advanced Spanish Podcast', where they speak in Spanish about various subjects at different levels of language ability. These are excellent lessons for those with a basic grounding in Spanish. Also available to buy are worksheets for each lesson at US\$1.85 - though I reckon they're worth a whole lot more....

Thanks go to Phillip Capper for the great shot in the title: Constantina, Andalucia. Next month I'm heading off to Holland, which should be interesting, so if anyone can point me in the right direction of some must-listen or must-watch podcasts, then that would be great!



**Production: 4**  
**Content: 4.5**

# Olympus DS-40

Digital Voice Recorder

by Phil Clark



Olympus DS-40 Digital Voice Recorder

Estimated Retail Price: \$199.99

Street price as low as: \$150/£137

Package Contents:

DS-40

2 x AAA Batteries

Stereo Earphones

USB Cable

DSS Player Software

(No AC adapter, although it does use one)

Accessories available:

Remote Control, microphone connectable

Case (not allowing operation while in case, though)

Ni-MH Battery Charger

Ni-MH Batteries (1.2V,800mAh) unknown if this is proprietary although I'm thinking not

Software:

DSS Player Software

In the February 2007 issue, PUM indicated that a new device was available from Olympus, with the headline 'Olympus moves into podcasting?' This device was the DS-40, a very small DVR (Digital Voice Recorder) that looked like one of their handheld dictation machines. It seems that just like several models of cars that may be based upon the same vehicle frame, with just different functions and bodywork, the DS-40 is in a similar state. However, the functionality of this little device does extend far beyond a simple dictation machine.

My approach to testing the capabilities of the DS-40 are just like that stalwart of the PUM, Jimmy Hastell - take it out of the box and see what it can do without referring to the instruction manual unless you have to! And so it was, upon hearing the delivery man ring the bell and deliver the demo model, I rushed to open the box, pull out the contents, and do a swift once-over of the device's layout and buttons.

I slapped a couple of AAA batteries into the easily accessible battery compartment, turned on the device, pressed record, and vocally described the contents of the package as a first test. There is an option to use the removable stereo microphone, or to use the one that is built into the top of the machine. I opted for the stereo mic, as at that time I didn't realize it was actually removable. To listen back to recordings, you can use an earpiece or listen through the rather small and 'tinny' built-in speaker. The former is recommended over the latter. I chose to plug a USB cable into the side port, and my Windows laptop recognized the device immediately, treating it as another drive with a drive letter. I transferred the file and played it with Windows Media Player. The DS-40 records in WMA format, apparently for its highly compressed profile, but it plays back both WMA and MP3 formats.

My initial impression on the quality of the recording was that it was very clear, and the stereo ambient effect is good, although if one person is recording it is disturbing to hear yourself fade from one channel to the other as you naturally move your head in speech. There are three recording modes - DICT, CONF, and Lecture (more on this later), and I had used the default DICT mode.

As the device is so small, only 1¼" wide by 3¾" long by ½" thick, it does pick up some noise from your hand as it is shifted, or as you normally move around. My recording was 1:58 seconds long, and in the WMA format it was 943kb at 192 Kbps/ 44.1 kHz. Converted to MP3 (using third-party software), it increases to 2.7Mb for the same sample rate. Olympus claims to get 17 hours 20 minutes of recording time on the 512Mb capacity of the DS-40 in Stereo High Quality mode. I haven't tested that yet, but I'll bet the battery dies before reaching that threshold!

I mentioned that I had converted the WMA file to MP3 format; initially I had tried reading the WMA file with Audacity v1.2.3, but it did not recognize the format. Sound Forge and Cool Edit seem to read it fine, however, and conversion is simple once it is put into this type of third-party software.

We did take the DS-40 out on a Field Test, using it as a backup recorder to my main Edirol R-1 during a recording session at a beer festival at Goose Island Brewery in Chicago.

Actually, it was my co-host, Mike Lingafelter, who was doing the 'driving' on this. He connected an external Shure C606 utility mic and wandered off among the attending crowd. One of the resulting recordings can be heard as an extract from the Brit and Yankee podcast, by clicking here



#### DS40 Sample One

Mike reports: "When I was given the Olympus recorder, I had no time to read up on it or set it up. With that in mind, it was easy to use, and it is very small. The sound was very good with and without the removable stereo microphone. With the microphone removed, I was able to use my Shure C606 microphone and put the Olympus in my shirt pocket. This worked out great!

"As to the 'pros' and 'cons', as I saw it, the 'pros' are that it's small, but not too small to the point where you would lose it in your pocket. It has built-in speakers, which I liked, as I didn't have headphones with me. The removable microphone takes AAA batteries. And the price was reasonable for this model with 512MB of internal flash memory. As to the 'cons', it only records in WMA format, and I didn't have enough time to fully explore it because USBrit confiscated it away from me as soon as the event ended!! Overall, I did like the Olympus, and for having it for only a short time, I would give it 8 out of 10."

As Mike has not had the benefit of using a digital recorder on a regular basis, it seems that this device appeals to the first-time user. The actual recordings made in the field did need a bass boost, done in Audacity (200Hz/6db), but that was all the post-editing that was done. It was very noisy at the event, and you did have to raise your voice to be heard. The recording shows signs of 'coarseness', but is very listenable.

We also did a recording using the DS-40 onboard stereo mic; however, for the resulting podcast segment we converted it to mono. At the end of our beer festival field test, we placed the DS-40 on a restaurant table between Lingo and me and recorded our summarization of the afternoon. Again, I added a little bass boost to the resulting recording in post-production.

The original and adjusted file sample, for comparison purposes, can be heard by clicking here.



DS40 Sample two

We thought that the result was pretty darn good, based on the conditions of the environment, which was a very noisy restaurant.

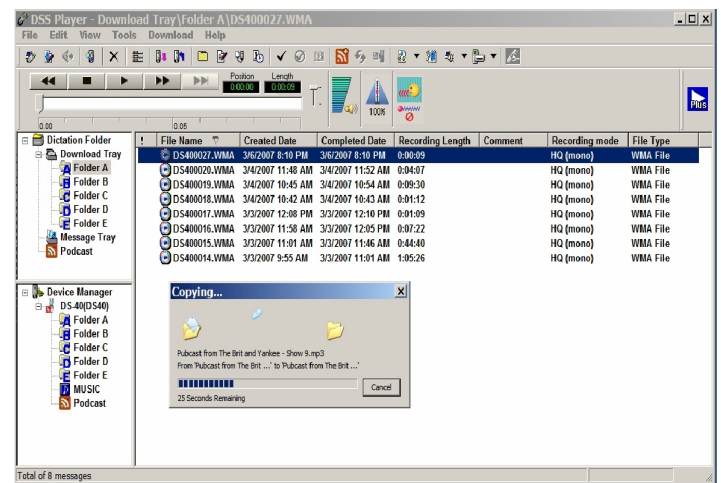
I made earlier mention of the three settings - DICT, CONF, and Lecture. These settings allow you to increase the microphone sensitivity. In a close situation you would set it to DICT, for small meetings use CONF, and for a conference hall setting where you would record at far distances, you would use Lecture. At the field event, we decided to standardize on CONF, so maybe that resulted in a slight over-amplification of the sound. There are a couple of other options provided that can affect the recording quality. These are the Noise Cancel function and the Voice Filter. Noise Cancel proved difficult to invoke based on following the instruction manual steps, but I'll put that down to user error! The Voice Filter responded as advertised, and listening on headphones to recordings made in a noisy environment, the difference in playback was noticeable.

From the aspect of usability, we initially found the size of the device somewhat difficult to operate because of the small size of the buttons. If you have 'fat fingers', you need a while to get used to where the controls are on the side of the recorder. The main controls are located on the right-side of the device and are Record, Stop, and Play buttons, plus the Power On slider, which can be set to Hold to prevent inadvertently pressing the other controls.

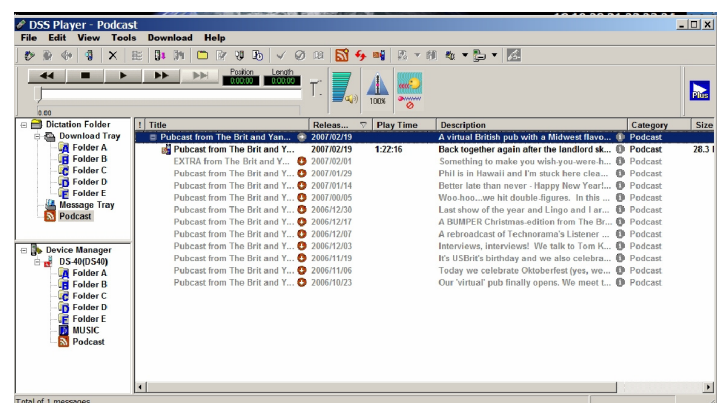
The recorded files are stored in one of eight folders: Root, Folder A through E, Music, and Audible. The actual tree structure is an interesting concept, and can be useful if you intend to record many different files of different topics. If you go back to the dictation-machine concept, it makes sense to categorize recordings, for example several different lectures. Our opinion is that this has limited value if you are using this to record podcast material in the field; we used only one folder, as each folder can hold up to 200 files. Why bother to use a different folder? Your opinion of course may differ!

The Music folder is used for podcast files, and the Audible folder for some type of purchased audible content that we did not have an opportunity to fully explore. The podcast files are obtained by installing the accompanying software, DSS Player. The version that comes with the product has an upgrade available for a nominal fee of \$9.99, which provides for additional benefits. These include seamless connection to IBM's Via-Voice V10 and Dragon NaturallySpeaking V8 (for Windows only), a file split and binding function, and the ability to access the recorder's menu setting through PC. Why this is an 'extra' and not included is beyond this reviewer, but it seems to go back to the dictation roots again.

As to the podcast aspects of the device and software, it provides easy to add feeds to the DSS Player software - simply select Tools, Podcast, Subscribe to Podcast, and add the RSS Feed XML URL. The software then retrieves the information for each episode, downloads the latest one and provides an option to download the others. After that, the device performs like any other



MP3 player, and listening to podcasts using an earpiece provides for an easy, pocket-sized MP3 player. The PC software shows all the entries in full, those downloaded and those that could be downloaded.



The device is not as sophisticated as some players in this area, but it certainly provides all that is needed in terms of basic functionality. The LCD display is easy to read and decipher.

