

# Bridges on the I-Way: Multicultural Resources Online

## Multicultural Podcasting

By Frank Alan Bruno

Since 2004, *podcasting* has become synonymous with downloadable radio-style Internet audio programs that are automatically uploaded to your computer. Internet radio stations work by streaming their content live into media players, while podcasting works by uploading a program episode directly on to your computer or MP3 device after it has been broadcast.

For the uninitiated, Rob at *Podcast411* ([www.podcast411.com/f12.html](http://www.podcast411.com/f12.html)) compares podcasts to a magazine subscription: "With a magazine subscription you register for a magazine (podcast) and then every so often the publisher (podcaster) will send one to your house (granted, with podcasts the aggregator goes out and fetches it—but you are talking to a 'Flashing 12,' so stop trying to confuse them with Geek Speak). Now, after the magazine is delivered, it sits in your mailbox (aggregator) until someone removes the mail and puts it on the kitchen table (iTunes). You then decide when you want to read that magazine (Daily Source Code) or some other magazine (podcast411) or you can just throw it away because it no longer interests you (Yeast Radio). You can also cancel any subscription at any time."

The term podcasting combines a shortened version of Apple's iPod® and the word *broadcasting*. Many podcasts use the MP3 or AAC audio formats. Some podcasts can be launched directly off podcast web sites utilizing podcast listening software. Apple has tried to emerge as the dominant players with the Apple Quicktime player and the Apple iTunes software. A few sites use Quicktime as a basic player that launches when you click on an episode. The iTunes software is easy to use and snazzy and probably will begin to dominate as the major player. To upload podcasts you can either go to the iTunes Store or import the URL directly into the program. iTunes users can subscribe to over 3,000 free podcasts and have each new episode automatically delivered over the Internet to their computer or iPod.

Apple cofounder and CEO Steve Jobs ([www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)) says: "The new Podcast Directory in iTunes 4.9 features over 3,000 free audio programs, making it one of the largest Podcast directories in the world, with favorites such as ABC News, Adam Curry, BBC, Clear Channel, The Dawn and Drew Show, Disney, Engadget, ESPN, Newsweek, and NPR member stations such as KCRW in Los Angeles and WGBH in Boston. iTunes enables anyone to quickly and easily find and



subscribe to their favorite Podcasts so that every time there's a new episode, it's automatically downloaded to their Mac or PC and Auto-Synced to their iPod. iTunes also makes it easy to manage multiple Podcast subscriptions with simple organization and display by episode and date. Starting [in spring 2005], iPods will offer an easy-to-use Podcast menu, including bookmarking within a Podcast and the ability to display color Podcast artwork."

Another robust way to locate podcasts is to use a free cross-platform open source program like *iPodder 2.1* (<http://ipodder.sourceforge.net/index.php>), which has been downloaded over 600,000 times. I find this software to be a bit clunky, but it has recently made some helpful improvements. But the nice thing is that users can receive automatic downloads that can be uploaded to external devices like the iPod, or for that matter, any MP3 player. There are 11 directories that can be searched within the program: *Ipodder.Org*, *PodNova Top 40*, *GigaDial 25 Latest*, *Adam Curry's Pod Squad*, *IpodderX Most Popular*, *Podcast Alley Top 50*, *Sports*

*Podcast Network*, *Podfeed Net*, *Radio*, *Technopodcasts.Com*, and *Ipodder Team Directory*. The problem is that users have to peruse them manually by clicking down to the content. There are several very interesting ones, but people will need to make an effort to find them.

Podcasts employ feeder software that was originally developed to find news or blogs but can also find audio, video, and graphics files. Podcasting uses a free subscription feed system file format called RSS 2.0. No one agrees what it stands for, but the three top prospects are "Really Simple Syndication," "RDF Site Summary," or "Rich Site Summary." James Lewin ([www-106.ibm.com/developerworks/xml/library/x-rss20/](http://www-106.ibm.com/developerworks/xml/library/x-rss20/)) says, "Regardless, RSS does stand for one thing—a format for syndicating content over the Internet." I find that "Really Simple Syndication" seems to be the most apt term.

Podcast files are designated with an orange square box showing XML or SSL. The Apple iTunes site clarifies how it works: "Podcasting consists of publishing XML files which contain reference to media (called enclosures) to a web site. Podcast aggregators (often called podcatchers), then read these XML files and download all the linked enclosures." Content publishers describe new content in an XML or RSS file, which includes dates, titles, descriptions, and links to MP3 files.

A feed reader or newsreader searches the Internet on multiple sites for file descriptions about a particular subject or show.

