

Podcasts and Podcasting for Law Librarians**

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Ms. Murley provides an introduction to podcasts, suggests some podcasts of interest to law librarians, and describes ways that podcasting can help law librarians deliver library services.

¶1 Podcasts are like portable radio programs that you can schedule for any time and any place. A podcast is an audio broadcast, distributed via an RSS 2.0 feed in MP3 or other portable audio format for download to and playback on a digital music player or computer.¹ You can download individual podcasts from the Web or subscribe to an RSS feed to receive new podcasts automatically when they are released. A recent Pew Internet Project survey found that “12% of internet users have downloaded a podcast.”²

¶2 Distribution of audio via RSS feed is called podcasting.³ You can subscribe to a podcast feed with a feed aggregator such as Bloglines (www.bloglines.com) or My Yahoo (<http://my.yahoo.com>), or with a specialized podcast aggregator, or “podcatcher,” such as Apple’s iTunes (www.apple.com/itunes) or Juice (<http://juicereceiver.sourceforge.net>).⁴

¶3 The term “podcast” was derived from *iPod* plus *broadcast*.⁵ Despite this etymology, however, you do not need an iPod to listen to podcasts—any digital

* *Editor’s Note:* “Technology for Everyone” is a regular feature of *Law Library Journal*. In each article, author Diane Murley reviews a tool that can help law librarians do their jobs even better.

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1. See Roy Balleste et al., *Podcasting, Vodcasting, and Law Libraries: How to Understand the Newest “It” Technology and Use It in Your Library*, AALL SPECTRUM, June 2006, at 8, 8; PC Magazine Encyclopedia, Definition of: Podcast, <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/> (search for “podcast”) (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).
2. Mary Madden, Pew Internet Project Data Memo: Podcast Downloading 1 (Nov. 2006), available at http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Podcasting.pdf.
3. J. Angelo Racoma, *Beginner’s Guide to Podcasts and Podcasting (Plus: How to Create a Basic Podcast of Your Own)*, FOREVER GEEK, Apr. 6, 2006, http://forevergeek.com/geek_articles/beginners_guide_to_podcasts_and_podcasting_plus_how_to_create_a_basic_podcast_of_your_own.php.
4. See also Balleste et al., *supra* note 1, at 8.
5. PC Magazine Encyclopedia, Definition of: Podcast, *supra* note 1.

audio player will do. You can even listen to podcasts on your computer, although you lose the portability associated with podcasts. Podcasts enable you to listen to current awareness or educational programming while you are commuting, walking, or engaged in other activities that make reading impractical.

Podcasts

¶4 There are many legal and library-related podcasts available. The following is a sampling to get you started.

Legal Research Podcasts

¶5 *Berring's Legal Research Podcast*⁶ is a series of podcasts supplementing the *Berring on Legal Research* DVD set. In the podcasts, Bob Berring explores the finer points of legal research topics only touched upon in the DVD set, expounds upon essential "deep principles" that should guide both experienced and developing legal researchers, and offers general advice for law students.

Law Librarian and Law Library Podcasts

¶6 *Check This Out!*⁷ is a weekly podcast about "law, libraries, and life, from a northern border town" by Jim Milles, University at Buffalo Law School. Jim has been producing *Check This Out!* since October 2005.

¶7 *KCLL's Sidebar*⁸ is a monthly podcast from King County Law Library in Seattle, Washington. Most of the episodes are around twenty minutes long and include legal news, research tips, interviews, beer recommendations, and music.

Podcasts of Government Information

¶8 *Podcasts from the U.S. Government*,⁹ available on the USA.gov Web site, provides audio broadcasts of interviews, speeches, meetings, hearings, and other official news and information from the federal government.

¶9 The *Oyez Project*¹⁰ is known primarily for its archive of oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court, and a program is underway to add all audio recorded in the Court since the installation of a recording system in October 1955.¹¹

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6. Berring's Legal Research Podcast, <http://www.berringlegalresearch.com/podcast.asp> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).
 7. Check This Out! Podcast, <http://cto.libsyn.com/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).
 8. King County Law Library, Podcasts, <http://www.kcll.org/aboutus/publications/podcasts/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).
 9. USA.gov, Podcasts from the U.S. Government, http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/Libraries/Podcasts.shtml (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).
 10. Oyez, <http://www.oyez.org/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).
 11. About Oyez, <http://www.oyez.org/about/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

