

American Library Association

Washington Office Newslines

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ALA Washington Office Tips for Creating a Podcast

This guide is intended for educational purposes and does not necessarily reflect the policy positions of the American Library Association.

Introduction

On December 7, 2006, the ALA Washington Office debuted the *District Dispatch* Podcast, a regularly updated audio program containing news and commentary about recent library-related legislation. For more information, click [here](#).

Numerous people have asked us how to create a podcast. In response, we have created:

A Step-By-Step Guide To Creating a Podcast

1. Buy a microphone and plug it into your computer, either into the "line-in" port or the USB port, depending on the brand and style of microphone.
2. Open up your sound editing program; in the case of the *District Dispatch* we use a piece of free software called Audacity. There are many different types of audio software, so please use the one with which you are the most comfortable.
3. Press the record button and begin talking. If you make a mistake don't worry; you can edit it out later.
4. When you are finished recording, edit the podcast as necessary. Using our recording software, Audacity, we generally edit out mistakes, long silences, and placeholders such as "umms" and "uhhs."
5. If you like, add music. We add a musical track to the *District Dispatch* Podcast, which we found on [CC Mixer](#). If you play music on your podcast you must have a license for it! Our music is licensed under a Creative Commons license, so we are able to use it without paying a royalty, but not all music can be used in such a way. Before you use any music on your podcast you should understand the terms of the license for that music. You should seek legal advice if you have any questions about licensing of music.

Other News:

[ALA-APA Council passes resolution to endorse a nonbinding minimum salary for professional librarians](#)

[New ALA scholarship named in honor of Cicely Phippen Marks](#)

[Elizabeth Edwards to keynote PLA President's Program](#)

ALAWON Editor:
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6. Save your recording as an mp3. [Note: If you are using the program Audacity you will need to download an additional plug-in in order to export the audio file as mp3. That plug-in can be found [here](#).]
7. Upload your mp3 to the web. If you don't have web storage space, there are many different services that offer it.
8. Finally, in order for you to have a true podcast your audio file must go out to subscribers via RSS feed. This simply means that whenever you record a new podcast and upload it your subscribers will be automatically notified. One popular service for creating this feed is [Feed Burner](#).
9. That's it! You are well on the way to making the most of Web 2.0 technology!

General Tips

- Before you get started, read the [Creative Commons Podcasting Legal Guide](#). This is a useful and informative guide to the legalities of podcasting, but as it mentions, "This Guide provides general information about legal topics but it is not a complete discussion of all legal issues that arise in relation to podcasting nor is it a substitute for legal advice."
- Prepare for your podcasts in advance by gathering notes. If you are going to use an interview format (like the *District Dispatch* Podcast), discuss the topic with the interviewee so you can prepare a list of questions and they can prepare responses before you record the podcast.
- You do not know when people are going to listen to the podcast. Therefore, it is best not to make references like "next week," "soon," or "yesterday." Be as specific as possible; e.g., "On January 25, 2007,..."
- Spell out acronyms before using them, otherwise your audience may be lost.
- Configure your software to record your podcast in stereo.
- If you are having trouble with varying audio levels, there is a free program called Levelator, which we use for the *District Dispatch* Podcast. It adjusts the audio levels to account for the different volumes of guests' voices.
- Submit your podcast to directories in order to get publicity. There are too many to list, but some of the popular ones are iTunes, Google, Odeo, Podnova, and Yahoo Podcast.
- As the Creative Commons Podcasting Legal Guide recommends,

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202.628.8410 (V)
202.628.8419 (F)

Office of Government Relations

Lynne Bradley, Director;
Melanie Anderson, Don
Essex, Erin Haggerty, and
Miriam Nisbet, Rosalind
Reynolds

Office for Information Technology Policy

Rick Weingarten, Director;
Mark Bard, Carrie Lowe,
Kathy Mitchell, Carrie Russell

waivers are recommended if you are interviewing anyone who is not an employee of your organization. Please consult the guide or a lawyer for more information.

- Finally, you should consider using a Creative Commons license, as it allows others to know what they can do with your podcast. For example, the District Dispatch Podcast is licensed under a [By-No Derivs-Non-Comm License](#). This allows others to copy and distribute an entire episode for non-commercial purposes, as long as they give the ALA Washington Office credit and do not create a derivative work from it.

Resources

- [Apple's Guide to Submitting Your Podcast to iTunes Directory](#)
- [Audacity](#)
- [Creative Common's Guide to Podcasting](#)
- [Levelator](#)



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