Listeners select what programs or descriptions they want to find. Even if the show is no longer being broadcast, such as *The Dawn and Drew Show*, the software hunts it down. The software player on their computer or portable device checks for continuous or newly updated files automatically and then downloads them onto the player for audio enjoyment. A few web-based podcast sites launch an episode in a pop-up window. If users don't have the right player software, the program prompts them to download it. Whatever audio software player the podcast was designed for is then downloaded. After rebooting or restarting the computer, the program is ready to play. Free demo Macintosh podcast recording software can be found at *Audacity* (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>); *Audio Hijack* ([www.rogueamoeba.com/audiohijack/](http://www.rogueamoeba.com/audiohijack/)); *Blog Matrix Sparks! 2.0* ([www.blogmatrix.com/](http://www.blogmatrix.com/)); *Digidesign Pro Tools LE* ([www.digidesign.com/](http://www.digidesign.com/)); *iPodcast Producer* ([www.industrialaudiosoftware.com/products/ipodcastproducer.html](http://www.industrialaudiosoftware.com/products/ipodcastproducer.html)); *Sound Byte Clip Organizer* ([www.blackcatsystems.com/software/soundbyte.html](http://www.blackcatsystems.com/software/soundbyte.html)); and *Wave Arts Panorama* (<http://wavearts.com>). Free demo Windows podcast recording software can be found at *Audacity*; *Blog Matrix Sparks! 2.0*; *Jazler Radio* ([www.jazler.com/demo/LatestVersion.asp](http://www.jazler.com/demo/LatestVersion.asp)); *PodProducer* (<http://radix.com.mx/podproducer/en/index.html>); *Propaganda* ([www.makepropaganda.com/](http://www.makepropaganda.com/)); *Sonicart 2.0* ([www.hitsquad.com/smm/programs/Sonicart/](http://www.hitsquad.com/smm/programs/Sonicart/)); *SoniClear Recorder Pro* ([www.soniclear.com/ProductsRecorderPro.html](http://www.soniclear.com/ProductsRecorderPro.html)); *Sound Edit Pro* ([www.rmbsoft.com/sep.asp](http://www.rmbsoft.com/sep.asp)); and *Wave Arts Panorama*.

A few prominent podcast content sites for general content are *Podcast.Net—The Podcast Directory* ([www.podcast.net/](http://www.podcast.net/)); *Podcast Bunker* ([www.podcastbunker.com](http://www.podcastbunker.com)); *Ipodder.Org* ([www.ipodder.org/](http://www.ipodder.org/)); *Audio Weblogs* (<http://audio.weblogs.com/>); *Podcast Alley* ([www.podcastalley.com/](http://www.podcastalley.com/)); and *Podcast411* ([www.podcast411.com/index.html](http://www.podcast411.com/index.html)).

Finding multicultural content on *Podcast.Net—The Podcast Directory* is tricky because there are no rules that state that ethnicity or diversity has to be in the description of the person submitting the podcast. Podcasts are listed and searchable in their directory in the following ways: Host, Description, Location, Language, and Categories & Keywords. Unless the individual submitting it to the site puts in a term like *ethnic*, *multicultural*, *Hispanic*, *Asian*, *Spanish*, or *Italian* in the description, language, or title, one will just have to listen to hundreds of them. The site employs an *add your podcast* section once a multicultural podcast has been found.

I looked up the term *ethnic* and was able to come up with only four podcasts: *The Whatever Sessions*, *Music4iPods.com—World*, *Mohawk Language*, and *SBS World View*. *The Whatever Sessions* and *SBS World View* were ethnic Australian radio programs that dealt with aborigine issues. I had better results for *Spanish*, with eleven podcasts: *Really Learn Spanish*, *Vida-Tech Podcast*, *Podcast d'una profe Dim*, *Superego Podcast*, *Trying to Learn Spanish Podcast*, *PODMEGO.com Latin Music Podcasts*, *ChapinBeatles PodCast*, *RadioVillano.Com Podcast*, *El Bloguipodio*, and the *PiECAST::Language Learning Podcast*. However, for those familiar with specific genres or topics, looking up those often yield additional results. For instance, a search of reggaeton—the currently popular musical genre that combines Latin and urban hip-hop music—delivers *Antracks Exclusive Reggaeton*. You will just have to do searches on individual countries, languages, and topics to find podcasts or explore.

In June 2005 *Time* magazine named *Podcast Bunker* as one of the 50 coolest sites of the year: "The web's best source of talk radio for your iPod." *Podcast Bunker* evaluates each feed

for audio quality and only chooses what the site owners consider as the best quality sound. It is a little tougher to upload from the site because one has to right-click on podcasts to upload them. I found a handful of ethnic podcasts: *Australian Craftbrewer*, *Caribbean Free Radio*, *Communicando*, *From the Formosa Tea House*, *IndieFeed Latin Channel*, *Sammelstelle*, and *Thomas Wanhoff's Sammelstelle*.

