

Podcast Solutions

The Complete Guide to Podcasting

Michael W. Geoghegan
Dan Klass



Podcast Solutions: The Complete Guide to Podcasting

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*To my wife, Stefanie, and our two sons, Nicholas and William.
Thank you for all your support and patience.
—Michael W. Geoghegan*

*To Melissa, Hudson, and Tallu, for all your patience and love.
Thanks for the smooches. Well, except for Hudson, who
won't smooch me, because he's way too cool for that.
Hudson, thanks for the firm handshake.
—Dan Klass*

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FOREWORD

In early 1980 I was working Saturdays at an electronics store just a few miles south of Amsterdam. The store mainly sold components for hobbyists who needed capacitors, resistors, and early transistors. My salary was used for gas money to get me to the studios of Decibel Radio, Amsterdam's leading illegal pirate radio station, which broadcast from Friday afternoon to Monday morning from a canal house apartment in the city center.

At the time in the Netherlands, there were no private radio stations, and the lack of popular programs on the government-controlled station had created quite an underground movement of small groups of enthusiasts who were connecting with local audiences through pure supply and demand. None of these stations ever turned a profit—any advertising income was saved for the inevitable raid by FCC agents, who would confiscate our equipment with a wink and a nod, since they knew we'd be back on the air the very next weekend. Heck, they were fans as well.

Those days were some of the most exciting of my youth. It wasn't about money or fame, but connecting with an audience hungry at a subatomic level. In fact, the most popular part of our programming was the hourly phone-in, when we opened up the phone line to allow anyone to say hi to friends and family also listening to the show. Everyone loves holding the microphone, if only for a few moments.

Around the same time, the Commodore VIC-20 home computer was introduced, and the electronics shop I worked at was selling them. I gravitated toward this device almost immediately, intrigued with its capability to share data through audiocassettes. The sounds recorded on the tape largely inspired a fellow Saturday worker and me to set about building our own acoustic modems to share data in real time across a phone line connection. Among a few components we "borrowed" from the shop was a pair of 75-baud modems that allowed a keystroke typed on my machine to display on my friend's monitor through a phone line. From that day, I knew something powerful was starting to happen.

I kept my broadcast career synchronized with my interest in computer communications, and in 1987 when I started working at MTV, my Mac Plus connected me directly to my audience, primarily college students who had access to terminals connected to the Internet. Nothing fancy—this was all pre-web.

FOREWORD

With the advent of the web, and as connection speeds increased, I became more excited about the possibility of broadcasting in the same unregulated fun fashion that we did at the pirate stations, except this time, the world would be our audience . . .

As you will learn in this book, which starts with a history of podcasting, my longtime wish came true. Now the power of audio communications with global distribution is within the means and budget of anyone with something—or nothing—to say. And podcasting can be a great conduit for us all. Gone are the gatekeepers of spectrum, content, and time.

Podcasting is only the tip of an iceberg slowly revealing itself. What started with weblogs is people's desire to take back our media—not into our hands to hold, but into our hearts. In the short time podcasting has been around, it has revived this element of multimedia that has been taken for granted for many years. The art is alive and kicking, with readily available tools (see the CastBlaster podcast creation tool supplied on this book's companion CD). And we are so frustrated with traditional broadcast outlets that the demand is now creating its own supply.

At the heart of this media disruption lies the power of subscription. The publish subscribe model has been perfected over the past eight years and has found its way onto our desktops and portable devices. Our media is adapting to our lives, instead of the reverse status quo.

Michael and Dan, two true podcasting pioneers, certainly know what they are talking about. As such, this book is an important part of a rapidly emerging movement. As the new spectrum expands with MP3 players emerging in every device imaginable, it serves as a launch pad for the millions of voices and hundreds of millions of ears that will participate in this collaborative “media hacking” initiative.

Adam Curry
Guildford, England
Summer 2005

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Michael W. Geoghegan has been involved in podcasting since its earliest days. His first podcast production, “Reel Reviews – Films Worth Watching” (www.reelreviewsradio.com), was the Internet’s first film review, discussion, and commentary podcast. With the success of “Reel Reviews,” and building on his enthusiasm for podcasting, Michael began helping others get involved in podcasting through his production company, Willnick Productions. His second production, “Grape Radio” (<http://graperadio.com>), is the top-rated podcast about wine.

Michael is the first podcaster to have ever been contracted by a Fortune 100 company (The Walt Disney Company) to both host and produce a podcast. The Disneyland Podcasts (www.disneyland.com/podcast) represented a watershed event in podcasting as large, established media players began to recognize the value of this emerging communications medium.

