

Podcasting for Journalism Students

S E C O N D E D I T I O N

An introduction
to podcast and radio production

Podcasting for Journalism Students

Also by Davy Sims

In the “Podcasting for ...” series

Podcasting for Communities

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A Firsthand Guide to Bled Slovenia – Shorter Edition

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Podcasting for Journalism Students

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by

Davy Sims

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Firsthand Guides

Podcasting for Journalism Students

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Dedication

To my wife, Dawn and sons Adam and Owen

To hear podcasts mentioned in this book visit

www.podcastingfor.com

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Introduction to the first edition

In a nutshell: Each chapter begins with just a couple of sentences to give you an idea about what is being discussed. If that topic is not for you, move to the next chapter. This introduction is no more than a few thoughts about podcasting. You might find it useful if you are completely new to podcast and radio production.

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This book is for young, trainee, or student journalists not specialising in broadcast media. It is an introduction to “making content” for podcasting and broadcasting whether you want to understand production on a professional level or simply because you want to create podcasts for fun or add something useful to your CV.

It is a result of my experience teaching radio production to journalism BA students in Dublin. Most, but not all these pages are the module and support notes. The book is part of the “Podcasting For ...” project which includes podcasts and the podcastingfor.com blog.

Journalists, newspapers, magazines, television programmes, any supplier of news, opinion or information can use podcasting to increase their reach, promote their main publication, bring additionality to their subscribers. People who were once “ink only” journalists are producing radio – to various levels of professionalism. They range from the pathetically poor – failing to understand simple production processes like audio quality or engaging audiences – to podcasts that are high quality, technically and editorially.

For some the addition of audio podcasts is part of strategy to add distinctiveness to their brand and expand to capture new – usually younger - audiences. Some “legacy media” realise that audiences’ needs and tastes have changed and audio satisfies some of those needs. Audio is also less complicated and expensive to produce than video, although modern video hardware, software and production have reduced costs massively.

Finally, there is an understanding that news “papers” are not on paper for some audiences. It is only logical to those consumers that reading text and charts, looking at photos, watching video and listening to

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audio are all ways to digest news, and when they combine, all the better.

Podcasts, because of the relative ease and cheapness of production are also a perfect way to develop audience loyalty. Once someone has subscribed to a podcast, and if that podcast is informative and well made, they will become regular listeners.

There is another reason why student journalists might want to become podcast producers. How many students walk right into the job they want? Producing podcasts while at college offers a student opportunities to put what they are learning into practice. Continuing to produce while job searching may be one way to set themselves apart for other job applicants, particularly if they want to work in radio.

Demarcations of the past are becoming meaningless. Magazines produce audio podcasts, newspapers make video, radio stations produce websites and so it goes. A journalism student beginning work in a newspaper or magazine, might well get opportunities to produce stories for the publication's podcast. Better still, a talented journalist might be offered the opportunity start a brand-new podcast.

This book, and its predecessor "Podcasting for Communities", answers the question "How?". Find out more than you ever thought you needed to know right here.

You don't need to be a part of an organisation to produce a podcast; any single person or team can produce stories cheaply and easily and bring those stories to their audience.

We can all be podcasters now because the tools to produce a podcast have never been so cheap (some, free.). The access to distributing our radio programmes on the internet has never been easier. Even the process to get our podcasts listed on iTunes is simpler than ever before. Although there is a lot more competition. There are more tools available to us and they are easier to understand.

"Podcasting for Journalism Students" is for people who want to get together to make radio programmes and turn them into podcasts as part of a course or as an extension to their studies. It also can be useful for students learning radio production.

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Podcast production and radio production are essentially the same – the means of distribution are different. Of course, many radio programmes are later made available as podcasts. How can a radio show be turned into a podcast episode? The book covers that, too.

You will find plenty of guides on the web about creating mp3 files, about XML files and RSS readers, about hosting podcasts and setting up blogs. There are fewer websites and guides on producing content – the audio programmes that will be our podcast.

The main part of this book is about,

- Forming your production team, then planning and recording your programme.
- As you are making your radio programme we explore 5 key skills that producers, presenters, reporters and sound recordists need; writing, reading, interviewing, recording and editing.
- We will discuss different podcasting systems and hosts to transform the recording into a podcast.
- Then we discuss promoting your podcast and developing and managing your online community. Developing and managing an online community is rarely covered in any depth in articles and books I have read about podcasting. Yet I believe that a healthy positive and supportive online community is central to the sustainability of a podcast.
- I also cover blogging and some of the simple technical stuff.

I have already said several times what "we" will do through this book. By "we" I mean you who are reading it, and me writing it because the book will continue through podcasts and the blog after it is published and you will have the opportunity to contribute your ideas and stories.

The PodcastingFor.com website will have more information and updates, conversations and interviews with other podcast producers. It will be a place to ask and answer questions and somewhere to support other new podcasters. The idea is that this "how to" manual will also kick off a conversation on the web.

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“First,” I will say later, “Think about your audience.” I am thinking about the audience or readers of this book as I write it. Most of what I am covering here I teach to final year BA journalism students in Dublin and to other groups of students from as far apart as Slovenia and South Africa.

This is not really a book about journalism. I am not covering much actual journalism here except for some important points relating to fairness, law and so on. I do not cover research, building contacts, developing stories and other common journalism skills.

Why now?

While some enthusiasts might talk about a podcasting revolution, I am more inclined to see the rise in podcasting over the last four or five years as a natural development of audiences expecting to hear programmes when it suits their circumstances, of creative people getting their hands on new tools previously only available to professionals, and new ideas about stories that people want to tell and hear that are not available through traditional radio programming. In the beginning, we had podcasters producing their own programmes and not needing to go through a radio station’s tedious commissioning processes. They no longer needed to convince the gatekeepers that the programmes they wanted to make were good quality and there was an audience for them.

The challenge is to be a good and relevant podcaster.

About 20 years ago in the mid-1990s some of us first experienced building websites with Geocities and Angelfire (the website and web building tools are still available). They were a simple introduction for the enthusiast and the hobbyist to creating websites. Yes, many of the first websites we built were ugly – well, mine were. Few had any merit at all. The websites we newbies were making were unplanned and a bit embarrassing.

As people developed their skills, so the websites improved. Some web pages were works of art filled with important and interesting information. Angelfire and Geocities gave ordinary untrained people their first chance.

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I think that is just where we are now with podcasting. People are hearing about podcasts. They are subscribing, downloading and listening to them. And now they are making podcasts. Everyone can make their own radio programmes which others can enjoy and contribute to.

This book is for those enthusiasts.

Davy Sims, UK – Ireland – Slovenia, January 2017

Introduction to the second edition

Let’s just get on with it.

Davy

Part 1 - The production plan

Before going any further, let's be sure all agree about what a podcast is.

A podcast is a strand of episodes not a single episode. On radio, it might be a daily, weekly or monthly programme such as BBC Radio 4's Afternoon Drama. Each episode will have different title. Some people produce their podcast with numbered editions.

If you look for a dictionary definition of "podcast", you are likely to find something like "a downloadable series of radio programmes distributed on the internet which you can play on a computer." Cold, unrevealing and while technically correct not really the whole truth. Because a podcast is a much a more emotional experience for the people producing and the people listening.

UK broadcaster Olly Mann first came across podcasting in 2006, just two years after it had been invented and the word coined. He was being interviewed at the Edinburgh Festival by podcasting pioneer Ewan Spence. That experience inspired him to become a podcaster, too. Soon, he was to launch the award-winning comedy podcast Answer Me This with his friend from university, Helen Zaltzman.

When I asked Olly to define a podcast, his first answer was the obligatory "radio programme on the internet". Then he revealed a lot more about what a podcast actually is.

"It's changing, but I still find generally speaking if you are talking to anyone over 55 it's easier just to say it's a radio show on the internet, because they know what radio means and they know what the internet is. Not everyone has got their head around downloads and streaming. And in its purist form that's what podcasting is. But I do think there is something distinct about podcasting and what makes a good podcast.

"For me, it's more intimate than radio. The thing people always say about radio is how intimate it is; you are doing the ironing or driving somewhere and you feel as if the presenter is talking just to you. That's true and we can all identify with that. Because by serendipity

we are in the same place at the same time – them in a studio and me driving down the M1 at five o'clock in the afternoon – you sort of know, really it is just by chance you happen to be listening."

[You can hear the interview with Olly at the Podcasting For ... website <http://www.podcastingfor.com/olly-mann-interview/>]

"I think when you choose to listen ... when you select out of all of the content that's available in the world then ... to put it into your ears, because people tend to listen to podcasts via head phones which is different [to the way we listen to most] radio. When you choose to share your head space – literally – with the person that's recorded the programme for you, I just think it's that step more intimate."

To begin, I am going to talk about one of the world's biggest broadcasting organisations and what it has in common with your podcast.

Then we move on to discuss the production team. While I realise "the production team" might just be you and maybe a few friends, this chapter is about the roles rather than the people.

Let's start by thinking about why you want to make a podcast. Let's talk about "purpose"

Chapter 1: Purpose

In a nutshell: Larry Gifford: “Having an intention is really important. The intention [of The Radio Stuff Podcast] was and is to connect radio lovers around the world and share great ideas and be as positive about the radio industry as we can. It's really about following our curiosities and talking to interesting people.” This section asks you to identify the purpose of your podcast. If you like, leave it for now and come back once you have read the rest of the book. The purpose will always be central to whatever you do.

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Before you do anything – before you buy the kit, before you invite someone to be interviewed, before you begin to plan your first episode, you must decide on your **purpose**. Why are you doing the podcast and what are you trying to achieve?

At the outset, your purpose might be to understand how podcasting works and to develop skills. Whether people listen or not is irrelevant. Eventually you will want people to hear the podcast you are making. Once again you must consider and decide on the editorial proposition; the podcast purpose.

This theme will appear several times in this book. At all times, you must be able to answer these three questions:

- *What do you want to say?*
- *Who do you want to say it to?*
- *How do you want to say it?*

Larry Gifford (@giffordtweet) has had an extensive radio career in the USA and from the beginning of 2017, in Canada. He has been an on-air personality, journalist, sports reporter, programmer and manager at ESPN, Fox Sports Radio, and news, talk, and sports stations in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Seattle, Columbus and Dayton. He also makes The Radio Stuff podcast and stresses the importance of the purpose, the reason for making the podcast. He calls it “the intention”.

“From early on when we were figuring out what the Radio Stuff podcast would be, we realised there were so many great ideas from just the small group of people we knew in radio. And we loved talking radio with our radio friends. We thought: why not share ideas about radio globally, when we can do that with the podcast?”

“The intention was and is to connect radio lovers around the world and share great ideas and be as positive about the radio industry as we can. It's really about following our curiosities and talking to interesting people.”

You can hear the Larry Gifford interview at the Podcasting For ... blog [<http://www.podcastingfor.com/interview-larry-gifford-of-the-radio-stuff-podcast/>]

Here are some purposes:

Developing professional skills: In Chapter 2, I will talk about all the various roles people can play producing a podcast, the editor, the researcher, the presenters and the others. People taking up these roles will be learning new skills; they may be working in a team for the first time. Perhaps they will be taking on responsibilities for the first time. Your team may be self-taught or have learned through group work. People will learn and change.

Perhaps the purpose of the podcast is to help people gain confidence as podcast producers and the number of listeners, beyond your own group, is unimportant. No matter, people will learn and grow and come away with new skills and possibility an eagerness to learn more.

But remember, always put your audience first, so if your purpose is to develop or improve skills, then combine that with another more outward looking purpose.

Reporting stories from your community: Whether it is the college community or the community the college is part of, this ultra-local journalism can have real value to audience and production team.

News about college events: Not just sports reports and concert reviews – there is nothing wrong with either. What are the real issues to do with college, further education, student politics, broader events that impact on student and college life?

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Campaigning: It is often said by commentators that students and young people are more likely to be attracted to issues like human rights and environment than party politics. What do you and your colleagues want to campaign about?

Connecting: Podcasting puts you on a global stage. You can use it to connect with other groups and involve yourselves in common issues around the world.

To inform the influencers: Who are the people who really need to know what you and your team are up to? Politicians, decision makers, grant making bodies, local businesses who you want to recruit as supporters and funders. You might want to examine the impact of a government policy. There might be something going on that concerns the community and you want to bring that to the attention of people who will do something about it. You might want to campaign for change. These are all credible exercises for campaigning journalism and a podcast – while it may not fix a problem alone – is one of the tools you can use to influence other people.

Reaching mainstream media: You can reach a broader audience if you connect with the mainstream radio, TV and newspapers. Journalist, Malachi O'Doherty: "Mainstream media are watching social media to pick up ideas for discussion on their programmes. That means the prospect of people using social media, and the podcasters, making themselves noticed by the mainstream media."

To become and influencer: A podcast is a platform. Make it good, get listeners and people supporting you and in time you too may become an "influencer". You and your team's podcast might be the change you want to see.

What to consider when deciding purposes

A radio programme, a podcast, a website cannot be produced by committee. Well, it can be, but it is destined for failure if it is. One person must take the lead and realise the vision. Even if you are working alone, decide what the purpose is, it will be your guide, your reference point. Don't be afraid to review and change if you need to.

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Think about the audience:

- Who do you want to talk to and what do you know about them? What do they like and not like? How they spend their time? What gets them motivated?
- Why do you want to attract their attention and take up their time?
- What do you want them to do after they have listened to the podcast?

You need to understand your audience. Producing a podcast means you do not have to go to an existing radio station, television channel or newspaper to reach an audience. For generations people working in mainstream media have been the gatekeepers. The best you could hope for is getting past the gatekeeper and speak to their audience. And their audience might not be precisely the audience you want to speak to. By producing your own podcast, you get the chance to develop your own audience.

You should not think of the audience as "everybody"; that can quickly become "nobody". Have a very clear idea of who your audience is to be. That will help you write your scripts, cut your reports and present your podcast because your audience will be in your mind throughout the production process.

The message and the conversation

What is it that you are bursting to say to this audience? Think about the stories you want to tell. You will be working to develop and keep an audience, so what sort of conversations do you want to have with them? That word "conversation" means that you also need to listen to your audience. How do you do that? How will you incorporate your listeners' thoughts and ideas into the podcast – or community radio programme? Broadcasting has changed. Social media have led that change. We are now able, more easily, to narrow the audience – narrowcast rather than broadcast – and involve the audience. The podcast is as much an opportunity to listen as it is to speak.

The method and the platform

Or if you prefer, “How do you want to say it?” Later in this book we will discuss a range of different production styles and techniques; interviews, written pieces, packages, two-ways, three-ways and more. The editorial thread running through them all, will be the house style you will develop. There might be humour, there might be varying degrees of formality. Your presenters might use an easy approach to language where slang where “four letter words” are acceptable, even expected. You will develop the right style over time with feedback from the audience and reviewing your work regularly.

Social media platforms are going to be important to your podcast. Podcasting is a social medium itself. You are going to need to use Facebook, Twitter and others, perhaps Instagram or SnapChat, as part of the production process. You will use them to research your reports and discussions and even to find guests. You will use social media to promote your podcast. Involving your listeners and developing a community is essential to what you are doing. As you are about to discover a podcast is more than the audio. There is a whole section in this book on using social media and developing and managing communities.

To establish a common purpose, discuss the whole project with the team so everyone buys into the idea. Even if you are a one-person operation – many podcasters are – you should still think this through for yourself. And yes, write it down and every few weeks, re-read the purpose and ask, “Is this what I am doing?”. If you are part of a team, meet regularly and from time to time review your purpose. Is that what you are doing? Should you change? As other volunteers join your team you can talk to them about the purpose and describe what it is you are all trying to achieve together.

The purpose can change over time as you learn more about producing your podcast and about the listeners. It is not smart to stick to what was once a good idea which everyone now hates. Try not to change too frequently, though. The people working on the podcast, and just as importantly the listeners, will want consistency. You might change the format of your programme, but it is unlikely you will change the editorial direction.

Malachi O’Doherty describes himself with typical modesty as an old radio hand. “The trouble is,” he says, “As you grow older and try other things you become a writer, you become a photographer, a broadcaster, a commentator, a reporter, a teacher. But I like the description old radio hand.”

For Malachi, the value of the archive is a purpose.

Malachi is one of the best-known journalists in Northern Ireland. He writes and makes radio programmes about politics, religion and faith, history, arts, literature. He is also one of the earliest adaptors of digital media among the journalists that I know and has been making his interviews and audio available to anyone online for decades. Pre-iTunes, pre-podcasting, pre-Facebook.

He began this journey when he realised that long interviews were being stripped down to a couple of minutes for the radio packages he was making. Yet, all the interviews were interesting and potentially valuable to other people who might want to hear more from the interviewee. Malachi had identified – before any of us had heard of the concept – the “Long Tail” value of interviews and how the web can be used to capitalise on that Long Tail. “I recorded audio and put it on the internet. It was as elementary as that. The first impulse was to put the recordings online so people could access them.” Having used perhaps two minutes of a thirty-minute interview, the full interview could be put online as a resource.

“If someone is interested in the package you have done and wants to know more they can go and find the full recording. It also has evidential value.” Malachi had identified the purpose.

Being old radio hands, both of us, we were trained to measure the audience and to ask, “How many are listening?” Big, immediate numbers are important in radio. In podcasting, you can get stats from your hosting platform every day. “The first one I used was podcastpeople.com. I was going to all this trouble at a time when the connection was slow, I was checking a day later and finding that four people had listened to it. And of that four maybe one had listened all the way through.”

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Yet the value is not always in just the numbers; it is in who is listening and how they engage with your podcast.

“The value is the archive. And you were hopefully part of a community of podcasters, journalists who were putting up material as well.”

*You can hear the interview Malachi on the blog
[<http://www.podcastingfor.com/interview-with-malachi-odoherty/>]*

Whether you are a single podcaster or one of the biggest broadcasting organisations in the world, purpose is the starting point. The BBC is the UK's first national public service broadcaster. It has been producing radio programmes since 1922, initially as the British Broadcasting Company then as the British Broadcasting Corporation. Radio was joined by television in 1936. Experiments with the web started in 1994, but the full rollout as a distinctive service had to wait until 1997.

For almost 30 years the BBC had a monopoly as the UK's only broadcaster. It is as much an institution in the country as parliament and the royal family and the armed forces, except that it is independent of government.

It does not have the automatic right to broadcast and webcast its programmes. These days, it does not make all its own programmes as it once did. It is required by law to commission programmes from independent producers.

Every 10 years it is legally required to go through a process to have its licence renewed under Royal Charter. The BBC needs to convince the government and the public that it should keep its right to broadcast radio and TV programmes and provide web and mobile services throughout the UK and by extension around the world through BBC World Service radio and BBC World TV.

It needs to convince everyone that it should continue to collect the licence fee. It needs to prove its value for money. It should earn its place among the choices available to the UK public.

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To begin the whole process of charter renewal, the BBC's management, programme makers and staff ask one question: “What is the purpose of the BBC?”

From the time, the first question about the purpose is discussed around meeting rooms in London, Salford, Cardiff, Glasgow, Belfast and beyond, through to the agreement with the government and then the publication of the Royal Charter, “What is the purpose of the BBC?” will be a central question. That process takes typically two years.

When the new Royal Charter is published, the first few words will describe the Purpose of the BBC. If you want to read more about the Royal Charter and Purpose of the BBC search “BBC Royal Charter”.

Lewis Rossiter is one person podcaster. His daytime job is in property, but he became fascinated with radio where he sometimes offers property advice. Now he plans to develop podcasting about his other passion - wrestling. “I enjoy doing the radio, but I am a massive lover of podcasts,” he says. Driving a lot for his job, he is listening to podcasts rather than radio. “Some of my favourite ones are mainly American. Reasonable Doubt is one with Adam Carolla and criminal defence attorney Mark Geragos.”

“I wanted to do podcasting because I am a fan of podcasting. And having dipped my foot in radio, which is very structured and podcasting is so liberating. It's a way of digesting information where I don't have to sit down and read a book. But I do think I've get smarter by broadening my horizons.”

Lewis had a very clear idea of his purpose at the outset. “I want to build something organically; something that could eventually be commercially viable. So, if I focus on quality, on something I would listen to and enjoy, then the idea is that other people will pick it up.”

The decisions about purpose and content are so much easier when you are a one-person operation. When you are a team it is different. There are so many ideas flying around it can be difficult to capture them. Good ideas will inspire better ideas. Group discussions around where you want to take your podcast can be inspirational.

And there will be disagreements.

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What if the whole team does not buy into one idea? Not everyone will agree. If there are doubters or people not prepared to accept the purpose, then you might be tempted to manage those people out. However, people who have a strong and passionate argument about a podcasting purpose are truly valuable people – even if you don't agree 100%. So, think carefully. A little disagreement can help creativity. Of course, disagreement can also be destructive. As the leader in the podcasting process this will be your first challenge; managing the team.

The purpose is important to the audience, because audiences like to have pretty good idea of what to expect – yes, you want to surprise and delight, but within certain genre. People who subscribe to a comedy podcast, are not expecting a history podcast.

Is your podcast going to be about serious political and current affairs journalism, or will it be about entertainment, music, events, tech, science, film? You choose, some subject matter can be mixed successfully, but think about the purpose of the podcast and how the content links to the purpose and the purpose links to the audience.

While the BBC is a massive global organisation and your idea for a podcast might be for just a few friends or colleagues, it is good practice to be clear about the purpose of the podcast. It is also important to plan the whole production process. Once you have decided, and everyone who is going to participate agrees what the purpose of the podcast is, then write it down. Try to write the purpose in 140 characters ready to post on Twitter.

To summarise

Begin by identifying your purpose. Then write it down.

“The purpose of this podcast is ...”. Keep it to two supermarket queue style sentences. In other words, if you were in a queue at the checkout at a supermarket and you met someone who asked what you were up to, have a two-sentence explanation of your podcast and what you want to achieve.

Then write it again in social media style. Write it in 140 characters or fewer.

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Tweet it, make a poster, send it out as greetings cards. Make sure everyone involved knows what the purpose is, that they agree on what it is and are prepared to review that purpose a little further down the line.

Next, identify your audience, who they are and what you know about them, what it is you want to say to them and how you are going to say it.

With that done, you are ready to start building the production team.

Chapter 2: The Production Team

In a nutshell: Most of the following chapter is about producing a radio magazine programme. By describing that, I can outline a range of tasks, responsibilities, production techniques and roles. A complex magazine programme is quite advanced, something that a group of people working together for an agreed outcome can do.

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At the outset, most people who make podcasts, or are interested in making podcasts, are planning something simple. However, even a simple production has its own inherent challenges. Therefore, the first section of this chapter will be on two different types of programme. The first is about the solo podcaster. As examples, I take two very different genres; creative writing and recording on site. The second example is the round table discussion with two, three or four voices. Sometimes they are serious discussions on matters like economics and politics. Sometimes they are the light hearted, banter and chat show programme which is probably one of the most common formats.

The Team of One

Lucy Mitchell is an award-winning blogger who writes BlondWriteMore - The Emotional Highs and Lows of a Blond Writer. Lucy recently started podcasting stories about her character Roxy Collins.

“She sprang from my blog where I ran her as a series. And then I took her on to Wattpad.com which describes itself as the world's largest community for readers and writers. Her stories were spotted by one of the Wattpad team who decided to turn them into a featured romance story. Within four days I acquired over seventy thousand followers.

“It just took off. Roxy has been there a couple of months and she has had over two hundred thousand views, and thousands of likes, comments. The feedback I have had encouraged me to do something else. The book market is quite saturated and I didn't really want to rush into writing a book. So, I thought I would bring Roxy to life in

another way. I really like “fiction on the go” and that you could listen to something in fifteen minute bursts.”

Lucy had heard about the growth in popularity in podcasts particularly in America. “I really fancied bringing something to life in audio. Someone I work with had started a sports podcast. And I thought – y’know, I’ll just do something completely different, and bring her to life that way.”

With the back catalogue of Roxy Collins stories, Lucy already had all the content she needed. But she knew nothing about how to make a podcast.

“I had to find out how to become a podcaster. So, I got myself a Libsyn hosting account – that’s where the podcast lives. I then bought myself a good microphone. My brother-in-law is a musician – so he did the music. Then I got the art work together. There are lots of different strands. That takes time. Then I had to spend weeks and weeks practicing and getting used to my own voice.”

There has been some trial and error. “It’s the best way to learn. So, for example, I was uploading m4v files. I have a new MacBook Air and didn’t realise I needed to use the mp3 file format. In the first week people were telling me they couldn’t download the file and listen to it, which was quite nerve-racking. So, I spoke to the hosting company who helped me. I had to convert the files to mp3, which was really easy.”

Lucy has been getting thousands of comments on Wattpad, and as an established blogger, she is used to working with her community – the people who follow her blog – and their comments. I was interested in discovering how she uses that community to support what she does and to drive her to do more.

“I’ve done some short fiction and I have had negative feedback. But for some reason Roxy hasn’t had any negative feedback, which I do find quite remarkable, because it’s quite a dry sense of humour. And I think this is what’s spurred me on to doing something different with her.”

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As an established and popular blogger, Lucy is used to getting daily stats about the number of people visiting her blog, what they are reading and how long they are staying. It has not been the same in these early few months of podcasting. “The biggest thing for me about podcasting is not getting that sort of experience or immediate reaction on a podcast. The listener behaviour is very different to blogging behaviour. Podcast listeners don’t listen to every episode as soon as you put them out there. They might listen to them at the end of the week. I listen to a lot of podcasts and I don’t listen to them all when they come out. I think that for a blogger is quite difficult.

“Podcasting is a different beast to blogging. It’s a different customer experience, and if you can get your head around that, you are going to be OK.”

Many podcasts are the work of single individuals who plan, record, edit and produce both the audio and web content. Some of the most effective podcasts are made by one person with an audio recorder who has an enquiring mind and an ability to ask questions of ordinary people. Scott Carrier of Home of the Brave podcast [homebrave.com] is one. Listen to his work to hear just what one person can do and how to tell a story in a podcast.

BBC Radio’s Hugh Sykes is a BBC radio reporter who you should listen to if you can. Sykes usually reports from middle east and north Africa. He is often one of the first reporters on the ground after an event. He uses the sounds of the places he is visiting as part of the story he is reporting; cities, bazaars, families, passing fighter jets, the sea meeting the sand on a shore. His simple atmospheric soundscapes build a picture of the situation where the interviewees find themselves. He asks ordinary people directly affected by terrible events to tell their story, sometimes simultaneously translating their answers into English.

Search “Hugh Sykes reporter” for links to some of his work.

Carrier and Sykes are not exceptions. There is a long history of radio reporters and now podcasters working alone, bringing the voices of ordinary people to the listener and allowing those people to tell their story in their own way.

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“Podcasting is the key to the toyshop,” says Olly Mann who is an experienced podcaster and radio presenter. Olly currently runs three successful podcasts, Answer Me This, The Media Podcast and The Modern Mann. He also presents the Guardian’s Chips with Everything. They are all great examples of how to make a podcast.

Olly and Helen Zaltzman have been producing Answer Me This since 2007. With a new edition, every two weeks, ATM has won many awards including a gold and a silver Sony Award from the Radio Academy.

ATM can be described simply as a programme that answers listeners’ questions. Of course, there is much more to it than that. Olly reckons that it takes the two of them and “Martin the Sound Man” two days a week to make.

The Media Podcast is a discussion programme where two guests are invited to discuss, provide insight and opinion on events in the media industry in the UK and further afield.

The Modern Mann podcast is closer to the magazine programme described later in this chapter.

“If you’ve always wanted to make radio programmes but didn’t have the resources or contacts to make your way through a tortuous BBC commissioning process, then not only can you make the show that you want to, but you should,” says Olly Mann. “I think there is an almost quasi physical release you get giving an outlet to your creativity almost regardless of whether anyone hears it. Inevitably some people will hear it, and if you’re lucky and you’re right that your idea was good then thousands of people will hear it.”

The two, three or four-person discussion or banter or chat programme is demanding of the presenter and the contributors. The presenter is not there to ask, “What happened and what happened then?” questions. The presenter should be on top of the topics up for discussion, should be well briefed and well read on the subjects. The presenter should not settle for trite and easy answers, but should challenge the contributors.

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The contributors are there to provide new information, analysis and insight, of course, but they are also there to provide entertainment – yes even in the “serious” topics – to provide discussion and take contrary positions and raise the level of debate. You do not want boring contributors.

- They will understand the format and the purpose of the programme.
- They will understand their role and be well briefed by the producer.
- They will provide their expertise and opinion and question and challenge other contributors and the presenter.

The programme will have a structure; it might not be obvious to the listener, but the participants will know where the programme is coming from and going to and the presenter will help them understand where they all are at any time.

The major problem with the format is when the participants forget the listener is there. It is easy to exclude the audience should the participants – if they all know each other – become overly familiar. The presenter’s job – rather than the participants’ job – is to bring the listener along with the programme. It is a skill. It needs to be developed.

Some other exemplary podcasts that combine discussion and entertainment include the Kermode and Mayo Film Review podcast from BBC 5 Live; two guys, a bit of competitive banter and a lot of knowledge. The audience is part of the show through the inclusion of often extremely well-informed comments and opinions emailed from listeners around the globe. Many of the Economist Radio podcasts’ simple formats belie the editorial and informational value of the content.

These are random selections. I would welcome your suggestions at the podcastingfor.com blog.

Forming the production team

There are no rules about the size and roles of the production team. It can be one person, it can be a dozen. The important thing is that

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everyone has a role, they know what they are expected to do and do that.

This book is written for student journalists, so I have spread the net to cover all the possible roles that a student production team might want to fulfil. Many, if not all, of these roles can be combined. While it is great to have a good active team, there are obvious disadvantages to having too many people being involved.

US broadcaster and radio consultant Larry Gifford says “Role definition is vital whether you are doing a radio show or a podcast. You need everyone to know what everyone else is doing. If my job is to book the guest and have the intro and outro music ready to go then that's something the other people don't need to worry about but they need to know what they are expected to do.

“It takes a lot of steps to put together a podcast well. You can put together a podcast ... but it doesn't mean it's going to be a good podcast. So, you need to sort out all the roles so the quality of the podcast is to your expectations and to the listeners' expectations.”

Olly Mann sounds a warning about the ambition you might have. He is talking about potential professional podcasters, but the same applies to a team of volunteers. “I think it’s naive for people to think that on British budgets they can match [the big US productions]. But I think it’s a good thing to get people into making audio and getting excited about audio. There is a lot of work that goes into an episode of Answer Me This which is essentially two people talking. We spend two days a week making that show. As soon as that is twenty people talking to funky soundtrack and an accompanying website, and has a social purpose ... It’s difficult to do.”

But we are talking about a student group; it is likely that there is no budget at all. If money is no object, because there is none, then a talented team can do a great deal. People need to understand how they can contribute.

Here is a list of possible roles for everyone to get involved. Later I will explain the work of the principle players.

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Editor

It would be rare for a single podcast to have an editor. It will depend on your circumstances; if there are too many people to be involved for one podcast series, you may decide to have two or even more. Perhaps you have set up your podcast team to take on all sorts of other support activities such as promotions, community relations and community management, fundraising, advertising and sponsorship. If there are activities beyond the production of the programme, perhaps you should consider having an editor who co-ordinates all the activity but does not get involved in the day to day production.

The Producer

The producer is not “The Boss”. Any producer who has that idea in mind needs to forget it now. The producer should think of themselves as a co-ordinator or facilitator. A good producer will have leadership qualities and will want to help people do better. They will have the ability to get the best from others. The producer will be able to tease out a story, find the links between stories and – this should not be underestimated – a producer is responsible for getting everyone else to meet the deadlines.

The role and the responsibility of the producer will depend on the set-up of your organisation and the skills and experience of the various members of the team.

A programme or podcast produced by committee is destined to fail. As a group, you will have decided the purpose of the podcast. It is the producer’s role to realise that purpose. Everyone else has a unique and important part to play, but the producer will lead the effort.

