

# PodcastUser Magazine

Issue 6  
July  
2006

## Podcast Your Passion: World Cup 2006 Plus:

Diary of a Novice Podcaster  
Earning a living through podcasting

Sourcing Podsafe Music  
Podcast Reviews

**Win!**

**SE Electronics Reflexion Filter**

Be a discerning listener  
and a productive podcaster



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

Now with active [Hyperlinks](#)**FIRST FOR . . .****Podcasts & podcasting news**

Our monthly schedule and revamped website will allow us to keep you up to date with the latest news as and when it happens.

**Product and service reviews**

Each month, our dedicated contributors will review a range of hardware and software to guide you to the right buying choice.

We will also review a wide variety of podcasts, bringing you diversity and entertainment from both mainstream and niche.

**Advice and help**

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

We're here to help.

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

Paul Parkinson is the co-founder and host of the Flashing12 podcast

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It has been two years since Dave Winer did his first AUDIO Coffee Morning Notes (June 2004) and kicked off the podcast revolution. Dave's work with RSS and enclosures brought us this media distribution channel we're all so fond of. Thanks, Dave!

Here at Podcast User Magazine we've got cause to celebrate, too. The magazine is now fully hot-linked, so any links you read will now take you to the web page concerned. Add to this our revamped web site, and it's all looking rather splendid!

Another cause for celebration is that we've got our first competition kicking off in this month's PUM. The fabulous prize is an SE Electronics Reflexion filter, courtesy of our friends over at Sonic-Distribution. If you're a podcast producer or have your own recording studio, or if you just want a portable vocal booth, then you **MUST** enter this competition. It is completely **FREE** to enter to win this £229/\$425 value!

World Cup 2006 is underway in Germany as I write, and we have a podcast-oriented article this month with a 'footie' flavour from the creators of Soccer Shout. We also have loads of soccer-free articles, such as an outstanding interview with Lynn Parsons, the first entry in the diary of a new podcaster, another new interview feature on the background of podcasters, and the usual wealth of reviews, tips and set-up guides. It's a stupendous magazine this month, and thanks to everyone who contributed!

**SHOUT OUT** - we're constantly on the lookout for good writers with good stories to tell. How did you start? Why? What equipment do you use? Why do you listen? What do you listen to? All these questions and many more could be the basis of articles we'd be happy to see. If you'd like to volunteer an article to PUM, please contact us at [submissions@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:submissions@podcastusermagazine.com). Although we are still running under volunteer power, you will have the satisfaction of seeing your name in print and knowing that your words are being read by around 10,000 people each month. So get writing - drop us an email and wait and see what happens!

Finally, we also welcome your comments for the Letters page. We sincerely look forward to hearing what you think about Podcast User Magazine and ideas you have for making it even better. We're waiting for your comments at [general.comments@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:general.comments@podcastusermagazine.com). Thank you again for your continuing support.

# Contributors

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**Cover designed by Mark Hunter**

**Editorial support**

**Linda Mills, Janet Parkinson**

**Jimmy Hastell & Simon Toon.**

# Submissions

We are always looking for great new talent. So if you have a topic that you would like to write about, please email us at [submissions@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:submissions@podcastusermagazine.com). We would be glad to hear from you.

# Special thanks

go to [clustermaps.com](http://clustermaps.com) and [Frappr.com](http://Frappr.com) for granting us permission to reproduce their maps in this and future issues of Podcast User Magazine.

We would also like to thank you, the reader, for your support and enthusiasm over the last six months. Your feedback has been gratifying, and we look forward to reading your suggestions, comments and responses to future articles.

# 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! Please keep your emails and postings coming in to the web site at [www.podcastusermagazine.com](http://www.podcastusermagazine.com) [General.Comments@PodcastUserMagazine.com](mailto:General.Comments@PodcastUserMagazine.com)

# Congratulations

to Richard Vobes of [www.vobes.com](http://www.vobes.com) who celebrated his 500th show at the start of June. We believe that Richard lives up to his title of the world's most prolific podcaster, unless of course you know better. Well done Richard.



### Podcast User Magazine web site face lift.

There has been a little bit of a change at [www.podcastusermagazine.com](http://www.podcastusermagazine.com), due to moving to a new server we've had a slight face lift! We still have the familiar layout that you have all grown comfortable with but added a splash of colour and combed our hair to look a little more presentable. On the down-side, we have unfortunately lost the original comments that everyone was kind enough to send in, but we're still open for business as usual.



### Roll up, roll up.

Registration has now opened for the Podcast and Portable Media Expo at the Ontario Convention Center, Ontario, California. The Expo runs from the 29th to the 30th of September 2006. Book early! [www.portablemediaexpo.com/](http://www.portablemediaexpo.com/)

### Education by earplug.

A lecturer in a West Yorkshire university in the United Kingdom has moved over to podcasts rather than the traditional lecture. Dr. Ashraf, a senior lecturer in microbiology in Bradford, reasons that students can listen to virtual lectures in their own time, freeing up more time for Dr. Ashraf's small group teachings.

Questions asked by the students via text messages will be reproduced on the Dr's blog pages. Dr. Ashraf says the move will better suit the needs of part-time students, distant learners and those balancing a family, studies, and work.

### Jimmy Hastell appears on technorama.

On a recent trip to the USA Jimmy had the good fortune to meet Chuck Tomasi of Chuck Chat fame and of course he interviewed him about Podcast User Magazine. Find it here [www.chuckchat.com/technorama/](http://www.chuckchat.com/technorama/)

## Students prefer iPods to beer - revelation.

A study by Student Monitor in Ridgewood, New Jersey (USA) has discovered from students surveyed at 100 colleges that 73% preferred ipods to beer. This is a big jump from last year's 59%. The only other time beer came a lowly second was in 1997 when internet access became widely possible. Kids eh, who'd have em'?

## Pop pod.

Apple has produced another U2 Special Edition ipod. It's a 5th generation 30GB machine holding some 7,500 music tracks. It has an all-black stainless steel enclosure and a red wheel and is stamped with the signatures of the U2 band members. Some report to be holding out for the Spice Girls version. At a price of \$329 another option is to stick my tiny player in an old tobacco tin and paint it black.

## Got a hot spot for someone?

No, [www.free-hotspot.com](http://www.free-hotspot.com) is not a place for acne-ridden teenagers to hang about in, but rather a clever idea by Anacapa Holdings Inc. The principle is simple enough, as is its operation: just go to the web site, select a country and town (this is the minimum information needed) and be rewarded with a list of free hot spots for Wi-Fi connections and a map too. Wonder if they would consider doing the same for public toilets?



[free-hotspot.com](http://www.free-hotspot.com)

## Tonight's the night then!

We suppose it had to happen... There is now a wedding podcast covering nearly all the aspects of the forthcoming event and beyond (well, almost). Check out

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

for more details. Wonder if they produce a divorce podcast after a year or two?

## THE COMEDY HUB PRESENTS POD THE WORLD CUP

THE COMEDY HUB is writing, producing and podcasting twice-weekly comedy shows around the football World Cup 2006. This is the first UK World Cup comedy podcast which will be downloadable free from the web, as an enhanced iTunes Podcast, and from all UK mobile phone networks. No subscription is payable.

The 2-minute to 5-minute podcasts are studio recorded by a professional team who have written for Johnny Vaughan, Frank Skinner, Graham Norton, The Big Breakfast and Bremner, Bird and Fortune. The actors have performed in Dead Ringers, Phoenix Nights, Bromwell High and BBC 2's 'Double Take'.

Leon Benjamin of the Comedy Hub said: "We know that huge numbers of Brits feel part of a massive occasion when the World Cup is on. And off pitch, behind the scenes of the World Cup can be as compulsive as the actual football. With this podcast we hope to get viewers laughing together over, for example, Nancy Dell'Olio's 'secret' diary, what Sven really says to his England players at half time and what Lineker and Hanson get up to off camera...."

Uniquely, The Comedy Hub will bring together a combination of technologies to distribute free comedy content over the web, the mobile network and through online communities and blogs. Content will be made available from The Comedy Hub web site, as MP3, through iTunes, and to mobile phones using an SMS short code.

Negotiations with media sponsors will make The Comedy Hub shows available for download on entertainment portals, and a wide range of unofficial football fan web sites will promote the content to their members.



## Pod People Unite for Poetry



Association  
of *Poetry*  
Podcasting

A year ago, if you hit the Internet looking for poetry, you would have found a lot to read. But today, you'll also find a lot to hear. And thanks to the newly formed Association of Poetry Podcasting (APP), it's easier than ever.

"Podcasting is perfectly suited to poetry," says the APP's Mongo. "It's a medium where poets can use the full range of their creative talents."

"But there's still work to be done," says Harry Lafnear of the APP. "Until now, it really has been hard to find the better shows. Services that list podcasts are not well set up to moderate poetry. Individual efforts easily get lost in the sea of inconsistent or amateur offerings. As a result, our community is often overlooked. We hope that by bringing the existing podcasters into a formal association, we can turn up the volume and bring the most vibrant poetry more public attention."

The Association of Poetry Podcasting intends to make it easier to find good audio poetry on the Internet, support new and established poetry podcasters, foster emerging spoken-word recording artists, and spread vocal poetry to a wider audience.

The Association of Poetry Podcasting website can be found at [www.poetrypodcasting.org](http://www.poetrypodcasting.org)



### Late-Breaking News:

The Edinburgh-based band Amplifico has announced a live, webTV event on Wednesday, July 19th, to help raise funds to complete their debut album. The 'webathon', in association with Nexuslive, will feature a live set from the band's album, "crazy activities, special guest appearances, live audience feedback online, and a big thank you to the fans (old and new)." There's even a way to get your picture on the CD's cover! Much more information on how you can see the show in person or over the web can be found at [www.amplificowebathon.com](http://www.amplificowebathon.com)

# WIN an sE Electronics Reflexion Filter



Here it is, the first competition at Podcast User Magazine! For our first-ever prize, we are delighted to present the AMAZING sE Electronics Reflexion Filter by those wonderful chaps at Sonic-Distribution. This is a free-to-enter competition, so all you need to do is follow the instructions at the end of this article and keep your fingers crossed. It's open to all PUM readers wherever you are in the world!

This is a \$425 (£229) piece of kit, and if you need to have some acoustic insulation for the microphone in your podcasting or recording studio, then this is a very VERY good way of doing it!

## So, what on earth IS a Reflexion Filter?

The Reflexion Filter is a portable device that reduces ambient sound in a room when you record live sound sources. It is a wall, made from an

advanced composite material, that can be positioned behind any microphone by means of an adjustable and included clamp. The main function of the filter is to help obtain a 'dry' vocal or instrument recording. The Reflexion Filter can be especially useful in studios that do not have proper acoustic treatment, but it can also be used for recording within the control room, to muffle the sounds of the switches and buttons on various devices, and in a rehearsal studio, to reduce ambient noise.