Michael’s entrepreneurial focus is now directed at podcasting. He has just launched his newest venture, PrivaCast (www.privacast.com), a first-of-its-kind enterprise-level solution for secure corporate and educational communications among organizations and their employees or constituents. In addition, Michael has participated in numerous presentations on podcasting and taught the very first “Podcasting 101” classes. He is frequently scheduled to speak about podcasting, its impact on new media, and opportunities for its utilization and monetization. Michael is also often sought out for comments on podcasting by various media outlets, and his insights have appeared on CNN as well as in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Wired Magazine*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He is widely regarded as a leader in producing quality podcast audio, and many of his online how-to articles on podcasting remain some of the most popular and widely linked on the web.

Michael lives in Newport Beach, California, with his wife and two young sons.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



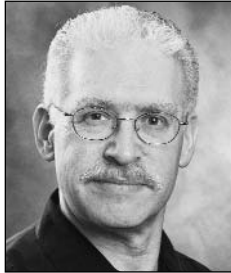
Dan Klass has been involved in the Internet and interactive entertainment fields for almost 20 years (yes, there was interactive entertainment 20 years ago!), including working on interactive video toys for Ideal and developing online “stand-up comedy” performances. Recently he was the creator/writer/producer/star of NewsPop, an animated series for a joint Internet venture between Steven Spielberg’s DreamWorks SKG and Ron Howard’s Imagine Entertainment.

Dan is currently devoting most of his time to podcasting. He produces and hosts two original podcasts: the weekly “Old Wave Radio: New 80s Music” (www.new80smusic.com), a retro-80s music show, and the much acclaimed twice-weekly “The Bitterest Pill” (www.thebitterestpill.com), a comedy/talk show that revolves around his musings as a stay-at-home dad on the outskirts of the entertainment industry. “The Bitterest Pill,” arguably one of the most popular entertainment podcasts to date, has been featured on NBC, NPR, and Fox News, and in the *New York Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Recently, Dan established Jacket Media (www.jacketmedia.com) as the central hub of his podcast production, syndication, and sponsorship empire.

Dan lives in Los Angeles with his wife, two kids, and two Macs.

ABOUT THE TECHNICAL REVIEWER



Doug Kaye is the creator and executive producer of the IT Conversations podcast network (www.itconversations.com) and a major new nonprofit network that was unnamed at the time of this book's publication. Before he began his distinguished 28-year career as a computer-software and dot-com CEO and CTO, Doug cut his audio teeth as a field and studio engineer in radio and as a sound editor and postproduction mixer in film and television. It all makes sense when you consider that he started college in the 1960s at the University of California, Berkeley, studying engineering physics, but graduated with a degree in drama, and then dropped out of New York University's Graduate School of Film and Television.

Somewhere along the way, Doug found time to write two books of his own: *Strategies for Web Hosting and Managed Services* (John Wiley & Sons, 2002) and *Loosely Coupled: The Missing Pieces of Web Services* (RDS Press, 2003).

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This book would not have been possible without the help of countless people whom we have been fortunate enough to meet through podcasting. Special thanks to Adam Curry; Doug Kaye (IT Conversations); Dawn and Drew (“The Dawn and Drew Show!”); Brian Ibbott (“Coverville”); Paul Figgiani (PodcastRigs.com); Dave Slusher (“The Evil Genius Chronicles”); Michael Butler (“Rock and Roll Geek Show”); Craig Patchett (“The Godcast Network”); Chris McIntyre (Podcast Alley); Leigh Older, Brian Clark, and Jay Selman (“Grape Radio”); Ray Slakinski and August Trometer (iPodderX); Jennifer Sanchez; Sam Levin; Tim and Emile Bourquin (“The Podcast Brothers”); Eric Rice (Audioblog.com); K. Todd Storch (“Business Thoughts”); Greg Cangialosi (“The Trend Junkie”); Duncan Wardle and the incredible team at Disneyland Parks and Resorts including Tim O’Day, Ken Langdon, and Joe Popp; Jason Niedle, photographer extraordinaire; the entire iPodder Lemon team; The Association of Music Podcasting; Forum E; The Podcastoutlaws; Mike Spataro; Bob Goyetche (“Mostly Tunes”); and Tim Schwieger and the entire team at Broadcast Supply Worldwide. To all you whom we’ve forgotten and are only reading this section to look for your names, we tried to work you in but the editor cut you out.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Podcast Solutions: The Complete Guide to Podcasting*. We had a simple goal in mind while we wrote this book: to give you a straightforward overview of podcasting and share the information necessary to get you up and running with a quality podcast. Within the pages of this book, you'll find everything you need to know to get started in podcasting. We'll cover the history of podcasting, how to listen to podcasts and, most important, how to produce and distribute your own podcast.

