

LEARNING MADE EASY



5th Edition

# Podcasting

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand



Find the right tools to  
make your podcast stand out

Learn how to edit and produce  
your first episodes

Use AI to streamline your  
podcast workflow

**Tee Morris**  
**Chuck Tomasi**

Professional podcasting pioneers

**Foreword by Evo Terra**  
Podcast strategist





# Podcasting

5th Edition

**by Tee Morris and Chuck Tomasi**

FOREWORD BY EVO Terra

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand

## Podcasting For Dummies®, 5th Edition

Published by: **John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**, 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774, [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com)

Copyright © 2024 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved, including rights for text and data mining and training of artificial technologies or similar technologies.

Media and software compilation copyright © 2024 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved, including rights for text and data mining and training of artificial technologies or similar technologies.

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the Publisher. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

**Trademarks:** Wiley, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, [Dummies.com](http://Dummies.com), Making Everything Easier, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHOR MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION WARRANTIES OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE ADVICE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR EVERY SITUATION. THIS WORK IS SOLD WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLISHER IS NOT ENGAGED IN RENDERING LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. IF PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED, THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL PERSON SHOULD BE SOUGHT. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. THE FACT THAT AN ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE IS REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK AS A CITATION AND/OR A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE AUTHOR OR THE PUBLISHER ENDORSES THE INFORMATION THE ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE MAY PROVIDE OR RECOMMENDATIONS IT MAY MAKE. FURTHER, READERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT INTERNET WEBSITES LISTED IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE CHANGED OR DISAPPEARED BETWEEN WHEN THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN AND WHEN IT IS READ.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002. For technical support, please visit <https://hub.wiley.com/community/support/dummies>.

Wiley publishes in a variety of print and electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some material included with standard print versions of this book may not be included in e-books or in print-on-demand. If this book refers to media such as a CD or DVD that is not included in the version you purchased, you may download this material at <http://booksupport.wiley.com>. For more information about Wiley products, visit [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com).

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024939764

ISBN 978-1-394-26452-0 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-394-26454-4 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-394-26453-7 (ebk)

# Contents at a Glance

<b>Foreword</b> .....	xiii
<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Part 1: Podcasting on a Worldwide Frequency</b> .....	5
CHAPTER 1: Getting the Scoop on Podcasting. ....	7
CHAPTER 2: Getting the Gadgets to Produce a Podcast .....	27
CHAPTER 3: Building Your Podcast's Digital Workstation .....	47
CHAPTER 4: Go, Go, Power Podcasters! .....	59
<b>Part 2: The Hills Are Alive with the Sound of Podcasting</b> .....	75
CHAPTER 5: Before You Hit the Record Button .....	77
CHAPTER 6: Interview-Fu: Talk to Me, Grasshopper .....	99
CHAPTER 7: So What Are You Waiting For? Record, Already! .....	119
CHAPTER 8: Cleanup, Podcast Aisle 8! .....	137
<b>Part 3: You've Recorded Your Voice: Now What?</b> .....	151
CHAPTER 9: Shrink That Puppy and Slap a Label on It. ....	153
CHAPTER 10: Move It on Up (to Your Web Server) .....	165
CHAPTER 11: Providing Show Notes .....	179
<b>Part 4: Start Spreadin' the News about Your Podcast</b> .....	195
CHAPTER 12: Speaking Directly to Your Peeps .....	197
CHAPTER 13: Fishing for Listeners .....	217
<b>Part 5: Podcasting the World of Tomorrow ... Today!</b> .....	235
CHAPTER 14: Podcasting and AI .....	237
CHAPTER 15: Podcasting on YouTube .....	255
CHAPTER 16: One Giant Leap for Podcasting: Live Streaming Content. ....	277
<b>Part 6: The Part of Tens</b> .....	293
CHAPTER 17: Ten Things We Wish We Had Known When We Started Podcasting .....	295
CHAPTER 18: Ten Types of Podcasts to Check Out .....	307
CHAPTER 19: Ten Original Podcasters .....	323
<b>Index</b> .....	333



# Table of Contents

<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	xiii
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
About This Book .....	1
Foolish Assumptions .....	2
Icons Used in This Book .....	3
Beyond the Book .....	3
Where to Go from Here .....	4
<b>PART 1: PODCASTING ON A WORLDWIDE FREQUENCY</b> ...	5
<b>CHAPTER 1: Getting the Scoop on Podcasting</b> .....	7
Deciding Whether Podcasting Is for You .....	8
You want to build your brand .....	9
You want to deliver media on a regular basis .....	10
You want to reach beyond the boundaries of broadcast media .....	10
You have something to say .....	10
You want to hear from your listeners .....	11
Creating a Podcast .....	11
Looking for the bare necessities .....	12
Recording your first podcast .....	14
Compressing your audio files .....	14
Uploading your audio to the web .....	15
Grabbing listeners .....	16
There's an App for That .....	18
The old-timer: Apple Podcasts .....	18
Podcasting on the go: Pocket Casts .....	20
The 800-pound gorilla: Spotify .....	22
YouTube podcasts .....	24
Other podcast resources .....	25
<b>CHAPTER 2: Getting the Gadgets to Produce a Podcast</b> .....	27
Finding the Right Mic .....	28
A beginner's guide to mics .....	29
Investing in a high-end mic .....	30
Podcasts Well with Others: The Mixing Board .....	34
The anatomy of a mixing board .....	36
Hooking up a mixer to your computer .....	37
Listen Up: Headphones .....	41
Accessorize! Accessorize! Accessorize! .....	43