## The Technical Bit, from Sonic-Distribution:

The Reflexion Filter has six main layers. The first is a strong layer of punched aluminium, which allows sound waves to pass through it, diffused, to a layer of absorptive wool. The sound waves then hit a layer of aluminium foil, which helps dissipate energy and break up the lower-frequency wave-forms, and from here the waves hit an air space kept open by rods passing through the various layers. The air gap acts as an acoustic barrier. The sound waves then pass to a further layer of wool and then through an outer, punched, aluminium wall, both of which further serve to absorb and then diffuse the remaining acoustic energy.

The main absorber has four formed pieces of state-of-the-art specialist acoustic absorptive material attached to it's face via the extended separation rods. These further serve to absorb and then diffuse the sound waves as they pass to the main filter.

The stand assembly comprises a mic stand clamp fitting, which attaches by means of a vertical joint to the horizontal bar assembly, onto which both the Reflexion Filter and any standard-fitting shock mount can be fixed. The microphone (in its shock mount) can then be moved both vertically and horizontally along the bar, and the Reflexion Filter itself can be moved vertically to obtain the optimal working position.

## How does it work?

The various layers both absorb and diffuse the sound waves hitting them, so progressively less of the original source's acoustic energy passes through each layer. This reduces the amount of energy hitting untreated walls and other surfaces, so there is less of the original source reflected back to the mic as unwanted room ambience. The Reflexion Filter also helps prevent any reflected sound reaching the back and sides of the mic. The filter's shape and size have been carefully tested to maximize absorption while keeping 'coloration' down to only around 1 dB and leaving the microphone's polar pattern unaffected.

## In Summary:

All in all, the Reflexion Filter a very clever and desirable piece of kit. It allows you to record vocals and acoustic instruments with a 'drier' sound, without having to do so in an acoustically treated room. The filter is portable. It uses state-of-the-art materials. It works... and it's a fraction of the price of acoustically treating your studio environment!

## SO HOW DO I WIN IT?

It's really easy. Take a look at the text above, answer the questions below, and then complete a tie-breaker topic in 20 words or less. One bit of advice, though: One of the questions is NOT answered above, so you might want to do a bit more research. [Hint: Use. The. Internet.]



Email your entry to [contest@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:contest@podcastusermagazine.com) and keep your fingers crossed. This competition is going to run for two months, in both the July AND August editions of PUM (Issue 6 and 7), so there's no excuse not to enter. Good luck!

## QUIZ QUESTIONS

1. Who distributes the Reflexion Filter?
2. How many main layers does the Filter have?
3. Which microphone is featured in the pictures above?
4. Which sE Electronics microphones do Steve Levine and Courtney Pine use?

Tie Breaker: EITHER: I want to win an sE Electronics Reflexion filter because:

OR:

An sE Electronics Reflexion filter will help my recordings because:

OR:

sE Electronics Rock! Discuss.

**IMPORTANT SMALL PRINT:** In the event you enter the competition, you expressly agree to the following terms:

1. You are aged 18 years or over
2. There will be only one winning entrant
3. You accept that the decision and discretion of PUM is final.
4. The winning prize will be one sE Electronics Reflexion Filter; there will be no cash or equivalent component awarded
5. Members of the current Podcast User Magazine co-founder group are ineligible for this prize.



## Cloudy Day Art

Reviewed by Simon Toon

This weekly podcast comes from Washington DC and features interviews with and performances from various creators—mostly poets, and occasionally some poetry from it's host, Will Brown. The tagline is 'What's your inspiration?' and Will expounds on this theme by discussing the creative process and 'the muse' in his interviews and general discussion. This makes Cloudy Day Art compelling listening for both the consumer of art and the artist alike.

Any poet who is new to the podcasting scene will inevitably get a poem played on Cloudy Day Art; it has almost become a rite of passage – the place to make your debut! So the poetry fan gets to hear a variety of poets.

As for the artist, he or she gets a place to discuss and exercise the creative process. The exercise element has become most clearly embodied in the monthly 'Second Sunday Show', which invites poets to write, perform and submit a poem on a specially-chosen theme.

The production values of this show have consistently grown, and yet it retains its relaxed, informal feel. Rather than being ego-driven, this show is genuinely focussed on the art of poetry and the poetry podcasting community.

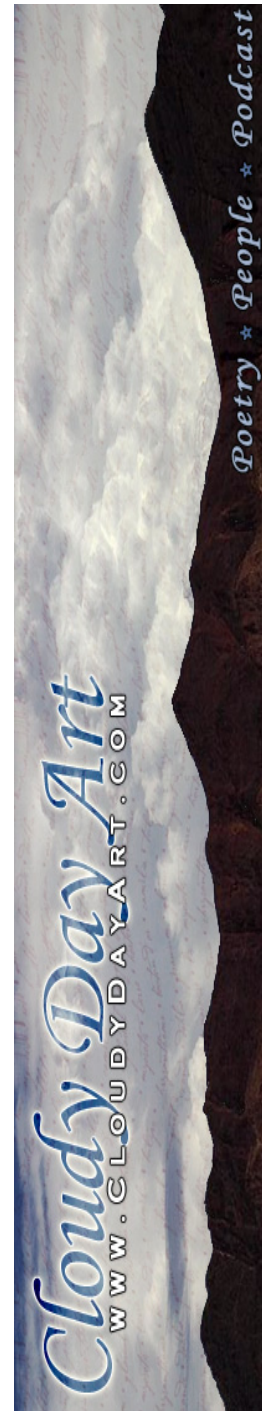
**Rating: 5 out of 5**

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

Simon Toon

The creator of the Slam Idol podcast

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





# SUN DOWN LOUNGE

Reviewed by Simon Toon

This weekly 'pod-zine' from Los Angeles reflects the diverse interests of its host, Larry Winfield. It's about an hour long and features whatever Larry has found to be of interest over the last week, such as poetry recordings from various internet archives and fresh recordings from the L.A. live poetry scene, smatterings of techno and jazz music from various pod-safe sources, alternative tech news (the latest cold-fusion experiment or ultra-keen automobile) and a little liberal politics.

The music tends to be fairly ambient, so it's good to have in the background during work or chores, but you'd better stop and take notice when the talk starts! The poetry featured tends to fall into two camps: old poetry from dead poets on which the copyright has lapsed, and contemporary poetry from the local scene, which Larry records himself, although the audio quality is not great. Larry presents his own poetry in a separate podcast, The Patio.

Larry has radio experience, and the production values of this podcast have therefore been consistently high. Larry is a very laid-back 'cat', and his relaxed, intimate presentation style is very welcoming.

**Rating 4 out of 5**

[www.larrywinfield.com/sundownlounge.htm](http://www.larrywinfield.com/sundownlounge.htm)



Simon Toon

The creator of the Slam Idol podcast

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



## Did you really say: *'1 hour to download'?*

Global Voices by Janet Parkinson



Janet Parkinson along with her husband Paul presents the flashing12 podcast.  
[www.theflashing12.com](http://www.theflashing12.com)

I certainly did! Because of the poor internet bandwidth and most South Africans still on a dialup connection, the average podcast takes over an hour to download. There's some perspective: try putting yourself in that situation with a Daily Source Code, a Daily Breakfast, and an update to iTunes to download! Podcasting is not for the faint hearted in such a climate.

Unsurprisingly, this has held back many would-be South African podcasters and listeners, but dig deep in directories and you'll find them and ...WOW! For the persistent and patient there's a whole lot of energy and buzz zipping around. But as connectivity speeds increase, rest assured you'll be hearing a whole lot more...

### **Derek "The Bandit" Richardson -**

Sound Republic [www.soundrepublic.co.za](http://www.soundrepublic.co.za) and <http://feeds.feedburner.com/Derekthebandits-soundrepublic>

Derek Richardson made headlines in SA podcasting in May when he announced a sponsorship deal with Sony Ericsson. "Blasting through the podosphere from South Africa to the world", Derek 'The Bandit' (I never did find out why "The Bandit" – answers on a postcard, oops, email, please) brings you the best dance music from SA. Already well known in the world of dance, Derek has moved his slick style and über-cool sounds into the digital age, perhaps proof that if you know what you want, it's worth going out and getting it, as companies are waking up to the word 'podcast'. Currently it is a monthly show, but watch out 'cos Derek's got his finger well and truly on the pulse not only of sounds but business, too.

**Rating 4 out of 5**

## 1st Eva SA Music Podcast

1st Eva South African Music Podcast – Cutting Edge SA Music

### 1st EvaSAMusicPodcast <http://steco.libsyn.com>

Majorly creative South African music show which should be well up there in the world ratings. Presented by ‘the Missionary’ and ‘Mountain Hunter’, the diversity of music from local musicians is great, giving you a true sense of the South African music scene. An acquired taste – but worth acquiring.

**Rating 5 out of 5**



### The ZA Show [www.theZashow.com](http://www.theZashow.com)

Extremely popular ‘chat’ show hosted by couple Glen and Bridgitte from Cape Town. In giving updates of news, gossip and interviews of what’s going on in South Africa and Cape Town, their friendly and casual approach attracts a large global following. Their ambition is to educate the world about South Africa and to entice everyone to visit. On this listening, I might even be tempted to get in an aeroplane!

**Rating 3 out of 5**



### 4 Geeks <http://moontan.co.za/4Geeks/>

‘4 tech fights in 4 minutes 4 everyone’ is the base, and they do their best to live up to this. Short and snappy techy fights with the odd mix of eggplants and mangoes to remind you that this is a laid-back land! They only started in May, so you have to wish them luck at keeping up with the weekly shows. Good work, chaps!

**Rating 3 out of 5**

I must say that I was surprised at how few podcasts I found. If you know of more good podcasts from South Africa that deserve a follow-up article, please do get in touch with me through the magazine. I enjoyed my too-brief stay in SA – I’ll be back when the broadband take-up improves and there are more podcasts out there!

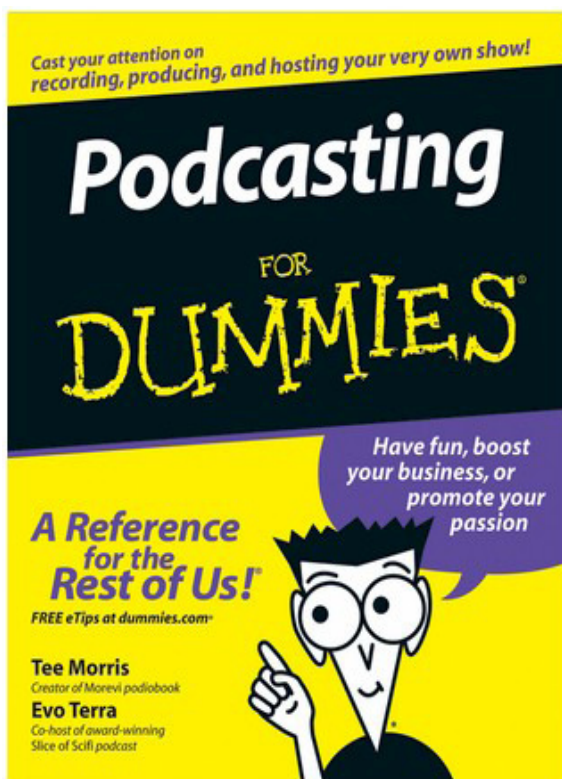
A quick final shout-out to “D.Nuttall” at [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com) for permission to print the amazing picture on the previous page. Taken near Cape Town, it shows just how beautiful South Africa can be.