We're not geeks, and this isn't a geek book. There's no way to detail step-by-step instructions for every piece of software that conceivably exists for podcasting, and we're not going to try to impress you with an exhaustive (and therefore exhausting) list of every website that has anything to do with podcasting (that's what Google is for). Things are moving so quickly in podcasting that it seems every day brings a new product or service announcement. If we covered them all, you'd never make it to the end of the book, and you'd never begin doing the one thing we really want to help you do: start making your own podcasts. Instead, we've used our combined experience to carefully select and detail the software, hardware, and services we feel stand out and deserve mention for helping people get started in podcasting.

While we're at it, we don't think you're a "dummy." Podcasting isn't for dummies. There's too much involved in the production and promotion of a successful podcast for it to be that easy. However, we've worked hard to provide simple explanations for processes that can be somewhat confusing at first, and we've tried to ensure that even a total beginner will be able to use and understand the information we present.

It's an exciting time in podcasting, and we're glad you've chosen our book to help guide you on your way to producing a podcast you'll be proud of. Let's get started.

ABOUT THE CD

The CD that comes with this book is jam-packed with useful programs to help you receive other people's podcasts and create the best podcasts you possibly can. It contains podcatchers, feed generators, and audio studio programs. Most of these programs are trial versions, which should be enough to give you a taste of the program. We have included links to go to for further information below, and electronic manuals on the CD where possible. There are also some *Podcast Solutions* podcasts included on the CD. These are interviews and discussion among some of the original podcasting pioneers. Check the site www.podcastolutions.com for all the interviews we conducted.

Adobe Audition 1.5

Version information: Timed trial version

Platform: Windows 2000 and XP (Professional and Home Editions)

Website: www.adobe.com/products/audition/main.html

Adobe Audition is a professional audio recording, editing, and mixing environment. Designed for audio and video professionals in studios, broadcast facilities, and postproduction facilities, it delivers advanced audio mixing, editing, mastering, and effects processing capabilities, as well as tight integration with Adobe's video products. Using Audition, you can mix up to 128 tracks, edit individual audio files, create loops, and use more than 50 DSP effects.

Audacity 1.2.3

Version information: Full version

Platforms: Windows (98, ME, 2000, and XP); Mac OS 9 and OS X; Linux (various flavors)

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

Audacity is a free, easy-to-use audio editor and recorder. You can use Audacity to

- Record live audio
- Convert tapes and records into digital recordings or CDs
- Edit Ogg Vorbis, MP3, and WAV sound files

- Cut, copy, splice, and mix sounds together
- Change the speed or pitch of a recording
- And more!

Audio Hijack Pro 2.5.1

Version information: Fully functional demo version. Noise is overlaid on recordings lasting over 10 minutes.

Platform: Mac OS X 10.2–10.4

Website: www.rogueamoeba.com/audiohijackpro

Audio Hijack Pro is an audio recording program that allows you to sample and record audio from any source your Mac can handle, from CD and DVD audio to Internet streams and downloaded MP3s. Once the audio is recorded, you can enhance it using industry-standard VST and Audio Unit audio effects.

CastBlaster 0.17 Beta

Version information: Beta version

Platform: Windows XP with Internet Explorer installed

Website: www.castblaster.com

This is a beta (prerelease) version of the CastBlaster podcast creation tool. Keep an eye on the website for updated versions and development news. Future versions are expected to allow for the ability to publish directly to the supported PodShow network.

DSP-Quattro 2.1.1

Version information: Fully functional demo version (but no saving of work is allowed)

Platform: Mac OS 8, 9, and X

Website: www.dsp-quattro.com

DSP-Quattro is a professional creative tool for audio editing, plug-in hosting, and CD mastering. It includes a host of recording and editing features to ensure that output is recorded just as you hear it and edited to perfection using editing functions and digital effects. It also supports plug-ins, both included effects and third-party plug-ins (from Akai, Roland, Yamaha, and many more). Finally, it boasts many CD-creation facilities, including fully programmable playlists and effect chains.

Feeder 1.1.2

Version information: Timed trial version

Platform: Mac OS X 10.3 and later

Website: www.reinventedsoftware.com/feeder

Feeder is an application for creating, editing, and publishing RSS feeds on Mac OS X. With Feeder, you don't need to understand RSS to create and publish feeds to the web—it is packed with features to help automate and enhance the experience from start to finish.

