



## Using Bloglines To Track Podcasts

Podcasts are audio blogs that people create as an alternate form of online expression. Think of them as pirate radio on the web, free from the restrictions of time and geography. Some are professionally produced, like talk shows and music broadcasts, while others are less formal daily diaries and running commentary between friends.

Whether you are iPodless in Ipanema or a Podcasting Pro on the Go, Bloglines can help you find, track and enjoy podcasts.

### Subscribe to Podcasts in Bloglines

If you are new to podcasting, find a few to sample by checking out some of the online guides to the new art, like [www.ipodder.org](http://www.ipodder.org) or [www.podcastingnews.com](http://www.podcastingnews.com). Every podcast has an RSS feed, so simply subscribe to your favorites as you would any other kind of blog or news feed in Bloglines.

Once you subscribe to a podcast feed in Bloglines, it will be added to your personal My Feeds list. When a new podcast is available, you'll see the alert next to that feed. Each podcast update has a text note accompanied by an "enclosure" icon that links to the audio podcast file. Simply click on that enclosure link to start the podcast. That will launch your desktop media player or specialized podcasting software like [www.dopplerradio.net](http://www.dopplerradio.net), and the podcast of your choice will play right from Bloglines.

Plus you can save podcasts to your Clippings folder, or post them to your Clip Blog to share with others.

Experienced podcast listeners like to use Bloglines to monitor for updates and get notification when new podcasts are available, so they never miss episodes of their favorites.

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## Tired of TiVo? Beyond Blogs? Podcasts Are Here

By KATE ZERNIKE

**G**RAND FORKS, N.D., Feb. 16 - From a chenille-slipcovered sofa in the basement of their friend Dave's mom's house at the edge of a snow-covered field, Brad and Other Brad, sock-footed pioneers in the latest technology revolution, are recording "Why Fish," their weekly show.

Clutching a microphone and leaning over a laptop on the coffee table, they praise the beauty of the Red River, now frozen on the edge of town, and plug an upcoming interview with a top-ranked professional walleye fisherman. Then they sign off.

"I'm Brad" says Brad, in real life, Brad Durick, a 29-year-old television advertising salesman.

"And I'm Brad," says Other Brad, a 44-year-old newspaper writer, Brad Dokken. "Until next week, keep your hook in the water, keep your line tight and keep it fun."

Their show, mostly ad-libbed, is a podcast, a kind of recording that, thanks to a technology barely six months old, anyone can make on a computer and then post to a Web site, where it can be downloaded to an [iPod](#) or any MP3 player to be played at the listener's leisure.

On an average day, about 100 people download "Why Fish" from its Web site. That is not a huge audience, but two fishermen can dream. Some popular podcasters say they get thousands of downloads a day.

Since August, when Adam Curry, a former MTV video jockey, and David Winer, an early Web log writer, developed the podcasting technology, 3,075 podcasts have sprung up around the world, according to a Web site, [Ipodder.org](#), that offers downloads of podcasting software.

From "Say Yum," a California couple's musings about food and music, to "Lifespring," a Christian show whose creator said he had a vision to podcast, to "Dutch Cheese and American Pie," by a Dutch citizen planning to move to the United States, these shows cover a broad variety of topics.

Podcasts are a little like reality television, a little like "Wayne's World," and are often likened to [TiVo](#), which allows television watchers to download only the programs they want to watch and to skip advertising, for radio or blogs but spoken.

And as bloggers have influenced journalism, podcasters have the potential to transform radio. Already many radio stations, including National Public Radio and Air America, the liberal-oriented radio network, have put shows into a podcast format. And companies are seeing the possibilities for advertising; [Heineken](#), for example, has produced a music podcast.

Inevitably, politicians are taking note, too. Donnie Fowler Jr. put out "FireWire Chats" by podcast in his bid to become chairman of the Democratic National Committee, saying Democrats had to embrace new technology if they wanted to reach a grass-roots audience.

Still, most podcasts are made by people like the two Brads, who record from basements, bedrooms or bathrooms, and devote their shows to personal passions.

In Southern California, three men have hit the Top 50 on [Podcastalley.com](#), a podcast tracker, with "Grape

Radio," a "Sideways"-like program about wine. Their expertise? They drink wine and like to talk about it.

There are music podcasts - cover songs, punk and "The Worst Music You've Ever Heard." There are many religious podcasts, nicknamed Godcasts. Then there is "Five Hundy by Midnight," a Midwest gambler's musings on Las Vegas.

There are podcasts on sports and on bicycling, on agriculture and on politics. There are poetry podcasts and technology podcasts.