Next month I’m moving swiftly eastward to the land of duck-billed platypuses, quokkas (yay!) and kangaroos...Australia, here we come! If you want to recommend a podcast or two for me to cover, please contact me at the magazine on [janet.parkinson@podcastusermagazine.com](mailto:janet.parkinson@podcastusermagazine.com). There are plenty of podcasts in Oz; help me find the wheat in the chaff!

# Podcasting for Dummies

by Jimmy Hastell

*Podcast User Magazine may be the only magazine for podcasters and listeners (in our humble opinion), but there is a growing library of instructional and educational books for your perusal.*



*The dominant category are the 'how to' books, and possibly the leader of the pack are the instantly recognisable 'For Dummies' collection, claiming the title of the #1 best-selling computer book series.*

*So, potential podcaster or interested listener, will this book really help at all? Jimmy Hastell, having emptied his mind, picks up the book and tries to be objective.*

The first thing that strikes me as I flip through the pages is the thought given to how this book can and will be used: you can read it from cover to cover in the conventional way or, as I did initially, check out dedicated sections. The layout is well designed; the wider-than-normal inside margin allows the book to sit open on a desk and be easily used--just a little point but one noticeable to me.

The general set out is good, starting with the very basics of equipment. There are detailed pictures and diagrams for extra clarity. The authors do not expect you to spend big bucks, and to that end they give you the information you need to know to guide your buying choices and, of course, how to plug them in.

Chapters two and three delve into 'finding your voice': to script or not to script, just how many em's and ah's can you get in one sentence, finding your radio persona, your first interview--it's all there.

Chapter four shows you exactly how it should be done: correct microphone positioning, levels, volume and projection and also something I didn't expect to see, ambient sound, a favourite of Richard Vobes (who, coincidentally, makes an appearance as a graphic example of a Podcast Alley screen shot on page 211 of the American edition!).

[Amazon USA link](#)

[Amazon UK link](#)

Chapters five to eight tell you what to do with your podcast, how to write the tags and show notes and how to make your podcast known to search engines and the world of RSS. If all this is gobbledygook to you now, then this book will certainly unravel the mysteries in an easy to understand way.

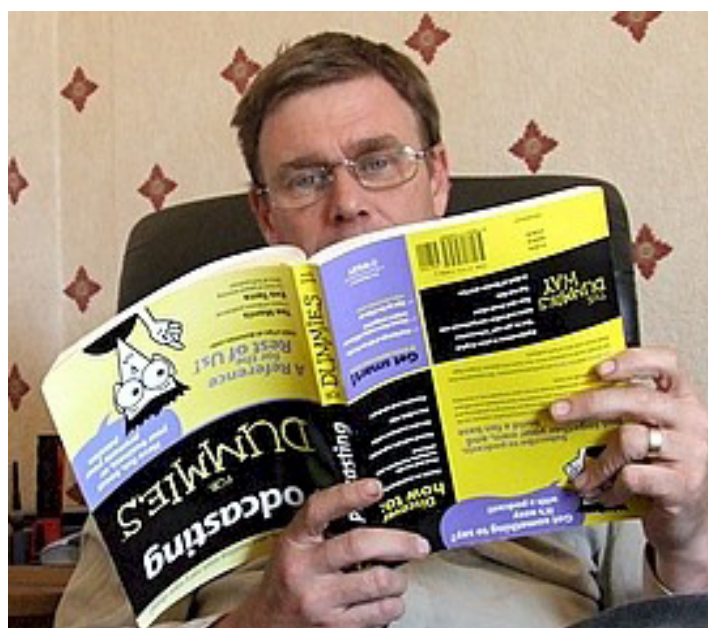
Chapter ten dives into the directories, the haunt of podcasters, as well as forums and discussion groups. There's safety in numbers, you know.

The last section goes much deeper into promoting your podcast and yourself. This is a step that is not taken lightly by a limited few; here the serious podcaster could earn money or a reputation if they so desire. For the most of us, producing a podcast for the enjoyment of it is reward enough, but if you want to take this step, then wise words can be found here.

As an additional bonus, consistently appearing throughout the book are extra paragraphs giving hints and tips, technical advice and links to examples for greater understanding.

There are a great many more subjects than those I have briefly covered here. If I were to have to suggest a good place to start, then this should be your first port of call. It will inspire you, and you'll know just what everyone else is talking about.

**Rating 4 out of 5**

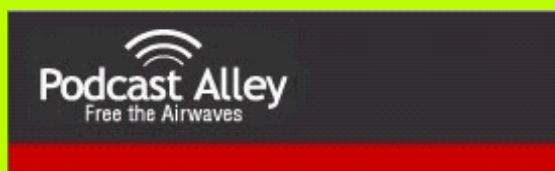


Podcasting for Dummies by  
Tee Morris & Evo Terra  
Published by Wiley Publishing, Inc.  
\$21.99 - £14.99

# Where are all the podcasts, then?



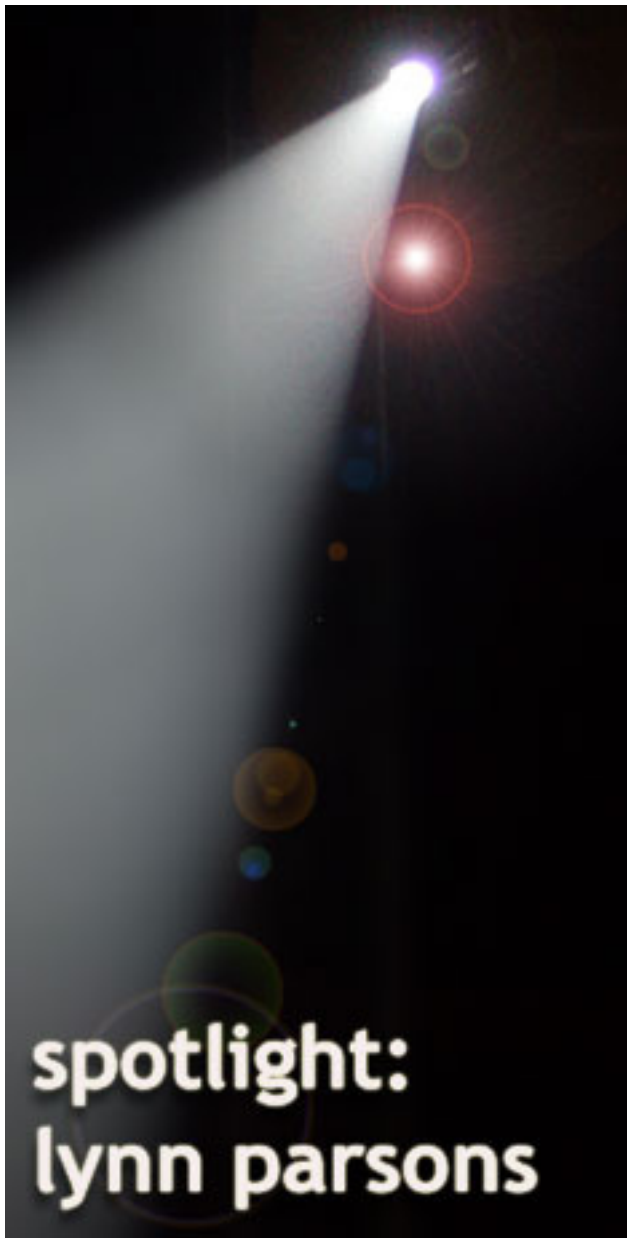
A searchable directory by genre, also top pods listed, forum and podcast submissions.  
[www.podcastpickle.com](http://www.podcastpickle.com)



Probably the most well known directory of them all. Top 100 and easy search options.  
[www.podcastalley.com](http://www.podcastalley.com)



Does exactly as it says on the tin, a community for British Podcasts. Extensive list of Brit podcasters. Diverse directory.  
[www.britcaster.com](http://www.britcaster.com)



## Martin Baker interviews Lynn Parsons on behalf of Podcast User Magazine.

*Lynn Parsons is a familiar name to many listeners in the UK who will have heard her dulcet tones and infectious laugh on BBC Radio 1 & 2, Virgin and many other stations. In August last year, Lynn started her own comedy podcast recorded in the chalet at the bottom of her garden. Recently she launched a second show, The Red Light Zone. We caught up with Lynn at home for a chat and slice of chocolate cake.*

**You've had a lot of success in radio, what made you want to move into podcasting?**

Last summer, I went away for a holiday with my mate Tin Tin and he lent me his iPod with an Adam Curry show on it. There were a few things that really struck me. It was very entertaining and I could hear the benefits of the freedom podcasting allows - it had an energy that your average show on radio doesn't necessarily have. Oh and there were a few \*\*\*\*\*g swear words too!

**So you started coming up with the idea to do your own show. How did the Chalet Show come about?**

I've always done straight-forward music shows, but in my dreams I've wanted to write comedy. There are very few people that I get together with that make me laugh, and Tin Tin is one of them. I thought if we could conjure up that fun on a podcast, then other people on the same wavelength might laugh, too.

**As you say, most of your work so far has been music radio where much of that freedom is taken away from you. Was it much of a shock having to go out and find your own music?**

Actually it was really nice to be responsible for the music because it feels more like your show. The Podsafe Music Network provides us with a lot of stuff, but I also get sent a lot of unsigned bands so it's an opportunity to take the best of those and play them on the shows.



### Do you listen to any other podcasts that you particularly like?

Yes, Gary Dring's 'Clever Little Pod' makes me laugh a LOT. Also my old mate Bob Sinfield has been on my show a couple of times and just started a comedy podcast, Docton Sin's Laughter Zone - it's great! We've played a couple of tracks on the Chalet Show by the Lascivious Biddies and not only do they make great music but they do a regular podcast that is well worth a listen. There are so many other podcasts that I would love to listen to but just don't get the time.

### How different do you find podcasting from traditional radio?

Well I don't get paid for doing the podcast! On the other hand, it's just so massively different being responsible for the whole output. I spend hours choosing music and it's just really nice working with someone else, Doing music radio can be a bit lonely sometimes.

Getting feedback on a podcast is very different too because it's actually very personal to you. The listeners might be commenting on the music you're playing, whether you're making someone laugh or not...you know that if it is praise that all that praise goes to you. At a radio station if you get emails that say "I love your choice of music" of course you can't reply back and say "Actually it's not my choice!" so you're kind of hiding. I think there's no hiding in podcasting, when you're doing it and it's all your responsibility then there's nothing to hide behind at all. It's like walking down the street with no clothes on!

**It's often said that with podcasting you're going to get fewer listeners but the listeners that you do get will have more of a connection with the podcaster. Has that been your experience?**

Yes absolutely, which is a huge compliment. If someone's listening every single week it does mean they're making a conscious effort rather than just catching you on the radio occasionally and perhaps only catching part of the show. So people hear you in your entirety; you can't have a bad one, it's got to be good. And when you're working on the radio generally it's 3 or 4 hours you do, but with a half-hour podcast it's "never mind the width, feel the quality!"



