

## Should your company use Podcasting as a marketing vehicle?

Planet Central approaches this new medium like every other media. We ask tough questions —

- What group of consumers is it reaching?
- What percent of these consumers are reached?
- Are there any regional considerations or restrictions?
- Cost per impression?
- Is it an appropriate medium for the client's message?

When a new medium comes out, like the Internet back in 1996, it's often touted as the next great thing. The same is true of Podcasting. While it's unique and very interesting, just as the Internet was a decade ago, it can still be evaluated as a media buy.

Let's start by looking at who it's reaching.

- As with any new technology, it's skewing younger.
- As with most new technology products, the early adapters are predominantly in the larger urban areas, especially on the East and West coasts.
- They have slightly more disposable income. After all, most MP3 players are still about \$200.
- 61% of this group consider themselves "internet experts."  
They are technologically adept.

We've found an important clue to help us identify this target in looking at the most popular Podcast downloads. The subject matter that's downloaded most is related to technology. Humor Podcasts are also very popular, quickly followed by news. We suspect those who are building the new medium are the ones using it the most – the early adopters.

### Some basic facts about podcasting and vodcasting

- Now let's back up a bit and cover some basic facts about Podcasting. Podcasting is the audio version "slang term" for RSS – Really Simple Syndication, a free internet service that allows consumers to choose what they want to read, listen to and watch and have it sent to them electronically.
- A podcast can be listened to either on an MP3 player or right on an internet browser.
  - Podcasts are audio feeds.  
Vodcasts are video feeds, and they're downloaded the same way.

NEW YORK



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- We don't yet have statistics on how many video-ready players have been purchased. They were first sold by Apple on October 12th, 2005. That same Holiday season, 14 million iPods were sold.
- Pod and Vodcasting is an opt-in service, meaning the receiver has given the podcaster permission to send it to them in an ongoing way.

**RSS awareness is low. Only 12% of Internet users are aware of podcasting and only 2% currently subscribe to podcasts.**

**There are at least 75 million regular RSS users in the UK and the US. But remember, not all RSS feeds are podcasted audio messages like this one.**

**By the way, go to [www.MktPodCast.com](http://www.MktPodCast.com) to see a list of sources for the statistics we're quoting.**

**The number of podcast users is expected to soar to 45 million by 2010, versus 4.8 million in 2005.**

**20% of those users download weekly, averaging six downloads per week.**

**Among all MP3 players, iPods held an 82% market share as of August 2005.**

**Apple estimated 10 million iTunes users in 2005, while some research analysts suggest it may be as many as 200 million today.**

**iTunes is a service of Apple Computer that allows you to purchase music, download podcasts and vodcasts, audio books, and more. You can also burn CD's of your music mixes using this service. It's EXTREMELY popular and it just keeps growing. There are about 200,000 songs downloaded daily from iTunes. The Billionth download took place this January.**

Here's an interesting development. Apple has partnered with Motorola to offer an iTunes-ready wireless phone device, the Motorola SLVR. Now you can listen to your music and podcasts right on your wireless phone. It does not appear to allow Vodcast viewing.

Podcasting will very shortly not be just about viewing or listening on pod-like devices. So if you do choose to use this medium as an advertising vehicle, your target will very soon have many different ways to review your message.



## **In Summary**

If your company is trying to reach a segment that's younger, somewhat technology-savvy, somewhat affluent, and located in an urban area, Pod and Vodcasting might be right for you.

And if you'd like the loyalty of an opt-in participant, this is a great medium.

But there are other considerations —

- The media is the message. That old line has never been more true. If your company wants to look current, contemporary and cutting edge, you should consider the new medium.
- Business-to-business companies should definitely use podcasting.
- Large companies with disparate sales people can use it as an intranet-like way to keep the team informed and educated.
- There are so many uses for this new medium.

And it's very affordable. For the cost to produce a 30 second radio commercial, plus a minimal cost to host and serve the podcasts, you can be reaching your target customer in an entirely new way.

### **A very important consideration**

This is an entertainment and educational medium. It is an opt-in medium.

And, as in all advertising, your target is not out there waiting desperately to view your marketing message. You must find clever ways to get to your target. Much as we've just reached you. You must create content that is informative.

You must be entertaining.

You must be relevant.

But you don't have to create an original program. You can sponsor some other podcasts that already have large participation, such as The Onion News. Interestingly, their largest sponsor is Chili's Restaurants, a chain that skews young and urban.

If you'd like to talk about it, contact Steve St. Clair at (908) 518-5100.