The producer,

- Has the editorial responsibility for the content.
- Makes the difficult editorial decisions.
- Has the legal responsibility for the podcast and all that is in it.
- Sets the deadlines.
- Has responsibility for the quality standards.
- Agrees the assignments with the rest of the team.
- It is the producer’s job to turn the prospects into the running order covered in Chapter 3.

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A producer can only lead with the permission of the rest of the team and needs to encourage people to get onside. Otherwise they are just some idiot with a clipboard talking to themselves with no content for the next podcast.

The producer is the pivotal member of the team.

Assistant producer

It really depends on the complexity of the podcast production, the frequency of the podcasts, the complexity and seriousness of the reports and stories.

“The more the merrier”, or “many hands make light work” are not always the best slogans for a production team. “Too many cooks ...” springs to mind. It is all too easy to get caught up in job titles and roles and talking about what you are going to do rather than doing it. If your team is big and you want to get lots of people involved, then think about having assistant producers. Make their role clear.

Reporting to the producer, the assistant producer(s) – or AP – can carry out a wide range of jobs like helping the producer directly or working with reporters in the field or back in the production office researching and setting up stories. Social media assistant producers will work on the website, Facebook page, Twitter feed. You really should have someone whose responsibility is to produce a perfect website or blog to host the podcast and extend the conversation. More about blogs and social media in Part 4.

Here are some jobs an assistant producer can do:

With the producer

- Research the podcast that you are all currently working on.
- Research future stories for podcasts.
- Planning production resources.
- Phone calls.
- Managing finance.
- Editing content for final production.
- Editing the final recording and transposing to MP3 format, adding ID3 tags and looking after other technicalities.

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With the reporters

- An AP assigned to a reporter will help with all aspects of producing the story.
- The AP working on an assignment is likely to help with the resources and logistics, recording the interviews, editing audio.
- Back in the studio they will work with the reporter to record the story or package.
- On site (in the field) the AP will make photos and videos, prepare graphics and make note and prepare the website content.

It is up to the producer, assistant producer and reporter to agree what everyone's responsibility is. The objective is to work together, not to get in each other's way.

On the blog or website

At least one person should oversee the website or blog content. It is more usual for a podcast to be part of a blog rather than a website – so from here I will only refer to blogs.

The blog will have all the supporting information for the audio:

- Photos
- Videos
- Maps
- Documents
- Scripts
- Links to further information
- Credits
- Information about supporters or sponsors

It will have a comments section which the web producer will manage. It will link to other social media and promote existing and forthcoming podcasts. blog and other social media will be places where the team can call for help finding out information, asking about stories that need to be covered.

There is more about the blog in Part 4

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The presenter(s)

“There are certain skills that come with being a radio presenter,” says Olly Mann. “Like having a good voice. Which does get lost a bit when you say to people “Yeah, go ahead, make a show. It’s easy just do it,” and you end up with people who probably really shouldn’t be radio presenters, presenting podcasts. It’s great for them – it’s a great outlet for them – but it’s a bit disappointing for me as a listener. I hear someone who has been put there, I suppose, because it was their idea, not because they were the best person to do it. I think some of the production gets let down when people have the opportunity to do anything.”

In the same way that the producer is not the boss, the presenter is not the star. Any potential presenter displaying any “star” tendencies should be dropped post-haste. The presenter is the connection between the content of the podcast or the community radio programme and the audience.

As part of your preparation planning your podcast series and consideration of the purpose, you will have thought about who your audience is. The presenter is the best person – or people – to connect with that audience. The presenter is not apart from but with the audience.

Picture this. The microphone is 6 to 12 inches (15 – 20 cm) from the presenter's mouth. If the listener is in a car, the speakers will only be a few feet away, if the listener is wearing headphones, the presenter is right there in the listener's head space. No need to shout, no need to over announce. All the presenter needs to do is talk. Talk warmly, clearly and smile, just a little.

A good presenter will have a certain spark. It is unlikely that they will be shrinking violets, but neither will they be bombastic. The presenter is not an announcer or proclaimer or town crier. The presenter talks to the audience the same way, with the same voice, with the same tone and vocabulary that they talk to their closest friends. The presenter's job is to guide the listener through the podcast or programme, and entice them to return for more at another time.

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BBC News Channel anchor Maxine Mawhinney has had 40 years reporting for radio, television and newspapers. You can hear some great advice from her about being a presenter on the Podcasting For ... blog [<http://wp.me/p7UXLW-5I>]

Larry Gifford again “I think sometimes we forget the listener has expectations of us as well. They are giving quality time out of their life to you. So, it's our responsibility as content creators, to make sure what we are providing them is worth the time they are giving. “

It is not uncommon to have two presenters in a radio programme or a podcast. Rarely are there more. Where there are two or more the roles need to be clear. Later we will discuss those roles.

Let's start by describing the role of the presenter in a single presenter podcast or community radio programme.

The presenter holds it all together. Podcasts by their very nature are recorded, but if everything falls apart, you can stop recording and fix things. In a live situation, the presenter is ready for anything and everything to go wrong.

The presenter is the voice of the podcast talking directly to the listener. It is you, the presenter and you, the listener, and you are in a conversation. It has the intimacy of a telephone call where the presenter is telling the story and inviting the listener to join in. Obviously, the presenter and listener in a podcast can't get involved in a conversation there and then. A podcast constructed properly, with opportunities for the listener to participate through comments sections or social media, will open the lines of communication for the listener. In a live community radio programme, there may be the additional option for the listener to call in by phone.

The presenter links the content, does interviews, invites, involves and talks directly to the listener.

A good presenter makes it all sound so easy. A great presenter makes it all sound like they aren't even bothering to present.

The presenter:

- Is the public face of the podcast.

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- Is the strongest possible link with the listener.
- Is an important reason why people return to hear more podcasts.
- Builds relationships with everyone involved, including the listener.
- Will write the final script, in their own words and their own style.
- Will do the “in studio” interviews on behalf of the listener asking the questions the listeners would ask.
- Is persistent in getting answers.

Do you know how pearls are made? A single grain of sand gets under the oyster's shell. And it irritates just enough for the oyster to produce the nacre substance to cover the irritating sand. This eventually forms the pearl.

At times, as chief inquisitor for the podcast, the presenter is like a grain of sand caught between an oyster's shell and flesh. Now just to get this point straight, the suggestion is not that the presenter should be irritating, but I am suggesting that in an interview, a presenter should have the same persistence in getting answers to the questions they are asking. Turning the sand into a pearl. More about that in interview techniques later.

The presenter writes the script. In Chapter 4, we will spend more time getting into how to write a script. But for now, let's look at how the presenter turns the different parts of the podcast together.

As the various elements of the podcast are coming together, the presenter will begin to write the final script. Along with the producer, the presenter should listen to any of the pre-recorded parts of the podcast.

A two-presenter show

Before you decide to have a “double-header” podcast or community radio programme, ask yourself “Why?” You should make the decision on production and listener needs, not because it's convenient for you as the producer or editor.

If the podcast or radio programme has two presenters, they need to be careful to remember that it is not their job to chat with each other to

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the exclusion of the audience. It is their job to talk to the listener. Think of three friends having coffee. It is just bad manner for two to hog the conversation to the exclusion of the other. In the same way, a radio programme and podcast should not be about two presenters talking to each other. There are some excellent double-headed programmes where the presenters barely talk to each other at all. If you are one of two in a double-headed show, find a balance. If you are producing a double-header, make sure you are playing the part of the listener and help the presenters find the balance that they talk to each other but bring you into the conversation.

Make sure the voices are distinctively different. Your listener will want to invest in a relationship with the presenter or presenters. Two similar voices will be confusing. I have listened to podcasts (from the USA) where both presenters sounded to me as if they had the same accents, the same tone, the same humour. I stopped listening, confused and a little frustrated.

The presenters do not have to male and female, but if they are the same gender, make sure they are suitably different.

Reporter(s)

The presenter and reporter might well be the same person. You might not have any reporter. There are so many different types of podcast, reporters might not be part of your plan. If they are, these are some of the things they might do.

- Produce packages.
- Carry out pre-recorded interviews on site or in the studio.
- Produce vox-pops.
- Be a specialist interviewer in the studio as another presenter.
- The “expert” or pundit; reporting on what has happened or speculating on what might happen.
- Bring their reporting expertise and research skills into a discussion.

The package

Of all the pieces a reporter will produce, aside from a full documentary, the package is probably the most complicated. The level

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of complexity will depend on time and resources. The important element is the story.

The package falls very broadly into two general categories:

- The story told by the reporter with recorded quotations or “inserts” and other sounds used to illustrate that story. There will be more of the reporter’s voice than anyone else’s. It is more akin to a newspaper or magazine piece with quotations.
- The story is told by the people interviewed and the reporter links the interviews and other sounds together. It is even possible that the reporter’s voice does not appear at all, but one or two central voices tell the story. This is probably the most difficult way to make a package.

A package will have many elements including several voices, actuality (sound recorded on location), music, poetry, sound effects ... whatever is needed to tell the story. Great reporters will not only find and tell the story, they will also use sound to build a picture.

On site interview

There are many reasons to record an interview on site. Sometimes it’s just because the interviewee can’t make it to the studio at a time that suits everyone. More often, though, it is to add another additional layer of audio to the podcast. If you can, you should always try to add variety to the sounds in the podcast and in the report. Location recording gives the reporter the chance to add new atmospheres. Whether you are recording outdoors or in a room, the additional ambience adds another quality to the listening experience. There are several issues to consider when recording outside which I talk about in the Record section of this book.

The “in studio” interview

Often, the best person to do the “in studio” is the presenter. There are a few reasons why a separate interviewer should be involved. The additional presenter may be a specialist in the subject being discussed.

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You will often hear radio programmes that cover a wide range of subjects using specialists in sport or economics or education to present a section or segment and include a studio interview there.

The “expert” reporter

Perhaps one of your team has a great story to tell. They have done the research, looked at many sides of the argument, has gathered advice and opinion from other experts on and off the record. In this case, the reporter comes into the studio to be interviewed by the presenter. This tends to happen more often if there is a matter of urgency, a story is only just emerging or expected to happen and there are no other options. It can also happen when a reporter has specialised in a subject like finance, crime, social affairs or employment issues and in addition to being a reporter, has become a “go to” expert.

The researched discussion

This is an extension of the expert reporter where a group of people including “experts” and “reporter” come into a studio – it can be on site as well – to discuss a topic. Again, the “reporter” is normally expected to be neutral but if required will take an opposing view representing a range of other opinions. This is not bias, it is attempting to achieve balance.

The vox-popper and eye witness

Vox-pop or vox populi is Latin for “voice of the people”. For us in podcasting or broadcasting it is the voice and opinion or story of the person on the street. When big stories come along, particularly stories that will affect the public, the reporter goes onto the street to get the reaction of “ordinary people”. Sometimes all the listener discovers is how poorly informed members of the public are.

It is different to eyewitness account (more below in the Interview section). Vox-pops are the opinions or stories from people.

There is an art to the vox-pop. Done well they can be interesting and informative. It is best if you plan first, think about the right people to ask, go to the right place to find them and ask intelligent questions. It

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is best not to just stop half a dozen people at random and ask them a question and splice together the answer.

Go to where the subject matter has meaning and talk to people who are likely to have stories to tell – not just opinions. With the rise of social media, especially Twitter and Facebook, the opinions of the uninformed and well-informed stand side by side. Use your vox-pops to get stories from real people on real subjects that they know, understand, or have experienced. For example, when the musician Lemmy from the rock band Motorhead died, a reporter had the wit to go to the bar where Lemmy used to go to drink and play the slots machines. The short vox-pop mixed with Motorhead’s music was an excellent example of what you can get if you put thought into the report.

So many roles – so many ways to carry them out.

The reporter is an explainer, a teller of tales, a presenter of facts. They are often also a presenter, sometimes a generalist, sometimes a specialist. They go into the field and find stories. They challenge authority and ask for explanations. In a community podcast, they have a really important job to play.

Researchers

A researcher might also be an assistant producer. The researcher will dig up the facts of the story, find telephone numbers, and research the right people for interview. Researchers might also find or make photos and videos to be used on the blog, or identify the music for the show. A researcher might be completely dedicated to reviewing all the stats and presenting a regular analysis of the podcast performance.

The sound engineer or sound recordist

It is a real luxury if you have one person devoted to understanding how the sound will be recorded and mixed. A sound engineer, sound supervisor, sound recordist will bring expertise on how to use audio recorder, record the final programme, mix, edit and get the best from sounds off all sorts that you need to make a great podcast. With the producers and reporter, they can experiment in developing a unique sound for your podcast. Even if you do not plan to use a studio at any

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time, one person making sure the sound is right will be a great boon to you podcast.

Runners

Runners are the junior members of the team. They help with the photocopying, compiling scripts, getting people to and from the studio, tracking down telephone numbers and any other emergencies you need to deal with.

Music specialists

You just can't take any piece of music and add it to your podcast. I go into some detail on this and other copyright issues in Part 5. Your music specialist might research the music you are going to use, find the right atmospheric piece or even compose and play original music. If you are lucky they will compose and perform the music. A music specialist is a real luxury to have.

Blog producer, social media and online community producer

Later in the book I spend more time describing the role of the people who will develop and manage the online content and especially how to manage an online community.

Everyone should have a job and a clear idea of what they are expected to achieve. Realistically, there may well be just two or three of you. These are still the roles that need to be fulfilled.

Of course, you can also have deputy editor(s), assistant editor(s), chief assistants, editorial leads, departmental heads. If you find you are going in that direction, rip up the plans and start again. Because

... It's all about the story.

The ideal team?

There is no such thing. The essential jobs are the

- producer
- presenter

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- sound specialist

That might be you, doing all three.

How you organise your team is up to you. Whether it is hierarchical, flat, networked or some other organisational arrangement, the important thing is everyone one needs to know the part they play.

It is important people support each other. You will all be learning. You might have some people expert in different aspects of the production. In the end, everyone will be learning a lot or a little with every production.

Remember, no matter what you know, someone will be able to add to your knowledge. As a team leader and as team member, the most important skill is listening. Listen to your team, listen to your podcast and never forget to listen to your listener.

Chapter 3: Planning, prospects and running order

In a nutshell: A final podcast will have a running order which communicates to everyone involved what is planned and what is happening. The running order starts out as the prospects, a list of possible stories owned by the producer which also keeps everyone informed about the progress of the show's production.

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“Where do you get the ideas for your podcasts?”

Throughout this book, I am taking a slightly complex podcast production as an example. Your podcast might be different. In my example, the podcast I describe has several stories and each story is treated slightly differently in each episode. Sometimes the story will be a package, sometimes an interview on site, or a discussion in a studio. Overall, I am describing what in radio terms would be called a magazine or current affairs programme. That is one broad theme and many stories around the theme. A theme might be education or business or news. Yours might simply be about your college, town or community.

As I describe in the introduction, there are many different types of podcast. Some people chose to be one person podcasters. They take a subject they are interested in talking about or exploring and learning with the listener. Perhaps they want to interview people from other countries living in their city. Maybe the podcast is just you and a friend and once a week you record reviews of the week's movie releases, films to be shown on TV, showbiz gossip. While I was working with students in Dublin in 2016, they came up with a great idea. “Trending in Dublin” was about social media, phone apps, fashion, and entertainment in the city. It was amusing, fun, irreverent and perfect for people in their early 20s to make and to listen to. The age group of the people who made the podcast, were exactly the people who would be listening to it.

As I write this book, I have in mind a group of people who are passionate about their community and want to cover stories that impact on the people around them. The audience will be at the centre of the production process. You will be considering the audience from the moment you begin to list the prospective stories for the podcast.

The prospects

Regardless of whether you are a solo podcaster, a double act, a group, or another arrangement, you are at some point going to say, “What's going to be in the next podcast?”

Whether you cover one item per podcast or chose a magazine style (and if there are a group of you), you are going to start listing the stories you want to cover and the way you want to treat each story.

- What's the story?
- What's the angle?
- What's the treatment?

Will you produce a package report, interview on site, “expert reporter” in the studio, write/read piece, discussion out of the studio, discussion in the studio? Oh, there are lots more.

You will begin to list the stories, the people to be involved, the reporter, producers, interviewees, the treatment, then the duration and deadlines. You will list the “must have” stories and the “wish list”, too.

All together are called the prospects. In due course the prospects become the running order. Both are a communications tool for everyone involved in making the podcast.

Even at this early stage, you might well want to publish the prospects on your blog for the audience to read as you are going through the production process. The audience might even be able to help with possible interviewees or additional information.

Following is an example of what the prospects might look like. Usually they will be on a whiteboard where everyone can see them. But at the very least they should be posted on a sheet of paper on a

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wall, not emailed around. It is essential people working on the podcast can see the changes. And there will be changes.

On the next two pages are examples of how the prospects might look – one for a radio show, the other for a podcast. It is entirely up to the producer to decide what the prospects will include. This is simply an example.

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Prospects for a radio programme

Name of programme _____					
Programme number _____			Date of recording/live transmission _____		
Producer _____			Presenter(s) _____ _____		Duration
Story	Format	Reporter Producer	Deadline	Duration	Notes
#1 Title	Live I/V	Presenter	date	4.00	In studio
#2 Title	Package	JD KLM	date	3.45	currently editing
#3 Title	Pre-rec I/V	NM KLM	date	3.00	Recording Mon 14:00
#4 Title	3-way	???	date	7.30	All studio
#5	phoner	TG	date	3:00	

Prospects for a podcast episode

Name of Podcast:				
Episode number: Episode title:		Recording date:		
Producer _____ Presenter(s) _____ Guests _____ _____			Expected duration	
Story/topic	Reporter Producer	Expected Duration	Confirmed	Notes
#1				
#2				
#3				
#4				
#5				
#6				
#7				

*Live I/V – live interview**Pre-rec I/V – pre-recorded interview**3-way – presenter and two guests**Phoner – live phone call (pre-rec phoner – pre-recorded phone call)*

It is important for everyone to know what the proposed duration consists of. If 4:00 minutes the duration of the recording or discussion, or does it include the introductory script (the cue) and any back announcements?

Plan for your presenter to present

In the running order, you are going to include introduction to the show and any closing script. You will also need to consider giving the presenter time to be a presenter – not just read scripts.

I once worked on a live daily programme which was only 45 minutes long. In the first few weeks of taking over the programme as producer, I could not understand why every day we almost over-ran or had to cut out of reports early. At the end of the second week I realised that I was not giving the presenter enough breathing space (literally and metaphorically). Everything was tightly timed, everything was running to the second. The presenter wasn't getting enough time to do what she was there to do --- to present. I was only giving her enough time to read. There is a big difference. Remember when you are setting out the timings, you need to let your presenter to present.

Dropouts and durations

During the production, right up to recording, it is not unusual for new stories to come along. Neither is it unusual for other stories to be dropped because they can't be "stood up", or they weren't as interesting as expected.

While radio programmes by and large fit into a pre-determined time segment, a podcast does not. If you normally record a 30-minute podcast, and one week you have 40 minutes of good material, then let the podcast run 40 minutes. If you are short, then run short. Time is

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less important, but not unimportant. Make sure the content is good. Does that extra 10 minutes earn its place on the running order?

Don't let the flexible duration be an excuse not to edit out the material that needs to go. How will you pace the programme and how can you manage that pace? If that extra item or story can be used anytime in the future, keep it. You will sometimes be glad to have something on standby to use when there are fewer stories around.

Some producers who make a podcast regularly once a week, will mid-week produce a short promotional podcast for subscribers. The podcast should itself be useful. For example, Monocle's podcast The Foreign Desk usually releases a three-minute promotional episode mid-week called The Explainer which takes one topic of current interest and explains the background to the story, and then it promotes what is coming up in the next full podcast. It is often a simple write/read, perhaps some sound illustrations. It is worth listening to as a standalone, but also a clever way to promote the main podcast to be released a few days later.

Holidays are awkward. You will want to take a break. Should your podcast? Consider a "best of" once or twice a year. If you have been making podcasts for a long time, maybe something from the archive updated if it is still relevant. Or a "special" recorded anytime and available for holiday time or just when there are no or not enough stories. These thoughts might not be part of "the prospects" but they should form part of the planning.

The producer is the owner of the prospects. While it will be a joint effort among everyone involved in the production to come up with the ideas, a programme or podcast cannot be produced by committee. The producer's main job comes into play at this point:

- Lead the discussion on the prospects.
- Make final decisions.
- Give out the assignments.
- Support everyone else involved to achieve their goals and meet the deadlines.

About this time, also, that the rest of the group begin to see if the producer is up to the job. Calm heads, determination to get the job

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done, empathetic but strong leadership, and a clear idea of the map ahead.

Panicky, divisive, disorganised, indecisive are all qualities that producers should not have.

The running order

The producer will transform the prospects into the running order, an ever-changing list of content for the programme or podcast. The only static running order is one that is the record of what happened, not what's expected to happen.

In a live radio programme, there are likely to be surprises that will dictate the way the show will work. The running order might be static for days and change moments before going live, it might even change several times during the programme. A podcast, by its very nature is a pre-recorded programme. But even during a recording, you need to be aware that something unplanned might happen in the studio. Perhaps an interviewee reveals something you were not expecting that deserves further exploration. Your presenter will need to ask follow-up questions and that will need additional time. Perhaps as you are recording, something happens on your patch that really needs to be reported urgently, or means that one of your stories needs to be dropped.

The running order represents the current plan. Expect the plan to change at any moment, for any reason and accommodate that change. Chances are it will improve the programme. It is, if nothing else, more exciting.

Below is an example of the running order based in part on the earlier prospects. You can get examples of running orders and other forms and paper work at www.podcastingfor.com/

RUNNING ORDER

Title:

Episode number

Record date:

Publication date:

#	Source	Story/Item	Duration	Overall Timing	Notes
1	Studio	Intro over sig tune	0.30	0.30	
2	Insert Package	Plans for demonstration suspended	3.30	4.00	
3	Phoner	Student Spokesperson (Mary McManus from the NUS)	3.00	7.00	Arriving in studio at 2:45pm
4	3-way	Disco – Brian Jones, lecturer, Dan Turner Head of Arts Dept	5.00	12.00	

The script

Each item will have a script (cue in and back announcement) and everyone working on the recording of the podcast should have a copy of the scripts and running order. Like the running order and the prospects, the script is a communications tool to help everyone know where you are in the programme. It (or a version of it) will be used on the website, too. If you are in a studio, the sound engineer (or whatever title you give the person in charge of recording and mixing the sound) needs a copy as does the producer, the studio director (usually, but not always the producer), each of the presenters and if someone is acting as a “runner” getting people to and from the studio, they will need a copy of the scripts and running order.

And the script is how the presenter helps the listener navigate the programme.

The final script will probably be written by the presenter in their own “voice”, but it will be prepared by the reporter or producer who is working on the relevant story.

For clarity, all scripts should follow the same format (there is an example below). It is normal these days for scripts to be read off a screen. That’s fine if everyone can move quickly between stories if there is an unexpected change in the running order. If you are using printed scripts, the pages should be loose, not stapled together. This is important, because whether it is a live radio programme or the recording of a podcast, the running order should be flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances. If someone fails to turn up, or arrives late, if a story is dropped, if at the last minute, a story is added or a piece of equipment fails, you need to move easily to a different story.

Make sure each story as a different title and running order number. Both of the following scripts could have the title “Student Demonstration”, but they shouldn’t.

EXAMPLE SCRIPT 1

#2 Plans for demonstration suspended

Jenna:

A demonstration by students and lecturers opposed to cuts by the Department of Education has been called off following an agreement between the National Union of Students, the Association of University Teachers and the department.

Earlier today at a meeting in London representatives of the three bodies agreed that government proposals would be reviewed and a new strategy to reduce costs would be agreed before implementation.

Michael – who was waiting outside the meeting sent us this report

[INSERT – PLANS FOR DEMONSTRATION
SUSPENDED]

IN: [SFX – general city and traffic noise “I’m standing outside ...

OUT: “. . . but that is for others to answer.”

DURATION 3’.30”

LAST VOICE: [Michael]

EXAMPLE SCRIPT 2

#3 – Student Spokesperson

Jenna:

Earlier today the Department of Education met with representative organisations for Students and Lecturers and agreed to suspend proposed education cuts.

The National Union of Students and the Association of University Teachers had been planning demonstrations beginning tomorrow. These have now been called off.

On the line, Mary McManus from the NUS

[2-WAY JENNA AND MARY]

- Unexpected turn?
- How far had the plans for the protest come?
- What is the offer from the Department?
- What will happen now?
- Was it a failure by the NUS and AUT to anticipate this?
- specific action to be taken now?

EXPECTED OUT: Thank you

EXPECTED DUR: 3'.00"

[Notes: Mary's number 0777777777. Backup number 08888888 Mary has our number too. She will find a quiet spot to talk to us. Possible atmos]

There is a skill to writing a script. It is not like writing a book or writing a business report or an essay for school. It is not like writing for a magazine or a newspaper. Writing a script is different. Sometimes it requires re-learning how to write, especially for people who write for a living.

Even these days on professional radio I can hear people reading a script at me. You can hear it in a voice, an intonation, the vocabulary and sentence construction. You can hear it in the reader's breathing and their unnatural intensity.

The first rule for reading a script? Don't let the script get between you and the listener.

Over the years there have been many changes to how scripts are written and how they are read. Once it was formal. Listen to very old BBC archive programmes. As broadcasting became less formal sometimes producers would complain that a presenter would fail to "lift the script from the page", when in fact, the script was badly written (sometimes by the producer).

We are largely in a post-formal communications era. From prime minister and president to podcast presenter and news reader, we and they seek "authenticity".

Your own accent is important, keep it. The way you naturally form your sentences (providing your speech is clear and grammar good) is important, keep it.

Write your script as you speak and read your script as you speak. That – in summary – is what we are going to talk about next.

Part 2 - Essential Skills

Podcasting and radio production require five essential skills: writing to read, reading as speaking, interviewing, recording and editing. As a podcaster, you should aim to be proficient at all of them. Whether you are a producer, presenter or reporter you need to be able to do at least one of them:

- **Write** a script which will be read aloud by you or someone else.
- **Read** a script in a way that the listener is given the impression you are talking naturally and directly to them.
- **Interview** people and understand not just how to ask questions and listen to answers, but how to handle the equipment correctly.
- **Record** an interview to broadcast standard ensuring correct recording levels and management of background noise and interruptions.
- **Edit** the final recording retaining the editorial integrity and natural flow of the conversation and create a final piece which sounds like a natural question and answer session and to write and edit supporting documents like cues in and out and show notes.

By “editorial integrity”, I mean not changing the meaning of what someone has said.

Once you have mastered these five essential skills, you will spend the rest of your career improving and perfecting them as well as beginning to learn about ethics, legal issues, decency and truthfulness – among very many other things.

Right now, these are the five you need to get to grips with.

Chapter 4: Writing

In a nutshell: There is a special skill to writing to read aloud. You begin by forgetting just about everything you have ever learned about formal writing at school and in business. A radio script is different. All other styles of writing are of no use to you.

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

Once, writing for radio was just as formal as any other. It was cold and without personality or character. There were some very notable exceptions – the great master was Alistair Cook in his programme Letter from America. Every one of those programmes is now available on the BBC website. Listen to some to hear how he wrote as he spoke. Listening, you are left with the impression you are the only person he is talking to.

The change to a more conversational, warmer style, allowing for the reader's personality to show has been the trend for many years. Even now, though, people who are asked to write a script for the first time are still likely to write something which reads more as a school essay than a conversation. Interestingly, the trend to be less formal and more conversational is now reaching some newspapers which in the past have taken a more conventional approach in their writing. Magazines and websites have become "chatty". The formality of news writing is less prominent than it once was. Readers are expecting a more conversational style.

Writing and reading are complimentary activities. To read well, first you need to write well. To write well you need to practice:

- write,
- read,
- record,
- listen,
- think,
- repeat

Podcaster and radio consultant Larry Gifford spoke to me from his studio in Canada. "I am a big proponent of writing. I think it is one of the lost arts of radio. I write a lot. I'm a news guy, so I'm used to writing my own script and reading my own stuff.

"With the podcast, I write enough so I can ad-lib and tell some stories but I've got a really distinct path I want to take. I will go extemporaneous but most of what I will do is well thought out and I have learned over time and through a lot of practice, how to write for my voice."

Once upon a time, in the dark and distant past when I was first being trained to read as a radio presenter, I was told to find the important words in a sentence and punch them out. But that is not how people speak naturally. Some reporters on television still use that convention. Some reporters on radio do, too. For them, it is likely to be part of the "sound" that the radio station wants to maintain or the presentational style the TV programme wants.

If you are writing for yourself, write what you are comfortable with. Let's try that sentence "properly". "If you are writing for yourself, write that with which you are comfortable." Hardly ... One was the "correct" way – the other the right way.

If you are writing for someone else, try to hear in your mind's ear, how they talk and find the words and phraseology they would use.

If you are reading someone else's script, change it to suit your style.

Don't be afraid to write "You'll" rather than "You will" or "I'll" and "I'm".

It is not an excuse to be sloppy. Make sure when you use "less" you don't mean "fewer", for example. Grammar is still important, and the right word is still important, but if you must contort a sentence so that it does not end with a preposition, go for the conversational rather than the pedantic.

There is a danger to writing as is spoken. You tend to see it in social media now that everyone can share every thought on impulse. If you are writing or checking someone's script, be aware of entirely the

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wrong word being used in place of a word that sounds a little similar. Some people write “should of” rather than “should have” or “should’ve”.

And there is a lot of “off of” instead of “of” about these days.

A note about “time”

Before you use words like “yesterday”, “today”, “tomorrow”, “this morning”, “last night”, “later today”, in your script website or podcast, think for a moment. Will the listener be hearing your show immediately after recording? Unlikely. So, “today” for you could be last week or last year to the person listening. On the internet, whether writing for a website or recording audio for a podcast, a reader or listener chooses when they are going to read or listen. You are not making a scheduled programme or writing a daily newspaper. If you say, “And you can get the result tomorrow”, for some listeners, your tomorrow has already happened.

An exception is when “later” or “before” is relevant to the conversation. Here are a few examples. You are interviewing someone about something they have done or are going to do.

- “You will be doing that later today, after this interview” is OK.
- “She arrived back in the country late last night, but is here now to talk to us” is OK
- “What age are you now?” is OK
- Referring back to the interview with, “You can see that one day event in the leisure centre tomorrow.” is NOT OK.

Yet, it all gets a bit weird if you start giving specific dates and times. “And you can find out about that on Tuesday 23 June at 4:45pm” instead of “tomorrow afternoon”.

How you refer to time can be awkward. Think about your listener. They might not occupy the same space and time as you. What is the best way to indicate what is “tomorrow” for you and “sometime in the past” for them?

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Writing and reading you’ve always done that.

Writing to read and reading what has been written are so closely related, it is probably best to cover them together. So, the physical act of reading (preparation, how to sit, how to breathe and so on) are covered in the Reading section.

Your writing objectives are simple.

- You want to write “conversationally”.
- You want to read so that anyone listening will feel that you are talking to them, not reading a script.
- You might be a natural – perhaps you have written to be read aloud all your life and never realised.

Most likely you will need to practice.

As you deliver your script clarity is important. Someone reading a newspaper or a magazine can easily go back over a sentence or paragraph and re-read it. A listener can’t rewind a live radio programme. Depending on the device the listener is using for a podcast they can flip back 10 seconds at a time, although you really would not want that to happen.

You must get it right first time. And (careful here ...) while you want to keep the word count low, you might need to summarise more and even repeat yourself a little from time to time.

An exercise in writing and speaking

First, you need to know what you want to say. Do you know what you want to say? Good. Then, imagine one person who you want to talk to. Next, sit down at your computer, word processor, notebook – whatever you use - and start to talk ... not write, talk. As you talk to that person, write what you are saying. Let the spoken word lead, and your fingers follow. Try this; begin by saying “Did you hear about ...?” Then start writing exactly the way you would normally tell the story to your friend.