<b>CHAPTER 3:</b>	<b>Building Your Podcast's Digital Workstation</b>	47
	Budget-Friendly (aka Free) One-Size-Fits-All Software: Audacity	48
	Commercial Audio Software	50
	Adobe Audition	50
	Apple Logic Pro X	52
	Gluing It Together with RSS	52
	Podcast Management 101	56
	Size does matter	57
	Bandwidth demystified	57
<b>CHAPTER 4:</b>	<b>Go, Go, Power Podcasters!</b>	59
	Podcasting with Your Laptop	60
	Shure MVi	60
	RØDE Streamer X	61
	Podcasting with Your Mobile Devices	62
	RØDE VideoMic Me	63
	smartLav+	64
	Two for the Røde: The Wireless PRO	64
	Podcasting with Portable Recorders	67
	Zoom-zoom-zoom: The Handy Recorder line	67
	From Cloud to Computer: Portable Audio Workflow	70
	Getting audio from your portable recorder	71
	Getting audio from your mobile device	72
<b>PART 2: THE HILLS ARE ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF PODCASTING</b>		75
<b>CHAPTER 5:</b>	<b>Before You Hit the Record Button</b>	77
	Choosing a Topic	78
	Finding Your Voice	79
	Finding Your Collective Voice	81
	Deciding Whether You Need an Outline or Script	84
	Determining a Length for Your Show	85
	The value of the short podcast	86
	A little length won't kill you	87
	Finding a happy medium	87
	Mark Your Calendar: Posting Schedule	88
	Posting daily	88
	Posting weekly	89
	Posting biweekly (or fortnightly for our friends in the Commonwealth)	90
	Posting monthly	90



	I Hear Music (and It Sounds Like Police Sirens!) . . . . .	91
	The powers that be . . . . .	91
	I can name that tune . . . I wrote it! . . . . .	96
	I'll take the First: Free speech versus slander . . . . .	97
<b>CHAPTER 6:</b>	<b>Interview-Fu: Talk to Me, Grasshopper</b> . . . . .	<b>99</b>
	I'll Have My People Call Your People: Interview Requests . . . . .	100
	Preparing for Interviews . . . . .	103
	Asking great questions . . . . .	103
	Avoiding inappropriate questions . . . . .	106
	Feelin' the synergy . . . . .	107
	Recording Interviews . . . . .	108
	Recording using Zoom . . . . .	109
	Recording using StreamYard . . . . .	111
	Recording using hardware . . . . .	113
	Prepping Your Green Room for Guests . . . . .	115
	Welcoming in-studio guests . . . . .	115
	Meeting guests on their own turf . . . . .	116
	Ensuring Trouble-Free Recordings . . . . .	117
<b>CHAPTER 7:</b>	<b>So What Are You Waiting For?</b>	
	<b>Record, Already!</b> . . . . .	<b>119</b>
	Did Your Sound Check Clear the Bank? . . . . .	120
	Understanding dB levels . . . . .	120
	Setting your levels . . . . .	122
	Noises Off: Capturing Ambient Noise . . . . .	125
	Identifying ambient noise . . . . .	126
	Minimizing ambient noise . . . . .	126
	Take Your Time and Hurry Up: Pacing and Clock Management . . . . .	128
	Take the potato out of your mouth and enunciate . . . . .	129
	And now let's take a break for station identification . . . . .	130
	Concerning Tangents and Their Val — Oh, Look, a Butterfly! . . . . .	131
	"Say, that reminds me of something . . ." . . . . .	132
	"But getting back to what I was saying earlier . . ." . . . . .	132
	Getting Started with Audacity . . . . .	134
<b>CHAPTER 8:</b>	<b>Cleanup, Podcast Aisle 8!</b> . . . . .	<b>137</b>
	A Few Reasons to Consider Editing . . . . .	138
	Editing with Audacity . . . . .	139
	Making Your Musical Bed and Lying in It: Background Music . . . . .	141
	Finding the right balance . . . . .	142
	Applying bed music the right way . . . . .	143
	Setting volume levels for bed music . . . . .	143