¶10 The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit was the first federal appellate court to begin podcasting its new oral arguments, which it makes available as an RSS standard audio podcast, an iTunes optimized audio podcast, and via the podcast.net directory.¹²

Podcasts for Legal Current Awareness and Continuing Legal Education

¶11 Robert Ambrogi and J. Craig Williams's *Lawyer2Lawyer*¹³ (formerly Coast to Coast) is a weekly legal-affairs podcast, including interviews of lawyers and other experts from all over the world, from the Legal Talk Network (www.legaltalknetwork.com/index.php). Some Legal Talk Network programs are available on the Law.com CLE Center.¹⁴

¶12 *Justice Talking*¹⁵ is a public radio show about current legal issues. Continuing legal education credit is available via West LegalEdCenter.¹⁶

¶13 Attorney Evan Schaeffer's *Legal Underground* podcasts¹⁷ have always been entertaining, but his series on advanced deposition techniques demonstrated that there is even more of a demand for informative and educational programming.¹⁸

¶14 *Litigation Podcast: Tips & Tactics for the Practicing Trial Lawyer*, from the ABA Section of Litigation, podcasts "practical tips, tactics, and interviews with today's leading trial attorneys."¹⁹

¶15 Despite the convenience that podcasts and portable audio formats provide, many continuing legal education providers only make their recorded programs available via streaming audio.²⁰ Ironically, the two providers listed above as providing CLE credit for legal podcasts take the portable MP3 formatted programs and turn them into streaming audio, requiring attorneys to stay by their computers to listen to the programs if they want credit. Fortunately, some states and other CLE providers do make their programs available in MP3 format,²¹ and more will begin to offer the format as demand grows.²²

12. Seventh Circuit RSS, http://www.ca7.uscourts.gov/ca7_rss.htm (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

13. *Lawyer2Lawyer*, <http://www.legaltalknetwork.com/index.php> (follow link to Radio Show Library, then link to *Lawyer2Lawyer*) (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

14. Law.com CLE Center, <http://clecenter.com/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

15. *Justice Talking*, <http://www.justicetalking.org/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

16. West LegalEdcenter, <http://westlegaledcenter.com/home/homepage.jsf> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

17. Evan Schaeffer's *Legal Underground*, <http://www.legalunderground.com/podcasts/index.html> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

18. See Evan Schaeffer's *Legal Underground*, http://www.legalunderground.com/2007/01/podcasting_upda.html (Jan. 24, 2007) (providing links to three podcasts on advanced deposition techniques).

19. Section of Litigation, Am. Bar Ass'n, *Litigation Podcast*, <http://www.abanet.org/litigation/podcast/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

20. Posting of Neil Squillante to TechnoLawyer Blog, *Thoughts on CLE*, http://blog.technolawyer.com/2007/02/thoughts_on_cle.html (Feb. 26, 2007).

21. See Posting of Neil Squillante to TechnoLawyer Blog, *More Thoughts on CLE*, http://blog.technolawyer.com/2007/03/more_thoughts_o.html (Mar. 5, 2007).

22. See Frederick L. Faulkner IV, *I'll Take My Legal News to Go Please: An Intro to Podcasting*, LLRX.COM, Mar. 15, 2006, <http://www.llrx.com/columns/faulkner3.htm>.

Podcasts on Management

¶16 *David Maister's Business Masterclass*²³ is a podcast by author, speaker, consultant, and former Harvard Business School professor David Maister. Each masterclass is a series of fifteen- to twenty-minute episodes dealing with various professional business topics. The series currently available on the site include Career Development; Strategy in Professional Businesses; Managing Professionals: Attitudes, Skills and Behaviors; and Marketing Professional Services.

Legal Education-Related Podcasts

¶17 *MediaBerkman*, from the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School, features “conversations with and talks by leading cyber-scholars, entrepreneurs, activists, and policymakers as they explore topics such as the factors that influence knowledge creation and dissemination in the digital age; the character of power as the worlds of governance, business, citizenship and the media meet the internet; and the opportunities, role and limitations of new technologies in learning.”²⁴ Hamline University School of Law has *Conversations in Law*,²⁵ a series on “Law, Leadership and Legal Education.”

¶18 *Nolo Podcasts: The Law in Plain English*²⁶ cover a variety of topics in the areas of business and human resources, patents, copyright and art, wills and estate planning, property and money, family law and immigration, and rights and disputes. The podcasts, like Nolo books, are aimed at nonlawyers. Nolo also makes transcripts of its podcasts available.²⁷

Finding Law-Related Podcasts

¶19 The following directories of legal blogs are good resources for finding more legal podcasts.