In summary, I might respectfully describe this device as a glorified dictation machine. Don't get me wrong; this is not intended as an insult. It has all the capabilities of a professional digital recorder, plus it can be used to play podcasts, with few problems to actually get the content into the device. If I had any gripes it would be that there just isn't enough fullness to the recordings; there's an overall feeling of 'tinny-ness' to the final results, and I would have liked to have had a tad more depth and bass. Also, the box does not include an AC adaptor; you have to purchase this as an extra. If you are using this as your podcast player of choice, running off a mains adaptor would be an advantage and a requirement, especially if you are downloading several podcast editions at one time. Come on Olympus, you're cheaping out!

On the plus side, if you consider the pocket-size of this unit and use it as an 'on-hand-at-a-moment's-notice' device, it could become something you rely on to get that exclusive recording for your podcast. A device that is just slightly larger than a cigarette lighter proves to be just the job to carry around in your pocket for instant recordings!

As a secondary recording device, at a reasonable street price of \$150 in the US, it might be worth purchasing. In the UK, Amazon sells the DS-40 at 199.95 GBP, which seems a little excessive, particularly when you can obtain a full 24bit MP3/Wave Recorder for another 100 GBP or less.

This reviewer would give Olympus a B+ grade, 7 out of 10, slightly above average, and a nice entry effort into the podcasting market.

Phil Clark  
Mike Lingafelter  
Pubcast from The Brit and Yankee  
[www.thebritandyankee.com](http://www.thebritandyankee.com)  
Olympus DS 40

Watch this space in next month's edition when we review the Edirol R-9 Digital Recorder.

## DIARY DATES

### MAY - TEXAS USA

Podcamp San Antonio May 19  
Historic Sunset Station Depot  
1174 E.Commerce. San Antonio TX

### JUNE - SWEDEN EUROPE

Podcamp Europe 12-13 June  
Stockholm International Fairs  
S-125 80 Stockholm, Sweden  
Mässvägen 1, Stockholm/Älvsjö, Sweden

### JULY - MISSOURI USA

Podcamp MidWest 20-21 July  
Kansas City, MO  
Venue to be announced

### SEPTEMBER - CALIFORNIA USA

Podcast & New Media Expo 28-30 September  
Ontario Convention Center  
Ontario CA  
See page 40 for more details



## What Just Happened?

News from the Podosphere

### Ubercaster official release

Ubercaster, which was reviewed by Bob Cartwright in issue 13 (page 13) is now out of Beta and is available for \$79.95 or with Feeder for \$95.00

<http://www.ubercaster.com>

### Who's back?

Tom from [www.podcastwho.com](http://www.podcastwho.com) is pleased to announce to all Dr Who fans that the podcast is back, after a 10-month hiatus, timed perfectly to coincide with the new series on the television.

### Don't quit your day job – Business News April 9

Interesting article by this business magazine, which comes up with some very interesting and encouraging figures, despite the article's title. The comments are well worth a glance over. [Link](#)

# Using Audacity for the first time

## For Windows, Mac and Linux

by jimmy hastell

In this first instalment about using Audacity, we will guide you through downloading, installing and making a simple recording.

Why Audacity? Two reasons: it's free, and it's a popular choice amongst podcasters and home recorders.

### Downloading and installation:

First you need to download Audacity itself.

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

The first thing you will notice is that there are two main download boxes: 'Stable' and 'Beta'. Ignore 'Beta', because this is a newer version that is under test and it may contain bugs. From the 'Stable' box, select the operating system you are using. In this example we will be concentrating on the Windows option. A new screen opens with the download link and extra options. For the moment, just click on the download link marked . . .

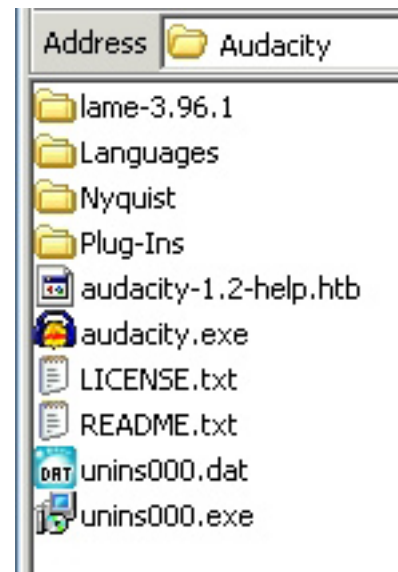
### Audacity 1.2.6 installer (.exe file, 2.1MB)

(this is the version available at the time of writing)

Whilst you are on that screen, also download the link marked **Lame MP3 encoder**.

When the downloads have finished, close the web browser and fire off the downloaded file called **audacity-win-1\_1.2.6.exe**, this will install Audacity on your hard drive in the Programme Files Folder.

Next fire off the Lame MP3 encoder you downloaded, this file is called **lame-3\_1.96.1.zip**. This file should unpack it's self and creates a folder called **lame-3.96.1**, copy this folder and place it within the Audacity folder.



**Brief explanation:** Audacity will only save audio as WAV files, which will be huge, so to enable it to save audio in MP3 format requires a 'plug-in' programme, called Lame. The reason we have placed it in the same folder as Audacity itself is simply one of ease. Once it has been used it will be in place and will not require setting up again.

## First look:

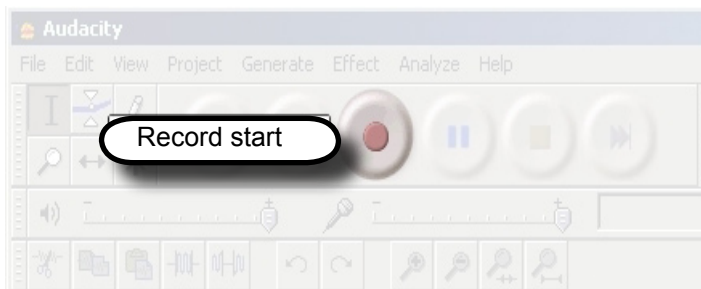
### Firing off Audacity for the first time

We're not going to waste time telling you what each and every tool does, because you just want to see it working. We're just going to use two buttons: record and stop.

In order to be able to record, you will need an input device such as a microphone. A cheap desktop mic or one of those headsets that includes a small microphone arm will do fine. Plug in the jack-plug from the microphone in to MIC or SOUND IN socket in the back of your computer.

Important note, it is recommended that any desktop speakers you have are turned off whilst recording, as this may cause screeching or howl-around, commonly known as feedback.

With Audacity ready on the computer screen, place your mouse over the 'record' button and click . .

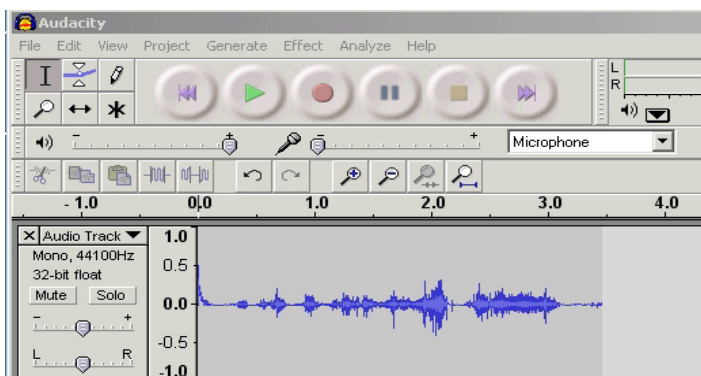


Now say something! (If you're at a loss for words, read a sentence out of a book.)

To stop recording, just click the 'stop' button.



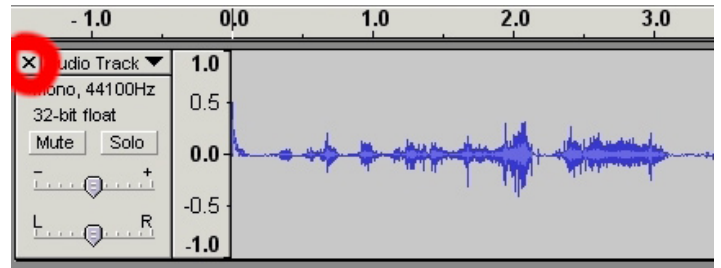
What you should have now on the screen is something resembling this:



(If you have nothing at all or you have a blank bar, then go directly to the section entitled 'Setting Up Audacity - A Rough Guide' after this item.)

So now you have your first recording, and chances are it was not as you expected (press the space bar on your keyboard to play it). For a start, it was in mono rather than stereo, and your voice sounded distant or weak. This is normal; it all needs to be set up to your own personal tastes. We're just getting you up and running for the moment.

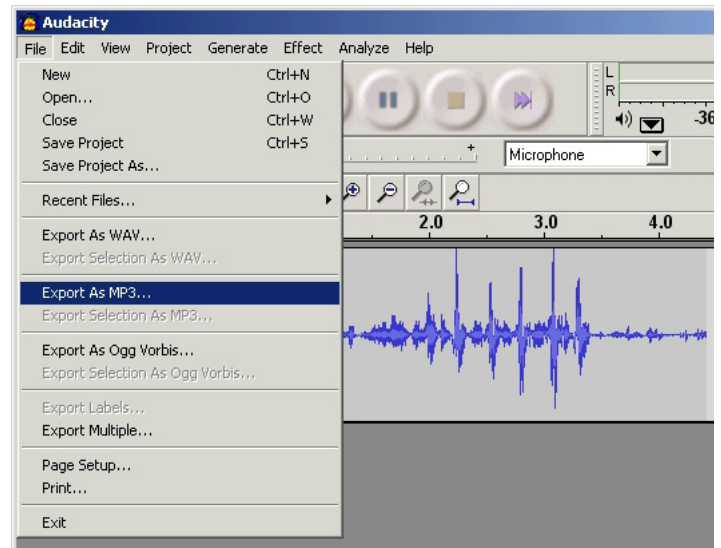
To scrap that recording and try again, just click the X in the box shown here.