This is what the spoken word does:

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- It uses shorter sentences than the written word.
- It creates places to take a breath.
- It ends sentences with prepositions – tut, tut (as Winston Churchill may or may not have said “Not ending a sentence with a preposition is a bit of arrant pedantry up with which I will not put.”)
- It even splits infinitives – but you should probably avoid that.

Do beware though, when we are speaking, sometimes we construct our sentences radically differently. Now you have written it – read it out loud. Read it to someone, or at least record it and listen back.

You are trying your best to keep the message as clear and as uncluttered as possible, to make what you say uncomplicated and easy to follow.

Is that the way you talk to people? You don’t want to sound as if you are reading a script, do you? Then put the script down, and talk to that person. Did the write/read and the spoken read sound pretty much the same?

Go over it again. Is there a long sentence? Can you split it into two or even three sentences? Are there words there that you don’t need? Are there words there that you never use when you are speaking?

Let’s edit that paragraph. Cut out words you don’t need. Maybe add some for clarity’s sake.

Record what you have written and listen back.

When Larry Gifford was starting out, he wanted to learn from people who sounded as if they were talking naturally, but were actually reading a script. He considered which broadcasters do this well and who could he learn from? Surprisingly it wasn’t other radio presenters. It was late night TV comedians.

"They come out and give this monologue every night and it's scripted but I feel like it's off the cuff. So, I studied the guys that do this. It's about certainty and confidence in where you are going and what you are going to say. You have to believe what you are saying is important." says Larry.

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Here’s a refrain I often hear: “I don’t like the sound of my voice.”

Well, that’s your voice. That is (more or less) how people hear you and have always heard you. In recent years, I have been amused and bemused by the number of people who say, “I hate the sound of my voice”, yet if I were to invite them to take a “selfie” and put it on SnapChat or Facebook, there is no stopping them.

“I didn’t think I sounded like that.” To others, you do. You hear yourself speak differently because of where your ears are, more precisely your ear drums. They are inside your head. When you hear yourself, you hear the feedback from your jaw, the sound of your voice in your head and all the working parts that make that sound.

Then some people when they hear their voice played back from a recording, realise for the first time they have an accent. Hurrah. We all do. Long gone are the days when people had to speak like the Queen of England to be on the radio. It’s worth listening to the Queen now and an archive recording from 40 years ago. Even she doesn’t sound like that now.

Accents are wonderful, accents are colour, accents are to be celebrated and enjoyed.

Lyse Doucet is the BBC's multi-award winning Chief International Correspondent. She has one of the most interesting accents on radio. On the Radio 4 programme One to One in February 2016, she talked about her voice to Jan Ravens, the Dead Ringers actress who often impersonates Lyse and many other famous women.

"Your voice, your accent is as much a part of your personality as the colour of your face, as your name and you can't over estimate when you say it's a personal insult when people say your accent is wrong."
[<http://bbc.in/1U3rZLZ>]

News presenter and journalist Maxine Mawhinney told me that when she is training her television students she gets them to concentrate on their voice. “When I get them to do something I don’t let them watch it the first time through, I make them listen to it. Because if you watch and listen to yourself at the same time, you get all carried away with how you look. I don’t let them see it, I let them listen to it and they

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can hear the delivery style which is different to the voice; you've got the voice and then the way you use it. Are you breathing properly? Are you keeping a good melody which is in tune with the story that you are doing, which comes back to tone? And, are you doing anything silly like lip-smacking all the time? And then I show it to them."

Here are a few tips from me:

- Do not put on a "posh" voice – it will sound false and everything you say will sound false.
- Speak clearly – don't mumble. People won't particularly notice your accent, but they will not hear much if you are mumbling.
- A "sing-song" delivery is as bad as mumbling. Most people talk just the way everyone else does. In real life people don't usually have a sing-song voice, although I have worked with one or two who are naturally sing-songy. Interestingly, they were clergy used to speaking from a pulpit.
- Slow down. Most of us speak too quickly and run our words together. Don't make a big deal of it. Just slow down a little and ask your colleagues for feedback.
- Smile. Seriously, just smile a little – don't grin like a fool, but a little smile in your voice will make your voice and personality sound warmer.
- Imagine one person and talk to them. Is this how you would talk to your mum or dad? Your son or daughter, your best friend over a cup of coffee? Don't think of a child or pet animal – you talk to them differently. Think of a good friend or a relative you get along with. That is your listener.

Altogether, that's called speaking, that's all. You have done it all your life. You talk and people listen. There's not much more to it than that. But there is. Look at the running order and prospects further on in this book. They are "stories". Presenting is about storytelling. There is a pinch of performance in presenting. Most presenters "turn it on" a little.

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"Sometimes," says Larry Gifford. "It's not about the words it's about the performance aspect. The intonation, pace, cadence are all important to each person's unique voice."

Chapter 5: Reading

In a nutshell: “Really? How to read? I know how to read, I’m reading what you have written now.” No, it’s not that sort of reading – or writing. It is all about reading aloud and not sounding like you are reading.

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

In Chapter 4 “Writing” I talked about writing to read then reading that aloud and making it sound as natural as possible. You write by speaking and letting your fingers follow what you are saying as they write your script. Both this and the previous chapter are two parts of the same act. Writing and reading aloud; both are interdependent skills.

Write and test out loud

If you are reading your own script, test it out. Once it is written, read it aloud and mark it up (I’ll explain that shortly). If you are writing the script for someone else to read, try to find their voice in your imagination. If you don’t know who will be reading the script, just write it for yourself.

Keep in mind, it is always possible that the person who will eventually read the script in the podcast or live on air, might not have chance to rehearse beforehand. Do your best to make it as reader friendly as possible. Never submit an unchecked and un-proofed script. I am a great believer in “a second pair of eyes”. You write; someone else reviews. If there is not a “someone else”, take a break, leave the script aside even for 10 minutes and come back to it with a fresh view. Read it aloud. (*Unfortunately, there has not been a second pair of eyes checking this book – hence the typos you have found and I have missed.*)

Names, foreign words and phonetics

If you are unsure of a name or a foreign word or even an unfamiliar English word, always enquire about the pronunciation. If it is a city or the name of someone from a different country it’s best, if you can ask the person named or check with someone who knows the city or country. You are looking if possible for first-hand knowledge.

If there is a foreign pronunciation in the script you are writing, try to provide a phonetic spelling to help the presenter particularly if they are not going to have time to review the script before reading. Sometimes there are subtly different ways of pronouncing the name. My favourite city in the world is Ljubljana in Slovenia. I pronounce it Lioobli-ana. But I have heard locals call it Loo-BL’Ana.

While we are on the subject of Slovene names and pronunciation, this is part of the toughest script I have ever had to read. It is from the English language tour of Bled Castle in Slovenia.

“Bled Rowing Club has produced several world-class rowers and Olympic Games medallists, including Iztok Čop, Luka Špik, Sadik Mujkič, Jani Klemenčič, Denis Žvegelj, Bojan Prešeren and Milan Janša.” Should you ever visit Bled Castle, track down the audio and hear how I managed.

When unsure “be confident”

If you are reading a script someone else has written, with luck, it should be just the way you want to speak it. If you have time you should always rehearse (aloud), re-write or at the very least mark it up to suit your style. If you are handed a script at the last moment, try to scan it for words you are going to have difficulty with. If you have time, check, if you can’t back to that advice; “be confident”.

Maxine Mawhinney: “People get really worried about their voice. Most people say, “I hate my voice”. Well, get over it, it’s your voice so if you want to use it there are various ways you can practice. You can have the best information in the world and ruin it by bad delivery and you can make really rubbish information sound fabulous with great delivery.”

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*There's more advice from Maxine on the Podcasting For ... blog
[<http://wp.me/p7UXLW-5I>]*

"Marking up" a script

Many years ago, I was taught to mark-up a script by finding the important words in a sentence and punching them out for clarity and comprehension. I still hear that style being used by some broadcasters even though it is no longer the modern way of presenting. If I were to do that to this paragraph, this is how a marked-up script would look.

Many years ago, I was taught to mark-up a script by finding the important words in a sentence and punching them out for clarity and comprehension. If I were to do that to this paragraph, this is how a marked-up script would look.

Times have changed, thank goodness. You are having a conversation or talking to the listener, not pitching a used car sale. A fellow producer once said of a presenter we worked with "He always makes it sound as if it is my fault."

Marking up a script is different now. Find the key words that help you speak in a normal tone of voice. How you will mark up the paragraph will be for you to decide. For me it would look like this.

Many years ago, I was taught to mark up a script by finding the important words in a sentence --- and punching them out for clarity / and comprehension. If I were to do that to this paragraph, this is how a marked-up script / would look.

The marking now emphasises the natural rhythm of the delivery, pauses, places to breathe.

Remember: Some people naturally drop their voices at the end of a sentence. If you are reading or adlibbing, do not drop your voice. It can be very frustrating for the listener. For some people, this is a natural thing to do in a normal conversation but it is difficult to hear a voice dropped low in normal radio circumstances. And normal circumstances for a listener are often driving in a car, with distracting noise around them, in a kitchen with all the kitchen equipment humming and whining and gurgling, running with headphones on thinking about the day ahead and half listening to what you are saying.

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If you drop your voice – what you are saying will be lost. Do it too often and people will stop listening.

If the script has a long quotation from a formal paper – say, a police or academic report – and you cannot re-write the script in your own voice, then marking-up becomes all the more important to aid clarity. A few words or a sentence might not matter very much, but a longer read may need a more savage and thorough mark-up.

Remember to breathe.

Most spoken word radio is made sitting down in front of a desk sometimes reading a script, sometimes adlibbing. Yet the best way to read is standing up. Many TV and radio studios have been adapted as places where the presenter stands. So perhaps you will be more comfortable standing. It's easier to breathe, and to establish a natural rhythm.

A few other tips on reading and behaving in the studio

In the studio, you use your mouth exclusively for talking.

- Water. Have a bottle or two of water to hand. Keep the cap on when you are not using them. Avoid glasses or paper cups of water that can be knocked over and spilt.
- "No eating, drinking or smoking in the studio." That is a rule for many studio and a rule for my studio if I am ever producing you. Sweet drinks and sugary coffee might spill and if you have a mixing desk in front of you, gum up the works, short-out the electrics, burn yourself or a guest. But you will need to have water.

Eating in a studio is just bad manners. If you must --- have to --- no question about it --- eat in the studio, make sure that the food is not strong smelling. Have some consideration for the people in the studio with you or those coming in next. Clean up after yourself.

- Smoking is a no-no. At times, as a producer of live programmes, I would have up to three cigarettes burning in the ashtray at the same time. It wasn't until I had

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stopped smoking that I realised how disgusting the smell is. And it lingers for hours and days afterwards.

- Don't eat chocolate – it will make your mouth sound sticky.
- Don't chew gum – people will hear it (eugh).
- Don't drink fizzy water – burp.
- Are you sitting comfortably?
- Don't slouch; it will affect your breathing, attention, elocution.
- Sit up and take a few deep breaths before you start. That always helps.
- Don't worry about getting physical; if you normally use hand gestures and move your arms about when you are talking – then do that in the studio too.
- Try to get a comfortable chair, preferably one that does not have wheels (squeak) or a seat that allows you to swing one way then the other – you will go off mic.
- Wear headphones.
- Be welcoming.
- If you are the presenter, welcome people as they walk into the studio.
- If people are “down the line” in another studio or on the phone, try to have a few words of welcome before you start the conversation. That is not always possible.
- Smile – don't grin – just lift the edges of your mouth up a little.

Get used to the studio if you are using one. If you are recording your podcast somewhere else, get used to that place too. It is your domain. The producer is in charge of the programme, you are in charge of making it run perfectly, and part of that is achieved but being comfortable with yourself and in your studio.

It is perfectly acceptable for a presenter or reporter to use the studio as their place to work preparing a programme if the studio is not in use for something more important.

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A long-experienced radio producer took me aside when I was a new presenter and more than a little nervous and said to me “Wear the studio like your favourite old coat.”

Chapter 6: Interviewing

In a nutshell: The better prepared, the better researched, the better briefed you are, the better the interview will be. You will ask better questions, and understand why you are asking them. You will ask questions that the audience won't be expecting, and perhaps even the interviewee wasn't expecting. The more you know about the interviewee, the better the relationship is likely to be.

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The interviewer represents the audience and asks the questions that the audience would ask if they knew what the interviewer knows. The interviewer has researched the subject and the interviewee. The interviewer might be asking the questions the listener has suggested. The interviewer should know when questions are not being answered. While many, perhaps most, interviews are civilised and engaging affairs, sometimes the interviewer must be more aggressive with the interviewee and at the very least, not let them away with avoiding an answer. "But that is not what I asked you."

Maxine Mawhinney was a TV anchor on the BBC News channel for over 20 years. She presented several 5 hour shifts each week and during those shifts probably carried out interviews more than anything else. "You do end up doing back to back interviews. I'll do one from a remote location on screen, and turn around and do another with a guest sitting beside me, sometimes two guests. This is more journalistically challenging because I do every story, not just the big story.

"You cannot prepare enough. I don't mean writing loads of questions." Maxine says that you should start with the end of the interview in mind. Decide what the interview is about. "What am I interviewing this person? What type of interview is it? Is it informative? Is it aggressive? And by aggressive I don't mean shouting. Perhaps it's a politician who is being a bit difficult who you

have to really push. So, I think 'If I were not a journalist, if I were watching this, what would I want to know?' If you approach an interview thinking 'What do I want and how do I get there?' I usually get there OK."

Hear Maxine's full interview on the "Podcasting For ..." blog.

The point of an interview is ... well there are many, many reasons for and possible objectives. Going right back to the beginning of this book, ask the question about purpose. What is the purpose of this interview?

These are just some.

- To ask questions on behalf of the audience.
- To get information, facts, opinions and stories.
- To scrutinise and get a response.
- To help someone tell their story.
- To get some quotations to use in the story you are producing.
- To hold people or organisations to account.
- To confront.
- To get answers and not to let interviewees evade the questions.
- To be "devil's advocate".
- To seek to present information in an understandable and digestible way.
- To get to the bottom of an issue or story.

You will need to keep the purpose at the front of your mind as you are researching, planning and carrying out the interview. Later, you will be editing to get rid of what you don't want, keep that purpose in mind.

You will already have the basic facts. Try to make the interview about the story with a beginning middle and end, rather than restating the already verified facts "When was the campaign launched?" You should know the answer. "What has been the effect of the campaign?" is better.

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This book is not intended to teach you how to be a journalist; there are many excellent books on that subject. It is an introduction to podcasting. This is about understanding what an interview is. I won't go into any depth on the journalistic nature of interviewing, just set out some of the matters a beginner needs to consider.

One of those is about the ethics of an interview. Just because you have control of the microphone, questions and editing software, it does not mean you can do whatever you want. You must be ethical in your approach to interviewing, reporting, and editing an interview.

Regardless of whether it is a tough "holding people and organisations to account" interview or a "tell me your life story" interview, they all begin the same way; research.

The importance of research

The better prepared, the better researched, the better briefed you are, the better the interview will be. You will ask better questions, and know why you are asking them. You will ask questions that the audience won't be expecting, and perhaps even the interviewee wasn't expecting. The more you know about the interviewee, the better the relationship is likely to be.

With purpose in mind, begin your research on both the subject and the interviewee. If you are lucky and there are lots of people involved in the podcast production, you might have a researcher or assistant producer to help you. It is probably best if you work together, but sometimes a researcher will come to you with a brief.

Even if it is a simple interview about a simple subject, you will always ask better quality questions if you have done your homework.

Since I wrote the predecessor to this book "Podcasting for Communities", a phrase entered the conversations of many of us; "post truth". The interviewee lies and manipulates and really doesn't care what the interviewer says or asks. There is nothing new there. What is new is how recognised and agreed facts are ignored, how things "feel" rather than what the facts say is more important to the interviewee. Have the facts to hand, have quotes you want to use within easy reach, have a clear idea of the direction of the interview.

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You do not have to be rude if someone is all "post-truth", but you do have to be firm.

Planning the interview

You will have researched your subject. You will have researched your interviewee and you will have checked your equipment. Now, the question I am asked most by people starting out on this journey is "Should I write down the questions?"

The answer is "Yes ... and no. Well, more no, than yes. It's complicated."

If you write down the questions word for word, you are likely to read them out word for word. You are also less likely to listen to what the interviewee is saying, because you are preparing to ask the next question.

I was working with a young woman in her late-teens who was about to interview a politician. She and I worked together to plan the interview and the most pertinent questions. She decided on three. We agreed that each of these questions were each "openers" to a subject. She should listen to the reply and ask supplementary questions before moving to the next question. The plan was not to write anything down, but to remember them and have a natural conversation.

Politicians being politicians, he was running late and we had to wait 45 minutes outside his office door. The young woman became more and more apprehensive. At one point, I heard her whisper the three questions to herself over and over again. She was in a loop and could not come out of it. She got to ask the questions but didn't listen to the answers. The interview was OK, but could have been so much more.

Why is that important? The job is to ask a question and if the answer is not satisfactory, challenge the answer. Without the option to challenge and lead the interview (which is not the same as asking "leading questions"), you might as well say "Please address the audience on the matter of ..." or "Is there anything you would like to tell the public about ...?"

There was a time that sort of interviewing took place, but we know better now.

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"Louis Heren was a reporter with The Times newspaper and a fierce defender of the independence of the press, and was unafraid of authority." This quotation is from Wikipedia. "He is remembered by journalists for many stories and sayings, but the one that is still quoted today is: "When a politician tells you something in confidence, always ask yourself "Why is this lying bastard lying to me?""

You can read more about Heren including that full passage in Wikipedia.

When the main presenter on BBC's Newsnight TV programme Jeremy Paxman told The Guardian in January 2005, "It's not just politicians. Any spokesman for a vested interest is well schooled in how to say what it is they wish to say, which may bear no relation at all to what you've asked them. Because they're more practised in the mechanics of interviews, it's perhaps slightly more difficult to get through the carapace."

[https://www.theguardian.com/media/2005/jan/31/mondaymedia_section.politicsandthemedial]

Listening is a critical part of interviewing

You might have some notes in front of you. You might even have a bundle of research in a folder. These are to fall back on if you really need them. In your mind, map out and plan, the broad outline of the interview, the general areas of questions. Sure, have a subject list in your notebook but not the exact specific word for word questions – unless the exact wording is important. You might want to refer to facts, quotations and references. Keep them to hand, but an experienced interviewer will have purpose and direction in mind. They are what will guide the interview.

Several times I have mentioned that the interviewee might be nervous. Well, more often than you might expect, the interviewer will be a bit nervous too, especially if they are new to the job and just gaining confidence. They might be nervous if the interview is going to be difficult and challenging, or if they are meeting someone they particularly admire and want to make a good impression. Like an actor who gets nervous before a stage performance, it can be good for the interviewer to have that little flutter of butterflies.

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Even a very new reporter can do an excellent job facing a well experienced interviewee with confidence and assuredness if they are well briefed and have done the research, are sure of the questions and the subject matter. It's not about the number of years you have been doing interviews, the preparation and training are almost as important as experience. The interview is all about asking the right questions, listening to the answers and when necessary challenging the answers you hear.

Different interviews require different approaches. There is no limit to the number of ways of going about an interview. Most will be straight forward. You ask someone a series of questions, listen to the answers and everyone goes home happy. Most of the time. Be prepared for the unexpected.

Why are interviewers interested in breakfast?

You know, when you go to see a band play live in concert, and arrive early when the crew are still setting up, sometimes even when the band goes on stage someone is going to step up to a microphone and say, "Ch, ch, check, check, one, two, three, four, ch, ch." It's a cliché because it is real. The interview version is "What did you have for breakfast?" The reason for the question is that the interviewer wants to "ch, ch, check" the recording equipment and levels. Someone who has never been interviewed before might be a bit surprised at that question. "Corn Flakes" is not long enough an answer to check your levels and the equipment. So, the best approach is to have a conversation. It is good practice to tell the interviewee that you are recording.

"I've started the recorder. I just need to check everything is working before we start. Can you tell me what you've been doing this morning?"

This is not an interview question. You will already have read somewhere your questions should be Who, What, Why, Where, When, How. Sometimes, you might need modifiers such as "Can you tell me why ...". You still ask the WWWWH question, but in a more natural manner.

More about the nervous interviewee

There are times when you will do a very serious interview with a person in authority (politician, police, civil servant) when you will take a more formal less empathetic approach. You will also interview ordinary people who have never experienced this before. First time interviewees are often a bit apprehensive. At those times, the first job of the interviewer is to settle them, make them comfortable and spend a little time explaining what is going to happen.

They are going to say, “What are you going to ask me?” You will probably tell them that you will be recording much more than you will use and if they want to re-start an answer any time, they only need ask.

They might ask what the questions are going to be. Avoid giving specific questions. Some people will be tempted to spill out all the answers before you have even begun to record. You should – generally – explain the broad areas of the interview. For example, if you are interviewing someone who has lived a long life in your community you might describe the interview in this way. “I want to talk to you about your childhood, what this town was like to grow up in. You could tell me about family-life and community here. I’ll talk to you about the big changes you have seen and what you think has caused the changes, what’s good, what’s not so good and how you see the future.”

You might only want to have a more probing discussion on the recent changes and how the interviewee sees the future. The first part of the interview can give you context for your report, cue material for the introduction, you can confirm facts you will be including in the report. All of that gives the interviewee time to settle and get into their own rhythm.

The empathetic interview

Something has happened, something sad or shocking or fun and exciting. All you want to know is what has happened and what the impact was. This is not quite an “eye-witness” report (which is next). It has potentially more layers and more about what people think as well as an account of what has happened. But you are not planning to challenge the interviewee. You will likely take the broad approach to

begin with then dig down to get more detail or a stronger explanation of how someone feels, what impact the event had on the individual. The empathetic interview is about helping someone tell their story rather than challenging their answers.

The eye-witness

When something newsworthy happens in a public place, journalists will seek eyewitness accounts. Eyewitnesses may contradict each other or add additional perspectives. You are not looking for analysis, you are looking for description.

The reporter has a handful stock questions:

- What did you see?
- What happened?
- What happened next?
- How do you feel?
- Who was there at the time?
- Exactly where did this happen?
- When was that?

The planned interview

This is often a long form interview with one or two people who have a compelling story to tell. Your job as the reporter or interviewer is to help them to tell that story step by step, finding the detail, teasing out the colour, supporting the emotions, pointing the direction. You are navigating the story for the listener. It’s unlikely you will ask a question the interviewee was not expecting. Perhaps you will dig a little deeper, perhaps you will add a thought not previously expressed. In general, you and the interviewee will know where you are going. It is really two-handed story telling. However, you are the interviewer, you conduct the interview. If you decide that there is a direction you want to go, or a question you want to push at, do. The likelihood is that when you are pushing for an answer, the interviewee will be more revealing and even share a story that had not been part of the preparation.

The challenging interview

You do not have to be unpleasant when you ask people to explain themselves, what they have done, what they have said, where they

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have been. Some reporters have built reputations on being highly confrontational and assertive. They might in some interviews come close to being rude. Usually you can see why they need to be tougher. They have the right to ask questions, and sometimes for public accountability the interviewee is expected to give a solid answer.

Yet the good, the great interviewers, manage to avoid being unpleasant. Why? Because the interviewer represents the listener, and most people do not like to associate themselves with someone who is being unpleasant. It is the high-handed politician that the interviewer is challenging who might come across as being unpleasant. Often because they are. A highly charged and challenging interview can be very revealing not just about the subject, but about the person answering the question.

It is the role of the reporter, the interviewer to hold people with power accountable. The interviewer is more likely to challenge politicians, police, civil servants, business leaders than the public.

You do not have to be rude. You do not have to be aggressive. It is better if you are neither. You may and should ask tough questions. But ask professionally – you are not there to be a heckler. And if the tough questions are not getting honest or open answers, then it's time to move to the next step.

The confrontational interview

Confrontational interview styles are not for beginners. You should get plenty of experience first. Just because you are holding the microphone does not make you right. And a microphone is not a magical wand of revenge – or protection.

You need to be well researched and sure footed if you are going to accuse someone of doing something wrong or stupid or dangerous.

Another more extreme way is “door stepping”. That means you go to where you know where the interviewee will be – home, work, car – and approach with recorder running and ask the question firmly and politely. At no point should you step onto private property or use violence. Be careful, there might be a chance of violence being used against you.

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Broadcasters and newspapers have guidelines for their reporter on “door stepping”. In most cases, you need to inform the editor or head of department. Often the reporter needs permission. It is wise, though to discuss with colleagues and decide whether this is the most effective way of getting the information or sound that you need. Frankly, it is probably best avoided. If you discover there is an important story to be uncovered, go to a professional journalist who you trust and work with them. They are going to have access to a bigger audience and as part of the agreement your podcast will get publicity ... and protection.

Producers beware. Some people very quickly get an over inflated sense of their skills and talent when they get a microphone in their hand. They need carefully managed.

This is a highly-charged area, ethically. These more advanced forms of interviewing are not to be done without first gaining some real journalistic experience. I mention them only in passing, more as a warning not to get too far out of your depth, rather than a recommendation of measures you should take developing your podcast.

The celebrity interview

Please, please ... not:

Interviewer: “Aren’t you wonderful?”

Interviewee: “Oh yeah, thank you.”

interviewer: “Thank you for your time.”

I have no problem with celebrity interviews. I have done plenty, but should you find yourself doing one, plan it as you would any other. What is the purpose? What do you know and what do you want to find out? Yes, there will be puff and promotion and that is the trade-off. But can you find a unique and revealing line of questions.

Contrary to the way some people act, celebrities are people, too. They get bored with the same questions. They enjoy a little challenge in the questioning.

Structure

For all interviews, there should be a structure; a beginning, middle and end. There are times, when the interviewer is under extreme time pressure, all they manage to get is the middle bit. When that happens, you should have already gathered enough information to provide a beginning and an end in your script setting up the interview and referring back to it – the cue in and cue out.

Larry Gifford was taught to interview in a three-day course at ESPN the US based global TV sports channel “Over the years I have felt it an obligation, a passion to share that knowledge which is why wherever I go, whenever I have the opportunity I’ll dissect a really bad interview I hear on The Radio Stuff Podcast and explain why it wasn’t really a bad guest, it was a bad interviewer.” Of course, Larry himself in the interviewer. I agree with Larry when he says – because I have noticed this myself with bad interviews I have done – “Most interviewees that are cringe worthy are the fault of the interviewer, not the interviewee.”

You can hear more from Larry on interviewing at the Podcasting For podcast.

You have mapped out the ideas. The purpose and the general questions will see you through the interview, but remember you will need context and that is why you need the structure.

You must tell a story.

Chapter 7: Recording

In a nutshell: There is more to recording than switching on the audio recorder and pointing the microphone. You need to know how to set everything up and potential problems to listen out for.

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You could argue that record and edit are support skills which help the presentation and production skills. Record and edit, in a large broadcasting organisation, may be the responsibility of specialist craft people. Even in a major broadcasting organisation, reporter and producers are highly skilled in editing audio. The crafts people deal with the more complex sound engineering and sound management.

If you happen to have a large team, you might want some to specialise in record and edit although everyone involved should have some “hands-on” experience.

It is important to realise right at the beginning that your podcast does not have to be studio bound. There is no reason why, in principle, you need ever visit a studio. Studios can be expensive places that often require trained and experienced professionals to manage them. Look at your resources. If building or renting a studio is beyond your means, do not let that put you off planning a podcast. There are lots of other ways of recording.

It is entirely possible to build your own studio. I am not going to cover that in this book, beyond this paragraph. You will need a room that can be split in two or two rooms you can connect electronically and preferably, visually. Your “cubicle” is where the microphones are, and the table the guests will sit around. The chairs and the headphones will be there too. The ceiling will be low and the walls will be covered in material that will absorb sound. The other room – the control room – is where the recording is made. There, you will find the sound mixing desk, recording equipment and the sound engineer. The people in the control room will speak to the presenter and others through a talkback unit into their headphones. That in its most simple form is a studio. If

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you decide to do that, be aware of fire safety, escape routes and the use of materials that will not put the people in the studio or the building at risk.

When Olly Mann and Helen Zaltzman began their first podcast Answer Me This podcast in 2007 (10 years later it is still going strong) they didn't have a studio. But they had a fantastic resource. Olly explained. "Helen's "husband elect" as she called him was a physicist but also a semi-professional musician. He had a setup a home for music. He had a decent Apple Mac, a rudimentary four channel mixing desk.

"Right from the beginning we had quality microphones that were used to record music. And we used the software a musician would use. But technologically we had to learn as we went along."

A studio is not a requirement, but do try to buy, borrow or hire the very best equipment you can, especially microphones, and use a suitable room. Later in the book, and on the podcast and blog, I will be discussing microphones and how to choose the one you need.

Whether you record the podcast in whole or in part in the studio, out of the studio or a mix of both is entirely up to you. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. They have their own sets of challenges. You can plan your approach and make the best of what you have. This section is about those challenges tips and tricks.

Recording away from the studio

The first question is "Why out of the studio?" Some of the reasons are practical;

- The interviewee can't get to the studio at all or at a suitable time.
- It is necessary for the reporter to see something for themselves.
- The location is pertinent to the interview.

Some other reasons are less practical and more to do with adding additional audio layers to the podcast. There is nothing wrong with all interviews happening in the studio, but if you can vary the atmosphere

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using location interviews, it adds variety to the overall sound of the podcast.

Here are a few reasons who you would record away from the studio

- You are recording in a school and you want to hear the sounds of children playing.
- You are doing a piece at a fire station (or anywhere that has a unique sound) and you want to add the atmosphere to the recording.
- The interviewee is doing an historical walk around the town and you want to capture some of the actuality of the walk and the talk, the sound of the town and other locations.

Perhaps it's more serious.

- An event and being on the scene is important to the report.
- There are several people to be included in the report and it is simpler to go to them.

There are all sorts of reasons why you would record outside. A podcast episode can benefit from changes in tone and atmosphere. Reporting from a place rather than just about a place can give context to the story. It can add new textures and make the episode more interesting.

Willis McBriar lectures at Belfast Metropolitan College in Creative Media. He teaches students studying computer games about sound and how it can be used to enhance video and games. He also coaches small businesses in audio visual techniques. Willis spent over thirty years in the BBC as a broadcast engineer and a communications engineer. "I've had the dubious pleasure of teaching journalists about techie stuff ... which has been a challenge. He says with a smile. "Don't give me the pointy headed crap." one journalist told him. "Just make it work."

*You can hear an extended interview with Willis on the "Podcasting For ..." blog
[<http://www.podcastingfor.com/sound-recording-and-microphones-interview-with-willis-mcbriar/>]*

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I wanted to talk to Willis about microphones, sound and recording techniques.

He gave me an example of students who had recorded a report for a mock radio programme. It was awful and the students knew it. Willis explained. “The recording had been made at the side of a road, and there was a lot of traffic noise. The students asked about which microphone should have been used to have recorded this better.

“The two things I said were, first; it looked as if they were using an omnidirectional microphone which was picking up sound from all around.” “Omni” meaning all things. “They would have been better off using what is best known as a hypercardioid or zoom microphone which as best it can, picks up from one direction.

“The second thing I told them that the key thing they should have done, looking at photos of the interview taking place, was place the interviewee with her face to the road and the interviewer with her back to the road, and used the interviewer’s body as a shield to reduce the sound coming from the road into the microphone. The interview had been done parallel to the road picking up as much noise as possible.”

The choice of microphone is critical to making a good recording. Willis and I will discuss some specific models toward the end of this chapter. There is also a podcast with the two of us talking about sound, recording and microphones.

Monitoring the recording

When you are recording your interview or atmosphere (wild-track) you will need to hear the sound that your microphone is picking up, not the sound that you hear in your ears as you stand there. You might be surprised what you don’t hear that your microphone does.

