Podcasts: Understanding, Creating, and Deploying them Dr. Rick Jerz Rick@rjerz.com www.rjerz.com

Today's Goals 1. What is a podcast? 2. How do I get podcasts? 3. How do I play podcasts? 4. Why should I care about podcasts for education? 5. How do I produce my own audio podcasts? 6. How do I deliver (deploy) my own podcasts?

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1) What is a Podcast? It must be nothing, since the "podcast" is not in my dictionary. It is something only children do. It has something to do with fishing. It is a radio talk show. It a music file. It is a TV program. It is a lecture.

Podcast Definition Podcasting is a new format for distributing audio and video content via the Internet. Actually, podcasting is just multimedia content enclosed into an RSS file. RSS means Really Simple Syndication. RSS is a special format based on XML. In fact, RSS feeds are XML files containing data according to the RSS specification, and usually located on a website. XML: an HTML-like file for handling data. HTML: Hyper Text Markup Language 1- http://www.rss-specification.com/sitemap.htm

A method of obtaining (subscribing) computer files (episodes), usually audio (mp3) or video (m4v), from a catalog (RSS feed, XML) on the Internet (website), and having them automatically delivered to your computer and then to your iPod (or other multimedia player)

2) How do I get podcasts?

- Computer (Mac or PC)
- Knowledge as to where to get the podcast
- Podcast software (aggregator)
 - (Not) Browsers (IE, Firefox, Safari, + others)
 - (Not) Blackboard and other LMS's
 - Best Method: Apple's iTunes (free from Apple)
 - Winamp (at SAU)
 - Not Windows Media Player
- "Subscribing" Adding the podcast URL to your aggregator

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iTunes: An Aggregator Manages the Podcast

- Reads the RSS feed file (i.e., the catalog)
- Displays the catalog of episodes to you
- Downloads the episodes
- Tracks which episodes have been viewed
- Removes episodes/podcasts
- Periodically (automatically) re-reads the RSS file and updates the catalog
- Coordinates the podcast with your portable multimedia player (iPod)

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3) Playing Podcasts

- On your computer (free players)
 - iTunes
 - QuickTime Player
 - Other multimedia software players (RealPlayer, Adobe Flash Player, Nero)
 - Key is .mp3 (audio), and .m4v or .mp4 (video)
- On your portable device
 - iPod (my recommendation)
 - Zune
 - Other devices?
 - Cell phones?

4) Why should I care about podcasts for education?

- Captures and shares knowledge and ideas
- Understood by students (Fad? Cool?)
- Mobile/Portable format (computer-less)
- Allows students to learn when they want (asynchronous). Efficient education!
- Automatic delivery. One-step, done! (subscription)
- Tolerates slow computer network
- Can support "classroomless" education (i.e., "online")

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Benefits Summary

- For the student
 - Able to learn when most ready
 - Able to use time more effectively
 - Able to repeat
 - Able to slow down, speed up
- For the instructor
 - Able to help students learn more efficiently
 - Better use of time
 - Class during inclement weather and other natural disasters
 - Added flexibility
 - ConferencesEcuador
 - Ecuado

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Benefits Summary

- For the University
 - ?
 - ?
 - ?

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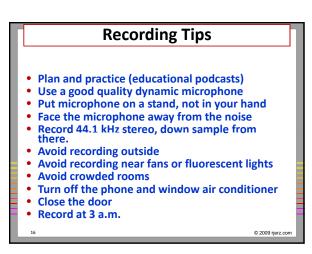
5) Producing Podcasts What can be delivered²? Audio • Stereo & mono • mp3 m4v, mp4 640x480 & 320x240 (iPod)

Video

PDF files "Zip" files (Anything) 2 - Refer to Apple's Specifications

Producing Audio Podcasts • Two production requirements: 1. Content files (audio and/or video) 2. RSS feed file (only one)

Producing Content Digital recorder Microphone Digital recording software that can produce mp3 files Audacity (free) Adobe Audition or Soundbooth • Demonstration



Producing the RSS Feed File (the Catalog) What doe it look like? Creating the RSS Feed • Notepad or MS Word (text file) Blackboard Website (GoDaddy) • Software approach (my preference) Feed Editor (PC) **Demonstration**

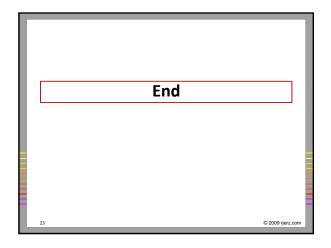


Review: Steps for Deploying 1. Create the content files 2. Create the RSS feed (catalog) file 3. Put the content and feed files on the "Internet" 4. Test the feed 5. Inform the public where to find the catalog's location (URL)

Podcasts on Blackboard • Advantages • Cost: free to you • Creates RSS feed file – no worries • Relatively easy to upload files • Good security • Disadvantages • Does not synchronize with your multimedia player • Maintaining files more difficult Demonstration

My Methodology I produce primarily videos I use Audition (sound) and Premiere (video) Website files are on my laptop I manage my website using Dreamweaver (Old method was Frontpage) Create and edit feeds with Feed Editor software Provide podcasts via iTunes, my website (goDaddy), and Moodle (LMS) Encourage students to use an iPod





Apple's iTunes Store
 A commercial distributor A cataloging service, not a container Free podcast service Big and easy audience Wants location of your RSS feed file, nothing else Audited by Apple No experimentation
After posting, make note of the information Apple sends to you