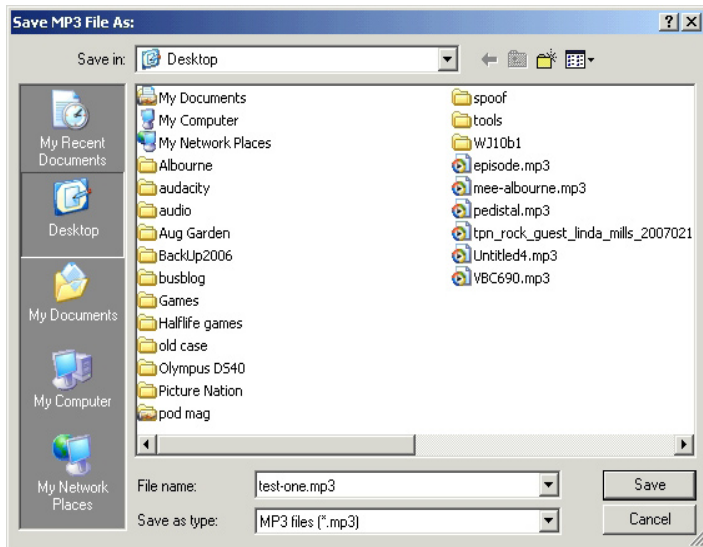
If your voice was too distant, then get a little nearer the microphone. Try to talk over, under or across the mic but not directly into it, as this often causes 'pops' and blasts that happen when you breathe out as you talk. The quality of the microphone can be a factor too, but don't rush out and buy an expensive studio mic just yet.

### To save a recording

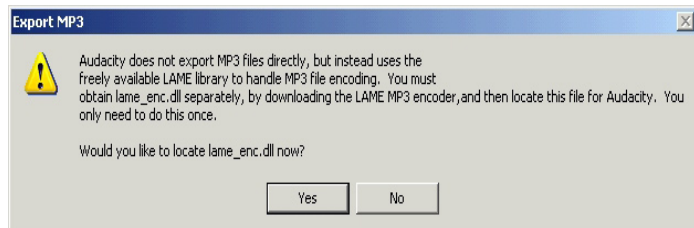
We shall now save our masterpiece so we can look back at it and laugh at our early attempts. From the file menu on the top bar, select 'Export As MP3'.



A standard 'file save' box will open. Here you need to give the sound recording a name. In this example I have called it 'test-one.mp3'. Note that I am saving the file to the desktop so I know where to find it. I would suggest you create a file just for recordings.

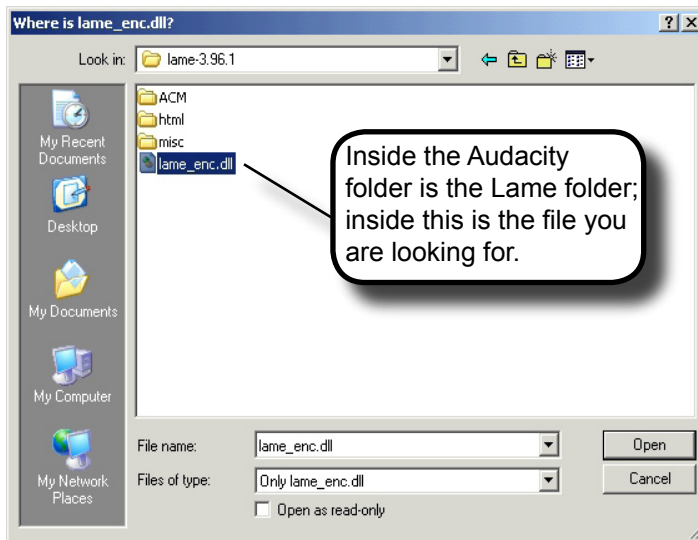
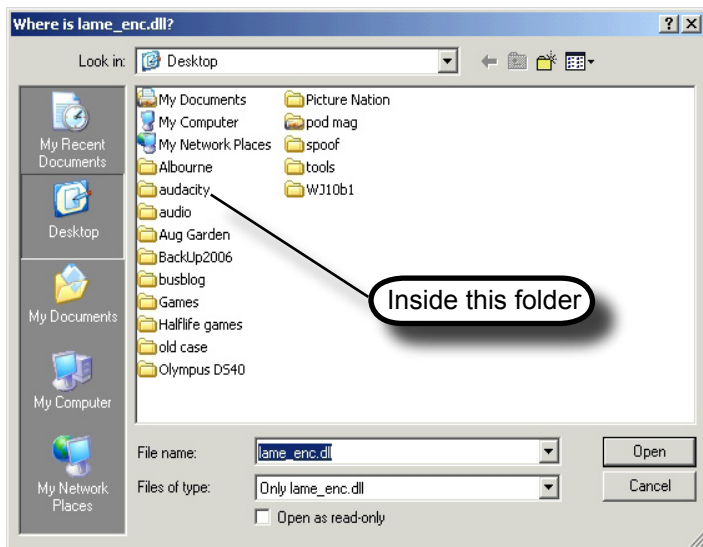


This is the moment that Audacity finds that it can not save an MP3 without the help of another programme (remember Lame?). A warning box appears.

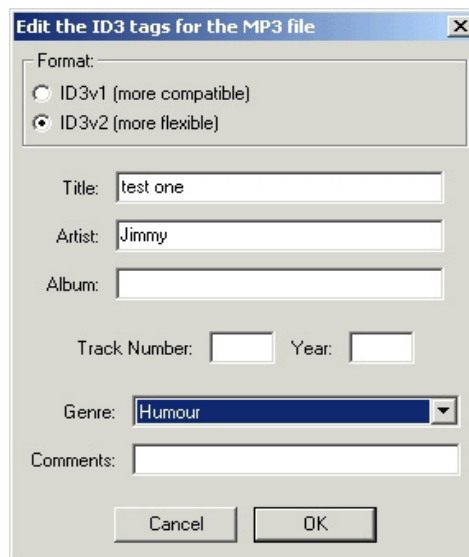


Fortunately, we have already prepared for this eventuality and are ready to deal with it. Click **Yes**. A new box will appear. You will need to find the Audacity folder (on your main drive in Programme files) and then open the Lame folder within it to click on the file called

**lame\_enc.dll** and click **Open**



This will make the connection. Luckily you will only ever have to do this once. Now a new box has appeared on the screen. Here you can enter a few details, if you wish, and clicking OK will save the MP3 file.



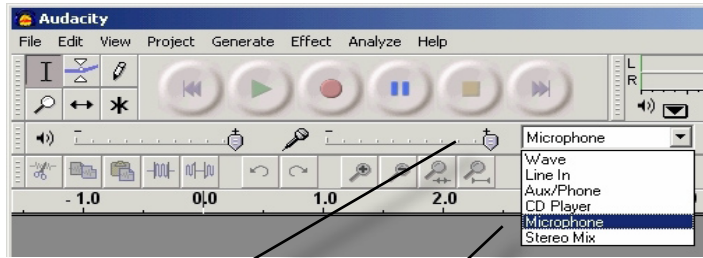
Next time it will all be set up in place, and saving will be a one- or two-click event.

Next month we shall look at editing a voice recording to remove the um's and ah's, coughs and stutters and improve the volume in selected places

Did you know that Audacity is not just a great tool for podcasting? You can also use it to transfer vinyl and cassette recordings to your hard drive in digital format, which can then be transferred to a CD or MP3 player!

## Setting Up Audacity - A Rough Guide

If the recording failed completely, then check the following options.

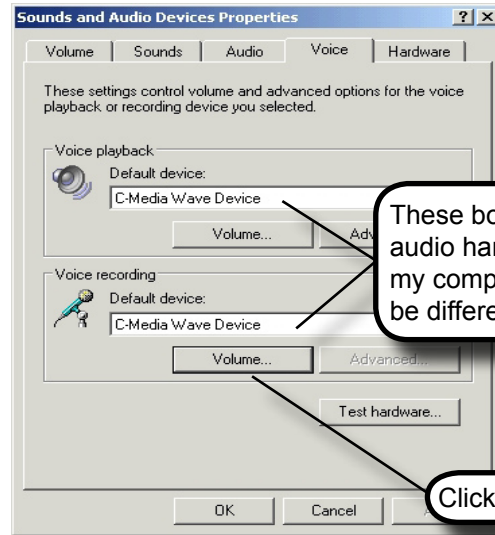


Is the Microphone volume up?

Is the Microphone selected as the input device?

Making sure Windows' own audio controls are set up correctly.

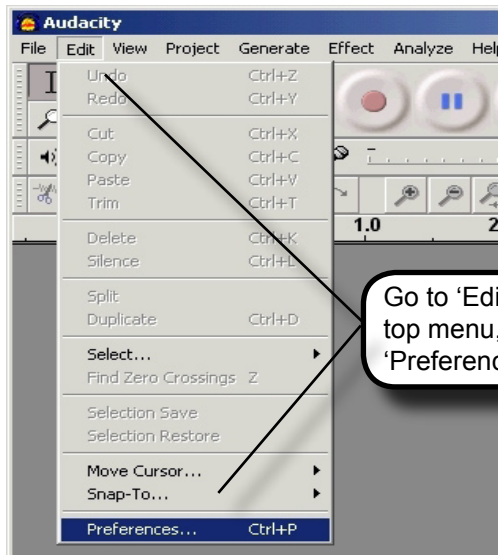
To open up Windows' own audio options, go to 'Start', Settings, Control Panel' and click on 'Sounds and audio devices', this will open up the following box . . .



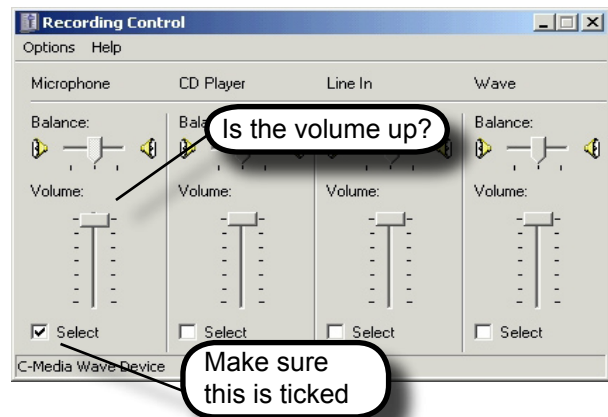
These boxes display the audio hardware used by my computer; yours may be different.

Click this button

To change the recording from mono to stereo

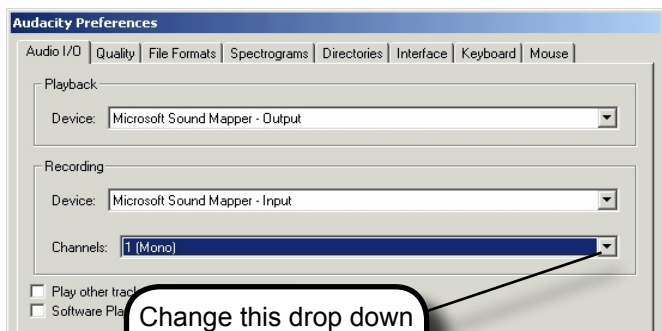


Go to 'Edit' on the top menu, then select 'Preferences'.