Have a good pair of headphones, the more external sound they can block out the better. Put them on when you are recording so you can hear what the microphone is picking up. These are just some sounds your ears fail to hear, but your microphone will:

Over modulation and under modulation – Willis McBriar explained, “If you have wound up the level on the recording and I

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keep talking really closely to the microphone you swamp, over modulate is the technical term, but you just swamp the recording with too much sound. The recording becomes distorted. Under modulate is too little sound if your record level is too low.”

I suggested to Willis that of the two, it is better to record too low than too high. If the recording is under modulated (too low) you might be able to do something to improve what you have recorded in the editing phase. But if it’s over modulated, (too loud) it’s broken.

“If you have made a recording with a lot of “noise” because the level was too low, you can do something with it.” Using editing software – even basic software like Audacity – you can filter out the top end. “You’d have to be pretty bad to get the level so low, it’s impossible to make out what you are saying. Once you have over modulated, once you have distorted the sound, there’s nothing you can do. It’s gone.” You can hear examples of both in the podcast with Willis.

Wind noise – whether in a field, on a shore, on a city street, even on what seems to be the calmest day, there is a possibility of wind noise being picked up. Your mic will hear it, your ears probably won’t.

“Popping” – Otherwise known as “plosives”. This is more likely to happen in the studio when someone’s lips are too close to the microphone, but it can happen away from the studio for the same reason. When people are saying, words beginning with hard letters like P (public, purple, protest and so on) and B, (because, broadcast, bank and so on) even T (tissue, taste, terrible and so on) the “plosive” disrupts the microphone. Your ears will not hear that until playback in the editing phase.

Sound balance – you will want to make sure the interviewee’s voice is not quieter than yours, or if there is more than one interviewee, everyone’s voice is at much the same level. It is more than just making sure that everyone is about the same distance from the microphone. Some people have louder voices, some people project more. You need to monitor to ensure a good balance.

Loud background noise – just because the noise around you seems OK to your ears, does not mean the microphone hears it the same way. Background noise is good, but it needs to be managed.

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Music – Background music is the same as background noise – only worse. Mainly it is very, very difficult, if not impossible, to edit audio with background music. As you edit what is being said, the music jumps around. Editing is often not just taking bits out of interviews. Sometimes you move answers around. And the music in the background follows. The same with a clock ticking loudly in the room where you are interviewing. Again, very difficult as the ticking loses its rhythm in the edit.

Exterior noise – Once again what you hear might not be identical to what the microphone is picking up. If you monitor the recording, then you can more easily manage background noise.

People walking past, and other passing annoying noises. For example, you are recording a very serious interview with someone who is upset and sharing a difficult story. Then in the corridor outside or the next room two or three people pass by laughing and having fun. You need to know if they are loud enough to disturb your recording.

Tummy gurgling. Honestly – I have recorded the sound of an interviewee's gurgling tummy. Remember, your microphone is not where your ears are. Best to say. "Oh, just a moment, can we record that again, please?"

Mobile recording devices

Most of us carry around enough equipment in our pockets or bags to go live on radio or TV anytime from almost any location. What once required trucks and cameras and specialist operators and expensive communications connections are on our smartphone.

All you need is a 3G, 4G or any other connection to the studio, the right sort of app. and someone to call on the other end to take your feed.

At a pinch, our smartphone has a sound recorder which is good enough in to use in an emergency. I'll explain why it is not recommended in a moment. The phone has a lens that can be used for video and even going on air if needed. While a smartphone is great to have and fine as a fall back, you will need better for recording for your podcast.

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Why is a smartphone not good enough? One issue is the transfer of files to your computer for editing. The phone and the file extensions might not be compatible with your editing equipment. There are ways of getting around that but more importantly, you cannot properly monitor the recording through headphones.

There are some sounds that you will not hear unless monitoring with your headphones on. Here are a couple of examples and what to do about them:

Electronic interference - This is something you will not hear unless you are wearing headphones and monitoring the recording. I once drove more than 200 miles to interview a singer on an old cassette recorder which I could not monitor. The fluorescent light in the singer's dressing room caused a buzz on the recording which I didn't know about until I returned to the studio the following day. Well it was 1980 and I was very inexperienced.

Problems with the microphone connection – It all might look as if it is going well, but what if that microphone lead is damaged and you are recording all sorts of clicking and drop-outs at the same time. Again, although I did not travel far, I was offered an interview with the guitarist and songwriter with a band who were very successful at the time. Normally the singer did the interviews. The songwriter talking was rare. Again, I wasn't monitoring and there was a faulty microphone connection. I didn't know until too late.

Microphone lead – If you are using a separate microphone, you won't hear the lead rattle.

Recorder body – if you are using a recorder the way you hold the machine might cause noise on the recording.

These, and other problems, may not be picked up during the recording.

However, that monitoring problem can be overcome easily as Willis McBriar explained.

"If you plug in a pair of headphones they switch off the internal microphone. You can overcome this with an adaptor. They are very

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cheap to buy.” There is a photograph of a couple of adaptors on the website.

“They will allow you to plug in a set of headphones and a microphone into the headphone socket of a mobile phone.” By doing this you use the phone as a recording device only.

“One of the great problems of using a mobile phone as a recorder is that the standard apps that come with mobile phones usually only allow you to record in mono. You can get apps that provide metering, so at least you can see what levels you are recording. But you have a fundamental problem of monitoring what you are recording.”

If you do have to use a mobile phone, Willis pointed out something that is counter intuitive. “The most fundamental mistake that people make is that they forget that the microphones are at the bottom of the phone, at the other end from the headphone socket. So, you need to turn it around. The screen (and the monitoring app.) will be upside down.”

A mobile phone is not recommended unless you can monitor the recording. In real life though, sometimes you are left with no choice. Radio producer, Johnny Seifert suggested this strategy. Spend a few moments recording a conversation. How did they get there today? How was the weather/traffic/scenery – it really doesn’t matter – on the journey? This will enable you to do three things. First you will settle your interviewee and begin getting some sort of rapport between the two of you. As you are recording you can set the right level. Then listen back to the recording and check for faulty connections, electronic interference and the balance between you and your interviewees.

Now you are ready to go. Remember to push the “record” button again ...

Mobile Journalism

The arrival of smartphones and tablets such as the iPhone and iPad, has led to a minor revolution for reporters and journalists. They are no longer encumbered by heavy equipment or the need for camera operators, sounder recordists even heavy vehicles like communications trucks and outside broadcast vehicles.

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Equipment we now carry around in our pockets and bags are often broadcast standard. We can buy peripherals from even higher quality microphones to auto-cues. Video and sound editing, once done back at base, is now done in the field and sent back by fast public telecommunications links. No longer do radio reporters have to disassemble public telephones and connect their Uher (sound recorder) to the phone’s microphone with crocodile clips (quite illegally) to send their interview back to the newsroom.

Today you can buy all the kit you need to do an outside broadcast and carry it in your backpack.

It is not the same as picking up your mobi and running off to do an interview. How you use the equipment is even more important. You no longer have the sound engineer monitoring what you do, Or, a director checking your appearance on camera.

Training is even more important if you plan to use mobile technology. Using the right microphones, the right monitoring, the right editing software and doing it properly is the key. Just because you have a mobile phone does not mean you know how to use it properly.

Search the web for “Mobile Journalism” for more detail on equipment and studies carried out by reputable organisations like the Knight Foundation.

It’s great living in the future if you know how to manage it properly.

Monitoring - what should you use?

While monitoring a recording in the field or in the studio, the best possible option is a pair of good headphones worn over both ears that let you hear exactly what the microphone is picking up. If the recording is in a difficult place or you have specific challenges, use proper good quality headphones. If you are recording wild-track rather than an interview or doing something more sophisticated, always use good quality headphones. Getting the message?

While you can’t plan for every eventuality, you can be prepared by always having a backup option available. Keep simple earbuds in your bag or pocket. If your headphones fail or you forget them, at least you have a means of monitoring. Buds are unobtrusive when you are interviewing and good enough to monitor the basics.

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I had never heard of psychoacoustics until Willis told me he taught the subject. “Anytime you are doing a recording you should be wearing a decent pair of headphones that can shut out as much of the external noise as possible. If there is a buzz coming off some electrical equipment, you’ll notice that the minute you come in and after a few minutes your brain will say to itself ... yeah, that’s ok ... that’s always there. And it will filter the sound out and you will not hear it. What you hear is filtered by your brain and ear. So, you will be more attuned to the human voice than almost anything else.

Then, if your ear can filter out those annoying sounds why are they not filtered out when you listen to the recording? “When you listen back to the recording, you don’t have the context of the room around you and getting all the signals.”

There is more from Willis in the podcast [<http://wp.me/p7UXLW-1h>]

Should someone else manage the recording while you interview?

Sometimes a reporter will go out to an interview with a producer or a sound recordist. There are – as you might expect – advantages and disadvantages to having an extra person in the room. I will run through some of the pros and cons. In the end, it will be the reporter decision.

There are two separate roles here, so let’s not confuse them. If the reporter/interviewer is with a producer or assistant producer their role is editorial. The producer or assistant producer will talk through the editorial line of the interview and make decisions together on what you are going to talk to the interviewee about, the line of questions, the approach and the sort of information or story you want to come away with.

If the reporter or interviewer is with a sound engineer or sound recordist, the relationship is different. They have a technical role and their competence will be the quality of the actual recording, not the editorial content.

So why have a person to do the recording? If you are recording in a place where there are challenging sound dynamics, or if there are a

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number of people in the recording, or perhaps you are recording a band or a choir. These are the times you might need the skills of a person who is expert in sound recording. Personally, I would do what I can to avoid having that extra person. They can be distracting to the interviewee.

It might be useful to have a producer with the interviewer for editorial reasons. Not all interviews are comfortable experiences and having the additional editorial support might help the interviewer. I would always suggest that in those circumstances that the reporter keeps control of the recording – holding the microphone, testing the sound. The producer might want to check it at the outset if the reporter is inexperienced, but then they should withdraw and listen. The best thing a producer can ever do is listen.

Sometimes in a longer interview, the reporter will have notes to refer to as it progresses. It can be difficult to balance microphone, recorder and notes as well as monitoring the recording. Someone there to help with the technical aspect may be useful.

If the interviewee is uncomfortable with more than the interviewer in the room and it is making the interview difficult, then the producer or sound recordist should go for a nice refreshing walk.

The recorder

The machine, that is.

There is a wide range of digital recorders on the market. You should look for one that:

- Records on .mp3 format (almost all do).
- May also record on .wav file format (but not essential).
- Adjustable record level setting.
- Adjustable output (monitoring) level setting.
- Built in stereo microphones.
- Socket for additional microphone (preferably).
- Socket for headphones.

You want a machine that is robust, that feels solid in your hand. Among the tests you will want to carry out are:

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- If you move it in your hand, do the microphones pick up that sound? If they do, then avoid.
- Test it outside, is the recording easily affected by wind noise? Some recorders will even pick up the lightest breeze as wind noise. You will want something less sensitive to that. You can buy a wind shield which might help in light breezes.

You can spend anything from around £100 to thousands of pounds for a recorder. Buy the best you can afford. You will want a good quality recorder, but remember, in the end, your podcast is probably going to be an .mp3 so don't go mad buying something you really can't afford. Put the effort into the microphones. Budget for around £200 to £250 for a recorder and think of reputable makers like Transam, Roland, or Sony.

For years, I have been using an Edirol R-09/HR by Roland. Disappointingly it is no longer produced and the R-05 has fewer functions. Both record well, but I'm thinking about buying a Transam with XLR sockets next ... unless you can suggest something better. Buy the best quality you can, and buy the most robust you can. Seek advice if possible. Read the reviews.

The microphone

If your digital recorder has built in microphones you will probably not need a separate microphone or microphones. At least when you are starting out.

I have listened to the experiences and opinions of a lot of podcasters. While I am happy with the built-in microphones on my recorder, other podcasters say separate microphones are essential. As you are just starting out, buy what you can. If there is a hire company who will let you rent kit that is a great way to start, too. You can then begin to make your own informed decisions on whether you really need separate microphones.

If you are recording several people at the same time, you should try to use a microphone for each person. The mics will plug into a mixer and the mixer into the recorder.

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Some microphones require "phantom power" which the right mixer will provide. A standard recorder will not (usually). Seek advice when buying.

"I spoke to a bunch of people and found out the difference between condenser and dynamic microphones." Freddie Soames from the QI podcast No Such Thing as a Fish. "The microphones we use are Rode Procasters. We use them on little mic stands and today for the first time ever we've put pop shields in front of them. These are dynamic microphones and they are designed to be used outside, but what this means in our loud noisy room, if you put them about 10cm from the mouths [of the people doing the podcast] and you set the levels correctly, you're going to get very little outside interference." And the Fish team do face significant sound problems. They use a room which is an office in Covent Garden, London, with city noise from outside and other noises in and out of the room. Listen to the podcast episode where we discuss this on the PodcastingFor.com.

"If you had a completely silent studio environment you could argue that condenser microphones would get a better signal to noise ratio and you're going to get a better quality of recording. In our far from perfect environment, the dynamic microphones give us a certain degree of protection from the random interference we get almost constantly."

Signal to noise is a technical term which, in this sense, means; the voice or voices you want to record is the signal and the noise is all the additional interference including background and the "hiss" of the equipment is the noise.

The microphones are only part of the set-up. They need to be plugged into something so they can be mixed. There are four microphones – one for each member of the No Such Thing as a Fish team. "I realised I had to plug my XLR microphones into something to give them phantom power." Freddie knew he could do that on a variety of devices and choose the Apogee Quartet. "A colleague has an Apogee. It's a little mixer that you can set the levels with and it takes a nice clean signal, processes it and puts it through to the computer. It might not be the best thing to use, but it works."

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You can hear the whole episode at [www.podcastingfor.com] where you can also hear the interview with Willis McBrier.

I met Willis in the Oh Yeah centre in Belfast. It is a place that celebrates the sound and the music of Belfast. Willis lifted his bag and brought out several microphones. There are photographs on the blog and a longer discussion on the podcast. He outlined the difference between a dynamic microphone and a condenser microphone.

Which should a podcaster choose? “Dynamic microphones are robust. Probably the best-known microphone in the world is the Shure SM58 which is one you see being practically swallowed by rock vocalists. It looks like an ice-cream cone.”

It’s very difficult to over modulate with and SM58 Willis tells me, it is a workhorse; it is comparatively not very expensive. Dynamic microphones are great close up. “But, if you wanted to capture the sound of an orchestra, from half way down the room, if you want to capture the subtlety of sound using a pair of SM58s they would sound like mud.”

We move to condenser microphones. Willis uses most of these for video work. “The basic Røde video mic costs about £70 or £80. It sits on top of a camera, but you can attach it to a handle so you can use it as your basic interview microphone. The more expensive Røde professional has more gain, which means that it you have more signal going into the recorder compensating for the noise of the recording.”

Next, we looked at the Zoom H1. It is a very simple and light weight recorder which he used to teach in Belfast and I use to teach in Dublin. It as a stereo pair of microphones attached. It is very light so handling noise might be a problem. But it is a good starting out microphone and recorder combined. You should be able to get one for less than £100.

Finally, we discussed the microphone a lot of podcasters use; the Blue Yeti USB Professional Microphone (about £120). It looks like it comes from the 1940s, but obviously is only paying tribute to the great broadcasting microphones of the past. It does not plug into a recorder. It plugs directly into your PC. “It’s really only designed for voice work and really only designed to be used indoors. So, if you are

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spending a lot of time beside your PC making podcasts this is the one to use.

“For me the key thing is that it has switchable patterns. That means you can have it omnidirectional, picking up sound from all around. You can have “cardioids” which is heart shaped, which means it just picks up in front of the microphone. Or it has “figure of eight” to pick up two people and not everything else in the room. You can position it to pick up two sides.

“The other beautiful thing about it is that it does not have an analogue output, only a USB output. You put it directly into the computer. It digitises everything inside the microphone then sends a digital feed out to the computer.” If you do a “round table” chat with friends, or if you record links for your podcast, the Yeti might be what you are looking for. However, you need to test the microphones in the situation where you are planning to use them.

When I began podcasting around 2008, I asked one electronics engineer who specialised in fitting out radio and television studios what I should buy. All he said was “AKG D-130” and went off to build another complex TV studio. It is a unidirectional microphone which I have used since then. They are no longer made and I got mine on Ebay for under £100. Great investment.

Once again, buy the best quality you can, but you don’t need to spend a disproportionate amount of money.

Headphones

I have covered headphones earlier. The advice boils down to this; use headphones.

Recording: preparation and techniques

If you are the person in the team who will be doing a lot of interviews the recorder and microphones are your instruments. You should become an expert in using them, and the best way to do that, is the same as for a musician – practice, practice, practice. Practice holding the microphone. Loop the lead around you hand once to stop microphone lead rattle. Practice moving your wrist rather than your whole arm if you need to re-direct the microphone between you and the person you are interviewing. Practice how to hold the microphone

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so you don't have to redirect in the first place. The same for a recorder with an in-built microphone; make sure any handling movement does not cause noise.

Setting levels

There are two levels which can be adjusted on the recorder. The record level is the more important. You will need to set the level as loud as possible, but not so loud that it distorts the recording. You should also monitor visually. Almost all recorders have a visual monitor. Some have a red light which flashes if your recording is too high. It's generally OK if you "bounce into the red" from time to time. If the recording is too low, it will give you problems when you are transferring to edit and mix into your programme. Being too low is (just about) better than being too high which will distort the sound. And there is nothing you can do with distorted sound.

The second setting is the level you are monitoring. Best practice is to set your record level first. Make sure it is correct, visually and in your ears before setting the monitoring level. Make sure the record level is up to the right level and your monitoring is down to as low as possible so you don't fool yourself into thinking you're recording nice and high. Practice, practice, practice.

Practice setting the levels so you know exactly where they should be. Practice everything.

If you are the producer, learn about the recorder and microphones, too. It is your job to help get the best from people. You should understand how to get the best from a recorder, too.

It is worth spending a few hours with someone who has had experience using a microphone and recorder. If you can, beg, borrow or – as a last resort – pay for professional support during the whole set-up phase. It will be worth it in the long run.

Checking the recorder before leaving the office

This is your tick sheet. Before leaving the office or home:

- Test everything: microphones, recorder, and battery power. Pack extra batteries and a mains lead if possible.

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- Will you bring a back-up machine and microphone? Test them too.
- Check you have enough memory to record.
- Keep your memory tidy. Delete any used or unnecessary recordings.
- Record something (yes, the classic "1, 2, testing, 1, 2" comes into play, here.) and play it back. Could you hear that in your headphones when you were recording? Can you hear it in your headphones as you play it back?
- Final check before you go: recorder, batteries, memory, microphone, headphones, bag. (Mobile phone? Don't, as one reporter who I know did, bring a TV remote control rather than a mobile phone. That was in the days when cell phones were less common.)

When you get to the location

When you meet your interviewee or interviewees and have your introductory chat, find a location for the recording. Inside is less problematic than outside, but outside can provide a more interesting background. Make the decision based on editorial needs. If you are discussing river pollution, you should be outside, at least for the start of the interview like a video establishing shot. There is more about wild-track, atmosphere and background a little further on.

Problems to lookout for – inside

First, test the room with your ears. There is very rarely silence in our world. There is almost always background noise. Even in what is a quiet room there can be the sound of air conditioning or a loudly ticking clock. There can be the sound of birdsong from outside coming through an open window. There can be louder sounds that might not interfere with the recording, but might make editing difficult. Be aware of noises like passing traffic or trains, or even the approach of aircraft to an airport.

Not all background sound is bad and you don't have to recreate studio conditions, but you should be aware – for example - that it takes a long time for a train to pass and even if it's not loud enough to disturb the recording, it might make editing difficult. I once recorded interviews in London for a documentary. Even though I spoke to about 6 people in different locations, every one of those locations was

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on the Heathrow airport flight path. Each interview was a nightmare to record and edit.

Second, test the room with your microphone and headphones. Are their sounds your microphone is picking up that your ears did not notice? Is there a buzz caused by electrical interference, for example? Or is that air conditioning inside or building work outside louder than you had thought?

Next, test the room with a preparatory interview. You can also set up the recorder while doing this. You are listening for a boomy, echoey room that reflects too much sound. You are also working out the best place for your interviewee to sit or stand. See below for microphone technique.

Problems to lookout for – outside

Even on the quietest day there is noise. Mostly it is noise you are aware of and want to keep as part of the recording – lovely noises like running water and birdsong. But even less attractive noises are useful. If you are discussing a problem with traffic, you want the sound of traffic. But perhaps you only want to illustrate your piece with traffic noise. Don't do the whole recording beside a busy road. Record a sample of the traffic noise to illustrate your report before moving to a quieter and maybe safer place.

One of the microphone's biggest enemies is wind noise. Even in the lightest breeze which you might not even notice, some models of microphone are more likely to pick up that rumble than others. A light breeze might sound like you are in a gale force wind. You can counter a light breeze with a wind cover for the microphones. But once again, you will need to wear headphones to monitor for wind noise.

Sometimes with excessive noise you just should give up and move somewhere else. Once, trying to do an interview on a very pretty riverbank in a quiet part of a city on a windy day, my interviewee and I had to move away because of the breeze. We couldn't find a cafe that wasn't playing background music. After trying several places, we were able to sit at an outdoor table at a restaurant. But the breeze caught the recording a couple of times, people were walking past talking loudly to each other and at one point an almighty argument

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between a man and woman kicked off about 30 feet away. The interviewee rambled and my questions were terrible. Not a good day. But the edit afterwards rescued the important parts of the interview. The edit can be what will save you in the end.

Record with an edit in mind.

Setting up and testing levels.

It is good practice when you are interviewing someone to record their name before you start the interview. "Tell me your name and what you do. And could you start with "My name is ...", please?" You might want to ask other relevant questions like what the person does, the name of the town. Ask the questions in the way you will do the interview. You can set the levels and help a nervous interview settle down.

Setting the input level of the recording is vital. In simple terms, the level is how loud you are recording at.

- First, you don't want to record too high, the sound will distort.
- Second, you don't want to record too low, there might not be enough sound to hear.
- Third, if everyone in the project records at a uniform level. the consistency makes editing much easier.

The level you will need to choose will depend on the microphone you are using, the background sound, where the interviewer is in relation to the microphone and how loud the interviewee is talking.

Test first at about three quarters of the maximum input.

The interview

"Hmmmmmm" – "Uh huh" – "Yesss" – "Noooo" and other No Nos

Look at your interview as they are speaking, but DO NOT respond to what they are saying with "uh, huh", "hmm, hmh", "Yes" and other noises we make when people talk to us. We do it unconsciously to encourage the speaker to continue, to expand, and to let them know we are listening. It might be natural but it sounds dreadful in a recording, so nod your head, smile, frown and make supportive facial expressions when needed. These visual cues do just the same as the

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vocal cues. They don't have to be wildly expressive. Lifting an eyebrow, a twitch of the chin, a lopsided smile all work. When you need to show warmth or empathy do that with a facial expression, too. The same with disbelief or scepticism. What face would you make if you wanted to indicate: "What I am thinking is --- Oh. Come on now. You want me to believe that rubbish?" Maybe just lifting your eye brows will do that.

When interview is over, some interviewers will ask if there is anything else the person wants to add. Then, to end, record a few seconds of atmosphere.

Listen back to just a little of what you have recorded. Listen in your headphones. Do not play the whole interview back to the interviewee. They will hate how they sound and if they hear too much, probably want to re-do it.

If it was not as good as you had hoped and the interviewee wants to re-do it, it might be worth trying. Do not record over what you already have. If the first recording is good enough for what you want, tell your interviewee how wonderful the whole thing has been and leave.

Microphone techniques

This section is not about asking questions. It is all about your microphone technique. I'll pull together some of the hints and tips from earlier and add a few more.

Positioning the microphone is all important. Maybe you've seen dramas on the TV or in films where the intrepid reporter corners the unsuspecting interviewee and pushes the microphone up to their own face to bark a question then pushes the microphone into the interviewee's face for the answer. And for the rest of the interviewee casually swings the microphone back and forward. In circumstances – if you are in a crowd or with a bunch of other reporters and your interview is on the move you might only have only seconds to grab a few words with them – then you might push your microphone as close to their face as possible. I doubt if it is important to record you asking the question, though. Concentrate your recording power on your interviewee.

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If you are doing a question and answer in a noisy place, if there are aeroplanes taking off, Formula 1 racing cars passing by, a rock concert at full tilt; these are all places where you might want to push the microphone close to the interviewee. These are not ideal places for an interview though. It might be OK for getting a quote or getting a few quick answers to questions. Most of the time, you will be in less hostile circumstances.

You will want to help most people forget they are being recorded and help them relax. Hold your recorder or microphone somewhere around about chest level. Favour the interviewee; after all, they are the voices the listener wants to hear. If you need to move the microphone between you and the person you are talking to, try to do it with a wrist movement rather than your whole arm.

There is not a rule, but standing close to someone is usually better than sitting; not always, every circumstance is different.

I have always been a fan of "walkie-talkies" where you and the interviewee walk as you record the interview. It's not common, but this is why I like it. The interviewee's excess energy is used in a positive way. There is less fidgeting, they concentrate on walking rather than being nervous about the interview. It is less confrontational. Both of you can look around at other things. Of course, there are downsides, if the listener can hear footsteps, they can be distracting, and editing can be more difficult. There is the possibility of wind noise or interruption. And frankly, it is not always suitable.

If you have no choice but to sit, do not let the subject get behind a desk. They will be too far away. Get them to either stand or sit beside you – at 90 degrees. Or if there is a table one of you can sit at the top the other at the side. If they are more than an arm's stretch from you, they are probably too far away.

Have your recorder in a position where you can glance at it to check levels and is still recording.

If you are using a separate microphone with a lead plugged into your machine wrap the first part of the cable around your hand to reduce any rattling lead noise.

Wild-track, atmos(phere), ambient, background

It is important to remember to record the ambient sound of the where you are doing the interview. You might feel a bit foolish the first few times you sit or stand with your microphone pointing at what appears to be nothing, and you might not use the wild-track (atmos, ambient sound or background sound). Then one day you are editing and you need that sound to help with a transition or a fade into the interview or a fade out.

Best thing to do is make it a habit. Before you start the interview take a few moments to record the atmosphere of the place. Exactly how long you will record will depend on all the sounds in the location. Then at the end of the interview, record a few more seconds.

You still should wear headphones while recording. And the background sound will change over time, so record at least at the beginning and end of the interview. If it is possible – a natural break in the recording for example – record a bit more wild-track then. You don't need a great deal. Even 30 seconds each time will help you.

Also, if there are unique noises (a clock chiming, animal noises, traffic, school playground, for example) record and perhaps mix into the interview for additional atmosphere. If you are recording a package with several people, you can use sounds like that to make fantastic transitions or “beds” for you to link over.

If you are recording outdoors and need to record links, then try to record them outdoors, too. Never tell your listener you are outdoors or imply you are outdoors if you are recording inside.

Why?

- a sitting room sounds different to a meeting room
- which sounds different to a bed room
- which sounds different to a hospital
- which sounds different to inside a car.

By the way, inside a car is an OK substitute for a studio if you need somewhere quiet with soft surroundings that soaks up sound. When it's not moving, that is.

A reporter once brought me a recording which was to have been made beside a lake. When he arrived at the location, it wasn't a pleasant day so he brought the interviewee into a house and everything was recorded in a sitting room. He even said, “Here we are beside the lake,” and there was the sound of a water tap running. The sound of “the lake” was the sound of water being poured from a bottle into a cup. And I could hear the reverberation of the room.

The reporter did not get his fee, neither was he ever booked again.

Studio recording

There is a lot less to be said about recording in a studio than recording on site. The studio is built for the job.

You are also going to have someone to help you with the recording. They are going to make sure the microphones are optimally placed, they will monitor for unexpected noises, they will monitor to make sure the interview recording. You don't need to wear headphones.

The interviewee is likely to be more nervous or apprehensive. This is your territory, not theirs. Show them around, tell them what everything does, introduce them to the recording engineer, let them settle.

When finished the sound engineer will check the recording is OK.

Over recording

You need to be disciplined. You have a digital recorder that can hold hours of audio. You have all the time in the world. Yes, you will over-record. You should expect to but do not get carried away, do not lose the plot or the focus. If you over record way too much, once you begin editing, finding the interview among all of what was said can be difficult.

Be disciplined. Find the interview, find the story and record around it for any additional material. But don't over record “just in case you get a good story”. The research should tell you what you can expect. Sometimes, rarely, but sometimes an interviewee does give you something new. But not because the interviewer sat for an extra 30 minutes asking inane questions.

Staying safe

A final note on health and safety. Don't take risks with your interviewee. Do not for one moment put them into a dangerous situation.

Don't take risks with your equipment. No point recording the best interview in the history of interviews only to lose or damage your equipment by being careless.

Finally, don't take stupid risks with yourself. If you are expecting to go into a dangerous situation, discuss with your producer and take all precautions needed.

And producers and editors, you should assess the risk every time you send someone out. It does not have to be a detailed written report, but you should consider it properly. Write down what the risks are, then write what you as the producer and the reporter/interviewer will do to avoid or eliminate the risks. Both sign the paper, and file.

If you fancy yourself as a "professional", act like one.

Obtaining permissions

If you are on private property, in a shopping centre, in a shop or even in some theme parks, you might need permissions to record. Most of the time people don't mind. If you are in a cafe or a bar, no one will care much. Just ask. "Hello, I'm recording an interview with a friend, here. I hope you don't mind. It's for a radio programme." Then order food and drinks. If there is an objection, go somewhere else. If you are in such a place and they have given permission they well may be helpful if you need to find a quiet corner, switch off the background music, or not disturb you during the recording.

Having permission is not always necessary and sometimes it just not feasible. Other times, it's counterproductive. You are not going to request permission before door stepping someone.

Chapter 8: Editing

In a nutshell: You will edit your interviews for several reasons. The final piece should be easy to listen to with interruptions, umms and errs removed. It should be cut to keep the story and reduce the overall length but it must retain journalistic integrity. Editing is about more than removing.

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Radio producer Johnny Seifert (@johnnyseifert) works on the Paul Ross Full Set Breakfast at London's TalkRADIO. One of his jobs is making the weekly podcast.

"It's very important to tidy up the audio. You can edit it; take out all the "umms", all the hesitations, take out the repeated words and have a really nice clean finished article." Sometimes, Johnny says, a one hour interview might be edited to five minutes. One option to reduce the length is to take out the questions. "I think it's nice to have a well packaged audio at 15, 30 or 45 minutes."

Johnny and I discussed the differences between radio and a podcast. "Radio listeners tune in and out all day. There are spikes in listening at breakfast, afternoon drive-time and in late night radio. A podcast is an appointment to listen. Someone has decided to sit down and listen for an hour. Or more likely a walk rather than sit down. Podcasts are normally listened to on the move. With a podcast being in the foreground rather than the background – a radio programme is usually in the background – you need to keep people listening. One way to break up the programme and give the listener options as to whether they want to stop for now or continue listening is to use music or "stabs" [short musical punctuation]. The listener can stop a podcast at a junction like that and pick it up the next day."

It's not a rule, usually that the more preparation you do, the less editing you need.

Editing – the objectives:

- To pick out exactly the content you want.
- To reduce a piece to fit time.
- To remove interruptions, noises, stop and starts.
- To “de-um”. (We all use “umms” and “ermms” as we speak. We tend not to notice too much when we are talking to someone, but we do notice when we are listening to radio or podcasts. They can easily be removed to help the flow of the audio.
- Take out the phrases like “y’know”.
- To give the piece flow.