Lynn recording The Chalet Show

**One of the big differences between radio and podcasting is being able to go back and listen to any previous show. Is that a good thing?**

Yes we still have people listening to our first show and catching up. It is lovely to know that if you've done a show that you're really proud of, people can always have access to it.

There is a downside though - I am the worst person in the world for corpsing, and we did have a show where I corpsed badly to the detriment of the show. I keep begging Tin Tin to remove it but he won't. If you want to go through and listen to all 40 or so shows then I'm sure you'll find which one it is!



**As well as doing radio and podcasts, you also do voiceover work.**

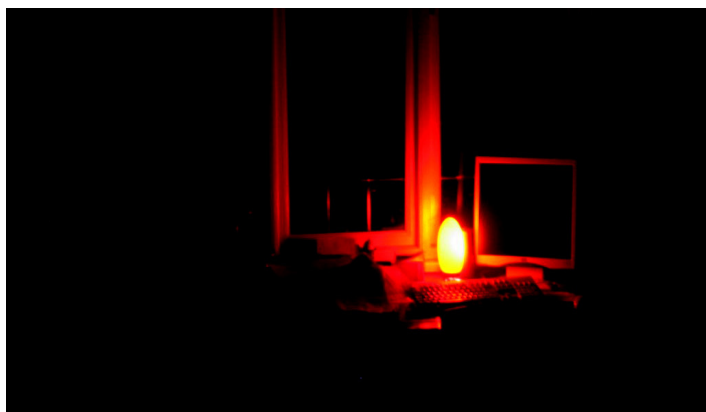
Yes I've been doing that for some years. The funny thing is that now I've got the website for the podcast, anyone who is considering me for a voiceover will usually find the site. If they click on The Chalet Show, they hear me pretending (obviously!) to give birth to a podcast. Inevitably I'll get a call saying "haven't you got another example of your work, we're not sure the screaming baby is the best representation of your voice!" That prompted me to put my traditional voicereel on the site...

**So now you've started a second show, The Red Light Zone, which is very different to The Chalet Show. How's it going?**

[laughs] Well I don't know about anyone else, but I'm really enjoying it! I wanted to have an opportunity to play some of the great music that I find which isn't upbeat enough for the Chalet Show. I've got this really cheap IKEA light with red feet and just put it on in the chalet one night when doing a show...and I thought The Red Light Zone! It just kind of makes the room feel warm and sexy and...late night!

**I did hear a rumour that on one of the podcast directories that the Red Light Zone had actually been added to the 'sex' rather than the 'music' category.**

[big laugh] Is that true? Oh leave us in the sex section! Spice up your iPod!



**Lynn's Red Light Zone**

## Lynn's partner in podcasts, Tin Tin, outlines how the shows are put together.

Generally we record the shows on Wednesday or Thursday night for release on Friday. Lynn emails me the music she's chosen and I download it from the Podsafe Music Network. I normalise the levels, set the intro timing and create a running order for the show. Quite often we'll record phone voicemail segments over Skype, so those need packaging up with the answer-phone intro and beeps.

Whether it's The Chalet Show or The Red Light Zone, we always try to record the show "as live" to make it flow naturally and minimise the editing required.

The chalet studio set up is:

**SOURCES:**

- ADK A51S condenser mic into a Behringer Ultravoice Digital mic preamp/compressor (Lynn's mic)
- Beyer M201 dynamic mic (everyone else's mic)
- Mac Mini with 3 x Griffin iMics to give separate outputs running custom playout software (watch this space...)
- Skype (running on the PowerBook)

**MIXING:**

- Behringer DX1000 mixer (no longer made - bought on eBay)

**RECORDING:**

- PowerBook G4 with Focusrite Saffire audio interface and Steinberg Nuendo software

After recording, I come home with the PowerBook, add some overall compression and EQ in Nuendo then export to MP3, struggle through the shownotes and finally upload to Libsyn. Another week...another show in the can!

[www.lynnparsons.net](http://www.lynnparsons.net)

# Finding the music

## a guide for new music podcasters

by Grant Mason

*As a music podcaster, I frequently receive emails from prospective podcasters looking for advice on getting started. One of the questions that I am guaranteed to be asked is, "Can you tell me where you find your music and how I can access it, too?" If I had 20p for each that one came up, I'd have...well...a big pile of 20p coins.*

*Thankfully, there's no podcasting mafia yet, so I'm not breaking the podcasting Omerta and likely to end up wearing concrete wellies and sleeping with the fishes, traffic cones and shopping trolleys in the Water Of Leith by spilling the beans.*

*There are three main sites that most music podcasters will start off using – the Podsafe Music Network, Magnatune and MySpace. Let's see how you go about joining up and getting the music on each of these.*

The Podsafe Music Network (PMN) <http://music.podshow.com>. Probably one of the biggest (if not THE biggest) music resource specifically aimed at podcasters, brought to you by the creators of Podshow.com.



the best in new music and music podcasts from the creators of PodShow.com

check out these top podsafe artists



Once you've got to the site, click the 'podcasters register' link on the right-hand side and complete the required details to register yourself. Bear in mind that you'll have to have a podcast site and feed set up, as you'll be asked for these details by way of confirming that you really are a podcaster! (**Figure 1**)

podcasters **login**

user name:

password:

Remember Me

Figure 1

Once you're registered, login, and you will be presented with a number of options. (**Figure 2**) (We'll ignore everything except for the music features since everything else is beyond the scope of this article.) Scroll down to the bottom of the screen and you'll see a 'Find Music' search facility; you can either use this or use the 'Build playlist' option up by your profile. Either one will result in the same thing – you get to choose various search or sort options to allow you to track down the music you're after. For example, let's use 'Build Playlist'. Click the link and you'll be presented with the latest music added to the PMN and a search facility at the bottom of the page:

Artist/Band	Song	Date Submitted	Genre	Purchase	Add to Playlist	Listen
One Laptop	Send Yourself Away	Jan. 15 2006	Pop-Rock	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
One Laptop	A Better Day	Jan. 15 2006	Pop	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
One Laptop	'Cause I was Wrong	Jan. 15 2006	Pop	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
Early Richards	Diamond King (George got Paid)	Jan. 15 2006	Pop-Rock	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
The Web Series	Mental Cuts	Jan. 15 2006	Pop	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
Double Down	Whiskey Down	Jan. 15 2006	Rock	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
Double Down	Sometimes	Jan. 15 2006	Rock	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
Double Down	Jessie	Jan. 15 2006	Rock	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>
Case Or Death	Satisfied	Jan. 15 2006	Rock	\$0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Listen"/>

Figure 2

The titles for the columns are fairly self-explanatory; note that 'Artist / Band' is a clickable link that takes you to more info about the artist, which you can use for your shownotes. The tunes can be listened to by clicking the 'Listen' icon, and if you like what you hear, you can click 'Add to Playlist'.

Once you've built up a playlist, click the 'Go to my page' link at the top of the page, which will return you to your main page. Click the 'My Playlist' button there, and you'll be shown your playlist: (**Figure 3**)

From here, you can:

- Choose to download the MP3 to your PC or play it live during your show recording.
- Choose to remove a track from the playlist if you're no longer happy with your choice
- Use the shownotes link for each track in your own shownotes
- Report when a track has been played



Figure 3

By far the most important of these is 'Report When Played'. This allows you to send a note to the artist so that they know they've been played. (Their page for the track will also be updated to show that the track has recently been played on your show.) Clicking on this brings up a short, default message shown in **Figure 4**, which allows you to fill in the Episode Name/Number, Date Played and a message to the artist. Out of courtesy, I always add my own wording to the standard supplied as I like the element of human contact rather than the bland factual statement that would otherwise be sent.

That's basically all there is to it, although the PMN asks that you mention on your show that the music came from their site and give out their URL, a very small favour to ask in return for the wealth of music that's being made available to you!

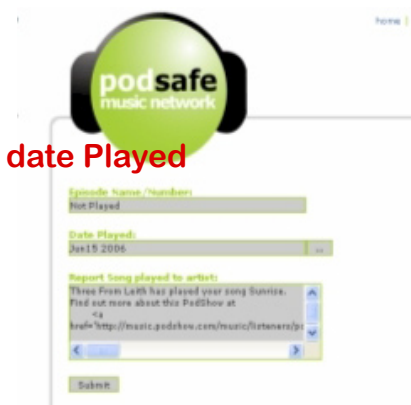


Figure 4



Magnatune - <http://magnatune.com/>

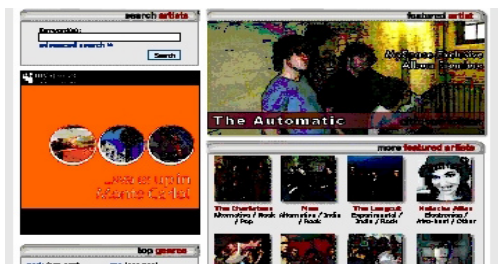
Magnatune is actually a record label with a very unusual and enlightened business model - they want you to use their music in your podcasts! They're one of the only record labels I know whose music you can legally use in your podcast without having to stump up megabucks to pay for a licensing agreement. As they proudly state, "All of our MP3s are Creative Commons licensed, and may be downloaded at no cost for podcast use. Usually, however, we prefer that podcasters get the best audio quality versions of our albums and so we allow podcasters to download the best-quality purchased versions of our albums."

So, how do you get your sweaty podcaster palms on the music? Have a look at their podcasters' page (<http://magnatune.com/info/podcast>) first. Then just email Teresa at Magnatune ([http://magnatune.com/info/email\\_us?to=teresa](http://magnatune.com/info/email_us?to=teresa)) with your podcast URL, and she'll reply with instructions and a special 'credit card' number which lets you 'buy' albums from them for free.

Again, while there is no charge for the music, Magnatune asks you to credit them in your show as the source of the music that you got from them. Teresa gives you specific instructions on how they'd prefer you to do this in the email along with the special number.

Whilst not as extensive a site as the PMN, they have a large variety of genres, and you have the warm glow of satisfaction from helping out a small record label in return for their unique and refreshing outlook on music distribution.

### Myspace - [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)



Lastly, but by no means least, the largest social networking site on the planet is also a massive source of music for podcasters. Register, set up your page and then get looking for music! How? Click the 'Music' link in the top menu to go to the music part of the site, and then click the 'Search' link in the 'MySpace Music' sub-menu bar. From here, you have access to set your search criteria: genre, location, influences and many more.

The search returns a list of all of the bands that meet the criteria you specified, and from there it's just a case of having a look, clicking their photo to visit their page and deciding if you like what you hear. If you do, click on their 'Send a message' button (and thereafter 'Add To Friends') and send the band a courteous email telling them how much you enjoy their music and asking if they'd allow you to play it on your podcast. If the track isn't directly downloadable from the MySpace player, ask them if they'd be able to email or send you the track to play. Remember to give them a link to your podcast website so that they can check you out beforehand, too, just so they can see you're not a crazed or demented fan trying to cadge some free MP3 tracks!

