

Audio and Video Podcasting & RSS Feeds for Busy People

Rhode Island Library Association Conference
June 5, 2008 ☀ Salve Regina College, Newport, RI

What is RSS?



Really Simple Syndication or Rich Site Summary, RSS is an XML (eXtensible Markup Language) format for syndicating and broadcasting web content. Anything can be broadcast, text, digital audio, PDF files, video files, and more. Learn more about RSS feeds at wpi.edu/+Library/Help/Self/rss.html.

What are Audio & Video Podcasts?

Podcasting usually means distributing *audio* content over the Internet using RSS feeds. A video podcast (sometimes called vidcast or vodcast) is online delivery of video content via RSS enclosures. People sign up for a feed & use their favorite aggregator ([iTunes](#), [Bloglines](#), [Google Reader](#), etc) to get the content when you post it. Users don't have to visit a specific web site to get content, it's pushed to them. View [RSS in Plain English](#) (3.5 min each) movie clip at http://www.commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english.

How are Libraries Using Podcasts & RSS Feeds?

See Library Success Wiki - libsucccess.org/index.php?title=Podcasting

Whether passive feeds of content once in a while or consistently active weekly or monthly, libraries are using podcasts to get the work out about library services, events, and information skills.

Five Steps to Your Own Podcast

1. Get a computer microphone and/or headset w/mic (from \$5-500)

We use Plantronics USB Stereo Headset with microphone (\$60) OR Samson CO1U USB Condenser Microphone (\$75)

2. Choose software to create audio or video

WPI Gordon Library uses Audacity: Free Audio Editor and Recorder: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> and [TechSmith Camtasia](#) (\$299) for videos. We also use a Flip Camera & other digital video cameras borrowing to take footage for our video podcasts.

Other options for creating/storing audio or video podcast content:

- FREE: Screencast-o-Matic: www.screencast-o-matic.com (you can upload to their site, which makes it freely available or export in QuickTime format .mov – FREE option, java-based). Sample movie: [Facebook Page Manager for libraries](#)
<http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/watch/ciXUXtsM>
- FREE: Camstudio: Free screen capturing software which creates AVI or Streaming Flash videos (SWFs)
<http://camstudio.org/>
- \$\$\$: Create a movie using Windows Movie Maker, Adobe Premier. Final Cut Pro or other software

3. Find a Space to host your audio or video content

We save podcasts to folder on own web server and/or streaming media server or Blackboard (WPI has [Learning Objects](#) Podcast LX building block)

Other Free upload sites to try if you don't have accessible server space and the links to these audio files or movies you've created:

Gabcast (record by calling 1-800 # up to 100MB free – no mic needed): <http://www.gabcast.com>
([Sample](#))

Upload to **Google Video, YouTube** (if you don't mind it being publicly accessible):
<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-6828353478644078943>

4. Create an RSS feed to broadcast your podcast

We manually create our XML file, see

<http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/Library/Borrowing/Podcasts/wpiaudiologo.xml> & update it when we have a new file to syndicate. We use <http://feedvalidator.org> to check our code. Here's a basic overview: <http://www.rss-specifications.com/creating-rss-feeds.htm>. There's software like feedforall (\$40) which can help you create them.

You can also generate XML or Feed by posting your links using [blogger](#), [del.icio.us](#), or other site that offers **feeds** already of stuff you add. Within Blogger, enable in settings then add atom.xml to the end of your blogspot address: <http://wpilibrary.blogspot.com/atom.xml>

Poderator - <http://www.poderator.com/> will help you create an RSS feed but you will have to have web space to save it to.

5. Test with RSS Readers (such as iTunes, [Google Reader](#) or [Bloglines](#))

How is WPI Using Podcasts & RSS Feeds?

Since August 2005 WPI has been podcasting short digital audio files on information sources, research strategies, events, and exhibits. See wpi.edu/+Library/Borrowing/Podcasts for the archive. Since August 2006 our news & events have been “fed” to subscribers. Since August 2007 we have been experimenting with Video Podcast.

To sign up for GL feeds go to: <http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/Library/Help/Self/rss.html#gordonfeeds>

Possible Future Uses with *Instruction Bias*

We are always talking with faculty about how to improve the integration of library instruction and multimedia content into the curriculum. We already integrate “archived” audio & video clips into myWPI course sites, but there is much potential for RSS feeds.

- Push *How To ... Instructional Movies* wpi.edu/_Library/Help/Self/Movies/ via feed posting within myWPI blackboard course sites.
- Consider use of *RSS to Javascript* to autofeed content added to any useful blog or RSS feed relevant to course, or one that you've created (see <http://www.rss-to-javascript.com>).
- Integrate audio/video into our Research Circuit online tutorial and push this along with audio tour of library to incoming first year students
- Offer sequence of video podcasts by topic: “Learn *Chemical Engineering Resources* over 6 weeks on your iPod.”
- Your ideas?



Christine Drew
Manager of Instruction & Outreach
cdrew@wpi.edu | 508.831.6163
users.wpi.edu/~cdrew ▶ presentations