Is the volume up?

Make sure this is ticked



Change this drop down menu to '2 (stereo)'

If none of the above solve your problem then feel free to drop an email to

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

and we will be more than happy to try and find the solution for you from our team of experts (The readers)

# Audacity



# John Cleeese



podcast

What happens when old school meets new media? How does a Cambridge-educated, Academy Award-nominated, Emmy-winning comedian and actor reach out to a global fan base from the comfort of his California ranch? Would you be surprised to know that the answer to both questions is 'podcasting'?

John Cleese was born in England in 1939. As a law student at Downing College, Cambridge University, he became recognised for his comedic ability through his involvement with the Cambridge Footlights Revue. As the years progressed, so did Cleese's talent, and along the way he met fellow comedians who would eventually work with him on Monty Python's Flying Circus. In five short years (1969 to 1974) Monty Python's Flying Circus became a television classic and Cleese became best known for sketches about various subjects such as a dead parrot, The Ministry of Silly Walks, and Yorkshiremen.

Then followed what for many really set the benchmark for British comedy: *Fawlty Towers*. Written with his then-current wife and acting partner, Connie Booth, the show starred Cleese as the irascible Basil Fawlty, a character inspired by a hotelier encountered in a Torquay hotel. Cleese was reportedly inspired by the hotelier's mantra: "I could run this hotel fine if it weren't for the guests." The series went to win many awards, going down in the annals of comedy history as one of the finest.

Fast-forward almost 30 years. The internet has changed the way we communicate, find information, enjoy entertainment...and make money. So how does Cleese fit into this revolution?

Dean Whitbread met John Cleese when the latter needed some technical support. Whitbread explains his role in the story:

"John spends much of the year on his California ranch, and while he's there the London office ticks over nicely. But when he's in town, it's all hands on deck. 'The Boss', as he's always referred to, travels a lot with his wife, Alyce Faye, so they're regularly in the UK for business. The first jobs I oversaw for John were very simple support things, stuff like scaling their office internet connection. I made the printers work, sorted their back-up system and along the way was able to save them thousands of pounds."

It was in this role as 'techie' that Whitbread became someone who could translate the mysteries of technology into a language Cleese could understand. Around this time Whitbread also set up a new company with an old friend who he describes as a 'creative powerhouse', Mark Crook.

"We began advising Cleese on website strategies. Our opinion was sought by John's personal assistant, Garry Scott-Irvine. He travels most places with John, has been onstage with him during recent tours and is a self-confessed

hi-tech gadget hound. Sadly, John's website wasn't bringing in paying punters and it was expensive to maintain. It looked good, though."

Paying punters. Does that sound familiar? How many of us would love to have paying punters knocking on the door of our website? And it's a motivating factor for Cleese, too. Scott-Irvine explains:

"While John has a successful career, he's not ridiculously wealthy, so his website was planned around bringing in paying customers, people who'd pay for premium content. This is part of him actively making a living."

Whitbread expands on this:

"In 2005 I suggested podcasting with a view to driving traffic to the site. At Funk, the company I set up with Mark Crook, we had experience with podcasting since November 2004, and we were seeing huge increases in downloads. So it made a lot of sense to get John involved. We agreed to run a six-month trial."

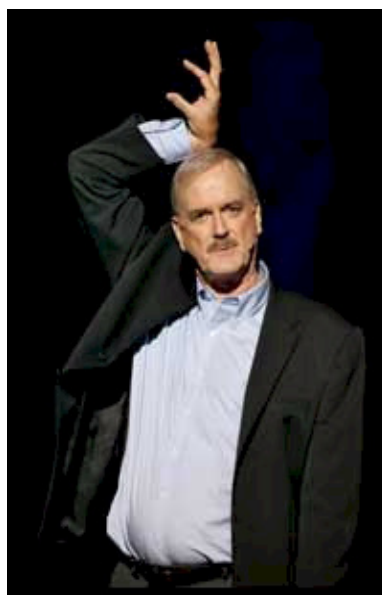
Scott-Irvine continues, "Dean set me up with a Sony mic and an Art USB pre-amp, which has now been replaced with a Zoom Handy Recorder H4. When video is required, I've got a broadcast-quality video camera. Progress was slow at first because John experienced some health problems (all is well now). I'd already recorded a nice introduction, and then, with people arriving looking for new updates from the podcast... well, we had a problem. There were no new updates."

Podcast producers take note. This is very wrong! Your output should be consistent, and if you say you'll have a new podcast out on a particular date or with a certain frequency of release, then you must be true to your word, otherwise people will quickly lose interest - faith, even - in your podcast.

But Whitbread was aware of this and set about putting it right. When you're working for a world-renowned comedian with a reputation for the surreal, then you have the scope for a little 'creative' license. He explains:

"We recorded domestic sounds. A telephone call, the sounds of banging and drilling, making a cup of tea, urinating, washing hands and then stuck them up online."

This served two purposes. The first, and most important, was that it provided content to put in the RSS feed. People expect content to download, and now they had it. But secondly, and interestingly, it created controversy. Were these sounds created by Cleese or weren't they? Was that actually Cleese taking a pee?! The idea worked perfectly, as the rising download numbers testified, with Cleese not yet having actually uttered a word.



Cleese possibly falls outside the demographic of those who understand and embrace new technology, something perhaps apparent by his 1939 birth date. But he's not a Luddite, either, and with Scott-Irvine's technophilia, he was well positioned to create new podcast content.

"At first John used a dictaphone," Scott-Irvine says, "and the resultant audio was dodgy. But he was just using whatever he had at hand, recording whenever he was in the mood." This helps to confirm the idea that it's having something out there, in terms of content, that matters rather than super-fine audio quality, a notion that fledgling podcast producers should take note of. Scott-Irvine continues, "The content was great, and that's what mattered, so Dean and Mark worked hard to rescue it."

But it wasn't until Cleese toured Australia and New Zealand during 2005 and 2006 that the pod-

cast really kicked off. Media interest was piqued by Cleese referring on the podcast to a certain town as “the suicide capital of New Zealand”. Then in April 2006, “Don’t Mention The World Cup”, was released; the song commemorated the 2006 World Cup, the finals for which were held in Germany, homeland of the fictional Fawlty Towers guests who were driven to anger and tears by Basil’s inability to follow his own advice to his staff, “don’t mention the war!” The World Cup song and video did reasonably well financially but very well in terms of press coverage.

The song was promoted through the John Cleese Podcast as well as through other social media vehicles such as YouTube and blogs. “This was the first time we saw revenue driven directly from the podcast”, Whitbread acknowledges.

These days, the podcast has grown and developed both in terms of content and hardware. “The dictaphone is long gone,” smiles Scott-Irvine. “Dean set us up with a Zoom recorder, and I send the MP3 recordings to Funk, who edit them into the podcast. John talks about experiences he’s had, funny anecdotes and observations on the world. The quality has improved greatly; we’re very proud of our ten minutes of John Cleese fun.”

But what about Cleese himself? Does he understand - appreciate, even - what having a social media presence through podcasting means?

It turns out he’s just like us.

While financial rewards from podcasting are important to him, and the team’s persistence in explaining the benefits of having a podcast presence has registered in his mind, listener feedback has been particularly revelatory. Cleese recently bumped into a young fan in the States who very enthusiastically explained how important his podcast was to her. She told him how she can watch and listen to him whenever she pleases, enabling her to fit a slice of Cleese into her daily schedule. She explained how with just a couple of clicks she was able to subscribe to his podcast, and with that the penny dropped. Suddenly, realising his podcast presence had impressed this young fan, Cleese understood why podcasting is so important. And with that he’s now considering ways to provide regular content that fits into people’s modern media consumption patterns.

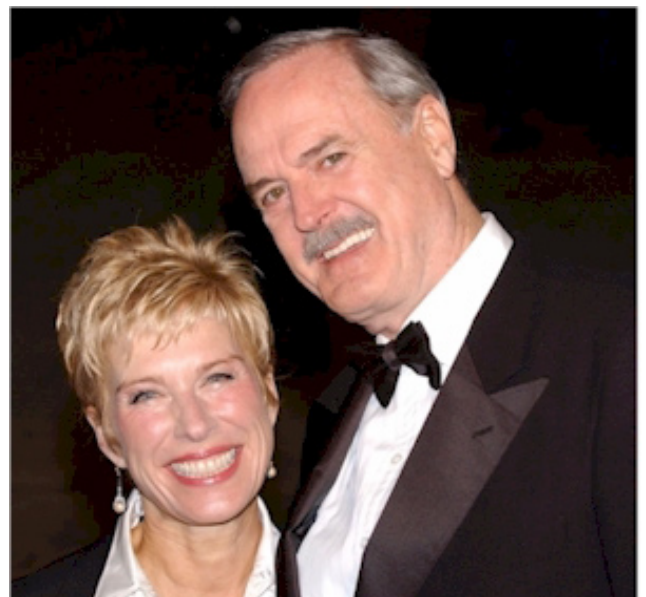
“Stay subscribed to find out more!” Whitbread urges.

The old John Cleese website with all it’s Web 1.0 glory is being discarded. And while there will be premium content on the new site, Whitbread assures us that the current Cleese podcast will be true to the very spirit of podcasting - 100% free.

Check it out online at [www.johncleesepodcast.co.uk](http://www.johncleesepodcast.co.uk)

Hardware Specs:

Mac dual processor G5, Digidesign 002 rack. Software Logic Audio, Pro Tools, Bias Peak, Powerbook G4, Universal Audio effects card , Zoom H4, Urei 1176LN compressor, Neumann U47 mic.



by Mark Hunter

# Inside the Podcasters' Studio

Paul and Judy from TotalPodcastrophe ask questions of Andrew Sims.



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 Andrew Sims.

Andrew Sims, age 17, is the main host of "The MuggleCast", a wrap-up of everything Harry Potter. News, theories, discussion and much more can and will be covered. Four to five MuggleNet staffers, aged 17 to 23, including Andrew, Ben, Laura, Eric, Kevin, Jamie, and Micah, co-host each show. Andrew hails from South Jersey and spends a lot of time working in his school's television studio. The weekly podcast began with episode 1 on August 7th 2005 and now has over 80 episodes accumulated. "The MuggleCast" has proven itself to be highly popular with fans of the global phenomenon created by author J. K. Rowling.