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*That, then, is all, folks. It really can start off as simply as that. Of course, these are just a small selection of the growing podsafe music resource sites out there on the web. Have a look at the links on your favourite podcasters' sites, and I'm sure you'll spot a few more which they've found and use regularly.*

*Happy hunting!*

# Indie Launchpad

Podcast



Showcasing Some of the Best in Independent Music

## COMES OF AGE

Podcasting is by no means an exact science, but that's one of its beauties. Indie Launchpad recently released its 21st show, which featured some of the best songs featured in the previous 20 weeks. It was a sort of coming-of-age show, '21 and never been kissed', thankfully much different than the person behind the show... yeah, that person being me.

For the previous 20 shows I'd recorded my voice using a microphone that I think cost me the giddy sum of \$2.00. No, that's not a typo -- two dollars. First off, this should prove that you don't have to spend a fortune, as mentioned in a previous article, but that's not to say I didn't have issues with this method of voice recording. One of the consistently difficult things I confronted was maintaining unified, consistent sound levels. With music at one level and my voice at a totally different one, the first half dozen or so shows were a real learning experience. After that I managed to end up with something that I thought was OK, but there always was that little nagging voice in the back of my head....

And so, with the 21st episode I decided to give the show a coming-of-age present, a Samson C01U USB microphone. Before I get into the details of this purchase, I want to say that this wasn't what I'd intended to buy. My idea was always to buy a mixer and microphone combination, which was going to set me back about \$200 or more. However, when the time came to make a purchase, I wanted something I could just go out to the stores and buy, and I wanted something that I knew a little about. Having read the PUM review by Chris Matson on the Samson mic (Issue 3), I phoned around to see if I could purchase one locally, here in Ottawa, Canada. After numerous stores told me they had no plans to stock them, I finally found a store downtown that had some to sell. With my \$115 Canadian + tax in hand, I got my wife to drive me downtown (in case parking was a pain), and a half hour or so later, I had a shiny new Samson microphone in my possession. >>>

by Colin Meeks

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

The first thing that's blatantly apparent when you get your hands on this mic is that it's heavy and very nicely put together. There's a mounting bracket, so you can attach it to a stand, but unfortunately the unit doesn't come with one; this is a pain, as without a stand, you can't set the mic standing up and are forced to have it lie on its side. Yes, a desktop mic stand will only set you back \$20, but even a piece of plastic that would let it stand freely would be nice to find inside the mic box.

This mic certainly looks nicely made and is pretty, but what does it sound like? Now remember, I'm coming from something that cost me \$2.00 to something that is quite a bit more expensive, so you might think my standards are pretty low; not so. I'm subscribed to over 80 podcasts and sample many more, so I know what sounds good and what sounds bad. With this new mic I've recorded only one podcast so far, but wow, what a difference. You can tell you are doing something right when, after the first show using the new mic, you get emails from happy listeners. But it's funny how you just end up replacing one problem with another, even though the problem is pretty easy to rectify -- have a nice chunky mic that encourages you to talk into it quite closely, and enter the old bugbear of pops and esses, the sounds that result when you say the words with the letter 'P' and words with an 'SS' sound. To rectify this problem you'll need to get what is commonly referred to as a pop filter, usually a sheet of fine mesh over a circular frame that's connected to a gooseneck (flexible cable) with a crocodile clip. It's fairly inexpensive at around \$20 but very effective. Now I only have to go pick one up myself.

The next goal is to learn how to record some decent bumpers and sweepers. For anyone who's looking to record some musical vocals, this may also be a nice microphone to pick up. I've dabbled with a few tracks, and the results on the whole have been pretty good. There is a slight hiss when you get some quiet spots, but it's nothing too noticeable. One thing I would recommend is the downloading of the 'Software Pre' as Samson calls it. This is basically a small applet that gives you some extra control over the microphone. The microphone is usable out of the box, with no extra software, but I had noticeably better results once I installed and used this applet. The software is available for Windows XP with Service pack 2 installed and Mac OSX.

The only problem I have with the microphone is that I can't seem to record my voice whilst at the same time listening to it through the headphones. I'm not sure if this is a limitation with the microphone, my set-up or both, but will try to test on my laptop when I get a chance. The other problem I have is with losing my levels. I went to record my podcast on Friday night but could only get my voice at a very low level. I finally rebooted the machine and everything sprang to life again. So yes, a pain, but worth it for the improvement in quality.

I can go on and on about how great this microphone is, but the proof in the pudding is in the eating. Go check out any of the Indie Launchpad shows before # 22 and any of the shows after that episode, when I started using the Samson microphone, and let me know what you think. Check the show again a few weeks after that, and you can see what kind of improvement the pop filter makes.

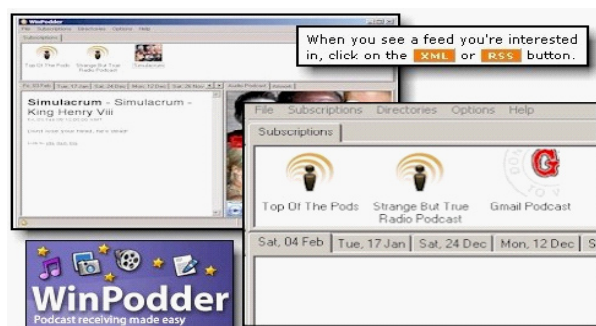
My final point is this: Yes, you do not need to spend a lot of money to get started in podcasting, but after a while and with a few shows under your belt, you will start to take pride in your little baby. Yes, you can spend a lot of money on new toys and gadgets, but you can still get very good results without breaking the bank. That's not to say my spending will now cease, as I still have my eyes on a nice mixer, but suffice to say you will be the first to hear when I get it.

Colin Meeks is the Producer of the Indie Launchpad podcast  
[www.indielaunchpad.com](http://www.indielaunchpad.com)



Samson - <http://www.samsontech.com>  
 Ebay - <http://www.ebay.com>

**WinPodder, the multimedia subscription tool, rated 10/10 in issue 2, and it's free.**



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



by Richard Vobes

You have heard all about podcasting. You have recorded your voice and gotten used to how weird it sounds. You've uploaded a few podcasts and are now thoroughly bitten by the bug. So what's next? Of course, build your own studio!

This month's dollop from the Vobes School of Podcasting brings you a few thoughts on approaching the construction of a home studio. I shall look at the merits and pitfalls of recording, the equipment required and the financial burden it's going to play on your disposable income!

Let's get straight into it, then.

### A PLACE TO SHOVE IT!

OK, you are not the BBC. You are not funded by the license fee and you haven't got a dedicated studio complex to build everything to perfect broadcast specification! Not a problem. Let's just see what you have got and work around it.

If you are the average podcaster producing shows for fun and frolics, then the chances are you have a computer in either a small boxy room, imaginatively called your 'office' or wedged in the corner of your living space, aptly referred to as your 'den'. Now maybe you're one of those lucky sods who has a whole house to yourself, as I had recently (until the kids decided they wanted to come and live with me and invade my peace and quiet!), and have a room dedicated to this purpose. Either of the above options is fine for the building of our Podcast Studio.

### SILENCE!

'Will you just shut up, I am trying to record here!' is probably the first thing you will hear when you encounter a budding podcaster, slowly finding his blood pressure increasing dramatically as he struggles to record just the first few lines of his show! So naturally, when choosing a place to build your broadcasting empire, select somewhere that is going to be naturally quiet. For example, if your house backs onto a railway line, it probably isn't a good idea to use your rear bedroom as the recording zone, as high-speed intercity commuter vehicles jangling on the tracks outside your windows do little to enhance the podcast – well, usually they don't! That said, if this is the only option, there are various solutions to deaden the sound to an acceptable level, but more on that later.





## BOUNCING OFF THE WALLS

No matter how quiet the room, there is one thing that is constantly overlooked (or ignored) by most amateur home recordists, and that is the room's acoustics. This is the most important thing in the whole studio environment, and I am amazed it is so infrequently considered. Let me say this right here and now – follow this simple piece of advice and your podcast sound quality will improve 101%. Forget the fancy compressors, graphic equalizers, the digital effects units and junk like that; concentrate on the acoustics, and you will start to sound like a professional broadcaster. Better than that, people will find you so much easier to listen to!

It's not rocket science either, and it's definitely no secret, just greatly misunderstood.

Let's get this straight. I am NOT talking about sound proofing. There are various methods of removing unwanted sounds from the room. Thick brick walls can do that, as will massive lead sheets formed into a box around you. No this is far more important: sound deadening!

Let me explain this more fully. When you open your mouth and utter a word, the sound doesn't just plop out in a speech bubble and get sucked into the microphone in front of you. It also travels across the room. It keeps traveling in a straight line (well, actually many straight lines radiating from your orifice) until it hits an object. Two things then happen. Firstly, some of the sound is absorbed by the object, and secondly, the sound bounces off the said object according to the properties of its surface and composition.

In other words, if you have straight, flat, upright walls, your voice is going to bounce off them like nobody's business and rapidly come back to the microphone to be added into the mix. This can result in a very hollow and flat sound that's not terribly pleasing on the ear.

The goal of sound deadening is then to do just that, deaden the acoustics so there are no vocal echos coming from the walls or other hard surfaces. You will be amazed how much a flat desk reflects the vocal sound back to the microphone when it is only a few feet away. Things to avoid where possible in your podcasting studio are bare plastered walls, large posters in glass frames, too much veneered furniture, dry wipe boards, mirrors and hard-polished laminated floors!





You can see where we are going with this then, can't you? Fill the room with plenty of soft furnishings. Carpets, comfy armchairs, rugs and lush curtains are perfect devices to deaden the sound. I was once advised by a BBC sound engineer to put a sofa in my studio. He said, 'Yes, that's a perfect bass absorber!'

Of course not everyone has the room to have all these bulky furnishings in their studio, so there are other options available to you.

Carpet, preferably 100% wool, affixed to the walls is perfect and found in a number of professional studios. A friend of mine suggested duvets hung from a length of wooden dowel adjacent to the wall, which is a brilliant idea, as you can change the duvet covers if you want to create a different mood from time to time. There is acoustic foam that comes in squares, like carpet tiles, but these are ridiculously expensive; if you have money to burn, though, they are an easy solution.

Unfortunately, sticking stuff to the walls may not always be permitted by your partner if your studio is in the living room and only operated when everyone else in the family has popped out for a couple of hours. In this case, small screens could be built to encompass the recording desk and pulled out when required. I have heard of someone recording a voiceover to a TV programme by simply climbing under the bed clothes and sitting in the dark reading his script with a torch!!!

So, deaden that sound and kill the returning echo. You will be amazed by the results. Another friend of mine confessed to me that he knew all about this but didn't do it himself as he felt a small amount of amateurishness' in a podcast helped to give it that home-made feel.

Of course, it's your show. You produce it however you like. The great joy of podcasting at the moment is that there simply are no rules, no right or wrong way of doing things.

