

Pod cast

PODCAST

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A podcast is a series of digital-media files which are distributed over the Internet using syndication feeds for playback on portable media players and computers. The term podcast, like broadcast, can refer either to the series of content itself or to the method by which it is syndicated; the latter is also called podcasting. The host or author of a podcast is often called a podcaster.

The term is a portmanteau of the words "iPod" and "broadcast", the Apple iPod being the brand of portable media player for which the first podcasting scripts were developed (see history of podcasting). Such scripts allow podcasts to be automatically transferred to a mobile device after they are downloaded.

Though podcasters' web sites may also offer direct download or streaming of their content, a podcast is distinguished from other digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically when new content is added, using an aggregator or feed reader capable of reading feed formats such as RSS or Atom.

Receiving and using podcasts

Making full use of podcasts' syndication features requires appropriate software, often referred to as a podcatching client or a podcatcher. The feeds are usually distributed using RSS or Atom protocols to the podcatching client. The dominant podcatching client is Apple's iTunes player. However, there are alternatives, including Microsoft's Zune Marketplace, Juice (multiplatform), Doppler (Windows), Podget (Linux) and Podracer (Linux). Some established audio players, such as Amarok, Winamp and Mediamonkey also offer (sometimes limited) podcatching functionality.

Many podcasts also allow users to direct download, by giving a link to the audio file in an RSS feed or web page.

Podcasts are most often listened to on an MP3 player[citation needed], but they can also be heard on a computer using media player software. Links are often also included on the podcast's website, so that the podcast can be sampled without the necessity of a subscription, and to encourage users who are not familiar with the concept of a podcast. VoIP technology can also be used for podcasts.

Other uses

Podcasting's initial appeal was to allow individuals to distribute their own radio-style shows, but the system quickly became used in a wide variety of other ways, including distribution of school lessons, official and unofficial audio tours of museums, conference meeting alerts and updates, and by police departments to distribute public safety messages.

Podcasting is becoming increasingly popular in education.[citation needed] Podcasts enable students and teachers to share information with anyone at any time. An absent student can download the podcast of the recorded lesson. It can be a tool for teachers or administrators to communicate curriculum, assignments and other information with parents and the community. Teachers can record book discussions, vocabulary or foreign language lessons, international pen pal letters, music performance, interviews, and debates. Podcasting can be a publishing tool for student oral presentations. Video podcasts can be used in all these ways as well.

Trademarks

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On February 5, 2005, Shae Spencer Management LLC of Fairport, New York filed a trademark application to register PODCAST for an 'online prerecorded radio program over the internet'. On September 9, 2005, the United States Patent and Trademark Office rejected the application. The rejection notice cited Wikipedia's podcast entry as describing the history of the term.

As of September 19, 2005, known trademarks that capitalize on podcast include: Podcast Realty, GuidePod, PodGizmo, Pod-Casting, MyPod, Podvertiser, ePodcast, PodCabin, Podcaster, PodShop, PodKitchen, Podgram, GodPod and Podcast.

As of February 2007, there have been 24 attempts to register trademarks containing the word "PODCAST" in United States, but only "PODCAST READY" from Podcast Ready, Inc. was approved.

On September 26, 2006, it was reported that Apple Computer started to crack down on businesses using the acronym 'POD,' standing for "Portable on Demand," in product and company names. Apple sent a cease-and-desist order that week to Podcast Ready, which markets an application known as myPodder. Lawyers for Apple contended allegedly that the term "pod" has been used by the public to refer to Apple's music player so extensively that it falls under Apple's trademark cover. It was speculated that such activity was part of a bigger campaign for Apple to expand the scope of its existing iPod trademark, which included trademarking "IPODCAST," "IPOD Sucks," and "POD." On November 16, 2006, Apple Trademark Department returned a letter claiming Apple does not object to third party usage of "podcast" to refer to podcasting services and that Apple does not license the term.