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TRANSCRIPT

Cut #27: The advantages of podcasting

George Faulkner with Ben Edwards

23 March 2007

FAULKNER: Welcome to [ShortCuts](#), a weekly online broadcast brought to you by IBM. We're here to help you get the most of everyday Internet and e-mail tools. I'm George Faulkner. This week's question came to us from Chris in Detroit. He asks, what are some of the advantages of utilizing podcasting?

On the phone with us is ShortCuts publishing expert, Ben Edwards. Ben recently became publisher of [Economist.com](#), the online companion to The Economist Magazine. Having spent the last few years as a key player in the world of new media, Ben joins us to share his enthusiasm and expertise on online publishing. So Ben, what can you tell us about the advantages of utilizing podcasting?

EDWARDS: Well, hi, George, and thanks for having me on your show. I think to me the podcasting has a couple of elements that are...that give us some advantage over other forms of publishing and broadcasting.

The first is the cost of production. If you look at how people produce podcasts, how they engineer them and put them together, it's very much a home made medium. People use low end so called prosumer audio gear, anything from 100 bucks to a thousand bucks or a bit more if you wanted to buy some fancier equipment. And produce things themselves. Produce the audio themselves using their own equipment and so on.

So it's...given that it's a very low cost medium, that low cost then allows you to target very small niche audiences with extremely tailored targeted content. So if you look at some

of the popular shows on the iTunes podcasting directory, for instance, where a lot of people go to download their podcasts...

...you'll see that a lot of them are extremely targeted at very small niche audiences, much smaller niche audiences than you could hope to achieve through broadcast radio or even satellite radio or Internet radio. You know, there are tens of thousands of podcasts listed in the iTunes directory covering everything. So that's the first.

The second is the podcast deploys subscription technology, RSS subscription technology, which allows me as a consumer of the podcast to subscribe to your show and pull the content I want from you.

The iTunes platform, which again, you know, people use a lot, is extremely easy to use and with a single click you can subscribe to the podcast. The podcast will automatically download to your client software so [sit] on your laptop, your desktop or wherever, on your Mac...

And then automatically synchs with your iPod when you connect that to your computer. So people find that utility very handy.

FAULKNER: So that's a great answer, Ben, for the general public. What about podcasting in the enterprise? What do you see as some of the advantages there?

EDWARDS: Yes, George. I think that, you know, just to sort of extrapolate from that, the first, as you think about subscription and subscribing to content as opposed to having it pushed to me, you know one of the challenges we have increasingly in the enterprise is information overload.

Too much e-mail, which is a push technology, if you think about it. It's me pushing out my communications to you and oftentimes that communications is fairly indiscriminate. It's not targeted. And it's thoroughly involuntary. In other words, it shows up in my inbox whether or not I want your e-mail.

So you know, a lot of people who work inside enterprises—especially large enterprises—have to deal effectively with you know, what's a large volume of spam from their colleagues.

With RSS subscription technology I can subscribe to the content I want and pull it from you based on my needs and my desires, so it puts me in charge of, you know, the consumption of my own information. It makes my information management much easier.

And obviously with the podcasting it's in audio form, which, it really gets to the second point about podcasting within the enterprise, is it allows me to create content in audio form or even video form if you want to do a video podcast and then publish that and now the consumer of the information can consume that and there are some circumstances where audio can be extremely powerful and effective form of internal communications.

FAULKNER: Well, thank you so much for joining us today, Ben. For a transcript of today's show, visit us on the Web at ibm.com/shortcuts. There you'll find more information on this week's topic. And again, if you've got a question or our experts, write us at cuts@us.ibm.com. From all of us at ShortCuts, thank you for listening.

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