My counter argument is that the show is made for the listener's benefit, and all I want to do is make it as comfortable for him or her as possible, so that they will come back again next time.

In next month's issue we shall start to find out what pieces of equipment we'll require and then work out a plan to plug them altogether!

In the meantime, get the carpet glue out and really give your friends and neighbours something to worry about.



**The Vobes School  
of Podcasting**

Richard Vobes. The Richard Vobes Radio Show. [www.vobes.com](http://www.vobes.com)

**Check out our free-to-enter competition on pages 7 to 8 to win a sE Studio Reflexion Filter**

# Podshow are coming to the UK

Podshow are coming to the UK. After many months of being regarded as of lesser importance financially and creatively, the UK has been graced with a visit from Adam Curry and Ron Bloom of Podshow, and according to reports it was a success, with many in attendance being impressed by the two men in question.

What will be interesting now is watching the tide of negative feelings toward Podshow ebbing as all of a sudden the UK becomes an important part in the development of Podshow as a company. Podshow's – and by that I mean Adam Curry's – no show at PodcastConUK 05 did little to engender a feeling of international podcasting brotherhood among the UK attendees, fostering a 'them and us' mentality among many UK podcasters toward their North American fellow hobbyists.

But with Podshow making it clear they want a presence in the UK, I predict we will see a collective reach for the Bic biro in readiness to sign the Podshow contract, specially amended to work with UK law (the contract I signed last June was hopelessly parochial). Neil Dixon, creator of the UK's podcast directory Britcaster, has blogged that he has been approached by Podshow, and I know of at least one other high-profile – and talented – podcast producer who has been courted by the company in recent weeks. Both of these podcasters have been offered management-level roles, but what about the grassroots podcasters, the people whose listener base Podshow needs in order to swell the numbers it offers advertisers? Expect some of your favourite UK podcast producers to be Podshow producers by the end of 2006. And that quiet whirring sound you hear? That's the sound of several UK anti-Podshow podcasters back-peddling frantically.

Why do I think there will be a shift in collective feeling toward Podshow? Simply because I don't believe all the podcasters who claim they podcast for the listeners, or for the creative fun of it, or because they can help unsigned bands and that they never want to make any money ever doing so. Granted, I have no doubt there are some altruistic podcasters in the UK who genuinely do wish to benefit others when they podcast. But what makes podcasters great podcasters is when they create and produce a podcast for themselves. Make no mistake about that; if you podcast for yourself, for passion, to sate your creative appetite, your podcast will be fantastic. But like any relationship where passion is a key ingredient, occasionally a little spice needs to be added – just to keep things interesting. And at the moment, unless you have a podcast with the listener base of Rocketboom or TWiT, Podshow are among the few podcast networks who, it appears on paper, have their own spice rack, hand crafted by Kleiner Perkins. And just in case my analogy has lost you, by spice I mean money. Therefore, once money is involved, or the potential – again on paper – to make money, attitudes often change.

In conclusion, the remaining five or six months of 2006 will see Podshow start to establish themselves in the UK. Some of your favourite UK podcasts will sign themselves into the Podshow stable in the hope to earn some money via their creative passion. And which one of us can honestly blame them?



Mark: My Words

# Basic mixer set up

by Jimmy Hastell

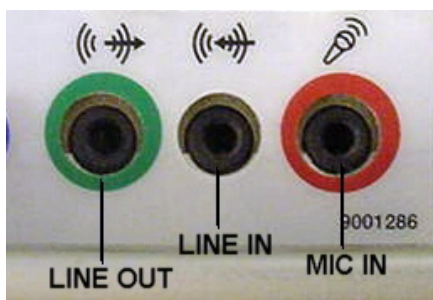
After a great deal of thought, you have convinced yourself that a mixer will add an important element to your podcasting experience, so you inform your other half that

- it's cheap.
- it will improve your production.
- both.
- buy it anyway and pretend it was always there.

For many of us, the thrill of opening a new package, sliding out the polystyrene foam protection and throwing the instruction manual back in the box is something akin to nirvana!

After a short while examining your new toy... sorry... hardware accessory, you start to realise that there are a lot more holes in a mixer than a Swiss cheese, and of course the only lead that comes with it is the power supply. In the end you just have to resort to going back to the box and getting the instruction manual. Just make sure no one sees you (it's a male thing).

Prior to PMT (Pre-Mixer Toy), your show may have been recorded on an MP3 player with a 'record' option or, as most are, recorded directly to your computer. Here are the basic connections in their simplistic form: two holes on your sound card, sound in (mic) and sound out (speaker/headphones)



So, where does the mixer figure in all this? It just plugs in between you and the computer, quite literally. Sound goes in the mixer, comes out the other side and into your computer via your sound card.

If it's that simple then, you may be asking yourself, why use a mixer at all? (many podcasters talk to themselves; it's actually a favourable trait). The mixer, depending on which model you purchase, offers a wide range of inputs. My Behringer Eurorack, for example, has two microphone inputs, giving me the opportunity to hold interviews around a table with guests or even have a second presenter. It also has another four inputs that allow me to connect up a CD player, a tape deck, a mini disc player, and the sound from another computer or laptop. You get a huge sense of power, fading from one source to another just like a real radio presenter. Let's not also forget that with a mixer you can record directly to a device such as a mini disc recorder rather than to your computer.

Setting up the mixer (the second most exciting bit – deep joy!) I'm actually going to start by what may seem a little back-to-front, the reason being that I'm going to have to crawl under a desk to get to the back of the computer.

**Getting the sound out from the mixer to the computer.** On the output section of the mixer will be a couple of holes marked 'studio out' or 'main out'; this is where the finished mixed sound leaves the mixer. Note the two sockets (often 6mm jack plugs), one for the right channel and the other for the left (it's stereo, of course).

The more astute will immediately realise that your computer only has one input socket, and it's a small jack plug, so here you will need to get a 'Y' cable with the right connections at each end. Don't panic, most audio/music shops stock a range of cables; good places to try are guitar and keyboard shops. This is why there were no cables in the box; depending on your computer, there are many different types of connections that can be made.

One other tiny thing: don't plug the cable into the mic socket which might seem logical. Instead, use the socket marked LINE IN, it's designed for this use (unless you don't have one or are using a laptop computer).



### Getting the sound out from the computer to your ears.

Did I mention to buy two of those cables? Well, go and get another one, then! The second 'Y' cable is used to get the finished recorded sound out from the computer. You could just use headphones in the 'sound out' jack from the computer, but it is better to run it back into the mixer via the 'Tape In' sockets (2x6mm jack plugs). This configuration gives you hands-on control of what you are hearing as it is recorded. Don't be tempted to plug it in to the speakers or you may get feedback, especially when recording. Then plug the headphones in the...er...headphones socket on the mixer.

Next, if you are using Windows on your computer, you will need to tell it to use the 'Line In' option instead of the 'Mic' option when recording, or you won't be able to do so. Go to 'Start/Settings/Control Panel/Sounds & Audio Devices', and in the 'Volume' section click the 'Advanced' tab to bring up the sound controls. In the options make sure that 'LINE IN' is ticked, select options again for the recording section and tick the 'LINE IN' there as well. This has the effect of turning that socket on.

To make life much easier, in the 'Sounds and Devices' section as mentioned above, tick the box that says 'Place volume item on task bar'; this will put a short-cut down in the right-hand corner of the task bar, a little speaker picture. Clicking this will take you directly to the sound controls. If you have any problems, this is the area in which it will occur by just not having the right options ticked.

The time has come to enjoy yourself (the most exciting bit). Plug in a microphone. A cheap plastic desktop mic just isn't the thing to use; we're getting professional now and need 'proper' equipment. Buying the best professional microphone available will not make you the best-produced or best-sounding podcaster, but using cheap equipment **will** make you sound cheap, not to mention tinny and hissy.

Check back issues of **Podcast User Magazine** in which we review some very good and inexpensive microphones. The Behringer Mixer uses the standard XLR mic connections (3 pins), but adapters are available.

Before you do anything at all, even before you turn on the mixer, just make sure all the volume knobs or sliders are at their lowest levels, the speakers are off and the headphones are ready.

OK, go for it, starting with the traditional 'testing .1 . . 2 . . 3', which is perfectly acceptable if a little corny. Then slowly turn up the mic volume control and the headphones until you can hear yourself. (You did turn on the little switch in the mic, didn't you?) Now it's up to you to get the best levels from your mixer. Using gain, EQ hi-mid-low, pan and the slider control, you'll soon get a feel for the thing, Now play.

I should stress that these settings apply to the Behringer Eurorack UB1002; the settings on yours may be different. In fact, you can even find USB mixers now. Always read the manual, no matter how clever you think you are; it saves hours.



Rode NT1000 condenser microphone. Reviewed in issue 4, page 31.

The Samson C01 condenser microphone. Reviewed in issue 3, page 12.



Alesis multimix 8 USB mixer. Reviewed issue 2, page 40.



# Get on your soap box and let rip!



by **Geoff Tinnion**

Fancy mingling with some angry people and then making them happy? Well, why not take a trip down to Speakers' Corner and perform your podcast live! There's no need to change the subject of the show to suit the environment, either; just carry on as normal - it doesn't all have to be about politics and religion, you know. Now, as a tip, plant one of your friends in the crowd to get the interaction started and to record the reactions of those around while they listen to you.

Getting to Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park Corner, London, is likely to be quite a trek for most PUM readers, but after a light spot of 'googling' I have learnt that there are many similar sites across the globe, so I hope there is one near to you. For example, if you're in Canada, why not try out playing your favourite podsafes tunes in Speakers' Corner, Regina, Saskatchewan. If you live in the States you could try out one of the many Free Speech Zones, which are set up by the government wherever Mr. Bush is appearing and where you can also play a game of 'I Spy the secret service bods' while you wait for a good opportunity to stand up and do your bit.

Good luck!

Geoff Tinnion  
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## References

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speakers\\_corner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speakers_corner)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free\\_speech\\_zones](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_speech_zones)

## Quote

Cory Doctorow "Giving a speech at Speakers' Corner is wild -- it's the ultimate soap-boxing experience, and everyone who's done it swears by it."

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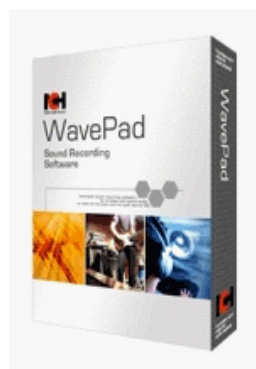
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[www.nch.com.au/wavepad/masters.html](http://www.nch.com.au/wavepad/masters.html)

# Podcasting for an audience of one

by Paul Nicholls

I've just finished a punishing schedule of three professional post-grad exams.

It's been a good 16 years or so since I sat an exam under exam conditions, and pushing towards the big 4-0, I found studying just that bit harder at such an intense level.

How do you prepare, or how did you prepare? I would sit with masses of manuscript notes, condensing them down to the tiniest form possible and try and learn that. How boring, how incredibly tedious.

Having four kids and a ridiculously busy practise was so difficult and downright awkward for studying purposes.