- Justia's *Blawgs.FM*²⁸ is a directory and search engine for law-related podcasts. Its *BlawgSearch* directory also has a podcast category.²⁹
- Blawg.com's *Blawg Directory* also has a podcasts category.³⁰

23. David Maister's Business Masterclass, <http://davidmaister.com/podcasts/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

24. MediaBerkman, <http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/mediaberkman/about/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

25. Conversations in Law at Hamline, <http://www.hamline.edu/law/conversations/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

26. Nolo Podcasts, <http://www.nolocast.com/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

27. Nolo Podcast Transcripts, <http://nolopodcast.blogspot.com/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

28. Justia Blawgs.FM, <http://blawgsfm.justia.com/> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

29. Justia Blawg Search, Podcasts, <http://blawgsearch.justia.com/category.aspx?catid=277> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

30. Blawg.com, Podcasts Legal Blogs, <http://www.blawg.com/Listing.aspx?CategoriesID=160> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

Podcasting

¶20 Listening to these podcasts may give you ideas for ways you could use podcasts to deliver research instruction or library services to more patrons. For example, you could distribute audio recordings of research classes and workshops, making it possible for students or attorneys to review them whenever they have time. Podcasting classes and workshops also makes them available to those who could not attend the class or workshop.

¶21 You could make audio recordings of library tours or research guides available, enabling patrons to listen and take themselves through the tour or research task at their own pace and on their own schedule. If you make a presentation or report to your parent organization, audio-recording would make the presentation available to those who couldn't attend and the report available for listening as well as reading. Podcasting can also be a great marketing tool if done professionally.³¹

¶22 Podcasting can be basic or sophisticated, plain or fancy. The audio recording can be handled by an organization's AV or IT department, or it can be done by an individual with a digital audio recorder or a headset with microphone. You can edit the recording on your computer using free software. Upload the MP3 file to your organization's media server or a podcast-hosting service, and you are ready to market your first podcast.³²

¶23 Law librarians may find that a simple audio recording is not enough when teaching legal research. Software, such as Camtasia,³³ that records what is happening on the computer screen and synchronizes it with the audio narrative may be the answer, especially for teaching electronic legal research. Other software can coordinate audio files with PowerPoint presentations or with still screenshots. I don't have space here to cover all the options available to you, but I will return to podcasting in a later article.

¶24 For more information on creating your own podcasts, a good starting point is Connie Crosby's "The Tao of Law Librarianship" column from LLRX.com, titled "Are You Ready for Podcasting?"³⁴ She discusses her developing interest in and ideas for podcasting as she prepares to record her own podcasts. You may also want to listen to the recordings of the 2006 AALL Annual Meeting program, "Invasion of the Podcast People: Podcasting for the Law Library,"³⁵ with Fred

31. See Al Podboy, *Podcasting: What Is It Good For?* PRAC. INNOVATIONS, July 2006, at 16, 17, available at <http://west.thomson.com/pdf/iii/PractInnovJul06.pdf>.

32. See Racoma, *supra* note 2; see also Russell Morgan, *Podcasting: Believe The Hype*, PCMAG.COM, Feb. 21, 2007, <http://www.pcmag.com/> (search for "Podcasting: Believe The Hype").

33. See TechSmith, Camtasia Studio Screen Recorder and Video Editor, <http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp> (last visited Apr. 10, 2007).

34. Connie Crosby, *Are You Ready for Podcasting?* LLRX.COM, Mar. 15, 2006, <http://www.llrx.com/columns/tao4.htm>.

35. *Invasion of the Podcast People: Podcasting for the Law Library*, program presented at 99th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries, St. Louis (July 10, 2006) (audiotape available from Mobiltape Co.) (remarks of Fred Barnhart, John Mayer, and James Milles).

Barnhart, John Mayer, and James Milles; and the 2007 Annual Meeting workshop on “How (and What) to Podcast,”³⁶ coordinated by James G. Milles.

Conclusion

Podcasting is exciting not because of the technology, although that may appeal to some of your younger library users, but because it gives you another tool for receiving and delivering information. It combines some of the best qualities of print and in-person communication, allowing users to access the information when and where they need it, while leaving their eyes and hands free for other activities.

36. How (and What) to Podcast, workshop presented at 100th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries, New Orleans (July 14, 2007) (audiotape available from Mobiltape Co.).