Making an Entrance: Intros . . . . .	146
Theme music . . . . .	146
Intro greeting . . . . .	147
Exit, Stage Left: Outros . . . . .	148
Leave the audience wanting more . . . . .	148
Coming soon to a media player near you . . . . .	149
<b>PART 3: YOU'VE RECORDED YOUR VOICE: NOW WHAT?</b> . . . . .	151
<b>CHAPTER 9: Shrink That Puppy and Slap a Label on It</b> . . . . .	153
A Kilobit of Me, and a Whole Lot of You: Understanding Kbps. . . . .	154
Care for a Sample, Sir? (Audio Sample Rates) . . . . .	156
ID3 Tags: The 411 of Podcasting . . . . .	158
Tell me about yourself: All about ID3 tags . . . . .	159
IDentity crisis: Making ID3 tags work for podcasting . . . . .	159
Creating and editing ID3 tags . . . . .	162
<b>CHAPTER 10: Move It on Up (to Your Web Server)</b> . . . . .	165
Show Art: Getting Graphic with Your Podcast . . . . .	166
Adopting an Effective File-Naming Convention . . . . .	168
Making Your Connection with an FTP Application . . . . .	170
Step-by-step (or quack-by-quack) setup for Cyberduck . . . . .	172
Step-by-step setup for FileZilla . . . . .	173
A place on your web server for your stuff . . . . .	174
Uploading your files . . . . .	175
Uploading to a Podcast-Specific Host . . . . .	176
<b>CHAPTER 11: Providing Show Notes</b> . . . . .	179
Show Note Etiquette . . . . .	179
Planning the Post . . . . .	181
It's all in the details . . . . .	182
A picture is worth a thousand words . . . . .	183
Posting Your Show Notes . . . . .	184
Posting in WordPress . . . . .	184
Posting on LibSyn . . . . .	188
Boosting Search Engine Rankings . . . . .	190
Loading up your titles . . . . .	191
Soliciting backlinks . . . . .	192
<b>PART 4: START SPREADIN' THE NEWS ABOUT YOUR PODCAST</b> . . . . .	195
<b>CHAPTER 12: Speaking Directly to Your Peeps</b> . . . . .	197
Gathering Listener Feedback . . . . .	198
Fostering Comments on Your Blog . . . . .	199

Focusing on Online Forums . . . . .	200
Socializing with Social Media . . . . .	203
Facebook . . . . .	203
X (the platform formerly known as Twitter) . . . . .	204
Pinterest . . . . .	204
YouTube . . . . .	204
Instagram . . . . .	205
Threads . . . . .	208
Using Voicemail . . . . .	209
Building a Community with Discord . . . . .	210
Seeking the Comments of Others . . . . .	212
Trying a general search . . . . .	212
Searching on a site, blog, or social media platform . . . . .	213
Dealing with Negative Comments . . . . .	213
<b>CHAPTER 13: Fishing for Listeners . . . . .</b>	<b>217</b>
Getting Your Podcast Ready for Promotion . . . . .	217
Polishing your presentation . . . . .	217
Checking your bandwidth . . . . .	218
Figuring out your USP . . . . .	219
Exploring Various Advertising Options . . . . .	220
Give me a boost, Facebook . . . . .	221
Insta-traffic with Instagram . . . . .	224
Writing press releases . . . . .	227
Promoting Your Podcast . . . . .	229
Optimizing your site for search engines . . . . .	229
Submitting promos to other podcasts . . . . .	230
Recording your promo . . . . .	230
Giving interviews . . . . .	231
Generating buzz . . . . .	233
<b>PART 5: PODCASTING THE WORLD OF TOMORROW . . . TODAY! . . . . .</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>CHAPTER 14: Podcasting and AI . . . . .</b>	<b>237</b>
Editing Made Easy with Hindenburg PRO . . . . .	238
Getting Descript-ive . . . . .	240
Adding ChatGPT to Your Toolbelt . . . . .	244
Helping AI Generate the Best Results: Prompt Engineering . . . . .	247
The Ethics of AI . . . . .	250
<b>CHAPTER 15: Podcasting on YouTube . . . . .</b>	<b>255</b>
A Hostile Welcome: The Demands of Video . . . . .	255
YouTube: We're Here to Help . . . . .	259