It struck me that most of my time travelling around in the course of my practice was a wasted opportunity. Additionally, I'd a thousand and one things to do, masses of DIY and precious little time to sit down. Why not podcast my studies? I could re-decorate the lounge, hang curtain rails and tend to the gardens. So I did. Mind numbing jobs were brought to life by principles and precedents in Murder, Theft and Manslaughter. I'd drive around listening to defences in rape, equitable maxims and the like. I'd even go to sleep listening to recklessness and principal offenders.

The results were staggering. Before I had struggled with exams and had to work like a dog, but now everything seemed to come back to me so clearly. I'd wake with the test for severance on my mind and be able to quote a Lord Justice's speech.

Since so much of my time is spent travelling, tending to chores and such like, it adds up, and I was astonished at just how much time I had to listen to my studies while doing other things. I'm sure it gave me more than an edge.

The reason for the result is actually very simple: if you listen enough to your favourite album, with its dozens of verses, choruses, middle eights and solos, you know what's coming next. Precisely the same happened with me and my podcast studies. I did get a bit cocky and leave the last exam prep a little late, I think, perhaps (though I hope not) to my peril. If I need a resit, you can bet your bottom dollar I'll be doing the same thing again.

My advice is this: if you have a best man's speech, a presentation, lines to learn in a play, or an exam, think about preparing your podcast for your most avid listener, yourself.



by Dave Kingston

If you're reading **Podcast User Magazine**, then you've already shown an interest in podcasting. This strange little world seems a bit intimidating at first. Believe me, I'm 'bricking it' just thinking about RSS feeds, audio mixing and the like. It's OK, though, because ignorance can be thrilling and -- you know what? -- it can be overcome with a little reading and a small dose of research. Hence my gamble in making a fool of myself in front of the experts here in the pages of PUM.

To start with, a quick bio. I've always had a passing interest in radio. I even got some gigs at small radio stations doing the 'late shift'. Unfortunately, I was bad... very bad. The vocal presentation wasn't too much of an issue, but my technical abilities were atrocious. There was no way I was going to be a 'DJ' for a living, but I loved talking to 'the listener' and interacting with an audience. The real world intervened in the form of a mortgage, and that was that.

Travel 10 years forward to my first iPod and the weird things called podcasts. Like most people, I saw an article in a magazine or newspaper and started surfing the pod world. These podcasters were producing weird, informative, funny, original and downright strange audio programming from their bedrooms with a computer and a few bits of equipment. I can do this, can't I? Well, here goes.

The first thing I did was to read, read and read some more. There are a ton of resources out there to help, and the starting point for me was PUM. I don't worry about the 'techno-babble' because I know that if I read all the stuff about XML feeds I could find, then it is bound to sink in at some point. After that I've ventured onto the forums that are part of some of the big podcast information websites. The beauty of this is that there seem to be hundreds of people out there asking the same questions I'm asking. Due to the 'community' aspect of podcasting, which is really in its infancy as a medium, there are some great people out there answering these posts. Someone is out there who has done what you want to do. They've made the mistakes and are willing to share their experience.

What does this button do?

Forums have strange dynamics in any area of interest on the internet. Most have sections, and podcast forums are no different. I started with the FAQ sections (if there was one). The next step was to use the search function (most forums have one) and then I just set aside a couple of hours and went through the history of interesting sections such as 'Podcast Software' or 'Technical Discussion'. There was plenty of information on the sites I mention later.

When I had a query I couldn't find an answer to, I just dived in and posted a question. A few things to note here: You'll go a long way by introducing yourself in your first post on any forum and announce your ignorance. Don't be shy! Regular posters on any forum will say hello and usually point you in the right direction. There will always be the Ubersnobs who may flame you for posting something that has been posted a million times before, but don't worry, just move on after thanking the helpful posters. The nicer you are when you first post in any forum, the more help you'll get, and it's no different in the world of podcasting. As most of the good forums out there are as new as the medium itself, there isn't too much 'overlapping'. This, in turn, means that you are unlikely to have to search for hours for relevant answers to your problems. Get in there while it's still fresh!

Just look at the pages of PUM and the problems expressed by the great contributors and how they overcame them. Check out....

PodcastAlley - [www.podcastalley.com/forum](http://www.podcastalley.com/forum)  
PodcastPickle - [www.podcastpickle.com/forums](http://www.podcastpickle.com/forums)  
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PodcastNews - [www.podcastingnews.com/forum](http://www.podcastingnews.com/forum)

A quick word of warning, though! Just as is the case with all internet-based information, there are people out there with ulterior motives. Don't sign up for anything that costs \$\$ without a recommendation from someone you trust or a site administrator. Do a search on the net for reviews of anything before you hand over money. That goes for equipment, hosting and the like.

That should keep you going until next time, when I'll be yapping on about content, because it's KING! I've got my podcast planned, and I'll go over that in some more detail. It's going to be called myexPODition, and I think it will appeal to a lot of podcasters and listeners out in the big bad world of podcasting. Until then, keep your fingers crossed for me.

Dave Kingston is a podcast wannabe from Dublin  
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What does this button do?

# Inside the Podcasters' Studio

**Paul and Judy  
from TotalPodcastrophe  
ask questions of  
Emma and Pete from  
The Emma and Pete show**

*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 the cordial occupants of Cooper Towers, Emma and Pete. Their podcast, "The Emma and Pete Show", is an audio blog from two residents of the British Isles. It is recorded almost daily but released to the Internet only when it is deemed to have an approved entertainment content. 'It's the podcasts that Emma and Pete reject that make The Emma And Pete Show podcasts the best' might be an appropriate slogan.*

*Pete describes himself as a "twenty-something strapping young lad with technical tendencies and a creative tint." Anyone who has encountered Pete on the Britcaster forums may know that the most recent 'tint' is his neon green hair. Pete is married to Emma, and although they have no kids, they have recently adopted two chickens, Princess Layer and Hen Solo. Residing in Oxfordshire, Pete and Emma spend their days working in the computer field, tending an allotment and enjoying their chickens.*



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

Pete: "I first heard Adam Curry's 'out take' recording of him recording a Daily Source Code carcast and driving past someone he knew who was listening to another Daily Source Code. There was a conversation (in what I presume to be Dutch), and hilarity ensued. To be honest, I had no idea what was going on, but it made me giggle, so I researched."

Emma: "Can't remember when, exactly - definitely from Pete babbling about it."

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

Pete: "Dawn and Drew Show. Curiosity."

Emma: "Wiggly Wiggles, because I'm a big fan of organic gardening and I have two of their worm composters."

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

Pete: "People having fun. Not talking about football. Seriously, I have wide-ranging tastes in podcasts, the key is have real people doing it because they like doing it, not because they feel they have to get a show out of the door to reach the monthly target of shows. I have respect for people like Mr Vobes and his gang who can do a show virtually every day, but it's not really my cup of tea. If I find a quality podcast, I will subscribe and link to it from my website - I comment on their shows if the facility exists. Any show that works with listeners is great - even something as simple as reading emails out on air makes it more 'real'. The last thing I look for is my guilty geek secret: the sound quality has to be good. If it's recorded at 64kbps mono and sounds like plop then I'll avoid it, even if it's the best thing ever."

Emma: "Interest or entertainment value."

## What puts you off a podcast?

**Pete:** “People who promise the world and don’t deliver. Startups who can’t get to the second or third show. I’m much more fickle with weblogs than I am with podcasts. If a blogger doesn’t update their site in a month, I lose interest. If a podcaster puts out a great show every two months, I’ll stay subscribed regardless. Podcasters seem to be more passionate than bloggers. There’s more effort required with recording a show than posting a blog entry, and that’s an important factor. On the subject of commercials and advertising in podcasts, I don’t have a problem with most adverts as I can fast forward the dull ones. I feel that I’m fairly immune to most adverts anyway, though I pay more attention to the good ones on a creative level (I rarely buy anything from a commercial, less so in a podcast commercial).”

**Emma:** “People with voices that (for some reason) grate.”

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

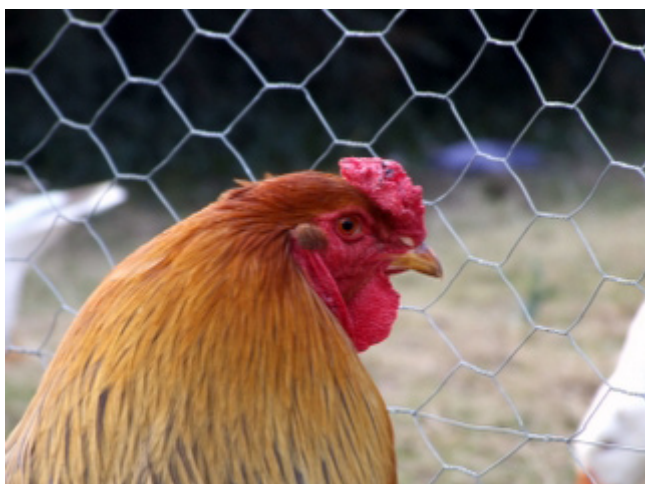
**Pete:** “Chicks and money. When are they arriving?”

**Emma:** “I thought it would be fun.”

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

**Pete:** “It’s still fun and I still enjoy doing it. There’s no plan of attack, we just hit ‘record’ and yap for 30 minutes. Very rarely edit stuff out. Just talk and go!”

**Emma:** “It is fun. And people seem to enjoy listening to us.”



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

**Pete:** “I’m not a big TV junkie. Truth be told, I’ll download UK TV shows from the web and watch them on my PowerBook if I miss the original. I try to catch anything with Sheridan Smith in it. She’s lovely. I love Radio 4. It’s the only serious thing I have in my life. All the good music radio shows I listen to are late at night or silly o’clock in the morning, so I’m now recording them and listening at a later time. The BBC ‘Listen Again’ feature winds me up: I feel dirty when I listen to Real Audio. I’d much prefer to record it and not moan about the sound quality. I’m a bit of a DJ vinyl monkey so I tend not to buy CDs very often. The thing about vinyl is it’s a bit different: it’s not the mainstream sort of thing, and I think that’s one of the reasons I like podcasting. We rent DVDs from ScreenSelect. They post us DVDs, we watch them and send them back. Easy. The last two DVDs I bought were ‘The Aristocrats’ and a rude Suicide Girls DVD. Saucy.”

**Emma:** [*walks off to feed the chickens, who are scratching at the door for more food*]

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

**Pete:** “I’ve met some great people. I get asked to write articles for a magazine (how cool is that, eh?) and I get to choose what I listen to. Which is great. The BBC is bound to rules and regulations, commercial TV and radio is - on the whole - terrible.”

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

**Pete:** “More of the same. Some chicks and money. Bigger bandwidth bills. We don’t have a format, and that’s pretty much our format.”

The Emma and Pete Show can be found at [www.emmaandpeteshow.com](http://www.emmaandpeteshow.com)

Judy and Paul Hutchinson can be found at TotalPodcastrophe.  
<http://totalpodcastrophe.blogspot.com/>



# SOCCER PODCASTS

by Phil McThomas

Fan-produced, non-traditional media is nothing new for soccer fans. The last twenty years has seen fanzines, Internet message boards, fan-run websites, phone-in shows and a kaleidoscope of blogs. It's therefore no surprise that soccer fans have latched onto the opportunities that podcasting offers.