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

**Andrew:** I heard about podcasting back in January of 2005 when Leo Laporte released his first pilot episode of This Week in Tech. I immediately gained interest in podcasting and how it was such an exciting new medium on the internet.

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

**Andrew:** The first podcast I subscribed to was This Week in Tech. I subscribed to it because I was an avid Tech TV fan and wanted to hear the latest work from Leo.

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

**Andrew:** I always look for entertainment first, which is why we put a focus on it in MuggleCast. In order to have a successful podcast you need to think long-term, and in my opinion, you need to establish a connection with your listeners in order to keep it long-term. Entertainment is a great way to connect with them first, and then you focus on making sure your listeners take something away from your show.

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

**Andrew:** I always look for entertainment first, which is why we put a focus on it in MuggleCast. In order to have a successful podcast you need to think long-term, and in my opinion, you need to establish a connection with your listeners in order to keep it long-term. Entertainment is a great way to connect with them first, and then you focus on making sure your listeners take something away from your show.

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

**Andrew:** I've always had an interest in broadcasting, and I've been involved in various TV Tech programs in my school for the past 5 years. When podcasting came around, I immediately wanted to try it out for myself in hopes to try out broadcasting.

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

**Andrew:** The fans are always the motivating factor. The response and demand for a new episode of MuggleCast every Sunday is overwhelming, and without the listeners...the show would be nothing. It's also a lot of fun to record the show each week when you know you're reaching out to thousands of listeners.

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

**Andrew:** Rather than listening to the radio, I always have my iPod hooked up to my car for listening to podcasts and music. I still continue to watch television, but recently I've found myself more entertained with podcasts than television programming. Podcasts are always my first choice for entertainment when I'm at the computer or on the road.

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

**Andrew:** MuggleCast has changed my life in that we have to produce a show every week. Once we release a show on Sunday, there's only seven more days to plan, record, edit, and release another episode. It's a never-ending cycle that we're always working on improving. We also have hosted four live podcasts across the United States, all of which have had hundreds of fans showing up.

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

**Andrew:** The fact that anyone can produce their own podcast gives me the most hope for a promising future for podcasting. Some podcasts made by amateurs are so impressive that it's hard to believe they don't already have their own professional radio or television program. Podcasting can definitely lead to promising futures for those who produce quality shows.

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

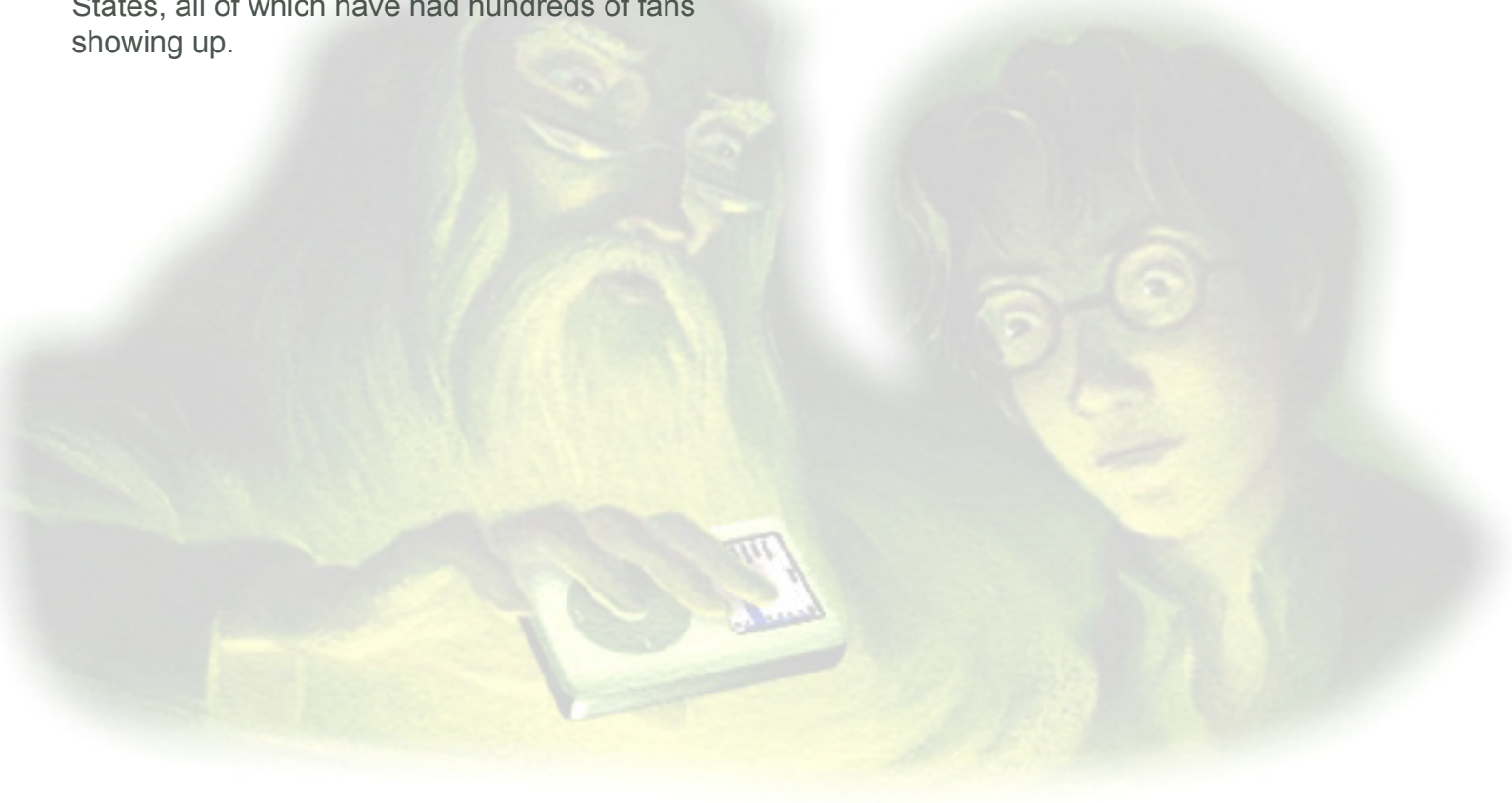
**Andrew:** In the future for MuggleCast I see another 100-200 episodes. We've just reached our 80th episode, and we're very proud of being able to produce that many shows week after week. We hope MuggleCast continues to grow in popularity, and we hope that the show can continue to entertain our listeners.

Andrew Sims can be found at:

<http://www.mugglenet.com/mugglecast/>

Judy and Paul Hutchinson can be found at Total PodCastrophe

<http://www.TotalPodCastrophe.com>





# Out of Sync

**Richard  
Vobes**

After a year of churning out wayward and perhaps a little off-the-beaten-track articles for this state-of-the-art, up-to-speed and highly coveted magazine, I was very kindly elevated to 'columnist' and asked to find a title for the new regular feature. Given that the Vobes Perspective is generally not from the centre line, and that I run away as fast as my little legs can carry me from what the collective masses tend to think, do and say, I decided to call this sideways-glance series of diatribes 'Out of Sync', and I am sure the next few paragraphs will demonstrate exactly why.

I want to look at podcasting from a different viewpoint, not only to stir things up a bit within the current community and medium but also to encourage debate, thought and stimulation. Here's what I mean: Firstly, I still believe podcasting is far too geeky, the communities are insular and inward-looking and little is being done to reach out and embrace a new audience.

In order to better qualify that statement, allow me to unpick it for you, starting with the actual term itself - 'podcasting' - which is misrepresentative and confusing.

A lot of people, and by 'people' I mean the great unwashed, ignorant and intolerably slow-witted ordinary members of society (whom I particularly love, respect and on occasions worship), think podcasts are purely for those who own that much-advertised Apple product. Others, quite rightly in my humble opinion, think that half the time it is far too much bother and equally unnecessarily complicated to find something they want to listen to, download and move to their 'where did I put that damn electronic thing-a-my and don't tell me the batteries are flat already' MP3 player.

Of course I am not suggesting we change the term 'podcasting' now; that would be stupid, but we must remember that some folk need to be continually reminded that podcasting isn't just for the iPod and it can be easy to access through their computers, laptops, other MP3 players and even their mobile telephones. (Remember my rant last month about moving the emphasis from the RSS feed to the online play button?)

We all know we must explain these things more. So now, on to my accusation of being too 'geeky': frankly, it bloody well is and it drives me up the flipping wall. I have nothing against geeks, anoraks or even trainspotters if it comes to that, but I don't want to be one myself, feed from the same trough as they do or feel as if I am out of my depth, lost or worse, mentally deficient, every time I delve into the world of podcasting... which at present, to perfectly honest, I do! The odd thing about this is that I do not have this same experience with other forms of media, such as the radio, newspapers, television and web sites, so why on earth should I have trouble with podcasting? And if I am having enough trouble with the geekiness, how do normal people, our potential audience, stand a chance? If 'we' are to reach out to a truly global audience, then we do need to lose this 'we are cleverer than you because we understand technology' attitude.

I also called podcasting insular, which might be considered a bit rich when there are all these social communities springing up all over the place. What the hell are these social community networks and podcamps and expos? Are these just buzz words or corporate speak, or forums for the secretly initiated or just a bunch of MySpace copycat websites where people can take up residence in a directory of other desperately wan-

nabe loved individuals hiding behind the anonymity of their screen name or, as old CBers used to call them, their handles!

I have nothing against the good-old get togethers, having a pint of the falling-down stuff and sharing ideas, but for goodness' sake, reach out beyond the damn geeky cyberspace, switch off the computer and go out into the real world and talk to people about your audio or video shows!

Yes, there is a certain amount of marketing you can do online, but that's not the be all and end all of it. Look at radio stations: they don't just keep telling their listening audiences how wonderful they are and hope that will bring others in. No, they get out with roadshows, put posters on buses, market through roadside billboards, places ads in the local paper and get involved in their communities (communities with real bricks and real mortar) and actually tell people about themselves face to face.

Take, for example all these expos. What's that all about? It's great that there are events where we can find out new ideas, methods of recording, drool over the latest sound-bumping, bass-throbbing multichanneled, microscopic recorder, but why aren't we also taking stands at public exhibitions, such as the UK's Ideal Home or, at the very least, the electronic consumers' show? Let's go to places where ordinary people who haven't discovered podcasting can stumble on it and find out how bloody easy it is to access all this entertainment.