Adding the Video Element: Creating a Podcast for YouTube . . . . .	261
Keeping it simple: Introducing video to an audio podcast . . . . .	261
Pro-level video podcasting: Working with a multicam setup in Adobe Premiere . . . . .	263
Crossing the Finish Line: Taking Your Podcast to YouTube. . . . .	268
Tell us about yourself: The Details window . . . . .	268
Adding more to your podcast: Video elements. . . . .	270
Making sure you're above board: Checks . . . . .	271
Drop it like it's HAWT: Publishing your video. . . . .	272
Grabbing attention: The art of the thumbnail. . . . .	273
<b>CHAPTER 16: One Giant Leap for Podcasting: Live Streaming Content . . . . .</b>	<b>277</b>
Going Live . . . . .	278
Setting up a Streaming Account . . . . .	280
Setting the Stage: Working with RØDE Streamer X and Streamlabs. . . . .	282
Streamer X: Livestreaming wherever you are . . . . .	282
Streamlabs: Your livestreaming control board . . . . .	284
And You're Live! Podcasting in the Moment . . . . .	288
It's a Stream! No, It's a Podcast. No, It's a Stream and a Podcast! . . . . .	289
<b>PART 6: THE PART OF TENS . . . . .</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>CHAPTER 17: Ten Things We Wish We Had Known When We Started Podcasting . . . . .</b>	<b>295</b>
Use Your Mic Effectively . . . . .	295
Make Sure Others Can See Your Screen . . . . .	296
Share Your Podcast the Right Way . . . . .	298
Have a Plan. . . . .	299
Create Five to Ten Episodes before Going Live. . . . .	300
Don't Rubber Stamp Your Next Podcast . . . . .	300
Control the Environment for Audio and Video . . . . .	301
Your Guests' Audio Should Sound as Good as Yours. . . . .	303
Don't Wing It with Interviews. . . . .	304
Look at the Camera, Not Your Screen . . . . .	305
<b>CHAPTER 18: Ten Types of Podcasts to Check Out . . . . .</b>	<b>307</b>
Tech Podcasts . . . . .	308
Independent Media Podcasts . . . . .	309
Science Podcasts . . . . .	310
Self-Development Podcasts . . . . .	312

Comedy Podcasts .....	314
Slice-of-Life Podcasts .....	315
Gaming Podcasts .....	317
Podcasts of the Pen .....	318
Geek Podcasts .....	319
Podcasts about . . . Podcasting .....	321
<b>CHAPTER 19: Ten Original Podcasters .....</b>	<b>323</b>
Mignon Fogarty .....	324
Adam Curry .....	325
Mur Lafferty .....	325
Steve Boyett .....	326
Adam Christianson .....	327
Dave Slusher .....	328
Scott Sigler .....	329
Michael Butler .....	330
Dr. Pamela Gay .....	330
Brian Ibbott .....	331
<b>INDEX .....</b>	<b>333</b>



# Foreword

It's been 20 years since podcasting became a thing, and we've come a long way, baby. For the first 10 years, "What's a podcast?" was what everyone said when you told them you were starting a podcast. For the last 10 years, the question has shifted to "How much money do you make with your podcast?" or "Do you know Joe Rogan?" Both questions make me sad, but for very different reasons that I don't have time to get into in my triumphant return to the world of *Podcasting For Dummies*.

So much has changed since Tee and I put pen to paper in late 2004 to help early adopters navigate the world of podcasting. I'll be honest — we made most of it up as we went along, because we and other pioneering podcasters from that time were inventing the medium as we were publishing to it. That was a lot of fun — and sometimes a lot of sheer terror. Back then, it was literally possible to break podcasting in a variety of ways.

As 2025 looms on the horizon, today's crop of budding podcasters — I'm looking at you — have it both easier and harder than we did back in the day. The technology that enables podcasters to create and distribute their shows to your ears is robust and about as bulletproof as things can get online. Over those 20 years, we've developed and adhered to standards that ensure that listeners have the best experience with our content, as well as paved the way for more ways for podcasters to express themselves and, sometimes, get paid.

When I started podcasting in 2004, there were 40 podcasts. Today, Podcast Index (<https://pfdbook.link/stats>) tracks well over 4 million podcasts — not counting the myriad video channels, private feeds, and other shows that people call podcasts that don't have an RSS feed. By this time next year, that number could double. Such growth is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, you have more competition than ever before, and breaking away from the pack could be a challenge. On the other, there are more people listening and watching than ever before. Tee and Chuck are here to help.

I'm still bullish on podcasting. Heck, it's been my only source of income since 2016 and has been every bit of feast and famine as you might imagine. It's taken

me quite literally around the globe, and I've no plans to exit the industry anytime soon. And while I can't promise you that reading this edition of *Podcasting For Dummies* will get you inducted into the Podcast Hall of Fame in 20 years, I can assure you that you'll be better equipped to navigate the ever-changing world of change in podcasting.

Enjoy your podcasting journey. You're in good hands with my two friends, Tee and Chuck. Jump in!

— Evo Terra, podcast entrepreneur



# Introduction

---

**T**he funny thing about podcasting — outside of comedy podcasts, of course — is that it isn't that hard to do. You just need someone to point the way and illuminate your path.

You don't need to be a techno-wizard or a super-geek. You can take a thought or an opinion, create original audio or video expressing that thought or opinion, and distribute your idea worldwide. You can capture the attention of a few hundred — or a few thousand — people around the world through MP3 players hiding in computers, loaded on smartphones, strapped around biceps, bouncing in pockets, or hooked up to car stereos.

You can do podcasting, from recording to online hosting, on a variety of budgets, ranging from frugal to Fortune 500. You can podcast about literally anything — including podcasting for its own sake. Blogging gave the anonymous, famous, almost-famous, and used-to-be famous a voice in politics, religion, and everyday life. Podcasting adds volume and tone to that voice.

## About This Book

---

*Podcasting For Dummies*, 5th Edition provides the answer to the question, “How do I podcast?” We take you through the always-evolving technological movement encompassing the internet, digital communications, education, and entertainment. By the time you reach the end of this book, the basics will be in place to get you, your voice, and your message heard around the world — and you can even have fun along the way.