Some of the more popular podcasts are re-purposed radio content. In the US this includes the 2G's (<http://the2gs.com>), World Soccer Daily (<http://worldsoccerweekly.com>) and the Treble (<http://thetrebletalk.com>). The Treble deserves a special mention for bringing a uniquely female perspective to the beautiful game. The BBC (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/downloadtrial/>) should not be overlooked – they make shows such as the 606 Football Phone-In available shortly after their domestic broadcast.



There's no shortage of independent podcasts. The emphasis seems to be on the British game, with podcasts such as the Premiership Podcast (<http://www.thepremiershippodcast.com>) and the Beautiful Game (<http://beautifulgamepodcast.blogspot.com>). The latter has the sheen of a professional job, with its excellent writing and pin-point delivery. Of interest to US fans is EPL Talk (<http://eptalk.com>), which features interviews with names familiar to many US fans, and Soccer Talk (<http://regularsoccertalk.blogspot.com/>), presented by newspaper columnist Brian Shea.

In this second group is also Soccer Shout (<http://soccershout.com>), the podcast I produce with my co-host Tony Wildey. We hold claim to the most prolific independent soccer podcast, with a new show every weekday morning. As we are in the US and create our show late at night – after the UK sites have their morning news available – we are able release a show in the early hours in the UK with our take on the same news that people are reading over their cornflakes.



One of our goals is to allow a listener to keep abreast of British soccer – or the World Cup for that matter – by listening to the show each day. The podcast, which normally runs to about twenty minutes, covers results and previews upcoming games as well as the news of the day.

We are also leading the way with blending in comment and opinion (and even the occasional rant) from listeners, bloggers and other podcasters. We actively solicited contributions in the run-up to the World Cup. Our World Cup preview shows included over two hours of contributed content – almost 50% of each show. This really livened up the debate over who will prosper in the summer tournament, and it got great feedback from our listeners. In the process we were able to showcase other podcasters, and in turn they pointed their audience to us. It was a win-win that podcasters in other subject areas might look to repeat.



The combination of having hosts in two locations and incorporating pre-recorded voicemail is a technically challenging process that we are still refining. We record a classic 'double-ender' while chatting via a voice-over-internet connection – doing introductions to voicemails that we've listened to but don't hear in real time. The two sides of the conversations are merged in post-production, and the voicemail audio is added at the end. This is sub-optimal because (a) not hearing the voicemails in real time kills some of the spontaneity, and (b) there is a significant amount of effort needed for post-production.

We're evaluating solutions in hardware and software. I would love to see an amalgamation of CastBlaster and Skype, with a recorder that captures the conversation plus the pre-recorded audio in real time. Failing that, we'll look at some kind of mixer that will provide the features we need.



Our strategy to grow our audience further is to look for an established website partner. We would provide fresh content on a daily basis while letting our listeners know what features are running on the website. In turn, we would benefit from the exposure of being featured on an established site on the web.

So what is the future for soccer podcasting? I'm looking forward to hearing the shows that haven't been created yet. The current crop sticks to fairly traditional styles of presentation and coverage, so there's room for podcasts that are a bit more 'out there' in terms of passion, humour and the colourful language that seems to come naturally when you're watching a game.

*Soccer Shout is free-to-air audio program produced by Phil McThomas, 35, and Tony Wildey, 31. Conceived in the middle of a rant about the dearth of soccer podcasts, it goes out every weekday morning – and every day during the World Cup – from an operation in the vicinity of Washington, DC.*

*Both Phil and Tony are IT professionals with an insatiable appetite for soccer, although Phil is a Middlesbrough supporter and Tony is Scottish.*

<http://soccershout.com>



## Other sportscasts -

GOLF : [www.worldgolf.com/blogs/golf-for-beginners](http://www.worldgolf.com/blogs/golf-for-beginners)

STOCKCARS : [www.stockcarzone.com/](http://www.stockcarzone.com/)

SCUBA : <http://bottomtimeradio.com/>

FORMULA 1 : [www.f1weekly.com/Podcast/](http://www.f1weekly.com/Podcast/)

BASEBALL HISTORY : <http://baseballhistorian.libsyn.com>

RUNNING : <http://www.irunningradio.com/>

HOCKEY : <http://www.lthpodcast.com/>

FLY FISHING : [www.askaboutflyfishing.com/](http://www.askaboutflyfishing.com/)

TAEKWONDO : <http://taekwondo.libsyn.com/>

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If there's one thing virtually all users of the internet do, it's email. There's nothing that quite matches the buzz of receiving your first email. There's also nothing that matches that first email you receive from someone who's listened to your podcast. If you're an avid podcast listener, you'll have noticed that many of the shows give out an Gmail email address for you to contact them. So what is Gmail, and why would you want to use it?

Gmail is a web-based email service. Yes, there are many email services out there, offered by companies such as Microsoft and Yahoo, but Gmail is a very different beast. Gmail was first launched in beta (and yes, it's still in beta over two years later) in April 2004, and what instantly set it apart from the competition was that it offered 1 gigabyte of storage space, at a time when the competition was offering between 5 and 10 megabytes. The folks at Gmail have refused to stand still, however, and my current storage capacity is nearly 3 gigabytes. This increased storage capacity meant that you no longer had to worry about deleting old messages, you could just archive them away. Yes archive, because your email now is in a sort of virtual filing cabinet. As Gmail is offered by Google, you can of course use Google's powerful search engine to search your email, which means nearly anything you could ever want is at your fingertips in a heartbeat. If you have a music podcast and regularly receive music or large files, Gmail is ideal, as you can then have access to these files anywhere, safe in the knowledge that they are backed up on Gmail's server.

One of the other main benefits of using Gmail is the ability to view your emails in a thread. This means that you'll see all emails that are part of the same conversation -- such as messages you replied to and were replied to in turn -- in an easy-to-navigate manner. This is a real time saver, especially when you are having extensive email dialogs. Another great time saver is the ability to view a wide variety of file formats, such as Microsoft's Word and the very popular Adobe Acrobat, within Gmail without having to launch the original application. Don't expect nicely formatted documents to look half as nice as the originals, but nevertheless this is a great feature to have, especially when you are viewing your email on a computer with download restrictions.



## Gmail (The Podcaster's Friend)

by Colin Meeks

Of course, having a web-based email service means your email is with you wherever you have an internet connection. But you always have the option of getting your email through the more conventional POP3 route, allowing you to read your email using Thunderbird, Outlook Express or any of the other great email packages around. Remember, though, you will lose the aforementioned features unless you decide to leave a copy of the email on the Gmail server. For anyone who's registered a domain name and would prefer to use that, you can always set up your domain's email to be forwarded to your Gmail account, and can also set up Gmail to allow you to send email using that address. All pretty neat stuff.

Gmail for me is an essential service to help with my podcast. It's still in perpetual beta, which means that it's still invitation only, unless you are in the USA and want to join with the aid of your cell phone. If you have difficulty securing a Gmail account, just drop me a line and I'll try to get something sorted for you. Send an email to [indielaunchpad@gmail.com](mailto:indielaunchpad@gmail.com) and be sure to put ME PLEASE as the subject and the first line of the email. Please bear in mind that I may get inundated with requests, so if you don't hear back, I'm sorry that it wasn't possible to help at this time.

As far as I know there is still an ongoing dispute about UK residents getting gmail.com addresses; instead they are given a googlemail.com address, but it functions in just the same way.

If you have any questions or have something you would like me to cover in future issues, just drop me a line

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



# So how do you make a living through podcasting



by Paul Pinfield

If you are producing a podcast, are wondering how to make a living at it? The sad truth is that because of the average audience size, the geographic dispersal of most audiences and the almost total lack of demographic data, it is almost impossible to attract enough advertising revenue over any period of time to sustain a living through podcasting.

Don't even get me started on the appropriateness of the advertising on some of the podcasts that I have listened to... You will notice that I said 'listened to', and that's because as a podcast listener, I can choose a podcast not only on its musical or editorial content but also on the appropriateness of its advertising. Without wishing to point out any howlers, I'll simply say that you don't have to look too far to find some uncomfortable bedfellows.

But you can make money through podcasting by acting as a consulting service to businesses. Really Simple Syndication (RSS) allows businesses to communicate more effectively with their clients and potential clients as well as internally with staff. RSS can also deliver standardised training to the desktop. The key is to use podcasts, videocasts, promotional materials and various other technologies in an imaginative and innovative way to create new services.

The great thing about RSS is that the podcast from the company is chosen by the user so that the business only ever communicates with an audience interested in the presentation. Of course there are issues of marketing the podcast and limiting the audience to a specified region, but that is an explanation that will be discussed later.

Next month, I will reveal how to get business through an innovative service, how to limit audiences and how to be able to tell who has listened to a podcast, when and where.

Until then, let me leave you with this thought: Local radio is dying on its feet because of the same music, the same adverts and the same format on every single station. Podcasting is not only innovative in its content and format, it is a rapidly growing medium that is a worthy alternative to the sameness of radio. There are ways to make money from your expertise in podcasting without having to revert to inserting the same standard adverts from the old medium of radio into your podcast show.

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## In English please, what is a podcast?

A podcast is simply, in English as requested, a recording of a voice, perhaps with music, effects and other stuff, which is recorded in to a sound file called an MP3. The file is then put up on the internet for people to download and listen to.

## DO we need an Apple iPod to hear it?

No, you can listen to it on your computer or transfer it to any MP3 player, these players (non iPod) start from around £20/\$36, depending on capacity and features.



## How much do podcasts cost?

Nothing. 99.9% of podcasts are free; a very few will make a small charge for their content. Some podcasters have a donation button or 'tip jar' on their site, but this is purely optional.

## What about these RSS feeds, subscriptions and aggregators?

You do not need any of the above. Most podcasters web sites have a button or a 'download mp3' clickable text, just right click and 'save,' whilst some have a built-in player for you to sample it. If you develop a liking to certain podcasts, they can be 'book marked' and downloaded automatically with an aggregator such as Winpodder, Juice or itunes. (Check previous issues for details)



## Just listened; utter rubbish.

Of the 8,000 different podcasts out there (and growing daily) you are bound to hit a few duff ones now and again. Check out the podcast directories such as podcast Pickle or Podcast Alley and look for subjects you have an interest in, but most of all, out there is something you'll just swear was made for you alone.

## Where's the best place to get real guidance?

Hmm, tough one that ... try [www.podcastusermagazine.com](http://www.podcastusermagazine.com)... works for me.



# Podcast User Magazine

In next month's issue we'll be looking at Garage Band for the Apple Mac, Australian podcasts, a clever trick with Google Mail, the second part of Dave Kingston's Novice Podcaster Diary, setting up a home studio (part two) and the last opportunity to win the sE Reflexion Filter.

**Issue 7 will be  
available on the  
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