In Northern California, Devan and Kris Johnson, young newlyweds, offer "Say Yum," recording themselves making dinner and playing music after work. (A snippet: "I hope everybody gets to eat avocados.") But they are not even the first of their genre; one of the first and most popular podcasts is recorded by a young married couple, talking about their lives, and sex lives, from their farmhouse in Wayne, Wis.

There are even podcasts about podcasting and several Web sites, like [Podcastalley.com](http://Podcastalley.com) and [Podcastbunker.com](http://Podcastbunker.com), that review and rank podcasts and provide links to them.

People who study consumer behavior say the rapid growth of podcasts reflects people's desire for a personalized experience, whether creating a stuffed animal at a Build-a-Bear store or creating playlists for their iPods.

"It's about control," said Robbie Blinkoff, an anthropologist at Context-Based Research, a consulting firm in Baltimore that has done several studies on how technology changes human behavior.

"Making something of their own, feeling like they've put it together, there's lots of self-confidence in that," Mr. Blinkoff said.

The potential audience for podcasting is huge; Apple alone has sold 10 million iPods in the last three years, about half of those in the last few months of last year.

And already, several podcasts have found sponsors. Dave Whitesock, who under the show name Dave Miller records the "Miller Report," a daily podcast from Grand Forks, got a limousine company to help pay for his report in exchange for a daily mention: "For when you need a stretch limo in Grand Forks."

While some podcasters take hours to edit their shows, many simply embrace dead air and the "ums" that come with what Mr. Whitesock called "Live to Hard Drive."

Brian Race, a radio station manager in Georgia who runs [Christianpodcasting.com](http://Christianpodcasting.com) on the side, picked up his cellphone in the middle of a recent podcast to discover his mother on the line. He kept on recording.

The rawness is part of the appeal.

"Everyone says, 'They're amateurs, they're amateurs, they're amateurs,' but sometimes, frankly, it's more interesting to listen to someone who's not a professional but who has something genuine or interesting to say," said Michael W. Geoghegan, an insurance marketer in California and the host of "Reel Reviews," a movie review podcast intended for people heading to the video store.

Mr. Geoghegan said he had "multiple thousands" of downloads a day. He does no editing. "People stumble when they speak," he said. "I think the listener appreciates when it's not superpolished as it is on a commercial station."

Podcasting has tended to be contagious; after Mr. Geoghegan stumbled on a Web site about podcasting in September and started his show, he persuaded three friends who like wine to start "Grape Radio."

Mr. Whitesock, too, stumbled on a Web site about podcasting, and persuaded the two Brads to do a fishing show, and then another friend to do a movie review show. This month, they added a music show in which a

radio disc jockey for a local [Clear Channel](#) station plays local music he would not get to play on the air, and persuaded the part-time mayor of Grand Forks, Dr. Michael Brown, an obstetrician, to do a monthly show, and put his State of the City address on podcast, too.

"We can reach people in the rest of the world who might say, 'Hey, Grand Forks is a great place to move to,'" said Dr. Brown, who said his shows had been downloaded by about 100 people, including some who wrote in with complaints. "And technologically advanced young people say, 'I can stay in Grand Forks.' There is a place for them here."

In California, the Johnsons of "Say Yum" added clip-on microphones to their usual after-work routine to create their show.

"I'm usually cooking, and Devan's usually playing music, so we just chat over the music," Ms. Johnson said.

Brian Ibbott had always loved making mixed tapes and CD's. His podcast, "Coverville," has become one of Podcastalley's most popular, and in many ways it is like a real radio show, without the advertising. Sunday is all-request day, and listeners can call in their requests. Mr. Ibbott, 35, plays back their recorded requests before the songs.

"I don't know that I'm doing it so much as a protest against radio as I am to develop the radio show I always wanted to hear," said Mr. Ibbott, who lives in Colorado. The last great radio station nearby, he said, was bought out by Clear Channel. "And they got the same playlist everyone else did."

He pays a few hundred dollars to Ascap and BMI to allow him to play copyrighted music, he said, and is negotiating with the Recording Industry Association of America, which has filed lawsuits to prevent unauthorized music downloading.

Mr. Ibbott, like the Johnsons and most podcasters, work in technology jobs. But then there are some like Steve Webb, who fits his Christian show "Lifespring" in between his regular job as a windshield repairman. He was on a Cub Scout trip with his son, he said, when he woke with a vision that he was to do a podcast.

"I felt it was leading in the Lord," said Mr. Webb, 50. "I felt he wanted to have a voice in this new media. After all, the Gutenberg Bible was the first thing printed on the printing press."

Technology watchers say that like blogs, some podcasts will be widely heard and influential, while others may end up with no more reach than local access cable programs. But many podcasters, like the two Brads, say they are simply happy to have an outlet for their passion. As Mr. Durick said, "You love to talk fish if you're a fisherman."