I am not saying it is wrong to be a geek - a lot of my friends suffer from that disease characterised by too many late nights and cups of coffee, but we should try not to wrap ourselves too much in the nerdy blanket and make the assumption that everyone understands us or even wants to be like us. There is a huge audience out there, and most would love our stuff if we only reached out.

Am I wrong, or just out of sync?

# EWAN SPENCE



1986. A Sunday. 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and I'm crouched over a portable Phillips FM Radio with cassette deck. Like many people, I'm taping my favourite songs in the Top 40 Hit Parade onto a blank tape. As I do it, I'm carefully working the pause button so I don't have to listen to DJ Bruno Brookes get in the way of the Top 40.

How times change, where the Top 40 was once the stronghold of music and the host simply held on and went through the list. The veritable smorgasbord of music available to podcast on the internet has reinvented a dinosaur once thought lost: The DJ. Not the sort who mixes beats and keeps the dancers happy in Ibiza, but the DJ who sits down, selects the music that he or she likes, that he or she knows will appeal to the listener, that all work together to make a great-sounding music show.

Quickly ask yourself, which music shows do you listen to? And who hosts them? It's an easy question to answer, as the personality of the music podcaster is the driving force behind these shows.

When you listen to a music podcast, you're not getting an auto-generated playlist designed to keep as many of the advertising-friendly audience tuned to that frequency as long as possible; you're sitting down with someone who, over time, has become (or will become) a good friend, even though you've never met them.

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

This is true for all podcasters, the tales of people who come up to us in the strangest places, having recognised faces or voices from the internet. Sitting in Terminal 1 at Heathrow Airport, waiting for an airplane back to Edinburgh, I struck up a conversation with someone who had been an avid Rock Show listener for over a year. They had heard me talking about my trip on the show, saw me in departures, and introduced themselves.

These personal connections are what drive podcasting as a whole, and drive the ever-changing new-media landscape. Human beings are social animals. We want to talk with other people, and not at them. Unlike the hosts of TV or radio, as 'casters we can have a conversation with our listeners that is truly two-way, where feedback flows in both directions. We are some of the most easily accessible people around.

Some may say that podcasting is no more than boys with their toys in their bedroom (that would be Muriel Gray of BBC Scotland Radio). She's wrong. Being human is about opening up yourself and letting the world look inside you. And through podcasting, be it words, music, actions, or the latest ninja super combo knowledge video, the podcaster is letting you know what they like, what they love. It's a little piece of them.

Is it any wonder that, as humans, we've taken this wonderful opportunity and used it to talk to each other? And how long will that continue to be the case?



# JULIAN SMITH

## Two Podcasting Myths That Need To Die

Dear podcasters, welcome to my introductory column. You may not know me or may not have heard of my show, but I've been around a little while creating shows, doing conferences, and doing consulting on podcasting. It's been two and a half years now, and I'm still here.

I've definitely made my way up in that time. I now make a living podcasting and consulting for it. My first podcast, *In Over Your Head*, was syndicated on Sirius, every week, and it is the longest-running show in Canada. My newest project, *Listen To Your Kids*, uses podcasting to connect kids who need to talk with parents who want to listen.

There are a few things I'd like to set you guys up with, concepts which I will build upon in later columns. They'll also explain some of the core of my ideas behind podcasting and how to promote it. First is the great entertainment myth, also called *The Big Break*. The second is the myth of fame, and how it will affect what you do as a podcaster.

### The Big Break

We've all heard this. You're waiting at the check-out line of the grocery store, covertly glancing at the cover of *People* magazine while you wait. Suddenly, the guy behind you asks, "Hey, aren't you Podcaster-X?"

You reply, sort of confused, that yes, you are. He replies: "Wow, I've been thinking about getting in touch with you for weeks! Your podcast is perfect for our new *Product-Launch-Y*, and we would love to have you on board. You will receive *Automatic-Income-Z!!!!*" It's all kind of like a game show which, I'd like to add, does nothing to help us escape the lie inherent in this story.

Take this to heart:

**The Big Break does not happen.**

This isn't to say that your work will never be rewarded. Instead, what will likely happen is this: You're hard at work producing a show or delivering a document for a client, and you'll get a phone call. Your friend on the other end of the line will say: "Hey man, I've got this great thing I want to share with you," and just as in the previous story, this person will offer you a good opportunity.

The difference is that your opportunities will come through relationships, not strangers, and that when you get them, it will have been because you were working, not just waiting for it.

So stop slacking, and go meet some people.

## The Myth of Fame

With more than 80,000 podcasts by this point in 2007, let's all have a seat, look around, and realize that most of us do not have the opportunity, much less the room, to be stars. Your show, very likely, will not be spoken of as having tens of thousands of subscribers, nor can all of us have an army (or should I say legion?) of fans like Keith and the Girl.

It is because of these odds that we should realize, all of us, that we need to be playing a different game. 'Who-is-more-famous?' gets us nowhere.

The truth of blogging, podcasting, and just about every industry on the web is that the people who are the most successful are not necessarily the best known. Working on sending podcast promos will do little but increase your visibility among podcasters, who should not be your primary audience. It may be nice to get recognized at conventions, but it doesn't pay the bills or mean you have the listenership, or that you're going anywhere. This was proven by the sale of Endurance Radio, a show probably none of us listens to but is huge with its niche audience of running enthusiasts.

It is in order to help us with this second reality that I am here. We have to become masters of different crafts: things like web strategy, metrics, and developing genuine, honest relationships. I'll take the time to talk more about some of these in later columns. These are ideas that, I hope, will make more of us than just talk-show hosts, waiting at the beck and call of some stranger on the telephone... Instead, I hope they transform us into self-reliant, autonomous people, able to freely do what we love.

"Julien Smith produces Canada's longest running podcast, In Over Your Head, and has been blogging since April 2003. His podcast and blog are known for their acute, penetrating commentary on life, hip hop culture, and art. A key figure in North American podcasting, Julien's podcast is played on Sirius every Friday, and with his new project, Listen To Your Kids, you can be sure he isn't done yet."

# Have you ever taken something for granted?

by Mark Hunter

Have you ever taken something for granted? We all have. Perhaps we're taking something for granted right now. It may be something trivial like the reliability of our 8 MB internet connection. Or it may be something more important, something like our health. Either way, when we take something for granted it usually means we don't fully appreciate its worth. We don't attribute its proper value.

I had been taking this magazine for granted. After 15 issues, each arriving on, or very close to, the first of the month for 15 months straight, I had stopped appreciating the work and effort that was going into making that very thing happen: a full-colour, article-laden magazine (and don't let any dilute its value by pointing at it being an on-line only magazine) is available to download each and every month, without charge, to thousands of people spread across the planet.

So, if I had been taking this magazine for granted, one can assume that's no longer the case. And it would be a correct assumption, I no longer take it for granted. But what occurred that changed my perspective? It was few comments I heard uttered by Keith Malley. Keith And The Girl were the cover story in April's issue of this magazine, and that came about after a series of email exchanges between Keith and myself. I had pitched the idea of his podcast being featured in the magazine, and he had been interested, but months passed and no article was written. However, offering them the chance to be featured on the cover suddenly put the wheels in motion, and after a couple of weeks we had a five-page article featuring Keith and Chemda.

Around the same time as that article was being written, the couple were being wined and dined by Business Week, a piece being written about them for that weighty publication. However, which magazine carried the weight with Keith? You'd think that to his cynical New York, seen-it-all-before sensibilities, being featured in Business Week would rate higher. But to my surprise... well, perhaps you can guess what caused my surprise. Incredibly, to me at least, Keith was more pleased with being featured in Podcast User Magazine.

Suddenly I saw the magazine in a new light. To a podcaster who has courted controversy for over two years, garnered a huge audience, been featured in publications such as the New York Times and now Business Week, being in Podcast User Magazine, this free-to-download online publication, was genuinely a big deal.

I searched Podzinger for the magazine and listened to clips of people enthusing about the quality of the articles, the value it adds to global podcasting. To put it very simply, I no longer take this magazine for granted.

Spending time talking to the team who write and edit the articles, reviews and tutorials, as well as our new columnists, I now appreciate and understand the amount of dedication, enthusiasm, passion, commitment and knowledge that goes into each issue of this publication. It's here to stay.

If you've got any comments about the magazine, good or bad, please contact me.

[mark.hunter@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:mark.hunter@podcastusermagazine.com)



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## Cush Rocks: Meet the Anti-Anti-Guy

by Lance Anderson

**Cush** knows more about life than you do and he's not afraid to tell you so. He has dated "hotter chicks" than you, but he wants you to know what to do when you meet one. Cush is full wisdom and contradictions. He doesn't care what you think, but he has life lessons he wants to teach you.

The origins of **Cush: Things I Say** can be traced back to **The Beatles** on **Ed Sullivan**. A young Cush thought to himself, "I could do that for a living." In 1979 he formed the "skinny-tie power-pop band," **The Wigs**. Based out of his home town of Milwaukee Wisconsin, the band's first incarnation was a Midwest sensation. In December of 1981, The Wigs charted better than The Police on college radio. The band was often labeled "Punk," but Cush says "I was never tragic or hip enough to be a Punk... I like melodies." The Wigs "hit a wall" in the Midwest, broke up and reformed in Los Angeles. Soon they were featured in the teen flick, **My Chauffeur**. They were signed by **CBS Records**, and things were going so smoothly, their A&R guy was bringing "girls and drugs" to the studio. Then suddenly, CBS Records slashed 200 employees and The Wigs were unceremoniously dropped. This led to Cush's five-year deep decent, ending with a "major freak out." Cush wrote about it in his book, **A Year of Living Stupidly**. It opens with the line: "My career is nowhere, my marriage is a failure, I'm in debt up to my eyeballs and I'm turning 30." Like a cat, Cush lived to see another day in Hollywood. He learned post production and even sang the theme music for the **Power Rangers**. Later, he played guitar for the internet sensation, Fisher. Everyone thought internet buzz was enough, but it wasn't.

Which brings us to his podcast. At first Cush thought podcasting would be "a great vehicle" for promoting his music. Now he says he just does it for himself. Although he also says he does it for the fourteen-year-old kid who won't listen to his dad but who hangs on his every word. These days, Cush doesn't even know how many listeners he has, but he can quote a recent email from a listener: "I am diametrically opposed to to all of your political beliefs, but you say more about the human condition than anyone else in the media." Cush took that as a "huge compliment" because "I am not a democrat or republican. I'm a humanist."

