

Podcasting Notes

iTunes U

iTunes U looks like a very cost-effective, easy-to-use solution for ENMU Roswell to make lectures from selected courses readily available to students.

- Storing large files and streaming audio and video is managed off site.
- Podcasts are always available, 24/7.
- No cost is incurred.
- iTunes is pervasive and a standard.
- iTunes software is free and can be used on PCs and Macs to download podcasts and manage files.
- The process is documented and easy to use, plus the price is right!
- Students can subscribe to podcasts for a course and they will be automatically downloaded to the students' computers. Easy.

Podcast Lectures

- Instructors will record lectures in the classroom for reuse in WebCT or as supplemental podcasts for the f2f students.
- Recorded lectures can be (and should be) edited with Audacity to clean up the pauses, the ums and the ahs.

Possible Issues

- Files in iTunes may not be compatible with any portable mp3 player except iPods.
- We may get help desk calls because iPods freeze. This can be an issue with firmware, software, or hardware failure.
- If students using the podcasts already have an iPod, they are used to downloading songs. However, songs are a lot shorter than a class lecture, and the files for music downloads are smaller. A 15-minute podcast with good quality sound is about 20 MB. We may have bandwidth issues for students on dialup connections. Workarounds may include students downloading podcasts to USB flash drives in the Computer Commons.
- Files that are recorded directly through the PC sound card may pick up some background noise from PC components. Digital recorders cut down on the noise, but add to the expense.
- mp3 players that can act as a hard disk (drag and drop files onto it) have fewer problems freezing. iPods are pricey and cost much more for the same capacity and functionality.

Other Concerns

- For instructors who want to include visuals of PowerPoint presentations or other visual objects, video tools need to be added. Camtasia 4 costs about \$159 per academic license in small quantities, but it is the most versatile, easy-to-use software package I've seen.
- ProfCast only runs on Mac OS X, which is not an option for most instructors.

Podcasting Tools

Tool	Source	Cost	Pros	Cons
Helix Producer Basic	http://www.realnworks.com/products/producer/index.html (RealPlayer is the parent company)	free	RealPlayer is loaded with adware and spyware, so it may be a good thing.	Our spyware blocker will not let me access the free download link. RealPlayer is loaded with spyware, so it may be a good thing.
ProfCast	http://www.profcast.com	\$29.95	Easy to use, powerful; allows advanced editing, adding other elements to a podcast, such as slides, and synchronizing everything	Not free; runs on Mac OS X only.
RealPresenter			RealPlayer is loaded with adware and spyware, so it may be a good thing.	Our spyware blocker will not let me access the free download link.
Kibisis	http://www.kibisis.com/kibisis/index.asp	\$59.95	Video to Flash converter	
Audacity	http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/	free	Free, powerful sound editor	
Juice	http://juicereceiver.sourceforge.net/download/index.php	free	Cross platform aggregator, podcast receiver	
SwiffRec	http://powerbullet.com	free	Record your voice to a Flash file. The program creates the HTML file. SwiffRec can also convert any WAV input to Flash format.	

Related Links

Audiofeeds.org Creating an RSS file

Podbasket—provide URLs for offsite podcasts: <http://www.podbasket.com/>

Fruitcast—podcast advertising: www.fruitcast.com/

Audioblog—create podcasts, audio, video, blogs: <http://www.audioblog.com/>

Audio Hijack Pro (\$32)—record and edit Mac OS X audio:

<http://www.rogueamoeba.com/audiohijackpro/>

MyRSSCreator.com—create and manage RSS feeds (.67/day): <http://myrsscreator.com/>

Gabcast.com—create podcasts with phone or VOIP, upload podcasts: <http://www.gabcast.com/>

WildVoice—free hosting for podcasts, photos, blogs and friends: <http://www.wildvoice.com/>

ClickCaster—podcasting and videocasting: <http://www.clickcaster.com/>

RSS Builder—create and maintain RSS feeds for your Web site

Broadcaster StudioPRO—record and broadcast video using a web cam:

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

Ourmedia.org—publish and store audio, video and other media you create: <http://ourmedia.org/>

PodcastPickle.com—podcast and vidcast community: <http://www.podcastpickle.com/>

Odeo.com—free podcasts, music: <http://odeo.com/>