This book was written as a linear path from the conceptualization stages to the final publication of your work. However, you don't have to read the book from page one. If you've already gotten your feet wet with various aspects of podcasting, jump around from chapter to chapter and read the sections you need. We provide plenty of guides back to other relevant chapters when the going gets murky.

*Podcasting For Dummies* should be the following to all who pick up and read it:

- » A user-friendly guide for how to listen to, produce, and distribute podcasts
- » A terrific reference for choosing the right hardware and software to put together a sharp-sounding podcast
- » The starting point for the person who knows nothing about editing, recording, hosting blogs, or turning a computer into a recording studio
- » A handy go-to think tank for a beginning podcaster who's hungry for new ideas and fresh points of view
- » A fun read

We don't claim to answer all possible podcasting queries, but we do present the building blocks and first steps for beginning a podcast. As with any *Dummies* book, our responsibility is to give you the foundation on which to build. We did our level best to bestow upon you the enchanted stuff that makes a podcast happen.

## Foolish Assumptions

We assume that you have a computer, a lot of curiosity, and a desire to podcast. We couldn't care less about whether you're using a Mac, a PC, Linux, Unix, or two Dixie cups connected with string. (Okay, maybe the two Dixie cups would be a challenge; a computer is essential.) We're here to describe the tools for creating a podcast, regardless of what OS you're running.

If you know nothing about media production, this book can also serve as a fine primer on how to record, edit, and produce audio and video on your computer, as well as accessorize your computer with mixing boards, professional-grade microphones, and media-engineering software.

With everything that goes into podcasting, there are some things this book is not about. Here's the short list:

- » We don't try to make you into an übergeek in RSS or XML (but we give you all you need to make things work — and even get you Spotify-ready).
- » We figure that if you get hold of Audacity, you can take it from there (but we give you an overview of the program and a few basic editing examples).
- » We don't teach you how to get rich quick by podcasting. Although we teach you how to produce a podcast, there's no magic formula for making the next *Serial* or *Welcome to Night Vale*.

If you're looking for a terrific start to the podcasting experience, then — in the words of the last knight guarding the Holy Grail in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* — “You have chosen wisely.”

## Icons Used in This Book

So you're trekking through the book, making some progress with developing your podcast, when suddenly little icons leap out, grab you by the throat, and wrestle you to the ground. (Who would have thought podcasting was so action-packed, like an MCU movie, huh?) What do all these little drawings mean?

Glad you asked.



TIP

When we're in the middle of a discussion and suddenly have one of those “Say, that reminds me” moments, we give you one of these tips. They're handy extras that are good to know and might even make your podcast sound a little tighter than average.



REMEMBER

If the moment is more than a handy little nugget of information and closer to a “Seriously, you can't forget this part!” factoid, we mark it with a Remember icon. You're going to want to play close attention to these puppies.



WARNING

Sometimes we interrupt our train of thought with a “Time out, Sparky” moment — and this is where we ask for your undivided attention. The warnings are exactly that: flashing lights, ah-ooga horns, dire portents, or your local DM saying “roll for initiative.” They're reminders not to try this at home because you'll definitely regret it.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

These icons illuminate the “So how does this widget really work?” moments you may have as you read this book. The technical stuff icons give you a deeper understanding of what the wizard is doing behind the curtain. If you want to skip the nitty-gritty details, that's perfectly fine.

## Beyond the Book

In addition to what you're reading right now, this book also comes with a free online cheat sheet offering quick reference points you'll want to have on hand when you're working on your first podcast or your first production on location. To get the cheat sheet, simply go to [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) and search for **Podcasting For Dummies Cheat Sheet** in the Search box.

This book also comes with a companion podcast, *Podcasting For Dummies: The Companion Podcast*. Go to <https://pfdbook.link/home> and follow the instructions to get free weekly audio commentary from Tee Morris and Chuck Tomasi about concepts in this book explored in greater detail, such as the difference between good and bad edits, when to tone down the reverb, and the variety of methods you can use to record a podcast.

## Where to Go from Here

---

At this point, many *Dummies* authors say something snappy, clever, or even a bit snarky. We save our best tongue-in-cheek material for the pages inside, so here's a more serious approach.

We suggest that you head to where you're planning to record your podcast or plant yourself in front of a computer. Then start with Chapter 1, where you're given a few links to check out and some suggestions on applications for downloading podcasts. You also find out about Tee's and Chuck's (many) podcasts as well as other podcasts that can educate, inspire, and enlighten your ears with original content.

Where do we go from here? Up and out, friends. Up and out.

# 1 Podcasting on a Worldwide Frequency

## **IN THIS PART . . .**

Understand the fundamentals of creating, uploading, and distributing your podcast for others to enjoy.

Find the right hardware, software, and accessories to fit your budget.

Take your podcast recording on the road with mobile devices.