At the moment, he is finishing up his short film, **Blue Bunny**, which is a brilliant satire of the infamous scene from the movie **The Brown Bunny**. Cush, like his art, is a dangerous mix of the profound and the profane. When it all works together, his podcast is better than your podcast... but he would never say such a thing.

<http://cushrocks.com>

LISTEN to my whole interview with Cush  
Recorded at the **LA Podcasters Studio 101**



<http://www.lapodcasters.com/media/PUMCush0407.mp3>





# Podcasting is still not radio!

**By John Buckley**

Last month, I talked about why I believe that podcasting is not radio and pointed a few obvious differences between the two. This month, I'd like to expand upon that, but before I do, I feel a little disclosure is in order.

Over the last two months I've been working on a project with Dean Whitbread, Creative Director of the podcast production and new-media company 'Talking Voices'. Dean has been putting together a radio pilot, featuring panel discussions between respected radio broadcast voices and the new wave of podcast producers. The show contains a mix of pre-recorded interview segments and opinion pieces, alongside panel discussions and contributions via skype and instant messaging with remote guests.

When Dean asked me to get involved as a contributor, I duly obliged, producing a piece on the state of UK podcasting and soliciting opinion and interview contributions from my podcasting peers and the local public. I also attended the Corporate Podcasting Summit (CPS) in London. All of which led me to do a lot of thinking about the way that we as podcasters perceive what we do and the way that the general audience outside of podcasting think about it.

A common perception I encountered amongst people unfamiliar with podcasting is that it's simply a form of time-shifted radio, albeit one with a very nice convenience and portability factor. Most radio stations have approached their podcast output from this standpoint, repurposing content and using it as a way to promote existing shows. The restrictions on playing commercial music have meant that they've had little incentive to do otherwise. Commercial radio (like commercial television) is geared towards a 'hit' culture, playing the biggest selling records and making programs to serve the biggest audiences. This is still very important because mass appeal matters, but in the podcasting world of niche, it's no longer all that matters.

My street interviews and conversations confirmed that for many, 'podcasting' is a term currently connected with the idea of listening to radio shows on your MP3 player. Strangely, most

people I spoke with failed to mention video, despite its increasing prominence in iTunes podcast directories and the fact that around 10% of podcasts now contain video. The arrival of a generation of portable video players will change this.

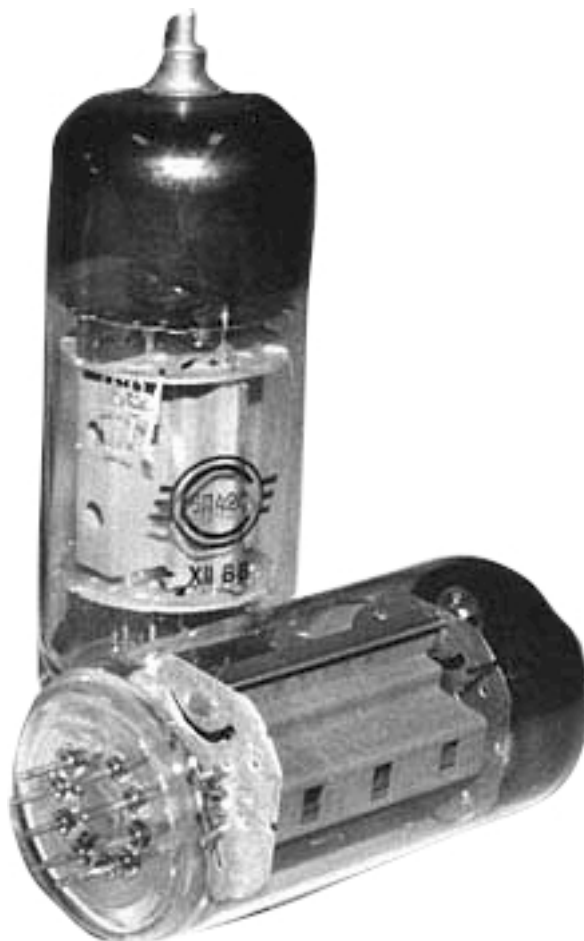
MeFeedia.com is currently tracking 2,356,498 video podcasts, from 23,105 video feeds, across 13,580 websites. RSS feeds can also carry documents, such as the one you are currently reading; it's this multimedia mix of audio, video and text which will ultimately shape the culture emerging around the creation and distribution of podcasts. The good news is that the general public has now heard of podcasting. The bad news is that too few of them have chosen to dig below the repurposed surface of big-media friendly programming to find the unique culture and content beginning to emerge from underneath.

An example I heard at the CPS event demonstrated how far uses of podcasting might differ from anything that might happen in the medium of radio. In this case, a company is using podcasting to enable a structured conversation and feedback loop among marketing, product testing and management groups, during a complicated product development cycle. This is not a use of audio that would ever find its way into a radio program. Of course, as the technology we use to create, distribute and consume podcasts matures (and as video becomes a more prominent player), I believe we will continue to find new uses for it.

There is far wider latitude for experimentation in podcasting than within the old broadcast network model of programming. The barrier to entry is relatively low - the expectation of return on investment scalable relative to the individual producer's needs. Literally anyone can become a podcaster, and there are many ways to benefit from it.

This is where the real paradigm shift between what constitutes suitable material for a mainstream radio or television program and what can be placed into a podcast will emerge, showing the fundamental uniqueness of what podcasting has to offer. As my friend Dean Whitbread commented, "It remains to be seen what becomes of podcasting, as it does with all media, but such is the speed of internet media evolution right now that as soon as you say what podcasting absolutely is, something will more than likely appear which confounds that definition."

Podcasting continues to fascinate as the medium evolves, and as a result of immersing myself in this thought process, I have helped to set up a collaborative place just for exploring just these kinds of ideas, which you will find at [www.unradio.co.uk](http://www.unradio.co.uk). If you'd like to contribute, come along!



# A Step Closer to Podcast Primetime

by Colin Meeks

Podcasting has undoubtedly come a long way in the last few years. However, it still has a way to go before it manages to be accepted in the same way as regular radio. I think that as with any new technology, the biggest problem is the classic barrier to entry. At present podcasting still seems only to thrive amongst people who have some kind of computer know-how. Admittedly, iTunes has done an awful lot to raise public acceptance, and it indeed jump-started podcasts for the masses, but there's still a problem with adding podcasts that do not have the correct iTunes form of URL. iTunes once used URLs that began with 'itpc://', but these seem to have been replaced with the more usual 'http://phobos.apple.com/' prefix.

So what can be done to make podcasting easier for the general masses? The first thing is to have a URL standard that is specific to podcasts. Yes, there is the iTunes-specific variant, but what if a listener doesn't have iTunes? If every podcasting client used the same form of URL (for example, `podcast://feeds.feedburner.com/indielaunchpad`), there wouldn't be this awful mess, where users click on the podcast link and get that page of XML/RSS gobbledygook. We also need to ensure that if that gobbledygook does appear, then clear instructions need to be the first thing people see on that XML/RSS page.

When the podcast link on a website is clicked, it should just be added to the podcast client or aggregator of choice, whatever is installed on the computer. It should also be easier to remove a podcast from a client or aggregator, so that if a listener clicks on a link to a currently subscribed podcast, there should be an opportunity to unsubscribe. There's even a possibility for a variety of query commands that could be added to the end of the URL, but development of those tools is probably far off and better left for another article.

Another simple thing a podcaster can do is add an audio player to the podcast's main page, allowing new listeners to easily sample podcasts. I know many people also use this as their primary way to keep up to date with podcasts, but I'm sure that's because the alternatives are at times confusing.

So that's at least one thing to make subscribing and unsubscribing to podcasts easier. The other thing that needs to be addressed is the terminology. The term 'subscribe' still seems to leave a sour taste in the mouths of people who are not used to podcasts. 'Subscribe' still seems to evoke in many the thought of needing to pay money. Again, listeners who are computer savvy are fairly used to the term 'subscribe', which is commonly used in reference to joining email lists and websites that offer user-specific content. I don't think there is any one right term. I racked my brains and the best I could come up with was 'Add to Podcast Presets', taking the terminology of a radio on which favourite channels can be saved. Maybe it's not the perfect term, but at least it seems less scary than the dreaded 'subscribe'.

With AppleTV now shipping, it looks as if Apple is again going to raise public awareness of vidcasts and, to a slightly lesser degree, podcasts. With the ability to subscribe, watch and listen to favourite vidcasts and podcasts on regular TV, the future indeed looks rosy, but we don't want to let Apple become the driving force. One look at the average podcast will show that probably 95% of the listener audience comes from iTunes; that is certainly the case with Indie Launchpad. This is a scary fact. In essence, iTunes controls the majority of podcasts. At present their power is benign, but that may not always be the case. We need to seize control of our podcasting des-

tiny and ensure that it's easy for our audiences to listen to our podcasts. We also need to ensure that we publicize as many different podcasting clients and aggregators as possible. We also need to badger those clients and aggregators to adopt some form of standard, such as the one I proposed earlier.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying what I've proposed is perfect. I'd like to think it's a starting block, a place to begin discussion and to try to light the fire up the podcasting community's backside. After all, a lot of hard work goes into making podcasts, and the more listeners we can attract, the better.

So, podcasters and listeners, do you agree or disagree? Do you have any other ideas to make it easier for new listeners? If I get enough response, I'll do a follow-up article with the feedback I receive. You can email me at [colin@indielaunchpad.com](mailto:colin@indielaunchpad.com). I look forward to your views.

## A Step Closer to **Podcast Primetime**



Ask Andy

# Podcasting In Industry

Whilst doing some research for my employer the other day, I was required to visit a number of different companies' websites and just have a general nosy around. Stumbling through the array of links and pictures, I noticed that nearly every single company had a podcast of some kind or another which was available to the site's visitors.

But should I have really been that surprised? Isn't this simply an extension of the information on demand and on-the-go mentality that has occurred over recent times not only with the internet but with our TVs as well? The need for companies to fit in around their target audience is becoming increasingly important.

The people for whom these podcasts are created are primarily powerful, high-flying industry people who get bombarded with millions of e-mails, stacks of post and numerous telephone calls every single day. These people also usually have a team of individuals to filter out the business mail from the spam, and so it's not surprising that companies are embracing new technology to get where other media just can't reach. Of course, going back into history, we discover that the main method of learning was once listening, which was later surpassed with the invention of the mass printing press.