Sometimes when editing you need to make more important editorial and even ethical judgements. You are removing the content you don’t want, but it is wrong to misrepresent what the interviewee is saying. That should be obvious. There are other questions you might be faced with which you might think a little more ambiguous,

- If your interviewee has a stammer, should you edit that out? Some of it? All of it? Is that misleading? Worse, is it insulting to your interviewee?
- If your interviewee asks for anonymity should you grant it and disguise their voice? Can you disguise their voice? Should someone else read their contribution? Under what circumstances – if any – is that the right thing to do? Is it ever the right thing to do?
- Should you use that piece that you promised the interviewee you wouldn’t because on reflection it is really good? Someone says something in an interview, you have recorded it then at the end they ask you not to use it. Should you? Is that different to speaking to someone and before they tell you anything ask to be “off the record”?
- Should you tell someone you are recording? At what point should you tell them?

In the Appendix, there is a list of books and websites which include publications on ethics for journalists. These are questions you should consider now. When you produce your programme, and publish it in a podcast or blog, you face exactly the same laws and ethical questions

any experienced journalist faces. I recommend you do not treat them lightly.

If you are at college or school, or a team of friends who are learning about journalism, radio or podcasting, you should get together often to discuss the principles of what you are doing including the ethics of interviewing, editing and storytelling.

If you can, invite people with experience in the journalism to lead the discussion, present a talk, or review what you have made.

How to edit

You have completed your interview. If you are lucky; all you need is a “top and a tail”. That means just cutting out the first few seconds or minutes to give the presenter a clean lead into the interview. Then removing the last few seconds or even minutes to bring the interview to a conclusion.

A general rule (all rules can be broken) is that once an interview is edited and you send it and the cue material to the producer who will check it and send to the presenter. The presenter will read the cue into the first answer from the interviewee. If the presenter is introducing a “package”, the first sound could be anything including atmosphere, an interviewee or the reporter’s voice. As you are editing, consider the overall sound of how the write/read cue material links to the recorded material.

If you are the reporter and you are interviewing gardener Jimmy White who is about to retire having spent 30 years tending a local park (who said being a reporter was exciting?), your question might be “Jimmy, you have been working here for 30 years. What did the park look like when you started?”

Your cue material to the presenter will be something like:

“Park gardener Jimmy White hangs up his wellington boots today after spending 30 years tending to the prize-winning gardens of our town. Angie Davis asked him what the park was like when he started working there in 1986.”

Then to the answer he gives.

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Or

“Park gardener Jimmy White hangs up his wellington boots today after spending 30 years tending to the prize-winning gardens of our town. He described to our reporter Angie Davis what the park looked like in 1986.”

Then to the answer he gives.

Not

“Park gardener Jimmy White hangs up his wellington boots today after spending 30 years tending to the prize-winning gardens of our town. Angie Davis interviewed him.”

Then to the recording of the question you ask, because that would be:

“Park gardener Jimmy White hangs up his wellington boots today after spending 30 years tending to the prize-winning gardens of our town. Angie Davis interviewed him.”

“Jimmy, you have been working here for 30 years. What did the park look like when you started working here?”

Match and balance your cue material to your finished edit. You can edit a piece which begins with your question. When I was starting out, one experience journalist suggested that if I can’t get cue material at the top of the interview, listen to how it ends. You will almost always find something there.

To get to the final piece, you will probably have to go through most, if not all, of the process below. As you get more accustomed to the editing, some of these activities can be combined. You might transfer first, then log, fact collect and “paper” edit, or just do a provisional first edit to begin with. Then go into more detail.

Logging

Different people have different approaches to the logging. Quite simply you listen back to everything that was recorded and make a written record of what you hear – regardless of whether you are going to use it or not. Note what people said, who spoke, the questions, interruptions, and key moments. Begin indicating what you are likely

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to use. Keep the record for yourself and for later if you are talking to the rest of the team about what you have. Something that you decide not to use may later prove to be useful in the podcast. Your job might even end at this point and someone else takes over to edit everything.

Fact collection

The recording will have at least 6 elements:

- Padding, the introductory chat. See earlier about how to get the best from your interviewee as you check your levels.
- Specific information* and facts you will be able to use in scripts, cues and links. See below.
- Usable interview material. Of course, you will be editing some of that out, but for now, this is the content you want to use.
- Unusable material where you ask a question that gets nowhere, where the interviewee goes off on a tangent or just not relevant (as far as you can see at the moment - but log it anyway. The story might change and you might need to find it.)
- Interruptions: wind noise, over modulation, banging doors, just stuff that gets in the way.
- Atmosphere, wild-track, sounds around you.

That *specific information might be spellings of names, ages, addresses for contacting people, email addresses, dates, times. You can gather these as you set up and as you go along. You can use a notebook during the interview to collect these facts. But as you have a recorder running and you don’t want to spoil the rhythm of the interview, then gather the information as you go along knowing it is unlikely you will use it in the interview, but might need it for the support material.

“Paper” Edit

Maybe you don’t use paper any more. Maybe you will transfer everything on to an audio editor and mark up the edits there. Let’s call it a “paper” or “proposed” edit. With some digital editing packages, it might be best to mark-up on the computer.

In the analogue age, it looked like this:

```
in - 02:35 "In the beginning ..."  
out - 03:10 " ... we all thought OK."  
  
in - 04:10 "They began ..."  
out - 5:33 " ... was not true."  
  
in - 5:43 "... but it was."  
out - 10:21 "... never tried again."
```

The advantage of a paper edit, or proposed edit, is that you as the person editing can get through the decisions more quickly. It also allows the reporter or interviewer to do something else and an assistant or sound editor can do the editing.

Transfer

If you have not already moved the recording from your recorder to a computer, then before you cut and mix, you will need to transfer to digital editing software. My own favourites are Audacity (both PC and Mac) and Garageband (Apple computers only). Both are free. You will need to download Audacity, but Garageband is usually already installed in Apple computers.

There are others such as ProTools and Adobe Audition which you can pay for. While both Audacity and Garageband have their limitations, they are usually enough for simple editing and mixes.

Transfer the audio file from your digital recorder (usually “drag and drop”) and load into the software.

Cutting the interview

Unlike analogue tape editing, you cut, but you don’t lose what is removed. In the old days, before digital recording and digital editing tools, interviews and programmes were recorded on tape and the tape was literally cut at an angle on an editing block and the places which edits were required were marked using a white chinagraph pencil.

Once cut, the tape was usually cast aside on the “cutting room floor”. Finding any given moment from the tape discarded was painstakingly difficult. Many times, I have seen and myself had to rummaging around a mess of tape looking for a single word which had been mistakenly removed, or was needed to make an edit correct. (Tape speed was usually 7.5 inches (19 cm) per second and each word was about a third of a second. So, we were looking for 2.5 inches (6.32 cm) of tape, among dozens of 2.5 (6.35 cm) inches of tape.)

A digital recording is never actually cut. The editing simply tells the computer playing back where to find the sound needed. The original recording is not damaged. So, don’t worry if you make a mistake or if you want to experiment with editing. If you have time to play around with what you have, use that time to understand the software better.

Remember – people breathe between words and phrases. Don’t cut from the end of one word to the beginning of another. Normally you would aim to cut from the beginning of the first word you don’t want, (after the breath) to the beginning of the next word that you do want (not including the breath). This work 90% of the time. With experience and active listening, you can decide if the cut should be made before the breaths or a breath is added from another place.

“You have to have an eye for it or an ear for it.” says podcaster Lewis Rossiter. “You can learn technically all you like, but if you haven’t got the ear for it or the eye for it, the edit’s not going to be any good.” I have much sympathy for that argument. You can identify where the end of the piece you want it is and where the beginning of the next piece is, but unless you make a cut and create a transition that leaves the listener with no idea that there has been an edit, it is a failure. Some people can do it naturally, others need to practice.

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De-umming

De-umming is the practice of removing the noises people make between their words. For example:

"I eh hh, started the day ah, with a bit ahh of' emmm, of' emmm of confusion about when our appointment was. So, Iya, Iya, had to, y'know, give you a call first."

That's a bit of an exaggeration, but that is the way most people speak. De-umming will remove some (if not all) of those noises.

Like so:

"I eh hh, started the day ah, with a bit ahh of'em of confusion about when our appointment was. So, Iya, Iya, had to, y'know, give you a call first."

To get:

"I started the day with a bit of confusion about when our appointment was. So Iya, had to give you a call first."

On this example, most of the sounds can be removed. It used to be a lot harder when the edit was by chopping out tape with a razor blade. That final "Iya" would probably be impossible to remove by physically cutting the tape without the result sounding unnatural. Digital editing is a whole different world of sound. A talented sound editor might be able to blend it perfectly, or even copy a different "I had" from somewhere else and paste it in.

First review

You might at this point – before you mix the piece – listen back to what you have lined up for the report. If you are an editor, assistant editor or producer, you might want to review at this point to check recordings, scripts and other elements being used to make sure you are happy with it or to give early feedback:

- Are the facts in the script correct?

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- Is the grammar correct?
- Is there too much waffle?
- Does the script fit logically and editorially with the recorded parts?
- Is there a shortage of information?
- Does the report say what it intended to say?

All of these and of course, "Is it legal?" No defamation, no contravention on reporting court cases. This book will not be giving advice on law, but there are some things that are obvious that an editor should check.

Mix

When all the parts are identified, and put in order, when you have arranged the sound effects and wild-track, when you have selected the music you want to use, it's time to mix the sound all together to create the report, the sound and tell the story you want to tell.

Review

Before including in your podcast or radio programme, listen back. It sounds obvious, but only by listening back will you hear the mistakes, what can be improved and the best bits you want to highlight. You might not want to make changes now (apart from redeemable mistakes), but you will be learning something for the next time.

If you can, get a different pair of ears to listen with you. If you are an editor listen with the reporter and give feedback. If you have had a pre-mix review, this is just a cursory listen to check all is OK and get a final timing.

What's next?

- Write or draft the introductory script – the cue.
- Write an item for the website.
- Add contact numbers, addresses or anything else relevant to supporting the podcast.

The cue

Before you send your interview or report for inclusion in the podcast or the programme, you will write a cue. It is likely that the presenter

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will re-write it if they have a moment. Sometimes that is not possible. Write it in their voice if you can – or know the presenter well enough.

Among other things, the cue sets up the story. A cue into a live interview will

- Explain the context of the interview (the “why”),
- Who you are about to interview, and why they are being interviewed (“our correspondent”, a witness, someone with specialist knowledge, the person at the centre of the story, and so on.)
- Where they are (if it is relevant),
- Give details of the story so far – perhaps important new information.

Simply the cue gives the details that the listener needs to know before the interview starts.

Here are some examples cueing interviews or reports on the same story.

On the morning (GMT) of 31 January 2017 news broke US President Donald Trump dismissed Acting Attorney General Sally Yates, who questioned the legality of his immigration directive. Here are examples of four cues from four radio stations, two in Dublin and two in London. Two were cueing live interviews, one was cueing a recorded “as live” interview and one (broadcast at lunchtime) was cueing a packaged report:

RTE Radio 1’s Good Morning Ireland

“It’s ten minutes past six and we are turning to that news breaking overnight in the United States. President Donald Trump has fired the acting US Attorney General after she questioned the legality of his immigration ban. Sally Yates who was appointed under Barack Obama had earlier ordered Justice Department lawyers not to enforce the President’s executive order. In a statement, the White House said Miss Yates had “Betrayed” the department. Journalist Marion McKeown is on the line from the United

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States. Marion, what did Sally Yates say and how did the White House respond?”

BBC Radio 4’s Today programme

“Ten minutes past six. Now, President Trump has fired the Acting Attorney General after she ordered Justice Department lawyers not to enforce his ban on emigration from seven mainly Muslim countries. Our Washington Correspondent David Willis told me what prompted the sacking.”

Newstalk Dublin

“News overnight that President Trump has fired his Acting Attorney General. We’re joined on the line by Victoria Jones the White House Correspondent with Talk Media News. Victoria, is it a surprise that this has happened?”

BBC Radio 1’s Newsbeat

(Over music) “Donald Trump fired his top lawyer last night after she publicly refused to defend his controversial travel ban in court [...] The new president temporarily stopped refugees and people coming to the US from seven mainly Muslim countries. [Atmos – crowd at demonstration cheering. Atmos continues under presenter.] Sally Yates the Attorney General was told to clear her desk as thousands of people around the world protested on the streets claiming the ban is racist. [Atmos continues as reporter speaks.]

Each have their own style, have information to set up the interview to follow and provide the listener with the information they need to navigate the programme. There is no “right way”. The “wrong way” is to leave the audience confused about what is being talked about, who is doing the talking and why the subject has come up.

When everything is done ...

Then start thinking about the next story.

Try if possible, to work or plan a series rather than a single podcast. The advantage is that you can have a broad theme running through a series. When you are covering a story, not only can you refer to earlier related podcasts, you can talk about stories that you will cover in the future. You can ask your audience for input into stories that you are planning to work on.

Part 3 - Making the programme

This section is about creating the radio show, the programme that will become an episode of the podcast. When we think of a “podcast” we are thinking about what we are listening to on the computer, mobile phone or mp3 player. The arrival of digital radio, cable and satellite TV/radio services and the internet meant that we could more easily than ever before separate the content from the platform. No longer were radio programmes only heard on radio sets. You could listen to radio on your computer and digital TV. You could listen to radio and watch TV on demand when suited you not the TV or radio station’s schedulers.

The next two sections of this book are about the two separate entities; Content and Platform. When we talk here about podcasts in this book we are referring exclusively to audio and radio programmes delivered through the internet, not video or anything else that can be contained in a RSS enclosure tag.

This is a perfect description from Wikipedia.org

“A podcast is an episodic series of digital media files which a user can set up so that new episodes are automatically downloaded via web syndication to the user's own local computer or portable media player. The word arose as a portmanteau of "iPod" (a brand of media player) and "broadcast." The files thus distributed are typically audio or video, but may sometimes include other file formats such as PDF or ePub.”

[<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcast>]

This section is about making the radio programme. The information here is relevant to you, whether you are a podcaster, community radio producer or production team, student journalist or training as a professional broadcaster.

Before starting this section, once again I emphasise I am describing one type of programme – a magazine or current affairs style programme that uses a range of production techniques and styles.

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Your programme or audio might be different. What is important is what they all have in common.

Here are some other types of programme you will hear podcasters produce.

The Story Collector: This has been a fine tradition in radio going back decades. The great practitioner of wandering around the country or city and finding and recording stories of ordinary peoples' lives was the American journalist and broadcaster, (Samuel) Studs Terkel. He interviewed the rich and famous, but the ordinary person, too. You will find the archive at WFMT.com <http://studsterkel.wfmt.com/>

There are many other present-day podcasters who work in very simple ways; one person, one microphone and recorder and one story at a time.

The Studio Based Discussion: Two or three people gather together in a studio and talk to each other about a subject; politics, sport, relationships, media --- any subject is fair game. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. It works for me if the people are talking intelligently about their subject. They have done their research and have some insights to bring to the listener. These programmes fail when they are self-indulgent and narcissistic. They don't even attempt to engage the listener in any meaningful way and trade "in" jokes. These are all bad enough, but when two people with almost identical voices are "riffing off each other", and ignoring the listener, then I unsubscribe. As Larry Gifford put it in an interview you can hear as a podcast "I don't want to overhear you I want to be included."

The Documentary: So many excellent and brilliant podcasts are great works of storytelling and journalism. Malcolm Gladwell's Revisionist History is one.

There are no rules about content. Really ... you do not have to follow a radio programmer's format. You can try anything. Listen to Radio Lab for some fantastic ideas about rethinking content production.

If you can think it and record it, you can make it. The big question is, "Will anyone want to hear it?"

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There is an infinite number of approaches to an almost limitless number of genres from sport, fashion, lifestyle to gender and race studies, philosophy to economics, medicine. You choose – then choose an approach to keep people listening. It can be as simple as Lucy Mitchell mentioned earlier, who opens the microphone and reads a story.

Chapter 9: When you don't have a studio, and using digital recorders

In a nutshell: The good news is, you don't need a full professional studio. Most magazine programmes are made finally in a studio, but they do not have to be. Using a studio is a radio convention. As podcasters, we can leave aside convention to experiment.

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I don't have a studio. We can't afford a studio.

The good news is, you don't need a full professional studio. In fact, a studio sometimes can get in the way. I have spent a good part of this book describing the different types of content you can produce for a magazine programme. Most magazine programmes are made finally in a studio, but they do not have to be. Using a studio is a radio convention. As podcasters, we can leave aside convention to experiment.

I do not have a studio – I wish I did have one. My podcasts are very simple. I interview someone, edit that interview, then package it for the podcast. Sometimes the interviews are face to face. More often they are on Skype. There are excellent interviews recorded on site (listen to the interview with Freddie and Alex from No Such Thing As A Fish podcast. It is very interesting to hear what they have done to set up a 4-person podcast).

The bare minimum you need is a device to record audio and transfer to the internet where a podcast hosting service will store your final programme. Studios are useful, but there are many excellent podcasts – and quite a few radio programmes, that never use a studio.

Using a smartphone

(First see the notes about monitoring smartphone recordings earlier in the book)

Let me start by emphasising that this is far from ideal. Smartphones may do some pretty amazing things, but they were not designed for audio production. When you become serious about audio production, do not ever, except in emergencies and for simple recording, use a smartphone.

This section is to show that a smartphone can be used, particularly when you are learning about podcasting. These are possible exercises, but not a plan for excellence in podcasting.

The solo podcaster can use a smartphone to record themselves speaking. They can record an interview and rather than edit, record separate parts in order. Here are some examples.

Example 1: The podcaster, let's call her Dawn, simply wants to record something she has written. Perhaps she is active in student politics and wants to let people know what she has been doing and her plans. Perhaps it is one of a series of short stories that she has turned into a podcast series. Perhaps she is a local politician who wants to record a weekly diary about what she has been doing and her opinions on current events so her constituents can hear and comment on her blog.

All Dawn needs is an account on SoundCloud and (at time of writing) an Android Smartphone with a SoundCloud app. She records the audio piece, tidies the recording with simple editing tools and transfers it to SoundCloud. She will write the show notes on the website and that is that. Some audio recorder apps for iPhone will upload to a SoundCloud account. At time of writing there is no iPhone SoundCloud app. Visit the blog for this book www.podcastingfor.com for updates

Alternatively, Dawn can record her podcast on her smartphone and transfer it to a computer before editing, uploading and writing show notes.

Equipment needed: smartphone with audio recorder, internet connection (a computer) and free or paid-for SoundCloud account.

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If it is a short piece – under two minutes, there is a service called Anchor [<https://anchor.fm/>] where you can record directly from your phone.

Another short form podcasting service is Opinion [<http://www.opinionpodcasting.com/>] which has the advantage of having a proper audio editor. Rather than just trim start and finish (top and tail), you can move audio around and clip out content.

But remember, the microphones on a smartphone are at the bottom of the device.

Example 2: Not everyone can be in the same place at the same time. Or Dawn is moving from place to place to tell a story. The smartphone has a digital audio recorder. All the better if Dawn can add headphones and separate microphone. However, even with the limitations of the smartphone, she can gather all the elements of the podcast (interviews, discussions, musical performances, links etc.) transfer them to a computer and edit them together. It's not great, but it will do. Also, beware some smartphones do not record as mp3s and their sound files will need to be converted before editing. Best advice – this is OK in an emergency, but go buy a digital audio recorder. It is worth the investment.

Example 3: Dawn's podcast is a discussion. Each week, she and three friends get together to discuss recent events in technology and business. All she has – and all she needs is – a table where the four friends sit around with an audio recorder in the middle. Dawn wears headphones, of course, which helps her monitor the recording. Easy. It is unlikely the sound quality and balance will be good. But if needs must ... For a discussion, better to invest in the right tools.

Some microphones are designed to capture four people talking at a table. Lewis Rossiter uses one. Listen to the podcast with Willis McBrier "Sound recording and microphones". [www.podcastingfor.com/]

Lewis Rossiter who is just starting out as a podcast producer uses an impressive iPad app called Boss Jock. If you are familiar with modern digital radio studios, you will probably instantly recognise what Boss Jock is trying to do. "I have an iPad Pro, a Blue Yeti microphone and

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Boss Jock on the iPad. Headphones plug into the iPad," All together Lewis has his own mobile studio.

Using a digital recorder

You can do the same as above with a digital recorder.

There are many advantages to using a proper recorder rather than an app on a smartphone. I gave the example to show how simple making a podcast can be. I do not recommend it.

The advantages of a professional recorder are outlined earlier. To recap:

- You can monitor the recording as it happens.
- You can set the input levels properly.
- You have much better quality built in microphones.
- You can plug in a separate microphone if you need to.
- You have more memory available if you need it.
- You are using equipment designed specifically for the job.
- You can make a much higher quality recording.

You will need to transfer your recording to a computer. There you can edit and mix the sound before using an internet connection to upload to the podcast host. More about hosting podcasts later.

Digital Recorder, Computer and Audio Editing Software

With a digital recorder, a computer and audio editing software, you can really get involved in audio production and you still don't need a studio. Very many podcasts and very many radio programmes need only these tools to create their show.

I have made thousands of hours of radio programmes for local and national stations. For dozens of those programmes I did not go to a studio at any point during the recording and editing. The audio files were sent – by computer to a studio for broadcast. Recording has been on location – including links. Editing and mixing was done on a desktop computer and the final sound file was stored on a computer until transmission.

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Let's say Dawn has these at her disposal. What difference would that make to the earlier examples?

- If anyone makes a mistake or there is an interruption and Dawn will need to re-record something, then the editing can be done on the computer.
- Dawn doesn't need to record items in a particular order and she can add unexpected pieces more easily.
- She can add background sounds to enhance interviews.
- She can fade the music or add interviews over the music.
- Add recorded music, or previously recorded interviews.
- Edit the interviews keeping the best material.
- Edit the whole piece for a given duration.
- Oh, and she does not have to pause while going between items. She can edit the sound files together into the final production.

Still we do not need a studio. As a piece of research while planning your podcast find and listen to a range of podcasts. Many will not have used a studio and are better because they are outdoors. The "Land of the free" podcast from America is always recorded on location.

The "No Such Thing As A Fish" podcast mentioned earlier, is recorded in an office in Covent Garden. It sounds as if each of the four presenters has a microphone and the sound is mixed. The sound is first class and the mixing excellent. No studios are used to record or in post-production.

"No one stopped listening to a podcast because they used the wrong microphone." Wrong.

Some podcasts I listen to – I shan't name them, but they are from well-known magazines – are obviously recorded in an ordinary room, probably an office. They are (again, obviously) using one microphone which is picking up ambient noise, room reverberation and not getting all (even both) the voices at the same balanced level. So, while I say, you don't need a studio, you will need a suitable room and recording equipment. I have read people say, "No one stopped listening to a podcast because they used the wrong microphone." Perhaps, but

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wrong microphone, wrong room, wrong settings and no proper structure has driven me away from some podcasts.

Many of Olly Mann's Modern Mann interviews are recorded on location. His Media Podcast is recorded in the restaurant of a club. He has high quality microphones, because of the background ambiance each participant holds their own mic, and the voices are monitored and mixed.

The most important thing about your podcast is what you want to say and who you want to say it to. Only then do you need to worry about equipment. Studios are expensive to hire. You don't need every piece of equipment when you begin. As you learn more about what you want to do, and the best equipment to help you do it. You can pick and choose what you need. You might even begin to turn a room into a studio.

Remember, you are a student journalist, not a network or national radio station. Your listener has different expectations and implicitly understands that you are not BBC, RTE or NPR. Sometimes they will hear cars drive past or children shouting in the background. Sometimes things will fall apart a little.

Like YouTube, we are prepared to forgive mistakes by an enthusiastic amateur video maker that we would not accept from a TV station. Your podcast will not be compared with BBC or NPR. You just need to do your very best and produce stories and information that people want to hear.

People – your listeners want what you want; stories that make great listening. Do not try to be something you are not. The listener can hear falseness.

Be honest with your listener. Because if you are not honest about who you are and what you are doing, then why should the listener believe a word you are saying?

Trust is hard won, but can be lost in a moment. Your greatest resource is not a studio, but the trust a listener places in you.

Chapter 10: Structure

In a nutshell: Regardless of the genre or format, you will need a structure. Most podcasts have a simple structure. If you are a solo podcaster, you will not want to develop something complex. As your team becomes better skilled and more sophisticated, you might need to plot a structure. The main point is: bring your listener with you, don't lose them in the noise.

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Even the simplest podcast or community radio programme has a structure. Whether you have thought about it or not, you are going to have a

- Beginning
- Middle
- End

The question is, how can you best structure your podcast to bring your listener through from beginning to the end, keeping the listener informed, surprising them with information they did not already know, motivating them to become involved and leaving them wanting more? There is more than a dash of showbiz in your average podcast.

This chapter looks at different structures. You need to decide which you will adopt and how you will make the best of it.

Sometimes the word “format” is used to describe a structure. Many of the TV programmes you watch are strictly formatted and you will find national variations of familiar formats around the world. Radio is less formatted, but will have a structure.

Radio producer Johnny Seifert (@johnnyseifert) works on Ross Full Set Breakfast at London's TalkRADIO. One of his jobs is making the weekly podcast. He draws from the best of the week's programmes. “The structure,” he told me. “Is almost like the purpose. Why have I made this podcast? What do I want to tell the listener? Why is this podcast different to podcasts I've made before? What is different between last week's episode and last week's episode?”

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Not every podcast producer will agree with me when I say this. You should not be constrained by the structure. If you have a complicated magazine programme with lots of people working on it then one day you are offered a lengthy, in-depth interview with someone you are eager to have on your show, or you are offered an opportunity to hold a live public discussion with an audience in a local venue – something you have never done before – you would be daft not to abandon your normal format for a special programme.

I suggest strongly staying within your editorial brief. If your editorial purpose is student politics, don't in the next episode produce a cookery show.

Structures are almost always a work in progress. Formats are usually tied down. Johnny compares the structure of a radio programme to a journey. "You have an A to B destination route but on that route, you might have a roundabout in the middle. You might go down different pathways but you come back to the original question."

Why bother having a structure or a format? People, your listeners, like a degree of familiarity. They like to understand instinctively the internal navigation of the show. They like to be taken on a journey but have confidence that you know where you are going, and they are happy to follow. From the production team's perspective, the building blocks of a structure will help make the podcast. Whether you follow the structure dogmatically or have a less formal approach, you as producers will ask

- How will we make the beginning and grab the listener's attention?
- How will we approach the interviews to bring the listener along and motivate them to participate?
- How will we organise the internal promotion or "signposts" ("coming up next", "later in the programme", "next week")?
- How to and when to add listener comments?
- If you are going to carry advertising or sponsorship, how do you keep the listener listening?

There are many other questions. Many will occur to you when you have made several podcasts.

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Olly Mann told me, "You can be a bit more confident about content that you wouldn't put in a radio programme. "Answer Me This" is really tightly edited and we want it to be pacy. But equally there are conversations in there that for a radio broadcast you would cut because they are too edgy or about something too niche. Whereas with a podcast you can have the confidence that if a person is listening and if they are 40 minutes into the show, they're probably not going to turn off.

"I find it really useful when there is some I really like who has done a really in-depth interview ... I'll happily listen for a couple of hours. It's more like reading a book than listening to a radio programme."

The simplest structure is beginning, middle and end. Some of the best podcasts and radio programmes are just this. All the emphasis goes into the middle bit. The rest is "Hello" and "Goodbye"

Beginning, Middle and End

Beginning or the introduction sets out what listeners can expect to hear in the programme. There might be some "tease" content to keep people listening. To use music or not? To use music to talk over or not? It is part of the style of your programme – you need to decide. Here are some radio programmes and podcasts to consider. Each are different, there is no "right" answer.

1. Trumpcast (Slate podcast)
2. Irish Times Business Podcast
3. The Bottom Line (BBC Radio 4 programme and podcast)
4. Sunday (BBC Radio 4)
5. Woman's Hour (BBC Radio)
6. Media Podcast (Olly Mann podcast)
7. Freakonomics (Podcast)

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Middle: This is where the story goes, or the main point of the show. This is where the purpose, prospects and running order come to life.

End: Here is where you say goodbye and (for example) give contact details, where the listener can email their thoughts and comments, where they can get more information. You might even have a little promo for “next time”. And most definitely credits – the people who helped make the show.

Everything else is an extension of this simple 1, 2, 3 structure

Here are some others

- Adverts, Beginning, Middle, End
- Adverts, Beginning, Middle, End, Adverts
- Complex beginning, Adverts, several sections of middle, End
- Complex beginning, Adverts, Mid-section part 1, Contact details, Internal Promo, Mid-section 2, Pointers to related story, End Credits, “And finally” “Next Time trail”.

The pace of the programme is also part of the plan. Pace will be determined by the programme’s personality, the information and content you are dealing with and the target audience. It is also important to consider how people listen to podcasts; usually on the move, often with headphones or earbuds, sometimes in the car and almost always alone. As has been said several times, listening to a podcast is a very intimate affair. The pace is likely to reflect that. It might be more conversational. All of that depends on the audience and their expectations.

Sometimes the content will be difficult, complex, emotional. TalkRADIO producer Johnny Seifert says you need to give the listener space to think and reflect. “You need to allow the listener to interpret what they just heard. Silences are so important, and those pauses will allow the listener to gather their thoughts, and then you can move on. The structure is really important.” Of course, Johnny is not talking about long pauses. A heartbeat’s silence can give the listener that moment to adjust to what they have just heard.

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How you move from one story to another, transition, is important.

There is more about advertising at the end of this chapter.

The podcast episode introduction

What should you say in the introduction? You can hear some wonderfully creative and inventive introductions to podcasts, often more creative and inventive than your average radio programme. Among my favourites is Freakonomics at freakonomics.com.

There are several reasons why this is one of my favourites: the pace, the subject, the presenter, the production values. Two elements of the show make it distinctive. The beginning and the signposts around the break (half way through). The beginning is almost a show by itself. I measured one edition to have 11 minutes from the beginning of the podcast to the intro music. And it was a fascinating 11 minutes. I had to keep on listening. The pre- and post-break signposts are perfect, one sets up what to expect in part 2, the second refers and refreshes what we have already heard. This podcast is not thrown together at the last minute. Neither does any of it sound like hard work.

The key is to practice and refine. What is the friendliest fastest way to pull your audience into your podcast?

People who love to produce creative radio and audio can really experiment in a podcast. They can get it wrong, they can try something new, and they can take a new approach to the very start of the show. You don’t have a management structure that makes the rules that flattens the creative spirit. You have the licence to fail, to try again, to be better. And creative people find their reward in following through to realising their vision. So, they will invest more time.

I have heard and argued with experienced and highly professional broadcasters who say that you shouldn’t give it all away in the intro. Keep the listener surprised. Don’t tell them what’s on the show. People who say that are in a minority, I disagree with them, but I would not say they are wrong. They may well be right. Their argument is based on the belief that if you say what’s on the programme and a listener doesn’t fancy anything on the menu, they will listen no further. The argument is logical. I have never seen evidence. I think the people who argue this and are successful, are

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because their listener knows they will be delighted with something in the show, and the presenters and production team have built a great relationship and the audience consistently enjoys what they hear. A menu in those circumstances is unimportant.

There is another good argument for not putting too much effort into the start of a radio programme; people will be tuning in later. The main reason for a menu is to bring listeners from one programme (the one they have been listening to) through to the next (the one you are making). For linear listeners to live broadcast radio programmes, that is a good reason for a menu.

So why have one in a podcast? Why make it special? I believe if you keep the content a secret, people might well not bother past the introduction, because they sense there is something better somewhere else. Remember, yours is not the only podcast in their pocket.

A well written, warmly spoken and welcoming script saying, “hello and here’s what we have for you this time” is as good as any tricks and creative starters you can come up with. When you are starting out as a programme producer, keep it simple. Then as you progress there is room for development. Listen to a wide range of podcasts and hear what others do. Copy the best.

Should there be music?

