

Podcast for Radio Studio of Zilina University

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Abstract— The paper deals with podcasting, which is an appropriate form of distribution of radio programs of University of Zilina Radio. In this paper, we explain and define several terms related to podcasting, its creation and downloading. Our work is presented in the context of Slovak and Czech Republic. We wanted to find out which programs would be welcomed by the listeners as podcasts on the website of the Rapeš Internet radio. In the last part, the design of podcast for radio studio of Zilina University is described.

Keywords-podcasting; RSS feed; radio; listener; podest.

I. INTRODUCTION

Podcasting got into the user awareness during 2004. It was a year after the Apple Computer company introduced the iPod media player for audio files. iPod gave name to this phenomenon, although it is not needed for playing podcasts.

Podcasting is a strength for communication between different individuals. Nowadays, anyone has the opportunity to become visible on the Internet. Podcasters, even with first podcasts, can reach a geographically diverse audience; everything, without transmitters, satellites, regulations. The whole world can really listen [1].

Basically, Podcasting is an audio content available on the Internet, which can be delivered to the computer or portable player.

University of Žilina does not use in its radio station any technology to make their archive available online. In our paper, we describe how this problem can be solved through the podcast technology.

Section 2 describes the history of podcasting. Software for receiving podcasts and for creating and editing records is introduced in Section 3. Sections 4, 5 and 6 analyse the current state of research in the area of using podcasts. The procedure to design podcast for the student radio of University of Zilina is described in Section 7.

II. HISTORY OF PODCASTING

Adam Curry, who is an MTV presenter of radio station MTV and interactive creator, tried for several years to find ways to use broadcast video and audio streams on the Internet. In 2000, Curry met with respected programmer Dave Winer, who was an expert in the development of hundreds of Internet applications, as well as the creator of Rich Site Summary (RSS) format for reading articles and reports on the Internet. Together, Curry and Winer, theorized about the possible way to use RSS for sending not only headlines but also audio and video files as such. As a result

of their theories, Winer created the <enclosure> tag through the RSS specifications, enabling applications to transfer files from the Internet by following the simple URLs through the source pointing to the file.

Curry began working. He tried to find ways to use RSS with the audio track, but not to download to the computer, but move a step ahead and keep it in sync with the iPod. Curry needed an application that would control the various RSS feeds, withdrawing them and moved into his iPod [2].

After Adam Curry has published the source code of his application on the Internet, the programmers found many enthusiasts improved and publicized it. Curry's session in August 2004 is regarded as the emergence of podcasting. Of course, at that time an appropriate name for use of audio with the RSS was not selected, most people called it audio blogging.

Later, the name Podcasting emerged, combining two words "iPod" - digital music player from Apple in which audio files were played and "broadcasting" - (radio) broadcasts. The word Podcasting is derived from the words "pod" and "broadcast", where "pod" comes from iPod [3]. Despite the etymology, the content can be accessed using any computer that can play media files and not just portable music players. Use of the term "podcast" predates the addition of native support for Podcasting to the iPod, or to Apple's iTunes software.

III. PODCASTING TOOLS

To upload and record a podcast it requires a microphone and freely available software applications. These are the basics enough to create a simple podcast. If a podcaster would like to create a complexed podcast, a mixing desk that allows the podcaster to record several sounds and combine them is also needed. [4].

A. Software for creating and editing records

There are several programs for creating and editing podcasts. Some are difficult, in view of their operation, some are simpler. It is up to the user which program to choose. Among the most common tools for creating and editing audio are:

- Sound forge [5];
- Audio Hijack Pro [6];
- BIAS Peak [7], and
- CastBlaster [8].

B. Software for receiving podcasts

Apple has integrated Podcasting into the operating system. To register to a podcast and the subsequent management of its editions, the program iTunes is sufficient, which is available as standard in each installation. Receiving podcasts in Windows is not native, but it can be easily reached. Receiving podcasts under this operating system can be divided into two categories [9]:

- Programs that are installed on your computer download podcasts to a hard drive and as a subsidiary function typically include the possibility to transfer downloaded songs to a portable player.
- Programs that are installed directly on the player. They start automatically when connected to a PC, make use of the Internet and check sources of podcasts. If they find a new session, they download it directly to user's player.