When previously researching new products or services, these individuals may have spent a few

minutes on each webpage or reading a brochure, simply due to the constraints on their working time. However, by using these podcasts they can, should they wish (although why would anyone really want to?), take their work with them to the gym, on the plane, in the car or even as they lie awake in bed at night (and yes, I have!!).

As a trainee accountant I am aware of the numerous changes and interpretation of standards which are laid at the door of accountants, financial directors and managing directors alike. All of the UK's "Big Four Firms" (PWC, KPMG, E&Y and Deloitte) use RSS news feeds to keep subscribers updated with the latest developments and ongoing discussions. This is a one-to-many method of communication and keeps the firms in the minds of their customers on a regular basis. Three of the four firms also have downloadable podcasts which cover a range of topics from tax laws to new regulations, offering a service to a wider audience than the literature previously provided only to their customers. If the advice and information on the podcast appears sensible and credible, then it could lead to future business; at the very least it should mean less problems in trying to put things right later on.

But it's not just customers and potential clients who are being targeted. There is an increasing number of internal podcasts being created.

These podcasts are recorded and placed on the intranet or internal file servers. They could include records of meetings or presentations and can also provide the same educational and instructional information found in the consumer podcasts. With the increasing pressure to reduce carbon footprints, a number of companies are dispensing with the paper-heavy, old methods of communicating items such as meeting minutes and newsletters and replacing them with media files or web pages, or both!

Universities have also started to record lectures and later make them available on the web as videos or podcasts (an excuse to miss your Monday morning 9:00 a.m. lecture if ever I heard one!)

As I was writing this, I stopped and wondered if this type of distribution could actually be called a podcast. Hasn't this been happening for years since the invention of the dictaphone or even the tape recorder? Wikipedia defines a podcast as being "distinguished from other digital media formats by its ability to be downloaded automatically, using software capable of reading feed formats such as RSS or Atom."

Some of the companies do provide a feed, which of course can only be accessed internally and shouldn't appear any time soon in the vast array of podcast directories! However, since a direct link to the feed can be used by programs such as iTunes, Juice, and the like by the above definition, they can be counted as a podcast.

Over the next few months I am expecting to see an increase in the MPEG-4 video recordings available. Research has shown that, at a retention rate of around 20%, audio visual demonstrations perform better than reading or listening, and it is far easier to be entertaining, personal and engaging when you have visual options.

There will never be a substitute for learning by doing, asking questions and interacting with people face-to-face, but for increasingly busy people, it's at least another option to take in information they otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to.

Andy Taylor is the author of the "Rantings of a northern bloke" website, podcasting since July 2005, at <http://rantings.shorturl.com>. Join him in his quest to run 10km, lose 2 stone and find a friendly person in London!



# Podcast Host Profile: Lee Douglas - Old Time Rock 'n' Roll

by **Mark Juliano** Senior Vice President of TalkShoe.

Lee Douglas has been in and around the entertainment business most of his life. Growing up in Brooklyn, NY, he was lucky enough to know famous disk jockey Alan Freed, who was also known as Moondog and who, according to Wikipedia, is credited with first using the name 'Rock and Roll' for the music he played on the radio. Lee says, "Alan was a very accessible guy and let me see biographies for hundreds of rock and roll artists." In addition to being a teacher, Lee himself has logged experience in radio and audio, including a kids' TV show in Orlando.

Lee began podcasting through TalkShoe in October, 2006. Although Lee had no existing audience, his podcast downloads grew from a few listeners to more than 2300 weekly within a month and more than 5500 a week after eight weeks of podcasting.

The idea of Lee's Talkcast, Old Time Rock 'n' Roll, is to bring people oldies music from artists such as Elvis, Chuck Berry and Little Richard, with a twist. "I play songs that people don't generally hear every day. People remember them, but don't request them." This is in contrast to most oldies radio stations, which use a narrow play list. It demonstrates the power of podcasting.

Lee spends a good deal of time researching his artists and scours the Internet and other sources for birth records, facts and figures, stories, and songs recorded by the artist, whether hits or mediocre songs. He incorporates these items into his podcast, in addition to reminiscing about growing up in Brooklyn in the '50s, '60s, and '70s.

"Lee does a great job of transporting people back in time," commented Dave Nelsen, TalkShoe's CEO. "His love, expertise and passion clearly come through."

Lee offers some tips and advice to other podcast hosts. He says the show should be at the same time every week, or day, and that hosts should schedule one show in advance to tell listeners that more episodes are coming.

Another idea involves email. "I hate ridiculous email forwards and jokes," says Lee. But he has turned them into a marketing channel and sends emails about his podcasts to the email forwarding lists. He also mentions free website submissions, but warns, "Be careful. They're always trying to sell you something." Other marketing ideas include printing podcast business cards, carefully choosing keywords in podcast titles and descriptions and having a good podcast image. He also stresses listing on many podcast directories.

As far as obtaining rights to play his oldies, Lee says, "I had to pay upfront to both BMI and ASCAP." He initially paid \$700 for both licenses. The BMI license fluctuates with his earnings from sponsors, and ASCAP is based on the number of times their music is played. Lee says that the legalities are somewhat confusing but assures that he is covered legally. Each quarter he submits a copy of his play list and earnings to both companies, and if he exceeds their basic limit, he's sent a bill.

Earnings from the TalkShoe's advertising program offset these costs. "It is a gamble, and I would only recommend that people jump into it if they can afford it up front." Lee has been happy with his TalkShoe experience: "On the Internet, people are always asking you for money. And TalkShoe is the opposite. We are actually able to make some money, and I commend them for doing this."

Lee's Podcast can be found at:  
[www.wrestlingwrap.com](http://www.wrestlingwrap.com)





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# Just Shut Up!

## No, not you . . . the computer.

by Jimmy Hastell

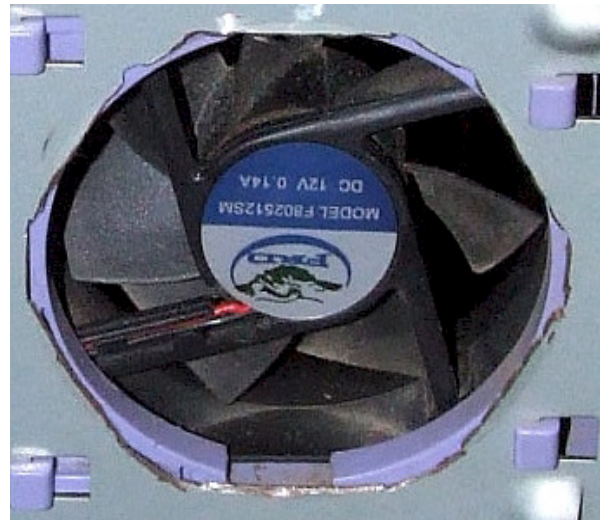
One of the most annoying features about home recording is background noise: You've recorded your masterpiece, word-perfect and error-free only to find that on replay the hum of the computer is plainly audible and so totally annoying.

So, where's the noise coming from? It's easy - it's originating from two fans, one for the built-in power supply unit (the PSU) and the other from the processor heat sink fan. Both of these are essential, so don't be tempted to remove them; if you do, something will fry.

The simplest solution would be to remove the computer from the recording area completely and it's not as difficult as it sounds; you just need a big drill. The idea is that you place the machine in another room, on the other side of a wall (preferably one that you own, of course), and run the cables through the wall to your monitor, mouse and keyboard. You may need to buy extension cables, but these are quite affordable.

Another way is to box the computer up or place it in a cupboard, but a word of warning here - the machine needs airflow to remove the heated air that builds up in the case, and if you remember from basic physics that heat rises, you'll need vents on the bottom and top or you will find you have built a home sauna in miniature!

Other solutions are designed to cut down the noise in-situ; these involve the replacement of the fans with high-quality, friction-free (well, almost) fans. Replacing your current processor heat-sink with a larger one that takes an 80mm fan is a good way for noise reduction - these larger fans produce the same airflow but, because of their size, they may turn at only half the speed and thus with half the noise. A quick check on the net soon revealed those manufacturers who clearly state airflow, in cubic feet per minute (CFM), versus a noise rating in decibels (Db). It's a bit of a compromise.



It is now possible to buy a noiseless power supply unit, but these are incredibly expensive, unless you are a keen modder with available funds.



I found that I could reduce some noise by removing the external grill at the back of the unit; air whistles through here at quite a rate, and opening it up reduces the surface area that causes the sound.



The ultimate solution is available in the form of a complete case package, the Zalman TNN 500a. The world's first absolutely noiseless computer case for high-end systems uses heat-pipe technology: no fans, no moving parts. Did I mention it's about \$1,400? Perhaps recording inside a big cardboard box is the answer.

[www.zalman.co.kr](http://www.zalman.co.kr)



## 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)

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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)



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## Reveal Yourself - Alastair Taylor

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 Kenny Little of Glasgow's excellent Hollow Horse - find out more at <http://www.hollowhorse.co.uk/> and on <http://www.myspace.com/hollowhorse> )

Who are you? Kenny Little from Glasgow band, Hollow Horse  
 What do you do? Write, sing and play guitar  
 How long have you done it? Since I was knee-high to a grasshopper  
 Do you have a hidden talent? Many. So hidden, in fact, that even I don't know what they are.  
 Stereo or iPod? Stereo  
 What ringtone is on your mobile phone? Don't own a mobile. Why would I want one?  
 Favourite artist? Marcel Duchamp  
 Favourite album? 'Thick As A Brick' by Jethro Tull  
 Favourite track? 'All You Need Is Love' by The Beatles  
 Biggest influence? The Beatles/ Early Bowie circa 74/75  
 What album do you wish you'd never bought? Medulla By Bjork. I just can't penetrate it at all  
 Most treasured possession? My Rickenbacker 12 string. guitar. I love it!  
 Most dog-eared book? The Ascent of Man by Dr Jacob Bronowski  
 Brand of coffee? Don't drink tea or coffee  
 Food you can't live without? Vegetables  
 Favourite labour-saving device? Lighter - saves me rubbing two sticks together.  
 What motto do you live by? Every Little helps - family motto  
 Who is your fictional hero or heroine? Holden Caulfield from 'A Catcher In The Rye'  
 What's the best advice you were ever given? Always expect the unexpected  
 Health and happiness or fame and fortune? Health. The rest will follow

## Next Month

**Next Issue  
June 1**

**Audio 101  
Audio tech feature  
starting in June**



**Edirol R9  
reviewed**



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