Feeder supports the full RSS 2.0 specification, including enclosures for podcasting. RSS has many powerful features, but not everyone needs them all. Feeder provides customizable templates to hide unnecessary fields, an autocomplete feature to save repetitive typing, and automatic updating of publication dates.

Feeder validates your feed to the RSS 2.0 specification and generates an HTML preview so you can see how your feed will look in a newsreader, check links and images, and proofread text. When your feed is ready, Feeder can publish it and upload enclosure files using FTP, SFTP, or .Mac.

iPodderX 3.0

Version information: Full custom version with preloaded feeds

Platform: Mac OS X 10.3 and later

Website: www.ipodderx.com

iPodderX is a podcatcher that is both powerful and easy to use. It allows you to subscribe to RSS and Atom news feeds to bring you fresh content regularly. It can collect not only podcasts, but also any other audio, movie, image, or document feeds you are subscribed to.

iPodder Lemon 2.1

Version information: Full custom version with preloaded feeds

Platforms: Windows 2000 and XP; Linux (various flavors); Mac version also available from the website

Website: <http://ipodder.sourceforge.net/index.php>

iPodder Lemon is a popular podcatcher that uses RSS feeds to bring you fresh podcasts of your choice to play anytime, anywhere.

Ozone 3.0

Version information: Trial version that is fully functional for 10 days, then mutes the output for about 1 second every 40 seconds or so

Platforms: Windows (98, 2000, ME, and XP); Mac OS X 10.2 and later

Website: www.izotope.com/products/audio/ozone

Ozone is a complete suite of mastering processors and plug-ins that provides everything you could possibly need to professionally master your audio files. Ozone is a plug-in for other programs, so you need to have a compatible host application.

Peak 4.14

Version information: Timed trial version

Platform: Mac OS X

Website: www.bias-inc.com/products/peak

Peak is an industry-standard stereo audio recording, editing, and processing application. It is the ideal audio utility for podcasters and audio professionals and enthusiasts. In addition to fast and powerful audio editing, Peak integrates a wide variety of effects and signal processing tools to create custom fades, adjust audio gain, repair digital audio spikes, add real room ambience, change pitch and duration independently, and more, all while offering additional real-time effects such as parametric EQ, compression/limiting, reverb, dozens of other special effects, and access to third-party VST and Audio Unit plug-ins, as well as additional solutions from BIAS such as the highly acclaimed SoundSoap family of audio noise reduction and restoration tools (for more information about SoundSoap and SoundSoap Pro, visit www.bias-inc.com).

Other tools include automated loop creation, unlimited and independent undo/redo for each audio document, a highly customizable work environment (colors, key commands, toolbar), and advanced batch file processing. Peak 4.1 can master content in a variety of formats, including Red Book audio CD and popular digital file formats used for delivering a podcast, such as MP3, MP4/AAC, and others.

Personal Audio Recorder 3.0

Version information: Timed trial version

Platforms: Treo 600/650; Palm Tungsten T/T2/T3/Z72; Sony Clie Palm tops

Website: www.toysoft.ca/par.html

Personal Audio Recorder (PAR) is all you need to turn your Palm into an audio recorder. PAR can record voice memos to RAM or to an external card such as SD and MMC. Recorded voice memos can easily be beamed or transferred to your desktop using a card reader or card exporter software. Voice memos can also be e-mailed using your e-mail client.

Propaganda 1.0

Version information: Fully functional trial version that inserts a demo message into completed recording every few minutes

Platform: Windows XP

Website: www.makepropaganda.com/products.html

Propaganda software is a powerful tool that you can use to create commercial-quality podcast shows with a minimum of effort. Propaganda handles music and sound effects as easily as spoken-word recordings. When you're satisfied with your production, simply click the Publish button and share it with the world. Propaganda will upload your completed podcast to your website, with full RSS, XML, and HTML support.

Sound Forge 8

Version information: Timed trial version

Platform: Windows 2000 and XP (Professional and Home Editions)

Website: www.sonymediasoftware.com/products/showproduct.asp?PID=961

Sound Forge is an audio recording and editing program. It enables you to analyze, record, and edit audio; produce music loops; digitize and clean up old recordings; model acoustic environments; create streaming media; and master replication-ready CDs.

Sound Forge Audio Studio

Version information: Timed trial version

Platforms: Windows 2000 and XP (Professional and Home Editions)

Website: www.sonymediasoftware.com/Products/ShowProduct.asp?PID=945

Sound Forge Audio Studio is very similar in functionality to Sound Forge 8, but it has fewer features and is aimed toward the hobbyist and home user markets. Podcasters will probably find this software to be more than powerful enough for their needs. If you think you're going to need a more professional environment, then you should consider using Sound Forge 8 instead.

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