Most of the most common players support this technology. Thanks to these programs, the files are automatically downloaded to the PC or a mobile player. Automation of this process distinguishes Podcasting from the common manual downloading of files from the Internet. This are the examples of these players [10]:

- iTunes;
- iPodderX;
- Juice;
- NewsFire;
- Winamp;
- myPodder, and
- Cloud Caster.

IV. PODCASTING AT STUDENT RADIO STATIONS ABROAD

The essential part of the analysis of the current state is to describe the ways how this problem can be solved abroad. For the needs of our work we looked for the best student radio stations rank in the USA. The list of the 20 best American student radio stations can be found at this website [11]. We have examined the individual websites of the university radio stations to find out how they podcast the programs [12].

Podcasting is used by the majority of these radio stations, because it is very common in the USA. The vast majority of US student radio stations distribute their podcasts exclusively through their Web portals without the use of external services. Their audio files - podcasts are streamed directly from their Web servers. Then we meet with another group of student radio stations, which share their programs on the Web portals for sharing audio files as Mixcloud or SoundCloud, and they can also stream podcasts on iTunes, the use of which is also very common in the USA.

Since 2005, the annual awards for podcasts are awarded on the initiative of Todd Cochran from the Podcast Connect Inc. The fans themselves can appreciate their favourite podcasters by nominating them into this competition. Nominated podcasts are divided into different categories, which arise from the most common nominations and belong

to the most listened types of podcasts. More than 600 podcasts have been nominated for the year 2016 already [13].

V. THE SITUATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Compared with Slovak podcasts in the Czech Republic, this service uses more radio stations. Among the first was the Czech Radio, which offers to its listeners so called Radio on Demand. It also offers a trailer for the podcasts in the form of video advertising. Besides Czech Radio podcasts offer also other radio stations: Radio Impuls, Express radio, Radio Frequency1 and radio Europe 2.

On the Czech websites, listeners can meet with other podcasts, which do not offer radio stations, but independent filmmakers. Examples include:

- brouzdej.cz - website where bloggers publish their blogs. It allows to set up voice output support. A blogger can choose if the notes will be read by male or female voice. When the blogger writes the contribution, after he/she send it online, it is converted into Waveform Audio File Format and saved to webhosted disk.
- respekt.cz - Respect Magazine offers users to download podcasts on their website. It offers storage space for audio recordings to each user. In case the user is interested to place a podcast in the magazine Respect, it is necessary to send the record to the editor by email.
- podcasting.rogner.cz - a website dedicated to podcasting. The user can find information about podcasting, information about the software, about systems etc. The author of the website, Roman Rogner, does not provide his own podcasts.

VI. THE SITUATION IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The first Slovak media which noticed Podcasting technology was FM Radio [14]. This third circuit of the public radio started podcasts on its website from 2006. Also Slovak Radio provides podcasts and shows all its circuits in the form of podcasts.

There are not so many podcasts which create an independent Slovak podcasters as in other countries. Websites with podcasts include:

- niemand.sk - the first Slovak podcast, whose author is Thomas Ulej. It was established in 2005 and listeners can find on this website particular recording of literature. One of the attractions is the use of the voice of P. O. Hviezdoslav. The used format of podcasts is MP3. Update of recordings is not regular, as the recording is mainly occasional.
- radioarwie.szm.sk - Internet radio, which was created in December 2005 with an irregular broadcast. Broadcasting in the form of podcast began at the end of March 2006. The listeners will also find on the website information about podcasting, programs, user manual for location RSS feed to iTunes and so on.

- gpkava.sk – podcast about coffee. Podcast dedicated to the forthcoming championship of Slovakia in the preparation of coffee in Aeropress.

VII. PODCASTING AND RADIO STUDIO OF ZILINA UNIVERSITY

Radio studio of Zilina University is a non-profit organization, where students of the University of Zilina are also involved in the operational process. They can acquire knowledge and develop their skills during broadcasting in three possible areas: moderation, broadcasting technology, or music area. These can also help them in their future career after graduating from university.