Later in the chapter on Rights: Music, photos and readings. I’ll discuss what you can, can’t and should do and how to stay on the right side of the law. Do you need music – a theme or signature tune? It’s entirely up to you. Some podcasters are very creative in the use of music not just in the introduction, but throughout the programme. Once again, I will refer you to Freakonomics and to Malcolm Gladwell’s Revisionist History. The wonderful Radiolab podcast will give you lots of ideas for introductions and structure and how to use music and other sounds.

As yourself and your team: “How can we be more creative?”

Internal promotion - signposts

Within the structure of the programme you may have important reminders and signposts to keep the listener with you. Here are some:

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“Coming up” Almost everyone who is listening to your podcast will have heard the introduction. But at times – and not too frequently – it is useful to remind people what will be coming up later in the programme and how that relates to what they have already heard. Not everyone listens in one sitting or completes the programme in one day.

If you are a radio programme with people tuning in and tuning out all the time, then the “coming up later in the programme” is essential. If you have a lot of material in the podcast or programme, sometimes not everything gets on the opening menu anyway, or you will have an interview with just one side of an argument, so “later we will hear what people opposed to the idea think” is a good way to show balance (providing you want to show balance. The joy of podcasting is you do not have to be balanced – but it can help.) Will what you are covering link to what will be heard in subsequent programmes? Is there something coming up in subsequent programmes you want to promote now? Are there other podcasts like yours that you want to promote and who will “plug” your podcast?

“Find out more on the blog/website” One of the features that makes a podcast more than just audio you can download, is the supporting website or blog. A blog is better than a website because the listener can add comments. A website with a comments section would do, but a blog is often best. On the blog, you can have supporting content such as photos, maps, additional audio – an extended interview, for instance – not used in the podcast. You can add all the contact details for guests, stories and even the running order or scripts. You can add notes and promotions for forthcoming editions. Most of all you can add detailed descriptions of content of the podcast. These are the “show notes” See later in this chapter.

Comments on previous podcasts

A podcast should whenever possible, include comments from listeners which they leave on the blog or email to you. You should be able to tell your audience how to comment. By providing information on adding comments or email address for the podcast, you are also opening the potential for continuing the content of the podcast beyond the recording of that episode. If you are going to have a comments

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section, a Facebook and/or a Twitter feed, then you should use that to engage with the audience on and off air.

Not all podcasts have comment sections on their website. Not all podcasts are about engagement. Some simply use social media to promote their work and do not engage with the audience. Those are the sorts of decisions you need to consider when you are defining your Purpose.

Tent Poles

As part of the structure, you should consider creating “tent poles”; moments or stories in the podcast or programme distributed throughout the show so listeners will listen through as long as possible.

You will probably start with the best or one of the best stories, the most relevant interesting, inspiring, the lead. Do you feature the “next best” next, and the “third best” after that? Well, first, not everyone will agree with you on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc. “best” story. If you can rank them, then why would everyone listen through to the end? If you are a community radio programme, people will join you through a live show. Do you want them to hear just the less interesting, less important stories at the end? Producers schedule stories; the best (probably) at the top, a good on interesting story – sometimes a funny story at the end “and finally ...” then mix the best and the more mundane giving the show light and shade throughout. This is the producer’s challenge; keep the audience listening right to the end. You do that by refreshing the show constantly, telling people about the interesting stuff coming up soon, having teasers (“What made the elephant sneeze? We’ll be talking about a twitchy trunk later in the show. But first, peeling onions”), populating the show with good stories as tent poles. And no, I have never produced a story about sneezing elephants or peeling onions. You never know, you might be lucky.

Segues – and how to make people cringe ...

“Moving right along ...” Please never use that phrase.

A segue is the transition from one piece of music to another. For our purposes, it is the transition from one story to another. It is the

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combination of the back announcement “... that was ...” of one story to the cue into the next story. The idea is to be as conversational and seamless as possible. It can be difficult. Sometimes it is not even desirable to attempt a seamless transition. Sometimes you need silence.

Jenni Murray and Jane Garvey present BBC Radio 4’s Woman’s Hour. If you want to learn how to write perfect scripts, seamless transitions between stories and how to do beautifully effective interviews, then listen to that programme.

Often music is used to separate stories at difficult junctions. What sort of music and how it is used will depend on the style of the programme and audience expectations? Sometimes a music stab, a single staccato chord will do the trick. Sometimes more time is needed. TalkRADIO podcast producer Johnny Seifert told me about a recent problem he had linking two very different stories. “We had Oritsé form JLS talking about his mum having MS. It would have been horrific going from that into an interview with Lee from Steps talking about a show at the Edinburgh Festival. So instead I put a trail in the middle that separated them. So, the audience has the time to gather their thoughts and move on again.”

You can hear more from Johnny on the “Podcasting For ...” podcast where he talks about structure, audiences, recording and editing.

Highly experienced and talented presenters can lead their listener through a programme from one item to the next with the greatest finesse. They come out of a story, connect it to a relevant thought which leads (perhaps via another connection) to the next. Another BBC Radio 4 presenter to learn from is Eddie Mair. Along with that scripting skill he has the skill to speak directly to the listener, ask penetrating and concise questions and add humour just at the right time. He also understands the value of a moment’s silence as a junction.

As a prospective podcast and programme maker listen to great presenters. Use how they work and what they say as opportunities to learn. Some are simultaneously presenting a radio programme and

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running a master class. I would welcome your suggestions at podcastingfor.com

The End

When I was a child (that's a long time ago), there was a TV programme on each evening called Tonight. It always ended with "That's all for tonight, the next 'Tonight' will be tomorrow night. Until then, good night." except of course on a Friday when it ended "That's all for tonight, the next 'Tonight' will be Monday night. Until then, good night."

I was a kid. I was amused easily. For me it had the appeal of the repetitiveness of a bedtime story. As far as I was concerned, it was the highlight of the programme. I was 9 years old when the last Tonight was broadcast. I loved it. Apart from "Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin" (Listen with Mother), it was probably the first catchphrase I had come to recognise.

The end of the show, and the final stories should not be what's left on the shelf after all the good stuff is gone. The phrase "And finally..." on many programmes leads to the last item. The funny, amusing or intriguing yarn.

As the producer, you will want people to listen to the end. This is where you will usually have the credits which is the list of all the people who have worked on and contributed to the show. The credits will include a final mention of the advertisers and sponsors. You will talk about how to contact the podcast and the blog address. You might promote what's coming up next time. Sometimes the credits can roll on for quite some time. Crediting everyone and everything is not mandatory. People might or might not listen right to the end. You are recognising the effort of all the people involved. The credits create good-will and if you are a voluntary organisation and people are giving up their time for free to make the podcast, the least you can do is say "thank-you".

Some presenters don't do "goodbye". It's their style and anyway, does saying good-bye make sense? Some don't say "hello" either. Some, on the other hand, go right over the top: "Well, that's all we have for you this time, I really have loved your company for the last hour. It

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has just been wonderful being with you and I hope you've enjoyed being with me ..." And it goes on, all sweet and syrupy and ... well, basically false.

Make the end of the show important. Make it a call to action. Create a functional wrap that will encourage people to download and listen to the next podcast or subscribe to the series. You could also promote another podcast that you think is important and related to the programmes you are making. Send people there. We are at a time in podcasting when finding the best programmes to listen to can be difficult. I always appreciate someone I trust recommending a podcast for me to listen to. We need to support each other rather than compete in a negative way. We can compete positively by working together to raise standards.

The end is as important as any other part of the programme. You are likely to rehearse the top of the show before you begin recording – or going live on air if you are making a community radio programme. Do not forget to write, plan or rehearse the end of the show. If you don't, you will arrive there and you have no idea of how to stop. Coming out of the last story and just saying "That's it for this programme. Goodbye" is not good enough. Rehearse the beginning, rehearse the end. You will find flaws and be able to fix as needed.

The end is the successful completion of the show. It has a good symmetry. It feels just right. More importantly it sets people up for the next time. Give your audience something to remember and to expect in the future.

Review

Once the podcast is made, then the whole team should listen back to review it. This is how you learn about what you can do, what you need to learn and how to improve. The review should have some form of structure. Yes, slaps on the backs all round is good for morale and keeping up enthusiasm. Professionals spend time learning from what they have done.

This is not an exhaustive list of questions to prompt discussion, but it's a start.

Podcast production:

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- Overall was the episode a credible concept?
- How was the duration?
- How was the structure?
- Did you find it (overall) interesting and entertaining?

Presenter:

- Did the presenter invite you into the episode and make you feel welcome?
- Did the presenter explain to you what the episode was about and try to engage your interest?
- Did the presenter introduce the panellists and explain why they were there?
- Did the presenter ask relevant questions?
- Did the presenter push the panellists for better more detailed answers?
- Did the presenter challenge panellists?
- Did the presenter make you feel that they were in control?

Panellists/Guests

- Did the panellists sound as if they knew what they were talking about?
- Did they express themselves clearly?
- Did present information confidently?
- Did they cite their sources?
- Did they engage with each other?
- Could the presenter have helped them engage with each other more effectively?
- Did they tell you something you didn't already know?
- Did they tell stories?

Finally ...

- What was the take away?
- If you were producing, what would you put into the next episode?

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Show notes

In our programme structure, we have reached the end of the show, but for the production team, there is still plenty to do.

Once your programme is recorded, you will start writing your “show notes”. Show notes are a summary of what is on the programme, who is interviewed, perhaps some quotations from guests. Show notes are likely to be the first thing people will know about the podcast. They are there to encourage people to listen.

The show notes on the blog can also contain additional material; photos, maps, short videos, links to other podcasts, websites and blogs. If you have the team and the time, it is worth enriching the blog post with plenty of information. However, if you don't have the team and the time, the website or blog are supports to the podcast. The focus should be on the audio.

A note about advertising, sponsors and other non-production credits

Are you planning to run adverts? First, you should ask “Why?” Most podcasts that run adverts and talk about sponsors do so because it raises money. That money can be used to re-invest in the podcast, the equipment, studio hire. As new podcast makers, you could send your team on courses to learn more about what they do. (My contact details are on the website.) Does the advertising or sponsorship raise enough to make an appreciable difference to your production? If you want, or are required to run advertising, there are some things to consider.

Even professional podcasters find it difficult to make money out of their podcasts. Many rely on listener contributions and subscriptions. The podcast landscape is changing and changing fast. Some advertisers realise that podcasting is different:

- Listeners are less likely to scroll through or fast forward through advertisements.
- Listeners are more engaged with the podcast than with a website.
- Listeners are, of course, listening. Rather than having the radio on in the background, listeners will have made a

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choice and are likely to put up with snappy to the point advertising if the content is rewarding.

Often podcast presenters read the adverts and personalise them. Listeners seem to find this highly personalised commentary much less intrusive than hard sell radio adverts. Heard too often, though, they do seem rather repetitive – even strange. Does any real sane person talk at length about the quality of their underpants and where and why you should buy the same underwear? Yet that personalisation is attractive to advertisers as well as listeners and I believe it is reasonable to assume that podcasts will become increasingly attractive to advertisers.

As a journalism student, your primary objective is to learn about podcasting, broadcasting and journalism. You may find it necessary to find funding to resource the podcast. Finding sponsors and advertising is what happens in real life.

Before you decide to look for advertising think about these issues.

Will the advertising impact on your editorial independence?

Maybe you are not concerned about independence. If editorial independence is important to you, then try to make the relationship with the advertiser as transparent as possible. You need to build trust with your listener. If your listeners hear an advert and a story related to that advert (some people call it content marketing), you could lose listeners' trust very fast indeed. For example, a free newspaper might carry advertising for a product, business or service. It will be obvious that it is an advert. Then on a different page (sometimes the same page), there will be an editorial feature on that product, business or service. You will even find that in high-end magazines and increasingly in reputable national newspapers. If a newspaper carries an advert then writes a feature on how wonderful that product is, will you trust their judgement? And if your podcast carries an advert for a product and then you are expected by the advertiser to produce a feature on how wonderful that product is, will your listener trust you?

Where is the advertising placed in your podcast? Some podcasts run the adverts at the top of the show before the presenter speaks. Personally, I don't like that and if I can, I scroll through 10 seconds by

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10 seconds. Try to make the advert short if possible, so scrolling is more effort than listening. And make sure the advertising is not irritating. "Funny" adverts are rarely "funny" after the second listen. You can run advertisements during the podcast and use them as logical ways to break up the show. Your presenter can read them. That often is less jarring than a standard radio advert. I have heard some podcasts run a short – very short – advert at the top of their podcast. It is so short it is not worth scrolling through. The content that follows is the reward. I have heard others go on and on. If you are a fan of a particular podcast and each episode they run a long advert for (oh, let's say mattresses), I'm going to be ready to scroll through.

If you are producing a community radio programme, the radio station you are with will probably have its own policy on advertising and the placing of adverts.

Sponsors are often a more efficient way of funding your programme than advertisers. They may provide some sort of support to the direct making of the podcast. Perhaps a generous studio owner has let you use the studio free or at reduced price in exchange for a sponsor's mention. Perhaps your college is providing the office space and studio, or a local business supplies all your coffee needs. Give credit where credit is due, not only to the people working on the podcast, but the people and businesses who supply support to you.

Listeners are sophisticated enough to understand when your presenter says – even half way through a programme:

"Time for a cup of coffee. Thanks to The Coffee Shop at 3 Main Street, My Town, who supplies us with our favourite blend. Maybe they can mix something up for you. Also thanks to The Big Studio where we make this podcast. They can record anything from a solo guitarist to a church choir. Call them on 123 4567" And that only took about 20 seconds.

Beware, broadcasters: make sure you are aware of sponsorship and advertising regulations in your country or region. Are you, as part of your licence agreement, permitted to carry sponsored programmes and what are the regulations around sponsorship? If you are carrying advertising, what are the legal requirements relating to advertising? If

this is not your area of knowledge, then find out. Consult with people who know. Understand the rules and laws about advertising and sponsorship before you start down that road.

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So far you have recorded the programme, the show. Up to this point you have done what radio producers have been doing for almost a century. Now we take the process into the 21st century.

Broadcaster and podcast producer Olly Mann: “I’m really pleased that in the last year or so, we’ve been seeing a lot more creative treatment of shows. Although my personal preference is for very straight forward shows where two or three people sit around and have a discussion, I always thought it odd that was a lot of people’s default when making these things because if you look at the Radio 4 schedule for example there’s no reason why there can’t be a popular podcast version of every single one of those genres. There are food magazine programmes, dramas, verbatim storytelling, but it took a while to catch.”

Since the early 1900s distribution has been by radio waves. More recently “radio” as we still call it has been by internet, cable and satellite, too. Since about 2004 by RSS feed. What we call podcasting.

The show is recorded. Next you will want to make it available for people to hear. You will want to promote it and get people talking about it.

We now move to the next phase of production. If you have a lot of people working on the project, then you might hand over the next part to a different team – the web team or podcast team.

Part 4 - The podcast, platforms, blog and social media

The word “radio” doesn’t really work anymore. Once it was the sound that came out of a radio set. You tuned in FM, short wave, long wave and good old medium wave/AM.

Now radio is the sound that comes out of your radio ... and your TV ... and your computer. I can’t even claim it is sound without vision, as there have been experiments with “visual radio”.

A radio programme can have all sorts of supporting information when the programme is carried on DAB.

The good news is, when anyone says radio, most everyone knows what it is.

If you talk about a podcast sometimes the people who you are talking to are not too sure. In her excellent paper *A Guide to Podcasting* published January 2016 by the Tow Centre for Digital Journalism, Vanessa Quirk writes:

“Clea Conner Chang, the director of marketing for Intelligence Squared, described the issue as a branding problem: People say, “What’s a podcast? How do I get a podcast?” It has an inherent branding problem. [...] It’s just radio on demand. You can hear your favorite show any time, and they just don’t realize how it works yet, how convenient it is. [...] Podcasting is on this precipice of being something understood by the masses—it’s not there yet.”

In a snapshot, there it is: [Podcasting is] just radio on demand.

I have been guilty of separating downloadable radio programmes from what I have called “proper podcasts”. I was wrong to do that. If we podcast makers realise we are part of a family that is still called radio – on demand radio – whenever you want radio – radio that waits for you.

Radio is of course always there as a stream of sound. Podcasts are there when you decide to listen. But really that’s all the difference. All

the other activities are part and parcel of the modern radio programme. The blog, the Facebook page, the Twitter stream and everything else are all part of making radio.

I have already mentioned Olly Mann. The Media Podcast is one of his. Trevor Dann is a long-established maker of radio and TV programmes. He said this on The Media Podcast in August 2016 “I don’t think we can define the success of a radio brand by how many people consume it through a radio set. I think that’s very ancient thinking and we have got to understand that people are listening to what we call radio programmes in a multiplicity of ways through a multiplicity of different devices.”

In this section I explain how to complete the podcasting process and how to make your programme available to anyone on the planet (who has the right equipment).

Chapter 11: Making the mp3 Audio File

In a nutshell: You have probably heard of mp3s and mp3 players. The .mp3 audio file can be one of many audio file types including .wav and .m4a. Some recording systems have their own file types. An audio podcast should only be an .mp3 file which contains the data (the sound) and important meta-data which describes the content. Other formats are supported but not universally. MP3s are supported by all devices. This section is about the .mp3.

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This is where we begin the process where you will make your programme available to the world.

If you know about .mp3 files, bit rates and sampling settings, feel free to skip this part.

I will attempt to make this section as easy to understand for non-technical people as possible. I am not particularly technical myself, so I hope it will be clear enough to follow without being patronising. There is a lot of information available on the web about the balance between file size, audio quality and download time. So, once you have read this section and you want to explore more, a few web searches should bring up all the additional information you need.

Technically minded readers will find this bit simplistic. Some will disagree. There is a technical section on the blog www.podcastingfor.com for discussion. I welcome your advice, suggestions and stories.

I’m not interested in all this tech stuff ... just tell me what to do

Let’s assume that by this stage you have recorded your programme. If you have recorded it onto a recorder you will need to move that sound file onto your computer and fire up your editing software.

If you have recorded directly onto the computer’s editing software, you are ready to begin editing.

Audio editing software

There are surprisingly few audio editing packages. Chances are you will use one of these:

Audacity: This is a free program. It is very simple but (if you are patient) it can do some fairly complex things. I use Audacity. I like it, I find it reliable. I don't "love" it though. It is open source and there are forums where you can raise questions and discuss improvements.

There are lots and lots of free tutorials on YouTube and on websites. Audacity users and developers tend to be very enthusiastic about the software. It is updated fairly regularly. Try to always have the most recent version.

There is an Audacity User manual online, where you can find out how to edit on Audacity.

[http://manual.audacityteam.org/man/tutorial_editing_an_existing_file.html]

Garageband: Like Audacity it is free, simple and reliable. It can only be used on Apple computers and again like Audacity there are lots of tutorials and support forums. I use it, I like it, I find it reliable, but I don't love it. Actually, I don't love any of the four I'm talking about in this section.

There is an excellent description of how to edit on Garageband at this website from Berkley

[<http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/garageband-basic-editing/>] or the shorter version [<http://bit.ly/2ijzNdS>]

It is an excellent, simple step by step introduction to editing speech on Garageband.

Garageband can export your recording as an .m4a file. A podcast can include an .m4a file but there are drawbacks. Retired sound engineer Roger Wilmot wrote on the Apple Communities messageboard

"Mp3 files can be played by pretty well anything, but m4a files may require QuickTime - if you install iTunes on Windows you get Quicktime so no problem there, but other MP3 players may well not recognize them.

"So basically, m4a files allow chapters with their own images, and mp3 files are universally playable. If you don't want chapters I should use mp3."

[<https://discussions.apple.com/thread/2692292>]

Adobe Audition: It began life as Cool Edit and Cool Edit Pro. It has been part of the Adobe family since 2003 and is aimed at professionals and broadcasters and you will pay about £ £20 a month licence (annual plan paid monthly price point, Summer 2017). There is more information from the Adobe website

[<https://creative.adobe.com/plans>]. I used to like Cool Edit a lot. Audition gets a lot of good reviews.

ProTools: I have used ProTools for podcast production, but I find it has too much to offer. It's big and complicated and if I were a film sound editor or music producer it would probably be my first choice. As a humble podcast producer, it's way beyond my requirements. It started out as Avid and was a popular sound editor for broadcasters and film makers. Like Audition you can buy a monthly licence for ProTools. There is an "express" or "lite" version available free ProTools First but it does not work on every version of Windows.

If you have other suggestions, recommendations and stories about editing software, please share them on podcastingfor.com

Working with Audacity

Audacity is the simplest of the audio editing software. It is also the most limited, but a great tool to learn with. Here is some of the terminology you will encounter and some concepts you find with all the editing tools.

Editing saving and Exporting

Many broadcasters who have been making podcasts for a few years, have highly experienced technical staff to help them make decisions about the settings to be used making the podcast. They try a range of different settings and test them with specialist equipment and processes. Establishing universal standards can make the complex simple.

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With that in mind, I recommend you use these settings. Plenty of smart people have been working on this and this is what they think is best.

- MP3 Mono Speech: 64 kbps, 44.1 kHz, constant bit rate
- MP3 Stereo Music: 128 kbps, 44.1 kHz, constant bit rate

Me? I just do everything at 128 kbs, 44.1 kHz, constant

I looked at the properties of several podcasts I listen to and 128 kbps is a common setting, even though most of the podcasts I checked are speech based and include music rather than music only podcasts.

What is being set?

The Project Rate

I am going to use Audacity as the example throughout this section. It is simple, it is free and can be used on most computers. If you decide you want to know more about Audacity, there are lots of tutorials on YouTube and other websites including the Audacity manual website. It is a great package to start with to learn about editing audio.

Fire up Audacity.

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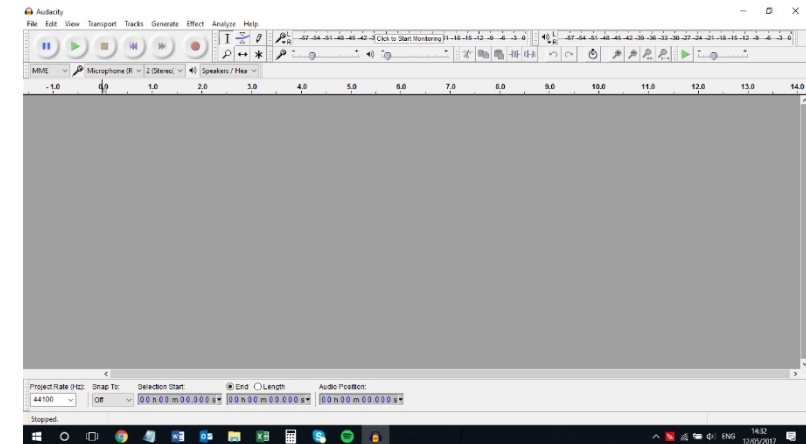


Fig – Audacity screen

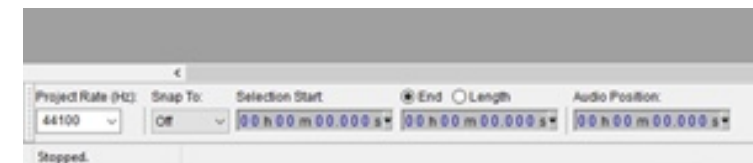


Fig – Project rate setting

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When the first screen opens, you will see all the controls. The top of the screen is more or less like any recorder; start, stop, record, fast forward and so on. There are also settings for levels.

At the bottom of the screen on the left you will see a setting “project rate” and a drop-down menu. From the menu, you can choose from 8000 Hz to 96000 Hz. When you open Audacity for the first time, the rate will probably be already set at 44100 Hz (which is 44.1 kHz). That is the one you want.

Later we will choose the bit rate as we save the final recording at the end of the session.

Audacity saves its sound files in its own .aup format. You will want to have the podcast files exported as mp3s. Audacity cannot export recordings as mp3 files. So, you need another free software package, LAME. LAME is an mp3 encoder which works in association with Audacity. You only need to set it up once – and that is very easy to do, and all the future recordings can be exported as mp3.

Why are the sample rate and the bit rate important?

You are trying to strike a balance. You want to have good quality sound but you want to minimise the size of your mp3 file.

It could be said, the bigger the file, the better the sound. But you are not producing a high-quality music CD. The sound performance of an mp3 format is limited. The equipment you are listening on is limited, too. As a producer, you are probably trying to achieve a similar quality to a reasonably good FM radio signal. As a listener, if the podcast is better than FM quality, that is a bonus.

You can say for sure, the bigger the file, the slower the download. Your listener will want to download the podcast as quickly as possible. They may want to download on the go and have limited bandwidth available to them. Waiting for a big file can be tiresome.

Your objective: good quality, fast download.

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Adding ID3 tags to your MP3 file

What are ID3 tags? If I were to say that ID3 tags are metadata, would you say, “What is metadata?” Then I would say “Metadata are a set of data that describes and gives information about other data.”

Would either of us be any wiser?

Let me give a specific example. Go to iTunes on your computer. Look at your podcast library – or your music library – and on the main screen at the top is the information you need about the podcast or the music. You will see:

- Name (or Title or Podcast)
- Time (or Duration)
- Release Date
- Description
- Artist
- Album
- Bit Rate
- Sample Rate

There can be many more pieces of information that will be shown in iTunes. These are metadata. Information about your podcast which users can read on iTunes or as some of it scrolls across your podcast player’s screen.

The first opportunity you have to add metadata or ID3 tags is when you are setting up your recording on Audacity. (Menu – Project – Edit ID3 tags).

When you are saving your podcast, you can add more metadata or edit what you already have.

It is up to you how you do it, but it is important that it is consistent across all your podcasts.

Save and close.

Have you added ID3 tags to your MP3 file?

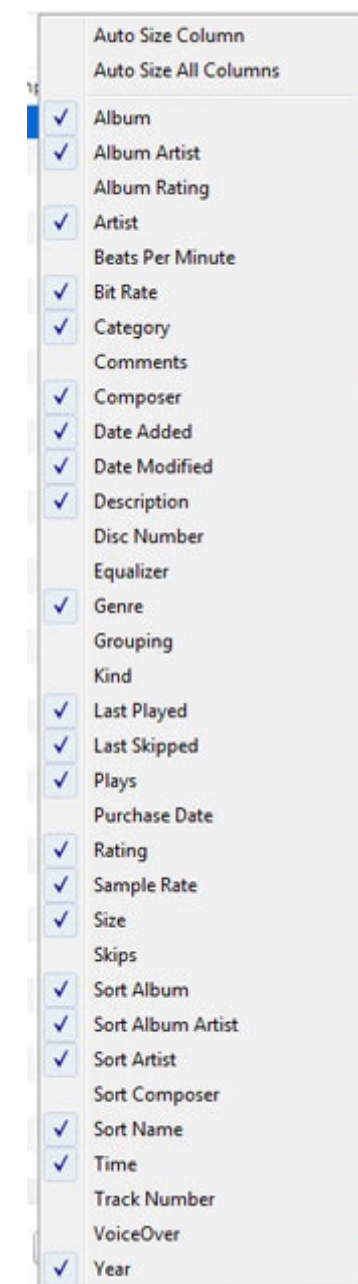
At the end of the last chapter, as the final part of exporting your audio file from Audacity, I explained how to add ID3 tags to the MP3.

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Fill in as many of the ID3 tags as you can. There are two things to bear in mind. The tags refer to Title, Artist, Album, Track Number – metadata about music rather than a radio programme. Look at how other podcasts deal with these labels. You can see how they have used their tags when you download their podcasts to iTunes or investigate using Windows Explorer. The important thing is to keep consistency across your tagging.

On the next page, you can see the list of tags used by iTunes. The user gets to decide which ones they want to see. You will fill in some of them as you are producing your mp3 file, others will be added automatically. Some will be filled in when you are preparing information for your RSS feed (more, later).

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You can re-edit the tags several ways; importing the audio back into Audacity, in your computer's iTunes, through Windows Explorer

Time now to hand it over to the internet.

When the podcast hits the internet

There are three main activities producing a podcast. You might do them all yourself. The jobs might be divided up among a few people, or of you are lucky, you will have teams specialising and really getting to know their role.

The activities are

- Making the audio, the show, the programme. That includes making the editorial content then recording the programme.
- Building the blog and everything associated with it including all the technical support for the podcast such as RSS feeds, linking to iTunes and other services that provide on demand online radio and podcasts.
- Promoting the podcast including using social media and other traditional tools get your podcast to the audience.

If you are fortunate enough to have lots of people working with you, I suggest strongly that you have someone leading the whole process of setting up the blog, RSS feeds, and managing iTunes and other podcast aggregators. In this technical area systems, apps, plugins, themes and so on change constantly. To have one person paying attention to this area is imperative. To have one or a few people dedicated to the blog is a great luxury and will pay off several times over as your expectations, experience and ambitions change.

On the other hand, you can ignore a lot of that, skip most of this chapter and concentrate on making the content. Read on, dear podcaster.

Chapter 12: Podcast hosting and blogs

In a nutshell: Do you need a blog host as well as a podcast host?

Setting up your blog to accommodate your podcast, choosing a podcast host, linking your host and blog. This is the part some people find difficult, but it is much easier than it once was. It is in two sections; the quick and dirty for people who want to avoid unnecessary detail and the full description, with lots of necessary detail.

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The Quick and Dirty

What was once cumbersome is now simpler – but not altogether simple. This opening section is as uncomplicated and short as I can make it. You might only need the briefest outline contained in these four pages. There is more detail and depth thereafter.

Having made your mp3 file and added the metadata, sign up for a (preferably) paid for account with a podcasting hosting company.

Here are two suggestions, others are available:

- SoundCloud
- Libsyn

You have already decided the name of your podcast. You will need to have a name for the episode you have just recorded (it can be as boring as “Episode 1” if you like). In addition, you also need to prepare in advance:

- The recorded and finished mp3
- Artwork for iTunes and other hosts, distributors and podcasts services. (Details below – see 4.)
- Start writing up your blog post. You will be using the title and the show notes in the
- “Description” – taken from the blog post or new notes if you prefer.

Libsyn – step by step

1. To set up your podcast go to www.libsyn.com. Sign up and sign in. Libsyn is a paid for service. To begin and until you know how much of the service you will need, chose the least expensive option. You can change later. Even at this stage it is a good idea to choose the additional small payment for statistics – basic information about the number of downloads your podcast gets.
2. You could begin at “Settings” and “Edit Show Settings”. Your “show” is your podcast. Each individual recording is an episode or edition. The “Edit Show Settings” page will go to creating the RSS feed for your podcast. Other information will be generated by the system. You only need to do this once, but it is good practice to return from time to time to check that the information is relevant and to update.
3. You will include the podcast name, an overall description of the podcast series, your web address or blog address. You will also need your iTunes store web address and any copyright information. Now, this is a bit chicken and egg. You need to have a couple of podcasts under your belt before you set up in iTunes. Add information later. You can make some significant changes after you have been through the whole process.
4. You will need to add the artwork at this stage, too. The dimensions and size for the artwork change from time to time. As I write the artwork should be 1,400 pixels by 1,400 pixels. These requirements are set by iTunes but are shared by other podcast providers.
5. If you have a third-party RSS feed you want Libsyn to routinely pull content from, there is a box to check and you then enter the feed URL. As you are new to all of this, you will most likely ignore that.

This very simple form filling serves a very important purpose in creating a file that tells relevant software about your podcast.

Next you will add your first episode.

6. Go to “Content” then “Add New Episode”. Add as much information to the form as you can. All the information will

automatically be added to the .xml file that will create the RSS feed. You really don’t need to understand the whys and wherefores, but to learn more visit W3 Schools [https://www.w3schools.com/xml/xml_rss.asp].

7. Follow instructions to upload the .mp3 from your computer.
8. Add details such as “Description”

That’s it. The podcast is ready. The system might take a short while to digest and make available to the world. There are several additional steps to take. You have made the podcast; how do people find out about it? We will discuss that later, but you might start with a blog.