Adam Curry's *Ipodder.org* has over 4,000 feeds that are tracked on a regular basis. Curry, an early developer of podcast software, has created 76 categories, including some with ethnic content. It is a freewheeling site, so there is no search engine. Users have to click their way down through the topics. Under *Educational* there is an English as a Foreign/Second Language category that includes *The Daily Idiom*, *Barcelona Young Learners Podcasts*, *Madrid Young Learners Podcast*, *The Bob and Rob Show*, and *Pod EFL*. The *Languages* category has an extensive amount of podcasts in the following languages: Belgian, Chinese, Dutch, Esperanto, French, German, Hebrew, Malaysian, Polish, Portuguese, Scandinavian languages, and Spanish. Of interest to me was *Da Capo al Fine*, a new Italian podcast.

If one wants to listen to the "freshest podcasts in the universe," then *Audio Weblogs* is the place. They post strictly by time as their only criteria and have a numbering system that includes 100 podcasts. These rotate off based on newer ones being added. Nothing lasts more than a few hours.


*Podcast Alley* has well over 4,000 podcasts with over 50,000 episodes. They list the top 10 podcasts and the top 10 new podcasts on their homepage. There are 14 podcast genres with only three—*Education*, *Cultural/Political*, and *News*—directly related to diversity. The *Education* genre has a few interesting selections including *Pod EFL*, *Barcelona Young Learners*, *SpiekenSieDeutsch*, *Mees*, *Curso de Portugues*, *Chilepodcast*, and *Trying to Learn Spanish*. The *Cultural/Political* genre has the following selections: *Israelisms*, *The Shona Podcast*, *Cultural Café*, *MixUp Arabia*, *Liberadio*, *Diyare Kohan*, *Klaus Adam*, *Ducht Hopto*, *Haftegi Radio*, *Hart aber Fair*, *Cultural Baggage*, *Kuftpavillion*, *La Linternia*, *Global Voice Online*, *Kuechenradio*, *Gender Talk*, *A Shanty No Lemon*, *Shalonkom Bakazay*, *We Are Marie*, *Hawaii Arts & Crafts*, *Catholic Voice*, *Abegado.Com*, *Bolivia Hoy*, and *Bath Chinese Broadcast*. Under the *News* genre we find *Know Your Bias*, *TokyoNewsPod*, *El Bloguipodia*, *Repubblica Radio*, *Hadegisfretir Rasar*, *Cadena Ser*, *Global Crisis Watch*, *French Radio Programming*, *Gabriel Serafini*, *Radio Sweden*, *Le Caribou dechaine*, *P.O.V. Beyond Black*, and *Calloutz Radio*. A search of Spanish-language podcasts returned 41 hits; a few interesting ones were *La Casa de los Ninos*, *RedPlaneta Radio*, *Radio Jardin*, *Xplana Radio*, *Communicando*, and *Queretaro Mexico Podcast*.

*Podcast411* is a no-frills site that has some interesting content. I find that each site tries to have a few unique podcasts. One can search by keyword or by category. There are 32 categories with *Art*, *Education*, and *Travel* having some multicultural content. A few unique podcasts are *Comme ça du Japan (In French about Japan)*, *Hanashi Station*, *Notes from Spain*, and *World Adventure: Pamplona 2005*. *Pamplona* is broadcast during and after people run from the bulls during the annual Festival de San Fermín in Pamplona, Spain.

Many of the popular search engines like *Yahoo* (<http://news.yahoo.com/>) or *Google* (<http://news.google.com/>) have news feeders that sometimes contain audio files. Other RSS news engines are *Ananova* ([www.ananova.com/](http://www.ananova.com/)); *Feedster* ([www.feedster.com/](http://www.feedster.com/)); *Technorati* ([www.technorati.com/](http://www.technorati.com/)); *Pluck* ([www.pluck.com/](http://www.pluck.com/)); and *Plazoo* ([www.plazoo.com/](http://www.plazoo.com/)). *iMente* ([www.imente.com/](http://www.imente.com/)) is a Spanish feeder service that offers

150 categories free, then charges for a larger array of feeds. A German feeder service is *Paperball* (<http://paperball.fireball.de/>). Sometimes buried in news sites or blogs are audio feeds, but for the most part they identify blogs and news, so stick with the podcast sites I discussed earlier. If you want to track news, then try out Pluck, which has an Explorer plug-in. One can search eBay and Amazon for items to purchase and to track subjects of interest, respectively. I did a search on the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* and received 93 feeds for the day. If you just want to read up on podcasting, you should check out: *Daily Podcast News* (<http://podcaster.blogsome.com/2005/02/01/>); *Podish* (<http://podish.com/>); Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting>); *Engadget* ([www.engadget.com/entry/5843952395227141/](http://www.engadget.com/entry/5843952395227141/)); *Technorati* (<http://technorati.com/tag/podcasting>); and *Apple* ([www.apple.com/podcasting/](http://www.apple.com/podcasting/)).

Anyone with a computer can now share his or her opinions and talents with the world through podcasting as well as through blogging. Young struggling artists with no record contracts can now find expression simply by recording an audio file on to a web site and sending their link to a blog or podcast site. Podcasting is for now a very democratic, free environment. I hope that as podcasting continues evolving, more ethnic subjects will be discussed in the great "Wild West" of the Internet.

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