- » Understanding what podcasting is
- » Discovering the steps to creating a podcast
- » Finding and subscribing to podcasts

## Chapter **1**

# Getting the Scoop on Podcasting

Sometimes the invention that has the biggest effect on our daily lives isn't an invention at all but the convergence of existing technologies, processes, and ideas. Podcasting may be the perfect example of that principle — and it's changing the relationship people have with their media player of choice, music collections, books, education, and more.

The podcasting movement is a spinoff of another communications boom: *blogs*, short for web logs. Blogs sprang up in the early 2000s, providing anyone with a desire to share their thoughts a clean, elegant interface that left many on the technology side wondering why they hadn't thought of it sooner. Everyday people could chronicle their lives, hopes, dreams, and fears and show them to anyone who cared to read. And oddly enough, people did care to read — and still do.

Many blogs offered something called an RSS (*Really Simple Syndication*) *feed*, which is basically a text file with blog articles and images along with metadata such as the author and publish date. RSS feeds liberated the reader from the mundane task of periodically checking their favorite blog sites for new content. Using an app, the reader could subscribe to a site and the app would automatically bring them the information.

Then in 2003, former MTV VJ Adam Curry started collaborating with programmer Dave Winer to improve RSS so that it allowed you to share not only text and images but also media attachments, including compressed audio and video files. Soon after, Curry released his first podcast-catching client. Thus launched the media platform of podcasting.

Podcasting combines the instant information exchange of blogging with audio and video files that you can play on a computer or portable media device. When you make your podcast publicly available on the internet, you're exposing your craft to anyone with a computer or mobile device and a connection capable of streaming data. To put that in perspective, some online sources report that the global online population is more than 5.3 billion users. In the US alone, more than 300 million people own some kind of mobile device or portable media player and every one of them is capable of playing your content!

This chapter is for the consumers of the content (the audience) and those who make the content (the podcasters) alike. We cover the basic steps to record an audio podcast and lay out the basics of what you need to do to enjoy a podcast on your media player.

If you're starting to get the idea that podcasting is revolutionary, groundbreaking, and possibly a major component of social upheaval, great. Some podcasts have made their mark in society, or reignited the desire for listening to stories, or shone a spotlight on criminal injustices. But not all podcasts are so deep. In fact, many are passion projects inviting you to join in on the experience!

## Deciding Whether Podcasting Is for You

Technically speaking, *podcasting* is the distribution of specially encoded multimedia content to subscribed devices via the RSS 2.0 protocol. Whew! Allow us to translate that into common-speak: Podcasting allows you to listen to and watch what you want, where you want, and when you want.

Podcasting, which is often referred to as *time shifted media*, turns the tables on broadcast schedules, allowing the listener to choose not only what to listen to but also when. And because podcasts are transferred via the internet, the power to create a program isn't limited to those with access to a transmitter.

The simplest reason to podcast is that it's just plain fun! We've been podcasting since the beginning, and we're still having a blast, getting messages to our worldwide audiences and challenging ourselves with new tricks and techniques for creating captivating media. So, yeah, for the fun of it? Heck of a good reason.



## WHAT'S IN A NAME, WHEN THE NAME IS PODCASTING?

As with most words that make their way into the conventional lexicon, the precise origins and meaning behind *podcasting* are clouded. Although the domain `podcast.com` was registered back in 2002, Ben Hammersley suggested *podcasting* and many other terms as possible names for this new technology in February 2004 (<https://pfdbook.link/guardian>), it's generally accepted in the podcast community that the first person to use the term as a reference to the activity we now know as podcasting was Dannie Gregoire on September 15, 2004. Some voices in tech asserted that the term held connotations to Apple's popular player of the time, the iPod. Regardless of the intentions, the term was *backronymed* (that is, treated like an acronym and applied to a variety of plausible existing meanings) even with alternative names defiantly offered . . . but to no avail. The term *podcasting* became part of everyday vocabulary.

Content creators who set up YouTube and Twitch livestreams and tell the world "Check out my podcast!" used to make us weep. We were purists, telling people "You can't call it a podcast if you don't have an RSS feed!" However, on finding our own place in streaming, we understood that times change, technology evolves, and even these old dogs can learn new tricks. We now realize that the term *podcast* no longer represents the specific technology linked to RSS; it's more about making your content available to a global audience delivered automatically or streaming on-demand. For that reason, we include Chapter 16 to help get you started streaming and seamlessly work it into your podcast's workflow.

The following sections cover other reasons podcasting might be for you.

### You want to build your brand

Whether you are someone who owns a company and are looking to promote your products or services, an author looking to get their story told, or an individual with the desire to be recognized as a subject matter expert, a podcast is a great way to get your message out there and to be seen and heard. Unintentionally, this is what happened to Chuck at his day job. He put on a bow tie and started creating content for the community related to his day job — and before long people regarded him as the face of a multibillion dollar company. It's a great story until Chuck finds himself at a conference in a hurry to get to his next speaking session only to be stopped by one more adoring fan for a selfie.