A blog is not essential, but it is an advantage. Libsyn provides a blog-like platform. It is OK to start with, but it is very limited. Blog hosts are excellent at hosting blogs, podcast hosts are excellent at hosting and syndicating podcasts. You have the greater advantage if you have both.

I suggest you use a self-hosted Wordpress blog, but there are other options. I suggest Wordpress (a paid for service) because of the availability of plugins, the popularity of the system and the ease of use. I suggest paid for because of the support you might need and the flexibility compared to free Wordpress.

From your Libsyn account, copy the “Direct Download” URL paste into your Wordpress post. The post will be about the podcast with all the relevant information, links, photos and so on. It will have the same title as the episode.

If you find this unclear – and I can understand that – go to Libsyn and follow their instructions. There are videos on the site as well and a help section and real people who will answer your questions.

SoundCloud

Adding your audio is simple. You chose a file on your computer (as you would choose photos to add to an email) and upload it. Here are the steps.

1. Create a SoundCloud account. You can use Facebook Google or email to sign-up.

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2. At the registration page fill in as many of the fields as possible especially in “settings”, but you don’t need to complete them all at first.
3. There is a tick-box in the settings → content section “Include RSS feed” - tick that box. This settings section will provide information for the RSS feed to podcast distributors including iTunes and Stitcher. (You will need to register with both.)
4. Once you have done that little bit of admin, then click on “upload”.
5. And follow the instructions, fill in the boxes and Bob’s your uncle and Fanny’s your aunt.

As with Libsyn, you can

- embed your podcast onto your blog page,
- send the RSS feed to iTunes and Stitcher.

You can find tutorials on YouTube and there are links from podcastingfor.com.

For some people, part of the fun of podcasting is exploring all this to find a way that best suits you. Others find it an unnecessary challenge. If you are in a team of students, try to have one person specialising in the web component of the project developing their own expertise. Overall, at the beginning of a journalism career, it is worth spending time learning basic coding and some internet applications. Podcasting is one, it is relevant and really very easy.

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The more detailed stuff.

Up to this point in the book, we have been talking about two activities that have been going on for generations; making radio and journalism. People have been making radio programmes for almost 100 years. How people produce radio changes; newer and better ways of making programmes are developed, new technology supports new ideas, but the fundamentals remain much the same. Even the arrival of digital technology did not change the basic principle. Telling stories,

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communicating ideas, providing relevant information, entertainment and learning.

Digital technology enhanced the programme maker’s work, made access to contributors easier through phones, Skype and remote studios. Digital editing was revolutionary and digital distribution gave more people access to radio programmes and allowed them to decide when and where they wanted to hear them. Podcasts.

Journalism has been going on for hundreds of years. Blogging has been compared to the activities of the pamphleteers going back to the early days of the printing press.

Podcasting started in the 1980s but only began to attract the public imagination in the early part of this century. This section is about this relatively new activity of distributing your audio as a podcast.

These are four themes I want to cover in this section

- Technology
- Choice
- Cost
- Expertise

The two services I will discuss are

- Podcast Hosting Services, the examples being SoundCloud and Libsyn, and
- Blog Hosting Services, the examples being WordPress and Blogger.
- Then, the third option, using WordPress only and placing your audio files on the same server.

Technology: Blog and/or website, hosting service, server, FTP, embedding, HTML code. These are the buzz words will be using. You will need to use an internet server to host your mp3 file. You will put the mp3 file on the server using File Transfer Protocol, and embed the podcast on your blog by cutting and pasting HTML code into your web page. Don’t run. It is easy. I promise. I will give you examples and step by step as we go along. I will also provide links to other people’s video tutorials.

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Choice: There are several dedicated podcast hosting services you can choose from. You can ignore my examples and find other ways to host your podcast, the technology makes it simple and the choice can make it confusing. You will need to work out approximately your requirements for storage space on the server and the sorts of services you will want if you use a podcast hosting service.

The amount of space you need each month will be determined by the length of the episodes and the frequency with which you will produce them. You will need to be aware of bandwidth needed which is to do with the download speed and the number of copies of your podcast likely to be downloaded each month. As you will need to plan organising your XML files and RSS feed, consider a service which automates this process. Don't worry too much about the vocabulary, it is so small you can learn and understand it in no time.

Cost: The general rule is if it is free then you will get what you pay for. The services might be good, but limited in what they offer. For example, you can get an excellent blog for free at Blogger (owned by Google) and (my preference) Wordpress. There are some free podcast hosting services, but once again the offer – understandably – is limited. They are great to use as a place to experiment and learn. Once you are serious, you should begin looking for professional services. For a small operation, they are not wildly expensive.

Expertise: Your level of expertise will grow with experience. It is very easy to get bogged down in this section, learning about blogging and HTML and FTP. My objective is to make it as easy as possible to get started. Once started you will become more confident and begin to learn more. This book is intended for the beginner. You can always go to the website and ask advice. Remember it's www.podcastingfor.com

Setting up your blog host

In my view blogs are better than websites for podcasts because of the way they work.

- Each podcast gets its own page.
- Each page is in reverse date order (i.e. newest first).
- You can choose to open comments to engage with listeners or not.

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Once you have set up your blog, we will move to hosting your podcast.

Blogging has been around for a couple of decades now and there are many free and paid for blogging platforms. I am going to talk about two, WordPress and Blogger. They are examples and work perfectly well for blogging and podcasting. Blogger is free and is part of the Google family. If you have Gmail, you have Blogger although you might not realise it. Blogger was one of the earliest free blogging sites. Google bought it in 2003 and have made some very good improvements. If you are already signed into your Google account, type blogspot.com into your browser, or search Blogger.

If you don't have a Google account, you will need to open one.

There is also a free version of WordPress. WordPress.com and Blogger offer limited service – just enough to write a blog and paste in your embed code. The chances are, once you become more proficient you will need a self-hosted (paid for) WordPress blog or one of the other professional blogging systems.

Blogger

Although I prefer WordPress I am going to discuss Blogger first because this is easily the simplest approach to take for people starting out.

This is how easy Blogger is. Go to www.blogger.com.

If this is your first time at Blogger, you will be asked some simple questions about which profile you want to use, avatar to use and so on. After a few more clicks there will be a big friendly orange button inviting you to “Create a New Blog”, and fill in the details. If you make a mistake you can delete the blog and start again.

If you have been at Blogger before, when you get to the landing page at www.blogger.com simply follow the “New Blog” link – it is big and orange and at the top of the page. You fill in the details of the title of the blog, save that and your first blank blog page opens.

Once you write your blog post and save it, you have begun your blogging and podcasting journey. With Blogger, you can choose

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different themes and layouts. If you decide to change a theme or layout you will not lose what you have written. Content (your words, pictures, audio and so on) is separate from the visual representation. You can try several templates to find one that suits you best.

It could hardly be simpler. You even get free statistics on the numbers of people visiting your site – how accurate they are, I am not sure.

Posting the podcast to SoundCloud

Setting up SoundCloud is very straight forward. There is no additional advice I can give here; the journey is painless and uncomplicated. When you have set up your account, upload your mp3 file. That's it.

Later, when you have posted your .mp3 file, you will get an embed code so your blog links directly to your podcast. This is what you will do once you have the embed code:

- The blog will have an “HTML view”, embed the code there, not at the “Compose” screen.
- You can toggle between the two (HTML and Compose) to check your progress.
- The “Compose” shows you how the page will appear to the User. It is a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor.
- The HTML is the background code that controls how the page looks and how the interactive aspects act.

WordPress

Once again, we have more choices. There are several ways to get WordPress.

- You can get a free blog at Wordpress.com
- You can download WordPress to your computer from wordpress.org. You will need to be pretty technically advanced for this option. Probably not for the inexperienced.
- You can go to a web company to manage it all for you.

I use the first and third options. The free service is for when I am showing people how to blog. WordPress.com is often the first example I use.

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I don't have the technical knowledge to use the second option. When I blog, I prefer to focus on the making the content – the words, pictures, videos – not working on the supporting technology. If I break any of the technical stuff I like to have a (very) patient support service. I have been using <http://vari.host> for almost a decade for lots of blogs (davysims.com and podcastingfor.com are both hosted on vari.host). There is an annual fee which works out around £1 each week.

I have my access to the WordPress Content Management System (CMS) some people call “the back end” where all the creative work is done. I also have access to their server if I want to upload files using a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) program - I use Filezilla.

WordPress is an immensely popular, very simple way to build a website. It is a content management system. The podcastingfor.com blog is a very simple example of WordPress. Because of its flexibility, you can build a standard website using WordPress. Blogging is its forte.

One of the attractions of WordPress is plugins. As a system, WordPress is never complete. Developers around the world create additional bits and pieces that are known as plugins. They are used for all sorts of content creation and editing including podcasting.

When you have arranged a host for your blog, and been given access, you will go first to the Dashboard and follow the link “Posts” → “Add New” and a blank “Add A New Post” WYSIWYG page will open. You will need to familiarise yourself with all the function buttons at the top. In time, you will add several plugins. But for now, this is the beginning of your blogging journey. Like Blogger there is a WYSIWYG page. At the top right of the composition area you will see Visual (how the post will look) and Text (for HTML code). When you have your “Embed” code from your podcast host, you will copy the code and paste it here. Then toggle to Visual to see how it looks.

Setting up your podcast host

In the final part of this section we will cover using your blog/web host to host your .mp3 file. For now, we turn to hosting your .mp3 file.

I will discuss the WordPress podcasting plugin, Blubrry, a little later in this section.

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How to make the choice? If you are experimenting, then avail of the free services until you are ready to get serious. While you are doing that, you can research the options to find what is best for you. “This is something I didn’t take lightly,” says podcaster Lewis Rossiter. “It’s a commitment. Do you want to pay £20 a month for a professional hosting site? There was a free way of doing it using Google Drive, but I thought; no let’s go on to Libsyn, they seem to be the best and really importantly I wanted the statistics.”

There are other professional podcast hosting services such as Podbean, Buzzsprout, Podomatic. Each have slightly different pricing plans. Audioboom.com is also worth considering, but you might want to make direct enquiries about the pricing plans.

These are some of the questions you need to ask before choosing:

- What is the monthly upload allowance? Sometimes it will be stated in hours, sometimes in MB. As a very rough guide, one hour audio (1.44kHz and 128 kbs) is about 60 MB
- What is the storage allowance? That is your archive. It should really be unlimited or big enough to store all the podcasts you will make.
- What is the bandwidth allowance? That is the download allowance for your listeners. If you run out of bandwidth people will not be able to get access to your podcast. Look for unlimited bandwidth. Also, if there is a limit, be careful that there is not a penalty for going over your bandwidth allowance. In his interview, Olly Mann described how he was penalised by several thousand dollars. You can hear that story in the podcast on the podcastingfor.com blog.
- Are stats provided? You will need and want stats.
- Ask about RSS tools.

Choose carefully. You are likely to be entering a long-term relationship with your provider.

These are two that I use, SoundCloud and Libsyn. While they do the same core job, they each have additionality unique to them. If you are new, my recommendation is that you start with SoundCloud.

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SoundCloud

I love SoundCloud. If you don’t know it, the best comparison is to YouTube but for audio. Earliest users of SoundCloud were musicians and DJs. It is becoming increasingly popular with podcasters.

Storage: You get (at time of writing) three hours of free space on SoundCloud. For a small monthly fee, you can double that and for a fee comparable to other podcast hosts, you can have unlimited storage. Storage is important. It is your archive. Once you exceed your allowance, earlier podcasts will be unavailable. That might suit you, but, if you want to look professional, then act professional and buy storage.

Statistics: The free version gives you limited statistical detail. As you would expect there is more information in the more expensive package: the number of downloads, where people are listening, plays by app, plays by website. Do you need statistics as detailed as these? You really need to know who is listening, when where and how. It is feedback that will help you develop your podcast. As your production team becomes more sophisticated, they will look for more information to help inform your project’s development.

How it works: Sign up for an account.

Adding your audio is simple. You chose a file on your computer (as you would choose photos to add to an email) and upload it.

1. Create a SoundCloud account.
2. Fill in as many of the fields as possible especially in “settings”, but you don’t need to fill them all, just now.
3. There is a tick-box in the “settings” → content section “Include RSS feed” - tick that box. This settings section will provide information to podcast distributors including iTunes which you will probably want to register with.
4. Once you have done that little bit of admin, then click on “upload”
5. And follow the instructions, fill in the boxes and you are set to go.

It really is as simple as that.

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Once the file is up you can:

- Embed the content on your blog or website (more later).
- Share on social media.
- Get an RSS feed to send to iTunes or other services like Stitcher and Tune In.
- People can follow you if they have a SoundCloud account.

Sociability: SoundCloud is a very social platform where people can follow you and comment. It is also a base from where you can launch your podcast onto other social media. These are all great positives, but there is the potential for this being too closed off to people who are not subscribers or members of SoundCloud.

Can I get my stuff onto iTunes? Yes. It is not too difficult and SoundCloud's Help section is pretty good. You won't need a lot of technical knowhow or experience. But perhaps a fair measure of patience.

Once up and running look to other podcast providers; Stitcher, Spotify and TuneIn for example.

Posting the podcast to Libsyn

Libsyn is a professional podcast hosting service. Liberated Syndication (Libsyn) launched in November 2004. It was the first podcast service provider offering space to store audio files, tools to create RSS feeds and other services serious podcasters needed.

I have chosen Libsyn as an example because it was the first, it is still going strong, many podcasts I admire use it and with this book, blog and podcast series, I will be using Libsyn. (If you are wondering, I have not engaged in any special commercial relationship with them. In other words, not only is there no deal, they have never heard of me.)

Libsyn [<https://www.libsyn.com/>] is a paid service with a range of plans starting at \$5 for 50MB storage per month. While \$5 per month is a good price, 50 MB is not much space for an audio podcast. If you want stats – and you will – that will cost an extra \$2 per month.

The amount of monthly allowance you will need for uploads will depend on how much you produce. To gauge how much space I might

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need for storage, I have chosen at random a podcast that lasts 29 minutes 53 seconds. The sample rate is 44.1kHz, the bit rate is 128. It is stereo and almost totally speech. So, similar to a podcast I will make. The file size is 27.5 MB. (The podcast is a Reith Lecture from the BBC; Professor Stephen Hawking "Do black holes have no hair?" from 2016.)

If you are making the same calculations and your podcast is an hour, then a 50 MB allowance only permit you to upload one episode per month. Half an hour? Two editions per month – and you will need to keep the timing tight. It's likely that you will need 250MB per month for (current price) \$15 if you want more or would like the flexibility.

For more money, you also get lots of advanced and professional services and features.

How it works: I covered this in detail a few pages back in the Quick and Dirty section. This is what I wrote.

9. To set up your podcast go to www.libsyn.com. Sign up and sign in. Libsyn is a paid for service. To begin and until you know how much of the service you will need, chose the least expensive option. You can change later. Even at this stage it is a good idea to choose the additional small payment for statistics – basic information about the number of downloads your podcast gets.
10. You could begin at "Settings" and "Edit Show Settings". Your "show" is your podcast. Each individual recording is an episode or edition. The "Edit Show Settings" page will go to creating the RSS feed for your podcast. Other information will be generated by the system. You only need to do this once, but it is good practice to return from time to time to check that the information is relevant and to update.
11. You will include the podcast name, an overall description of the podcast series, your web address or blog address. You will also need your iTunes store web address and any copyright information. Now, this is a bit egg and hen. You need to have a couple of podcasts under your belt before you set up in iTunes. Add information later. You can make some

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significant changes after you have been through the whole process.

12. You will need to add the artwork at this stage, too. The dimensions and size for the artwork change from time to time. As I write the artwork should be 1,400 pixels by 1,400 pixels. These requirements are set by iTunes but are shared by other podcast providers.
13. If you have a third-party RSS feed you want Libsyn to routinely pull content from, there is a box to check and you then enter the feed URL. As you are new to all of this, you will most likely ignore that.

This very simple form filling serves a very important purpose in creating a file that tells relevant software about your podcast.

Next you will add your first episode.

14. Go to “Content” then “Add New Episode”. Add as much information to the form as you can. All the information will automatically be added to the .xml file that will create the RSS feed. You really don’t need to understand the whys and wherefores, but to learn more visit W3 Schools [https://www.w3schools.com/xml/xml_rss.asp].
15. Follow instructions to upload the .mp3 from your computer.
16. Add details such as “Description”

That’s it. The podcast is ready. The system might take a short while to digest and make available to the world. There are several additional steps to take. You have made the podcast; how do people find out about it? We will discuss that later, but you might start with a blog.

A blog is not essential, but it is an advantage. Libsyn provides a blog-like platform. It is OK to start with, but it is very limited. Blog hosts are excellent at hosting blogs, podcast hosts are excellent at hosting and syndicating podcasts. You have the greater advantage if you have both.

Can I get my stuff onto iTunes? Yes. It is simple. Follow the “Destinations” tab. It opens a page with quite a lot of information. At the moment, all you need is the Quick Links section:

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Libsyn Classic Feed

<http://podcastingfor.libsyn.com/rss>

Web Page (Legacy)

<http://podcastingfor.libsyn.com>

There is /rss link. That is your key to distributing your podcast around the web. It is that you will provide to iTunes and once up and running, to other podcast providers such as Stitcher, Spotify and TuneIn.

On the Web, you will get lots of suggestions and advice on hosting podcasts. If you have any experiences you would like to share or recommendations, please visit www.podcastingfor.com/communities.

“Self-Hosting” Podcasts with WordPress

What do I mean when I talk about self-hosting? As you will have gathered by now, your mp3 file will live somewhere on the internet where listeners can connect and download copies of your programme. Self-hosting is when you already pay for a web or blog host and website or you are planning to have a blog host or website – that is a server provided by a commercial company to host your website. Rather than have your mp3 file sit on a separate server with a separate service provider, you place the audio file on your web host’s server.

“I already have a blog, podcastingfor.com. Do I really need a separate podcast host?”

The website at podcastingfor.com is a WordPress blog. I could arrange for the audio files to live on the same server which has both advantages and disadvantages. One obvious advantage is that I don’t have the added expense of paying for a separate service. However, my bandwidth is limited.

In crude terms Bandwidth is what is used to deliver your podcast to a user. The more people who download your podcasts and the number of podcasts will define the amount of bandwidth you will need. And it can become expensive.

Delivering web pages does not consume as much bandwidth as mp3 files. The most important reasons for using a dedicated podcast

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service is their support and the statistics. You will want to know the number of downloads, where and when they happen.

Once again, using your paid for blog service to host your podcast is OK setting out, but you might find the separate services preferable.

If you decide to self-host you still need to ask your web service provider the same questions as you would a podcast provider, so I shall repeat them.

- What is the monthly upload allowance? Sometimes it will be stated in hours, sometimes in MB.
- What is the storage allowance? That is your archive. It should really be unlimited or very big, big enough to store all the podcasts you will make.
- What is the bandwidth allowance? That is the download allowance for your listeners. If you run out of bandwidth people will not be able to get access to your podcast. Look for unlimited.
- Are stats provided? You will need and want stats.
- Ask about RSS tools.

Using the Blubrry Plugin with WordPress

There are plenty of podcasting plugins available. For this example, I have chosen Blubrry. It is among the most popular and there are several tutorials on YouTube if you want to learn more. I have used it, but frankly, the set up did try my patience ... considerably. Since then, Blubrry has been updated, and even if it is a bit annoying at times, it still does the job well. This is what Blubrry says for itself:

“Blubrry PowerPress is the No. 1 Podcasting plugin for WordPress. Developed by podcasters for podcasters; features include Simple and Advanced modes, multiple audio/video player options, subscribe to podcast tools, podcast SEO features, and more. Fully supports iTunes, Google Play, Stitcher, and Blubrry Podcasting directories, as well as all podcast applications and clients.”

First you will need to download the plugin. Go to the WordPress dashboard -> Plugins -> Add New then in the “Search” box write

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“PowerPress Blubrry”. A list of podcast plugins will appear, chose the one you want, it will download. When ready you will “Activate” it.

After you activate the plugin, go to “Settings” and fill in the forms. Spend some time thinking about the information you are adding. Yes, you can change everything, but once your podcast is live, the information you provide will be translated into the RSS feed that you will provide to iTunes and the others.

Want to know where I went wrong? I assumed this process could not really be all that simple. I started messing with the “Advanced” features without really knowing what I was doing and caused myself a considerable amount of unnecessary frustration. Stick to the simple stuff – it works well enough.

Next step is to compose your blog post. You will notice that after adding the Blubrry plugin, additional fields have appeared on the “Add a New Post” page. One section is “Media URL”. The system assumes that you by now have added your .mp3 file to the internet.

So here you stop to add the .mp3 to your server. For that you will need a FTP programme (there other ways of going about this, but let’s stick to FTP for now).

Create a /audio or /podcast folder on your server through the FTP. Upload the .mp3 to the folder. Your “Media” URL will be something like, <http://www.mywebsite.com/audio/mypodcastepisode.mp3/> That is what you add to the field “Media URL”

Fill in as few or as many of the additional fields as you feel confident about. At this point for someone new to this, fewer the better.

Once the post has been written and the podcast added “Submit your podcast to iTunes and other podcast directories” link on the Blubrry dashboard. From here, once you have filled in any additional fields and uploaded your artwork, you will get the feed URL – something like <http://www.mywebsite.com/feed/podcast/>.

At that point, you might want to “Validate” your feed. I use <https://validator.w3.org/feed/> There are others, but the W3 organisation sets standards for the internet. If you copy the URL and

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go to <https://validator.w3.org/feed/> you will get a report in return. The feed should be perfect. There might be a minor error or two. If there are more than two minor errors, go back to the beginning and start afresh. If the RSS feed is wrong with will be rejected by iTunes and the rest.

If part of your objectives is to learn more about podcasting, technology and blogging, Blurbry is probably just the thing you are looking for. Simply using it drives you to asking questions about what goes on behind the scenes when creating a podcast. There are tutorials and solutions on the web particularly on YouTube.

If you find technology challenging, or you would prefer spending your time on other matters such as the editorial content of your podcast, self-hosting is probably not for you.

One of the reasons podcasting is so suitable for students and new starters is that so many of the tools you need are free, or very inexpensive. Of course, “free” has limitations and “Inexpensive” might not provide all you will want in the future, but both are perfect to learn and experiment. You can set up your blog, your podcast and your social media for nothing. Learn about producing and posting your programme and begin serious planning without spending a penny.

Once you have decided that it is worth investing in more advanced and sophisticated tools, you will already be sure about using them.

Libsyn also has a podcast widget (plugin) but if you are already using Libsyn, you will only duplicate the settings you have already added to your Libsyn account.

Show Notes

The Show Notes are the blog post. They will have information about the podcast – what you are talking about, names of guests, additional information such as email addresses, phone numbers, contact information for your guests, maps, feedback forms, photos, graphs ... anything relevant to the podcast edition you have just produced.

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You will also use the Show Notes for Libsyn and SoundCloud, perhaps less detailed – just the text which will be added automatically to the ID tags.

The Show Notes are as important as any other aspect of the podcast and one way to promote the show. It is likely that someone searching will read the Show Notes before deciding to listen to the podcast. You can also use them on Facebook as your post about the podcast.

Registering with iTunes

Once the podcast is made, the post written and everything launched to the internet, you will want to make your work as available as possible. One way – probably the most important way is to submit your podcast to the iTunes Store podcast directory

You will also want to register with other aggregators mentioned already in this book, but for now let's focus on iTunes.

First some preparation

- You will need your RSS feed. It will look something like this: <http://podcastingfor.libsyn.com/rss>
- You will need artwork. You should prepare an image 1400px by 1400 px saved as a .jpg or .png file (please check with iTunes for updates on this information).
- You will need some words. You should prepare a title and description before you start. You will need to register a unique title. So, if you have a great idea for a sports podcast on a desert island you might get away with Desert Island Discus. But if they are throwing vinyl you won't be able to use Desert Island Discs, even though it is a different programme.

Do you have an active Apple ID? You will need one to submit podcasts to the iTunes Store. Create one by registering yourself with iTunes.

- Sign in to iTunes Podcast Connect [<https://itunesconnect.apple.com/>]
- Click the iTunes Connect “Add podcast” button at the top left of the iTunes Connect dashboard.

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- Enter your RSS feed into the provided text box and then click the “Validate” button.

A Feed Preview will load if you do not have any validation errors. It is important not to rush this process. Try to get it right first time.

- Consider whether you have the artwork you want – you will be able to change; but change can be slow.
- Write an informative and call to action description, make sure you are in the correct categories
- Make sure your episode description is correct and interesting. This is what might grab a potential listener’s attention
- Finally check the Validation Errors section if you have any problems validating your podcast feed.

When you are happy that everything in the Feed Preview is correct and the way you want it, click the “Submit” button.

Your podcast is now submitted to the iTunes Store podcast directory. Party time. But hold on ... nothing is happening. Why?

All podcasts submitted to iTunes are moderated. The process can take up to 10 days, though most submissions are approved within 3 days and on occasion only a few hours.

Apple will email you when your podcast is approved. The message will be titled “iTunes Store Podcast Approved Notification” and will include your own unique iTunes subscribe URL.

You will need to keep a record of this. If you have used Blubrry, copy this URL and save it into the PowerPress settings > iTunes tab section in the “iTunes Subscribe URL” field. You will also need it for Libsyn and other.

iTunes likes to see more than one episode available. So perhaps you might have a couple of pilot episodes available as well as the official episode 1 when you submit your podcast to iTunes.

(A note about iTunes: One of the most significant reasons why podcasting has really taken off in the last few years has been the ease with which you can add podcasts to iTunes. When I started doing that

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around 2007, it was a bit of a nightmare to post podcasts and not as easy as it should have been to download them as a listener.

In her report for Tow Center for Digital Journalism, Vanessa Quirk writes: “Apple’s latest system update. iOS9, released in September 2015, further reduces the steps to access a podcast in the app.” She looks forward to a time when podcasts when listeners can easily and instantly access rather than have to acquire a podcast.

Remember though, your podcast is not held on iTunes. It is held on your web or podcast host. By registering your podcast with iTunes and having it accepted, you will alert iTunes automatically through and RSS feed and the app will download your podcast to devices when users have subscribed through iTunes.)

Registering with Google Play, Stitcher, TuneIn

While very popular, iTunes is not alone. And some people just don’t like Apple. I register podcasts with alternative services. The process is simple. As yet, Google Play is not available in the UK. It might be available where you are. Go to [<https://play.google.com/music/podcasts/publish>] to find out.

I like Stitcher. Go to [<http://www.stitcher.com/content-providers>] to apply to be a provider.

TuneIn is [<http://help.tunein.com/customer/portal/articles/1215148-how-do-i-add-my-podcast-to-tunein->]

Some providers come and go, so an occasional “where should I submit my podcast” search is worthwhile.

Chapter 13: The blog and social media promotion

In a nutshell: It's all about the audience. How do you attract an audience to your podcast, build a community and communicate with your community? How do you involve your audience, generate comments and encourage involvement? Do you want to encourage involvement? We start, unsurprisingly, with social media. But there's more to do.

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This chapter falls into two distinct but closely related activities,

- using social media as part of your digital promotions strategy and
- managing your social media community by a community manager.

By now you have everything prepared and set up. Your first podcast episode is made and ready to share with the world. You have decided on the best blog platform, your show notes written, additional material added to the blog.

There's something missing. What is it?

Ah! The audience. An audience to read, to listen, to correspond with and discuss the topics.

You have built your whole project around the audience, now you should go out and capture them. In due course, you will want to monitor and analyse the numbers of people who are listening, where they are, when they listened. The first step is to engage with them.

As I said earlier in this book, there are three main activities in the podcasting process. The activities are.

- Making the audio; both deciding on the editorial content and then recording the programme.
- Publishing the podcast: building the blog and everything associated with it including all the technical support for the podcast such as RSS feeds, linking to iTunes and other on demand online radio and podcast services.
- Promoting the podcast: how you will use social media and other traditional marketing tools to get your podcast to the audience.

The social media promotional activity is not the same as the community development and management. They have different objectives and while they share some skillsets, each have additional specialist skills drawn from different disciplines. Both can work successfully together. The two are not in competition with each other.

In this section I want to talk about the promotions team or (more likely), person. Later I will cover community management.

The promotions team (or person)

The skills needed to promote the podcast are different to the skills needed to produce the audio or deal with the blogging technology. So, what do the promotions team do? Here are a few examples of their responsibilities and roles:

- The promotions team will be the first people to listen to the podcast.
- They will find snippets and quotations to use in the promotion.
- They will produce copy different to the copy written for the scripts or the show notes.
- They will take the photos of the podcast team at work, make video clips.
- They will produce Vines and Periscope streams and other sharable video.
- They will use all the social media tools available to promote the podcast.

Begin by planning: strategize

Never expect people to come looking for your podcast; some might, most won't. It is your job to go to the audience, find out where they are, offer them the podcast and encourage them to download and listen.

Look beyond the obvious. Do more than just putting a link on Twitter or starting a Facebook page. The role of the promotions team/people/person is to whet the appetite of the potential audience.

Malachi O'Doherty, the Belfast writer, journalist and "old radio hand", says that because of his activity on Facebook, he now knows who is listening to his podcasts and looking at his photos. "I'm getting comments back from them. It's not a very large number of people, but it is people who are genuinely interested and who are engaging and discussing those things. I do get comments with people who strongly disagree with me.

"And I get comments from people who change my mind about things. I also get people with a profile in the political sphere and will come into the discussion. I like that; elected politicians, senior journalists. That's more likely to happen because I have a public profile, too."

Forming the strategy to promote your podcast will be the first step. Thinking it through and writing it down will make it clear to you and anyone working with you what it is that you want to achieve. Like planning your podcast; the only way to reach your destination is to know where you want to be.

Here are some of the questions you should ask:

- Once again ... (and again and again) ... Who is the audience? Don't say "everyone". Yes, anyone and everyone can listen to the podcast, but who are you trying to reach? Think about age, gender, interests, social background. Then think about their style, the sorts of jobs they do or schools, colleges or universities they attend. Build a pen portrait of a member of your audience.
- Where are they? Your podcast can be hyper-local news only intended for people in your town, or it can be a global podcast for people of a similar interest anywhere in the world.

- Are they active online? If not, or if you are targeting an older or less active audience, reaching them might require using more traditional marketing tools.

Let's assume most, or a significant number of people you are trying to reach are social media users (podcast listeners are more likely to be), then social media is likely to be the best way of reaching them. But if the audience is older, old fashioned leafleting, posters and word of mouth might be the right way. If you are targeting a small community audience, there might be a community exercise to help people understand how to find, download, listen and participate in podcasts.

No matter who the audience is, you need to understand where they are and how to reach them effectively. That will be the central part of your strategy.

Digital Promotions

Decide which social media you are going to use. Obviously, you will use Twitter and Facebook. But what other social media are there you could use?

You can use Linked In, especially if there is a business or professional aspect to your podcast. Younger people might respond better to SnapChat. If you are producing a podcast on, fashion, sport, economics, history, medicine, or any other professional and lifestyle interests, you could engage with others on specialist blogs. Don't just promote your podcast, try to be constructive in your engagement.

Decide by thinking "Where can we make the most impact?" Which popular social media platforms are effective considering the time you need to invest to use them?

Using Facebook

Here are three ways to promote your podcast on Facebook.

1. If you don't have a Facebook account, get one. Make friends (see later) and build an audience. When your podcast is ready, post a link to your blog. Facebook will automatically add information from your blog to the link. Make it friendly. Give information that will interest people.

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Post photos if you have any from the podcast.

Make the podcast part of your normal conversations on Facebook “We are working on a new episode. Does anyone know about ... (whatever topic you are working on)” or “We are working on the next edition. One of the stories is about (whatever the story is about). Have you any experience or opinion about that? Leave a comment and let me know if you would like to take part.”

Use all your social media as part of the research and promotion of your podcast. Get everyone else working on the podcast to do the same. Make your Facebook friends part of the podcast community.

2. Create a Facebook page which will be part of your podcast production and promotion.

3. As yet, you cannot upload audio to Facebook, as you can video. But if you turn your podcast into a video, you can post your podcast to Facebook. This might seem like a lot of effort for a little return, but these are times to experiment and see what works for you. Facebook prioritises video posted directly to Facebook over video posted to other sites like YouTube linked from a Facebook post. Open your video editing software, create a new video using your podcast as a soundtrack. Add images, video, graphics or just one image or graphic with your podcast information. Then post as a video to Facebook.

I find it more effective producing short promo videos rather than the whole podcast. I use a clip of around a minute from the podcast, build a video of images and slides around that and link to the podcast page. See the “Podcasting For ...” page on Facebook.

Using Twitter

Twitter and Facebook are not the same. I know that is obvious, but sometimes people use them in identical ways. Twitter is more breaking news. “Here is what is happening now, and here is a photo we have just taken”. Facebook (slightly) more reflective and rather than breaking news is more the news summary with photos, videos and comments.

Use Twitter to promote what you are working on, that your podcast is forthcoming, that you are looking for contributors. Post information

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that is interesting, but not generated by your team; news stories, videos, articles you have seen that are relevant to your podcast. Retweet followers and engage in conversations.

Using other social media

By exploring other social media platforms, you will be able to identify potential audiences and contributors for your podcast. There may also be opportunities for cross promotion if you find people and groups producing podcasts or other content like yours.

- Use other social media such as SnapChat or Instagram if your prospective audience is there.
- Become involved in other social media like Quora where you can be an expert offering answers while taking the opportunity to promote the podcast.
- Go to other blogs on the same subjects where you can comment and join the conversation to add to their blog and promote your podcast.
- Use your blog address in email footers.
- Don’t just link to your podcast, use social media more imaginatively. Have conversations, use clips, teasers, talking about what’s “coming next week”, post photos of recordings, invite photos from listeners. Are you doing a feature on the state of roads in the area? Invite photos of listeners’ most hated pot-holes.

It is easy to waste time on social media but take the time initially to experiment. Then take some more time to experiment. After you have done that, experiment a bit more. Find your voice and your platforms. Drop what’s not working. Move time and resources to what is.

Using more traditional methods

If the podcast is strongly linked to your local area, print flyers to give out and posters to place in the library and other public buildings.

- Have some cards or handbills printed. Give them out everywhere.
- Is there a local newspaper or freesheet? Talk to them.
- If it’s free or cheap, use it.

Making “friends” and getting “followers”

An often-asked question about social media is “How can I get more followers on Twitter or Instagram?” and so on. The short answer is “to get a following ... follow. To get friends, invite people to connect.” These are three tips guaranteed to get followers. They are all about other people not you.

- **Listen** before speaking, read before posting.
- **Be interesting** when you do post.
- **Share** other people’s content with your friends and followers. Someone else made a podcast like yours? If it’s good, share it.

Managing the online community

Remember the three activities or specialisms?

- The people who make the audio – from editorial to sound engineering
- The people who create the podcast and blog
- The people who promote the podcaster

There is a fourth which I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter; community management. If it is your purpose to build an active online community as part of your podcast, how that community is grown and managed should be part of the whole production process.

Community management is organising and leading your social media friends and followers to engage with each other and with your podcast in a constructive and positive way.

Community management focuses on how you engage and work with people who become involved in your podcast through the blog or social media. By opening the comments section in the blog or starting a public Facebook group you are inviting people to contribute their ideas and thoughts. You are encouraging participation and you have a responsibility to ensure that participation is good for all participants,

Not every podcast will attract large numbers of people who want to participate or engage, exchange their views or add comments. However, should your podcast take off and begin to attract a large and diverse audience, then you should prepare to manage that community,

even if it is simply to acknowledge comments and have conversations with the audience.

As with the other activities, it is important to have at least one person focused on understanding and working with the audience especially if you plan to grow a community of people who will comment and share their thoughts and ideas on the blog or social media. As the producer oversees the podcast content and someone else is responsible for the technicalities of putting the podcast on the internet, one member of the team needs to be in control of all the social media activities, and managing the online community.

If the community involved around the podcast and the social media is growing, you will want to make sure everyone has an equal chance to participate and especially if some “big personalities” get involved, people who might drown out the voices and opinions of others. While there are “big personalities”, there are also people who are not assertive and perhaps lurk in the background and don’t become quite so involved. They need to be welcomed, invited to contribute. Need a bit more support to become engaged.

In recent times, some online news outlets have closed the comments sections on their websites as the behaviour of people posting their views has become objectionable. In unmanaged communities, the trolls took over and the community had to be terminated. Meanwhile other websites which have community managers and moderators retain generally good behaviour.

Let’s look at the “big personality” first. That is a polite way of describing people who

- are not polite (aggressive and rude to other users).
- give other members of the community a bad experience,
- trample on the views of others,
- belittle the experiences of others,
- blunder ahead without considering other peoples’ views or sensitivities,
- use unacceptable language,

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- troll,
- over-share or over-post.

You know the type. A few – or even one – in a community can destroy the conversation and chase people away and ruin everything you have worked for.

Sometimes people make a comment which seems rude, even offensive. And they think they are being funny with no idea of the problems they have potentially caused or how rude they appear. Some people over-share because that's the way they are. Some people are just insensitive so-and-sos.

So where do you start managing your community? You start with community standards.

Drawing up the guidelines

You, anyone working with the community, and members of the community themselves must be aware of the community standards; what is regarded as bad and good behaviour, language and tone.

The rules should not be long and complicated. They should not be put in place to stop people becoming involved. They should be there to help people feel safe when they are communicating with you and your podcast team.

There are several very good examples you can review to help you put together your “house rules”. Search for these:

- BBC Moderation House Rules
- Guardian newspaper community standards
- New York Times community standards
- Facebook community standards

Some of these are more legalistic looking than others. When you are drawing up your community standards, discuss with the team so that everyone owns them. Allow for dissent and new thinking, but in the end, agree among all to keep the rules:

- Snappy – simple short and easy to scan and read.

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- Keep them clear – avoid ambiguity. Ask some people not involved in your project to read them and comment.
- Keep them friendly – the rules are there to help everyone involved, not to tell everyone what to do. Be supportive not bossy.

Try to avoid using the word “rules” if you can. Is there of more friendly way of describing what you are drawing up? “Guidelines” or “standards” are usual terms. “rules” seems a bit regimented.

The community guidelines should extend to all your social media activities, so your blog and Facebook should have the same personality. First and foremost, People should always feel safe.

Managing your Community

Some of the most open, patient, humorous, strong and genuinely good people I have ever known are community managers. Do not for one moment think it is an easy, “do it in the spare time” job. It takes wit, wisdom and good judgement. It needs empathy rather than sympathy; don't confuse the two. And it takes someone diplomatic and strong enough to stand up to bullies while encouraging strong debate. There are lots of books and articles on being a community manager. Read as many as you can. It is a fantastic role to play online. Good community managers will help the web from self-destruction.

What are you trying to achieve? Why bother? These are the questions you are the team and you as the community manager need to consider. You have thought about the producer's job, the reporter's job, the technical jobs, too. You know what you want them to achieve. So, what do you want the community manager, the commenters, the community to do? Define the purpose and set the objectives.

Moderation

There are three common approaches to moderation that a small team of people with no budget and little experience can adopt.

Pre-moderation: This is time consuming and makes every post your legal responsibility. Pre-moderation is checking every post before allowing it to be published. This has been abandoned by most websites except where there is an audience of children.

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Post-moderation: Where all messages are checked after they have been published. The moderator reviews posts every two or three hours. If in the meantime someone posts something that goes against community guidelines, there is an “alert a moderator” button for other members of the community to use.

Alert a moderator: The website is not checked at any time except where a member of the community alerts a moderator about a post they think goes against the house rules.

No moderation: A digital free for all. I really don’t see the point in this. Why have comments if you are not going to come involved?

If you use a WordPress blog, there are settings for posts which automatically allow posts to be published or alert a moderator. There are other free commenting applications that can be added to a website.

The day to day work of a community manager

I have already described some of the skills of the community manager. Most of what follows is about doing the job. Before we get there, just let me emphasise, being a community manager is a serious role. It is the human link between the production team and the audience.

Welcoming new members. For every person who posts a comment on a blog or a website there are many others who are “lurking”. They are reading the comments, they have something to say and they have not quite plucked up the courage to express their opinion or tell their story. When they do, welcome them into the conversation and encourage them to share more. Then there are dozens of others who are reading and could be encouraged to join in. How the community manager welcomes people, converses with them, supports them is important and noticed by everyone. Welcome new members, thank them for their contribution. If people are required to sign in with their email to make a comment, reply with an email just saying hello and welcoming them to the community.

Introducing the topic. As new topics are introduced on the podcast, so you will want to get people to comment on those topics. Perhaps the team are researching a story and you want listeners to make

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suggestions or help with the podcast. Maybe a story develops on the message board or comments section. The community manager will introduce that as a potential new topic.

Guiding not leading the conversation. The idea is to let the community find their own voice or voices. Perhaps in the early days, you will need to lead conversations. The plan should be for you to withdraw bit by bit and become the guide not the leader. Have conversations, ask questions, share interesting comments and articles.

When it gets heated. There is nothing wrong with passionate and opinionated discussion, but sometimes matters can boil over. Now you will be tested for your ability to lower the temperature. It is a skill, but the pleasant – and strong – community manager will succeed whereas the loud bullying community manager will fail.

Managing bad manners. Bad manners are not acceptable. As soon as anyone displays bad manners the community manager should point out that it is not acceptable. This is when having the email of the community member comes into play. Don’t argue in public. Point out why behaviour is not acceptable then have a conversation privately.

Taking the conversation off-line. You don’t want to have an argument with a community member online. Invite them for a private discussion via email. Apart from any other reason, you should do your best to keep a record of those conversations.

If someone cannot be managed? If it is necessary, ban them. It is an absolute last resort. Make sure your reasons are clear and the person knows why. Keep records.

The numbers and analysis. Don’t get obsessed with analytics and specific numbers. This is partly because very accurate analytics are hard to come by. Also, if you are working with a small audience minor changes can be misunderstood. So rather than daily or weekly numbers, look at trends over a period of months. Think about quality content, not the numbers.

Part 5 - And finally ...

The last part of this book is final advice, suggestions and information relevant to podcasting, radio production, and journalism regardless of the platform or publication.

The information, which can probably be of use anywhere, is intended for a UK, Irish and more broadly, a European audience. As I will repeat later, I am not a lawyer and I am in no position to offer you legal advice. The section on the law is intended to make you think before you do something that might be illegal. The section does not contain a comprehensive list of potential legal issues and the rule is always, if you are in doubt, go consult with someone who knows. If you are with a business, charity or broadcast organisation, it probably has a lawyer. It might be worth letting them know what you are planning. If you are at a college or university which also has lawyers in training, talk to someone in that department and you might be able to set up a mutually beneficial arrangement. In my experience people who practice law like to know ahead of time if something new is happening which might require their involvement sometime in the future.

Chapter 14: Legal and Ethics, Balance and Bias

In a nutshell: It is easy to break the law by accident if you are careless. On the internet, there is one major area where people often fall foul; copyright. You should also be aware of defamation – publishing something about someone as fact which is untrue and may cause them to fall into disrepute or damage their reputation. The following is advice on what to be aware of. It is not comprehensive, but is an indication of where the most common mistakes are made.

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Here's my legal bit ...

I am not a lawyer. I am not giving legal advice. If you end up in court for breaking the law, don't call me, I will not be able to help in anyway whatsoever. And don't blame me – because once again, I am not offering legal advice.

Copyright

These are some of the potential pit-falls. This is the area where things can go wrong. The first part of this chapter can be written in 10 words:

IF IT IS NOT YOUR PROPERTY, DO NOT USE IT

If you are thoughtful and considerate, it is quite hard to break the law; it is easy to break the law if you are careless. This section is all about infringing other people's rights. The internet has always been the wild west in copyright but law is now catching up. Here are some ways you can infringe the rights of others.

- People find photos they like and put them into their blog posts or websites.
- People use music that does not belong to them in podcasts and videos.
- People lift graphics and other images.
- They use clips of TV programmes or films.

Where are you reading this? I am writing it in the UK and my experience of this is from the UK and Ireland. There are differences in other countries, but not many. These are some broad principles.

Rule 1 - You cannot use other people's work without their permission. In addition to permissions you may need licences which you may have to pay for. (See later; permission might not be what you think it is.)

Music

You can't just lift a recording of a song and add it to your podcast. You absolutely must never, ever take a music recording and add it to your podcast without "clearing the rights", or having appropriate licences. Neither can you get a friend to record their version of someone else's song and use that in your podcast.

These are some of the copyrights you will be breaking.

The musical composition: Someone wrote that music and a publisher published it. You will be infringing the rights of both the composer and the publisher. Therefore, whether it is a recording made by you of your very talented next-door neighbour playing a well-known song or the version we have all heard on the radio, you are infringing the composer and publisher's rights.

The recording: Someone in a studio made the recording – probably several people, producer, sound engineer, assistant sound engineer, these people have rights over their work.

The performer: Not all performers sing their own songs. Regardless of whether the singer is singing their own song or music composed by someone else, they have rights over that performance.

The distributor: Yes, even the record label and distributor have rights.

Everyone involved from the person who first thought of the song right through to the record label have rights. You should get permission and pay them to use that music.

Luckily, many of these people are organised into representative organisations. The organisations issue licences which you can buy.

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If you want to use someone else's music make The Performing Rights Society your first stop. Their website [prsformusic.com] includes information about using music on podcasts. Contact them if you are planning to use someone else's music. You should also contact PPL Phonographic Performance Ltd. You may require licences from both. It is likely you will have to pay.

Where can I find rights free music? The internet is a wonderful thing connecting wonderful people who give away their work for free. That includes composers and performers. Come to think of it, it probably includes you too. You are probably going to give your podcast away for free. Spend a little time researching and listening. Some "pod safe" music is excellent. Use more than just Google to search, different search engines throw up different results.

I found the Free Music Archive during the research for this project. There is an interview with Cheyenne Hohman from FMA on the Podcasting For blog [<http://www.podcastingfor.com/free-music-archive/>]

You may have to buy a licence directly from the composer to use the music. More often it is there for you to use. Keep up to date by checking out the Podcasting For ... website podcastingfor.com

The search phrase I normally use to find music is "Open Source Music". Some performers produce their compositions copyright free or through Creative Commons (see glossary). I suggest whether you use open source Creative Commons music or not, you consider making your podcast, images, and any other creative output available as Creative Commons.

"But I met (insert name of musician/composer here) and they said I could use their music." It happens. Did you get it in writing? Did their lawyer and your lawyer co-sign it? Musicians are usually wonderful people who only want to share their music. Their lawyers, publishers and record companies live in a different world where one exchanges money for the use of someone else's work. Just because (insert name of musician/composer here) wrote and/or performed the song, does not mean they have the rights to "exploit" that work themselves. They

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signed that work over to a publisher and they have the right to collect the payment.

Readings: books, poetry and prose

Stop!

One of the team says, after listening to a particularly poignant report, that there is a wonderful piece of poetry that could follow on the podcast.

I like the way that person thinks. A great podcast has all sorts of textures and ideas running through it. Readings from books and poetry are one way of adding textures. Like music, someone wrote that poem, someone published that poem. Someone has the rights to that poem.

Identify the publisher of the work and contact them. Get permission to use in writing.

PROBABLY, and possibly not. Copyright lapses and works fall into Public Domain (in the UK and most places) 70 years after the death of the person who created the work. So, you are going to be OK with Shakespeare.

This territory is not easy and I suggest you seek professional assistance because different copyright rules apply in different in different countries. Even if someone has made a recording of a piece of literature, that reproduction might itself be copyright. An adaptation of a piece of literature or a piece of music might not be in public domain. Sure, you could chance it and use it ("how will 'they' ever know?"). You optimistic and creative person you. It's the internet. You never know who is going to hear your podcast. One day you might get a letter saying, "cease and desist" or worse ... a bill asking for money – even if you have not made any.

If you are going to use an excerpt from literature, poetry or even a "how to" book like this, ask permission from the publisher. Write, phone or email. Get the permission in writing before you publish your podcast.

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If you do want to use any of this book, just drop me a note. I won't charge.

Other audio – radio programmes and other podcasts

You have probably heard radio programmes or watched TV programmes that have included “clips” from other TV and radio programmes, or soundtracks from films.

Tiresome, I know. But there are rights around these too. And yet again you need permission. It becomes even more complicated if the radio programme or TV show includes someone else's work. Here's an example; there is a great piece of radio you want to include in your podcast. There is the presenter of the programme interviewing someone, towards the end there is a little music playing and a short reading from a poem – just two lines. Can the radio station give you permission to use the clip?

No.

The interviewee may need to give you permission, and there are rights on the music and the poem. Yes, the radio station has permission to use that content in their broadcasts, but they can only give you permission to use what they own, not what others own.

Movie clips

Now, people might say “Hey, you can use up to 30 seconds (or three minutes, or ...) if you are reviewing the movie.” Really? If the person who told you this does not have a legal qualification, ignore them.

Copyright is copyright. This is not an area so seek forgiveness rather than permission. You will get forgiveness ... at a price, a £\$¥ price.

People make podcasts reviewing movies. They use clips. They (should) have permission.

Production companies – film, TV, radio – make promotional clips and images available for free. Contact them directly, get on their mailing list. The internet has made distribution of clips and images easier, and it is now less difficult to get access to the promotional material. If in doubt, contact the press office of the organisation or production company.

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“Hey. That fool Sims is talking nonsense. My lawyer says so.”
Lawyers disagree – that is their business plan. So, if your lawyer says, “Go ahead.” then follow her/his advice. They are trained and qualified. I'm just a radio producer.

Copyright over all of these matters is different from country to country and licences are different for different “territories”

Photography

This is the easiest to deal with. Don't use a photo, image, graph, gif or anything like that which you have found on a website, except a website that provides free, rights free images. Gifs, I concede, are more difficult in that although they break copyright, they have become so ubiquitous, that not using one when you need one would seem to be odd. All I can do is issue the warning that they are someone else's copyrighted work and leave the decision to you.

There are such websites where caring, sharing individuals provide great photos and all they want in return is a credit. One such is Wikimedia Commons. You can also find some free to use photos on Flickr.com, do check the copyright attribution on each photo. Now that good digital cameras available to everyone, you are likely to find excellent photos on social media and other people's blogs. You should always ask permission before using and always add a credit if people ask. It is good practice and good manners. If you were to ask permission from me to use one of my photos, first thing I would do is check your site, see what you are doing, whether I want my work to be associated with yours and whether you offer credits.

There are so many open source projects, software, music, photography and more, you should be able to find something suitable. It takes effort.

The questions you should ask before using work that you have not made yourself are:

- 1 – Who made this work?
- 2 – Do I have permission to use this work?
- 3 – How do I get permission?

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4 – If I need a licence do I have one?

5 – If I have permission do I have it in writing?

6 – Do I have permission from the right authority?

Ask. The owner will either say: “Yes” (get it in writing), “No” (then find an alternative) or “Yes, but the cost is ...” (A fee, a licence, or even a day in court.)

Other legal stuff

With the rise of social media, online comments, blogs and other forums for people to tell their story or express their opinion, people have become rather casual about the things they say about others. These online conversations might be informal, relaxed, angry, even aggressive, but they are not like a chat over a coffee or an argument after drink has been taken. These are published comments. People need to stay within the law. Your podcast and website, your community radio programme or social media page is required to fulfil its legal obligations just like the New York Times and the Guardian.

Here are some areas to be wary of:

Defamation: Slander, libel, character assassination. If you are publishing on a website or podcast, and say or write something untrue about someone else that damages their reputation, that is libel. The point is, making a statement about someone, presenting it as fact – rather than opinion – and bringing their reputation into disrepute, is against the law. There are defences for these – ask a lawyer. Here especially the law varies around the world, even within Europe.

Court Reporting: If there is a court case that interests you, you are limited to reporting the goings on in that court. It is unlikely that this extends to an opinion of the re-telling of the goings on from other people reporting on the court case, if you are in the UK and the court case is in the USA. Different legal jurisdictions. Different rules. But if there is a court case in your town and you are attending with the intention of reporting, you need to stay within the law. It is probably best to use a trained reporter and interview them rather than do it yourself.

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Injunctions and Super Injunctions: This is a murky place. Unless you are an experienced reporter or journalist, step very carefully. An injunction is a court order “that compels a party to do or refrain from specific acts” – in this situation, for example – demanding that the details of a story or event are not reported. A super injunction is “a directive that forbids both the public disclosure of information on a particular issue and any disclosure of the existence of the directive itself.” A super injunction includes reporting that the injunction even exists. Or something like that. Have I already suggested you ask a lawyer? That is good advice.

Balance and Bias: Here’s the good news. While in the UK broadcasters are required to be objective and balanced, bloggers, podcasters and newspapers are not. You might have set up your podcast to campaign for or against something. You might take a political view on a particular matter. You are not required to be balanced.

Good journalism is about trying to be objective. You might believe strongly in something, but adding at least some objectivity to your reporting, or allowing a voice opposed to your perspective make a much better listen and gives your argument more weight. Good reporters gather all the available facts. What separates different points of view is the analysis of those facts.

People tend to know the difference between reporting and propaganda – unless you are very good at propaganda.

Incitement to violence/hatred/racial hatred: If your bias extends to inciting people to hate others, be violent towards others then you are breaking the law and I look forward to reading about your court appearance.

Do not be afraid. The chances of you falling foul of any of the above are slight. However, if your podcast or radio show or blog is straying into the arena of serious journalism, then my advice is to act like a serious journalist. Learn about the profession, the legal, ethical and moral standards that are required.

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Find some serious books about Journalism and the Law.

If you are outside the UK, find books relevant to your jurisdiction.

If you are in the UK, McNae's "Essential Law for Journalists" is the textbook to read.

You might also want to investigate the National Council for the Training of Journalists website.

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End piece

We began this journey asking about purpose. What is the purpose of your podcast?

That question, however, does not address motivation. Why do we want to make podcasts? Why a podcast rather than a book or a painting or an opera? We are all storytellers to begin with. Telling stories is a fundamental human activity. First, we find food, shelter, love, safety, warmth. Then, whether we are in a cave at the beginning of time, or in front of a warm fire in our cosy home, whether we are on a bus with a friend on a wet winter's morning with all the windows misted or in a restaurant with our boss and we don't know whether you are about to be promoted or fired, the moment we open our mouths to speak, we tell a story.

We will choose the medium or media to tell that story best. We will choose a medium we are most comfortable with. This time, we are choosing podcasting and social media, because they are the tools that attract us. I leave the final words to Malachi O'Doherty who at the beginning of this tale said, "The trouble is, as you grow older and try other things you become a writer, you become a photographer, a broadcaster a commentator, a reporter, a teacher. But I like the description old radio hand."

We choose the medium that suits the way we want to tell our story. I agree with Malachi that there is more to it than convenience and suitability when he says, "I am sure there are artists who paint on canvas who just love the brushes. And I am sure there are writers, and I have been that writer myself, who really loves opening a crisp note book and using a fountain pen and the actual love of the materials comes before the creative notion.

"Is that madness in me? I think they are symbiotic. I think we are podcasters, photographers, we are broadcasters. We are playing with microphones and recorders not just because we have stories to tell, but we love the kit too."

Glossary

Creative Commons: From the Creative Commons Website: “What is Creative Commons? Creative Commons helps you legally share your knowledge and creativity to build a more equitable, accessible, and innovative world. We unlock the full potential of the internet to drive a new era of development, growth and productivity.

“With a network of staff, board, and affiliates around the world, Creative Commons provides free, easy-to-use copyright licenses to make a simple and standardized way to give the public permission to share and use your creative work—on conditions of your choice.”

[<https://creativecommons.org/>]

Embedding: When you upload your content to websites like YouTube, SoundCloud and Libsyn, you and other users are offered simple ways to share that content. One is through “embedding” the content on another website. You can embed your podcast hosted on SoundCloud or Libsyn by copying the code and pasting it into the HTML editor of your blog. The embed code will resemble this;

```
[<iframe style="border: none" src="//html5-  
player.libsyn.com/embed/episode/id/4975521/height/360/width/6  
40/theme/legacy/autonext/no/thumbnail/yes/autoplay/no/preload/  
no/no_addthis/no/direction/backward/no-cache/true/"  
height="360" width="640" scrolling="no" allowfullscreen  
webkitallowfullscreen mozallowfullscreen oallowfullscreen  
msallowfullscreen></iframe>]
```

FTP stands for The File Transfer Protocol. It is used to transfer computer files between a client and server on a computer network. If you want to move a file from your computer to the server where your website is hosted, you might use FTP software. I use Filezilla.

ID3 Tags: “ID3 tags are the audio file data standard for MP3 files in active use by software and hardware developers around the world. ID3 tags are supported in software such as iTunes, Windows Media

Player, Winamp, VLC, and hardware players like the iPod, Creative Zen, Samsung Galaxy, and Sony Walkman.” id3.org/

mp3: A way to compress recorded sound into a small file to enable digital storage and distribution.

Package (Radio Package): A package is a radio report within a longer programme. A package usually includes several voices and points of view. Often, it is presented by a reporter who might also include additional sound, music, sound effects, archive material or other audio content to tell the story more fully and engagingly. Some packages do not have a reporter presenting; the story is told through voices, sounds and music collected or compiled by the reporter.

Plugins for WordPress: “Plugins are ways to extend and add to the functionality that already exists in WordPress. The core of WordPress is designed to be lean and lightweight, to maximize flexibility and minimize code bloat. Plugins then offer custom functions and features so that each user can tailor their site to their specific needs.”

<https://codex.wordpress.org/Plugins>

This means that WordPress is very flexible. You can add functionality as you need it. Unsurprisingly the free WordPress hosting on WordPress.com has limited functionality. For example, there is no plugin to help you with podcasts.

The hosted podcast has an extraordinarily wide choice of plugins. Most of what you will need are free. And there are several plugins to help you with podcasting.

Among the most popular is Blubrry Powerpress Podcasting Plugin. I found it a bit fiddly, a bit difficult, a bit frustrating. But after setting it up and beginning to understand it better, I found it did the job.

There are others available. There are videos on YouTube that are invaluable if you are setting up Blubrry Powerpress Podcasting. And as with any plug-in, WordPress theme or version of WordPress, make sure you have the most up to date.

Podcast host or Podcast web host: is a business that provides the technologies and services needed for the website or webpage to be

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viewed in the Internet. Websites are hosted, or stored, on special computers called servers.

Promo or trail: A short advertisement or announcement about a forthcoming event or content later in the podcast or in the series or in another podcast. A device to encourage people to keep listening.

RSS and readers: RSS stands for Rich Site Summary or more frequently and more expressively Really Simple Syndication. RSS had been used for many years for summarising blogs. People “subscribed” to their favourite blog. Let’s call those people “subscribers”. The blog address is added to an RSS reader, aggregator, “blog catcher” or the browser on the subscriber’s computer. Then, when the blog is updated by the author adding more stories and articles, the subscriber is alerted through the RSS reader – a little bit like email. This “push” technology meant that the subscriber did not have to return to a website to see if it had been updated. The new updates were sent automatically to the RSS reader. Interestingly, RSS readers are becoming popular again with users. Among the most popular is Feedly. RSS readers mean that you can build your personalised news service. And you have the power to define what you think is news.

When RSS feeds were updated in 2004 to include media – like audio, video or .pdf files – podcasts were born. A “pod catcher” worked the same way as a “blog catcher”. It too is an RSS reader collecting information from podcast publishers. The listener has software on their computer which read the RSS feeds from podcasts to which the listener has subscribed.

RSS and podcatchers: You need to be able to help people find your podcast. It's all very well posting links on social media and telling people about your podcast over coffee. You really begin to build listeners when people, friends you have told and strangers who have come across your podcast in a search, can find your podcast easily and "subscribe". I've always found "subscribe" an odd word to use as it implies payment, even though there is none. But over the years that has become the word.

Once someone subscribes, they will receive your podcast automatically every time you publish one. It's like you send an email

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and the people who you have sent it to get it as soon as they open their email Inbox. You publish your podcast and subscribers get it as soon as they open their "pod catcher" or "pod client" or, for most people iTunes.

Show Notes: Once the audio recording is complete, the show notes are written on the blog. They promote the podcast and point people to where they can subscribe or download it. There will be additional information, photos, links, even scripts.

wav file: Is a format for storing uncompressed audio files. You will not be able to use wav files for your podcast. You will need to convert to mp3

Thanks

This is the follow-up to Podcasting for Communities; the first book in this series. Both books are almost identical, so the people I thank in that book, I thank in this book. They are John Rosborough a colleague and friend since 1978 and a highly-respected broadcaster. Johnny Seifert, Larry Gifford, Lewis Rossiter, Lucy Mitchell and Olly Mann. Also to old friends Malachi O'Doherty, Willis McBrier, Maxine Mawhinney and Barbara McCann who were early interviews for the Podcasting For ... podcast.

My wife, Dawn and Adam and Owen for putting up with me while I was writing and all of the rest of the time, too.

Since the first book I have also interviewed Harry Soames and Alex Bell from the phenomenally successful podcast No Such Thing As A Fish, Declan Conlon the Irish Times's podcast producer. And thanks to another old friend Ronan Kelly, for being one of the first people to buy both books,

About Davy Sims

Davy Sims has won broadcasting and new media awards in London, New York, Dublin and Belfast. He worked in BBC radio for most of his career, mainly in Radio Ulster but also in London as senior producer then chief producer in BBC Radio 1 and BBC Radio 4.

In 2001, he became Editor New Media in BBC Northern Ireland and was part of the team that revolutionised BBC Online which became BBC New Media.

Davy began experimenting with podcasting in 2008 and produced several series for the Irish Football Association and Momentum – the former representative body of the Information Technology industry in Northern Ireland.

He began his career in 1978 aged 22 when he joined the local independent radio station for Northern Ireland, Downtown Radio. As a freelance he presented an evening weekday programme. He became fulltime a few months later.

At Downtown, Davy specialised in music and in particular new and emerging bands from Northern Ireland.

He joined the BBC in 1986 where he produced, magazine programmes, music programmes, news and current affairs, social action, travel, religious affairs and general programmes. In 1999, he became the first internet (BBC Online) producer in BBC Northern Ireland.

Davy now spends time between Northern Ireland and Slovenia. He occasionally lectures on Radio Production for Journalists in Dublin and on Journalism and Emerging Media in Ljubljana.

Davy can be found on Twitter @davysims, or through his blog davysims.com

Further reading

Books:

Sound Reporting: Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production, Jonathan Kern is published by University of Chicago Press.

A Manual for Broadcasters by Robert McLeish published by Focal Press. This book is from 1978, pre-digital, but the fundamentals of radio don't change that much.

McNae's "Essential Law for Journalists"

Websites:

To learn more about coding and writing code, visit W3 Schools [https://www.w3schools.com/xml/xml_rss.asp].

Journalism Training: If you want to learn about the profession of journalism and how to become a trained journalist, there is no better place in the UK than the National Council for the Training of Journalists [<http://www.nctj.com/>]

Ethics: For an online version of NYU Journalism Handbook: Ethics, Law & Good Practice, [<https://journalism.nyu.edu/publishing/ethics-handbook/>]

Podcasts:

The Kicker – Columbia Journalism Review [<http://www.stitcher.com/podcast/columbia-journalism-review/the-kicker>]

Journalism.co.uk [<https://www.journalism.co.uk/podcast/s399/>]

The Radio Stuff Podcast [<https://soundcloud.com/radio-stuff-podcast>]

No Such Thing as a Fish [<https://soundcloud.com/nosuchthingasafish>]

Economist Radio [<https://radio.economist.com/>]

You might also like to look at the list on Player.fm [<https://player.fm/featured/journalism>]

To hear podcasts mentioned in this book visit

www.podcastingfor.com

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