## You want to deliver media on a regular basis

Sure, you can include audio, video, and PDF content in a blog. Many bloggers create special content and insert it as links in the text of their blogposts. Readers then download the files at their leisure. However, this approach requires manual selection of the content that blog hosts want readers to download.

Podcasting automates that process. A listener who subscribes to your podcast is subscribed to all your content, whenever it's available. No need to go back to the site to see what's new! Once listeners subscribe to your podcast, the content is delivered to them in the same way as when they subscribe to a print magazine. This is why many apps call it *subscribing* to a podcast.

## You want to reach beyond the boundaries of broadcast media

In all types of radio except satellite radio, the number of people who can listen to a show is limited by the power of the transmitter pumping out the signal. Broadcast television has similar limitations, depending on whether you are using an antenna, cable, or a satellite dish to receive programming. Podcasting doesn't rely on or utilize signals, transmitters, or receivers — at least not in the classic sense. Podcasts use the internet as the delivery system, opening up a potential audience that could extend to the entire planet.

No rules exist (yet, anyway) to regulate the creation of podcast content. In fact, neither the FCC nor any other regulatory body for any other government holds jurisdiction over podcasts. If that seems astounding, remember that podcasters are not using the public airwaves to deliver their message.



WARNING

Just because the FCC doesn't have jurisdiction, you're not exempt from the law or — perhaps more importantly — immune to lawsuits. You're personally responsible for anything you say, do, or condone on your show. Additionally, the rules concerning airplay of licensed music, the distribution of copyrighted material, and the legalities of recording conversations all apply. Pay close attention to the relevant sections in Chapter 5 to avoid some serious consequences. When it comes to the legalities, ignorance is not bliss.

## You have something to say

As a general rule, podcasters produce content that likely holds appeal for only a select audience. Podcasts start with an idea, something that the podcaster has the

desire and knowledge, either real or imaginary, to talk about. Add to that a bit of drive, do-it-yourself-ishness, and an inability to take no for an answer. The point is to say what you want to say, to those who want to hear it.

Podcasts can be about anything and be enjoyed by just about anyone. The topics covered don't have to be earth-shattering or life-changing. They can be about do-it-yourself projects, sound-seeing tours of places you visit, or even your favorite board games. A few rules and guidelines are common, but at times you may find it necessary to bend the rules. (That can be a lot of fun in itself!)

Some of the most popular podcasts are created by everyday people who sit in front of their computers or phones once a week and just speak their mind, heart, and soul. Some are focused on niche topics; others are more broad-based.

## You want to hear from your listeners

A perk of podcasting is accessibility. On average, most audiences have a direct line of contact between themselves and the podcast's host or hosts. Podcast consumers are more likely to provide feedback for what they listen to or watch, probably traceable to the personal nature of a podcast. Unlike popular talk shows that follow strict formulaic approaches, podcasts offer their audiences — and the creators behind the production — control, options, and intimacy that traditional broadcast media cannot. This appeal has attracted to podcasting major production studios such as NPR, ESPN, Disney, CBC, and HBO, who were early adopters and continue podcasting today. The connection of podcasting with audiences paved the way for streamers, and now podcasting and streaming are synonymous.



REMEMBER

When you ask for feedback, you're likely to get it — and from unusual places. Because geography doesn't limit the distance your podcast can travel, you may find yourself with listeners in faraway and exotic places. And this feedback isn't always going to be "Wow, great podcast!" Listeners will be honest with you when you invite feedback.

## Creating a Podcast

The two main schools of thought when creating a podcast are the "I need the latest and greatest equipment to capture that crisp, clear sound of the broadcasting industry" school, and the "Hey, I have a phone with a microphone and I can record my voice wherever I am" school. Both are equally valid positions, and lots of secondary schools are in-between. The question is how far you're willing to go.

But allow us to dispel a few misconceptions about podcasting right off the bat: You're not reprogramming your operating system, you're not hacking into the Internal Revenue Service's database, and you're not setting up a wireless computer network with tinfoil from a chewing gum wrapper, a shoestring, and your belt, regardless if MacGyver showed you how. Podcasting is not rocket science. In fact, here's a quick rundown of how you podcast:

1. Record audio or video and convert it to a download-friendly format.
2. Write a description of what you just created.
3. Upload everything to a host server.

Yes, yes, yes, if podcasting were that simple, why is this book so thick? Well, we admit that this list does gloss over a few details, but a podcast — in its most streamlined, raw presentation — is that simple. The details of putting together a single episode start in Chapter 2 and wrap up in Chapter 8; Chapters 9 through 12 walk you through all you need to make the media you create into a podcast.

So, yeah, podcasting is easy, but there's a lot to it.

## Looking for the bare necessities

You need a few things before starting your first podcast, many of which you can probably find on your computer. For these beginning steps, we focus on audio:

» **A microphone:** Take a look at your computer. Right now, regardless of whether you have a laptop or a desktop, Windows or Mac, your computer probably has a built-in microphone — or a USB port for plugging in a microphone. Yes, even your mobile phone has a microphone, or it wouldn't be much of a phone, would it? Many earbuds even include a microphone.

Position the microphone in a comfortable spot on your desk or table. If you're using a laptop, it should be somewhere on your desk that allows for best recording results without hunching over the computer like *Young Frankenstein's* Igor. (That's *EYE*-gor.) Check the laptop's documentation to find out where the built-in microphone is located in the unit's housing. For a mobile phone, hold the device as if you're making a call, the way it was intended. Holding the device any other way can degrade the audio quality. If you're using a microphone earbuds set included with the phone's purchase, you may need to do some experimentation.

Usually the built-in microphone in a laptop is located close to the edge of the keyboard or near the laptop's speakers.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

» **Recording software:** Check out the software that came with your computer. You know, all those extra applications that you filed away, thinking, “I’ll check those out sometime.” Well, that time has arrived. You probably have some sort of audio-recording software loaded on your computer, such as Voice Recorder (PC) or GarageBand (Mac).



TIP

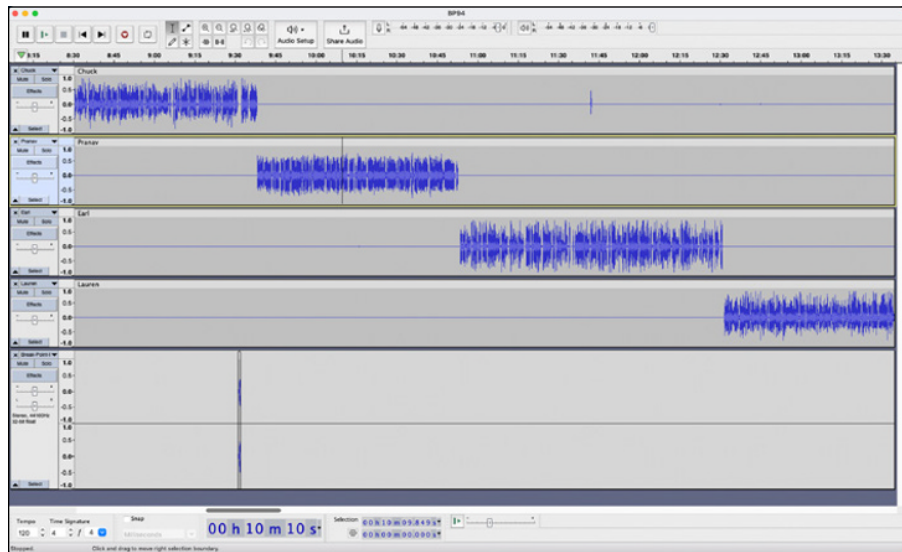
If you don’t already have the appropriate software, here’s a fast way to get it: Download the version of Audacity for your operating system (at <https://pfdbook.link/audacity>). Audacity, which is shown in Figure 1-1, is free. Good news! We get in-depth with Audacity later in this book.

» **An audio interface:** Make sure your computer has the hardware it needs to handle audio recording and the drivers to run the hardware — unless you have a built-in microphone.



TIP

Some desktop computers come with an elementary audio card built into the motherboard. Before you run out to your local computer vendor and spring for an audio card, check your computer to see whether it can already handle basic voice recording.



**FIGURE 1-1:** Audacity allows you to record and edit audio and create MP3 files.

See Chapter 2 for tips on choosing the right mic and audio accessories. Chapter 3 covers all the software you’ll need.

# Recording your first podcast

When you have your computer set up and your microphone working, it's time to start recording. Take a deep breath and follow these steps:

## 1. Jot down a few notes on what you want to talk about.

Nothing too fancy — just make an outline that includes remarks about who you are and what you want to talk about. Use these bullet points to keep yourself on track.

Checking your computer, jotting down notes, and setting up your recording area is called *preshow prep*. This topic is discussed in depth in Chapter 5 by other podcasters who have their own set ways of getting ready to record.

## 2. Click the record button in your recording software and talk for as long as it takes for you to get through your notes.

We recommend keeping your first recording to no more than 20 minutes. That may seem like a lot of time, but it will fly by.



TIP

## 3. Give a nice little sign-off and click the stop button.

An example of a sign-off is “Take care of yourselves! See you next time.”

## 4. Choose File ⇨ Save As and give your project a name.

Now bask in the warmth of creative accomplishment.

# Compressing your audio files

Portable media devices and computers can play MP3 files as a default format. While many other audio formats are available, MP3 is the preferred format for podcasting because so many digital devices and operating systems recognize it. If your recording software can output straight to MP3 format, your life is much simpler.

If your software can't export directly to MP3, it should be able to save to a WAV (Windows) or AIFF (Mac) file, which is raw, is uncompressed, and can get large. In this case, save your raw file from your first software package and then use Audacity to import the file and export it as MP3. We get into those details in Chapter 3.

Congratulations — you just recorded your first audio podcast! Easy, isn't it? However, this is merely the first step into a larger world, as Obi-Wan once told Luke.