“RAPEŠ” radio studio, the only college radio studio in Slovakia, broadcasts 24 hours a day. During the term, listeners can listen to moderated broadcast from Monday to Thursday, from 18:00 to midnight. Except for NONSTOP, which is broadcast once a term for one week. Rapeš radio studio broadcasts universal programs from the world of music, music genres, Slovakia and Czech productions, through programs on current topics of everyday life as well as events at University, to programs in which listeners can win valuable prizes.

The main aim of this paper was to design and present the podcasts for radio station of the University of Zilina. The significant part of this work was to determine the students' interest and the usage of podcasts on the website of the radio. To clarify the main aim, we selected a number of partial objectives. The first partial objective was to analyse the need for the creation of this service among students. We were trying to find out the attitude of students, their interests and the views on the creation of podcasts.

Since Rapeš broadcasts many programs, we wanted to find out which of them would be welcomed by the listeners as podcasts on the website of Rapeš. On this basis, we developed a questionnaire, through which we also wanted to find out whether respondents are familiar with with the Podcasting service and what the conditions to use it are.

A questionnaire was used. We contacted 100 respondents, both men and women studying at different faculties of the University of Zilina aged 19-30 years. Response rate was 100%; all questionnaires were useful for our research. In the research component, the proportion of men and women was 59% and 41%.

From the respondents 45% are familiar with the Podcasting. Conversely, 55% of respondents do not know or are not familiar with this concept. It shows us that Podcasting has not yet got into the consciousness of the wider public.

Although a number of respondents are familiar with podcasting, it is used by only 21%, which shows us that they were not impressed by this service or are not familiar with such content that would interest them enough to download it through podcasts.

Technical equipment of people is sufficient, since 98% of respondents own a certain type of MP3 player. 39% own a portable music player, iPod. Probably for this reason, most of the respondents use iTunes, 48%. Only 5% use iPodder, despite the fact that it was the first program which could

download podcasts. 33% of respondents use Winamp, and it is also the most commonly used music player on the PC. 14% use other programs to download podcasts.

Although 62% of respondents do not know which program they would welcome as a podcast or podcasts on the website Rapeš (Figure 1), 38% of respondents could imagine podcasts of some programs. 12% wished “Album of the week”, because they are interested in which artist released a new album. 9% would like to download “Cinema life” because they are interested in movie news and reviews. 8% are interested in competition and therefore would like to download the program “Not to drown”.

Based on the received information about Podcasting service, we drew up a service proposal for radio studio Rapeš. The selection of programs was affected by the evaluation of questionnaire survey. The greatest interest had “Album of the week” and programs “Cinematiclife”, and “Not to drown”.

Characteristics of Podcasting programs:

- Album of the week - a regular program in which the moderator presents the current album, which he/she considers as interesting, or special.
- Cinematiclife - Movie news, reviews and highlights from the show business. Listeners will learn current information from the world of film and can enter the competition to win free tickets to the cinema.
- Not to drown - entertainment program in which two guests compete. Moderator prepares for them three competition rounds, and competitors try not to "drown" in the questions.

After the selection of the program, the moderators were acquainted with the fact that their program will be recorded and subsequently placed on the website. There was also indispensable cooperation of technicians who are in charge of the recording of such programs. Programs were saved in MP3 format, which is the most commonly used format of audio files placed on the Internet.

After obtaining the recorded program we contacted the webmaster who placed this program on the website. Webmaster realized the proposal and created a Podcasting service on the Radio Rapeš website. He created the username and password for us in the CMS, from where the website is administrated. On this basis, we can add a recorded program on a page.

Programs will be updated each week during the moderated broadcast of the radio station Rapeš. At the time the program is not broadcast, the last programs remain available as podcasts. Gradually, we will develop podcasts of other programs.

VIII. CONCLUSION

There is a number of quality radio stations that could use Podcasting and enable their programs to be listened also after live broadcasting. At the same time, by provision of this service they could increase visits of their websites, as it was confirmed by FM radio after releasing the Podcasting service. From the survey, conducted on the potential users of the Podcasting service, came out that users have good

assumptions to use this service because they are technically skilled and open to new ideas.

We were able to meet the aim of the research upon the analysis of existing technologies and used tools, and upon the survey among target customers – students, we designed a podcast for the radio station of the University of Žilina.

As the next step, it will be necessary to examine the benefits and failings of our proposed solutions, the impact on the mentioned programs, and to propose any corrections, if necessary.

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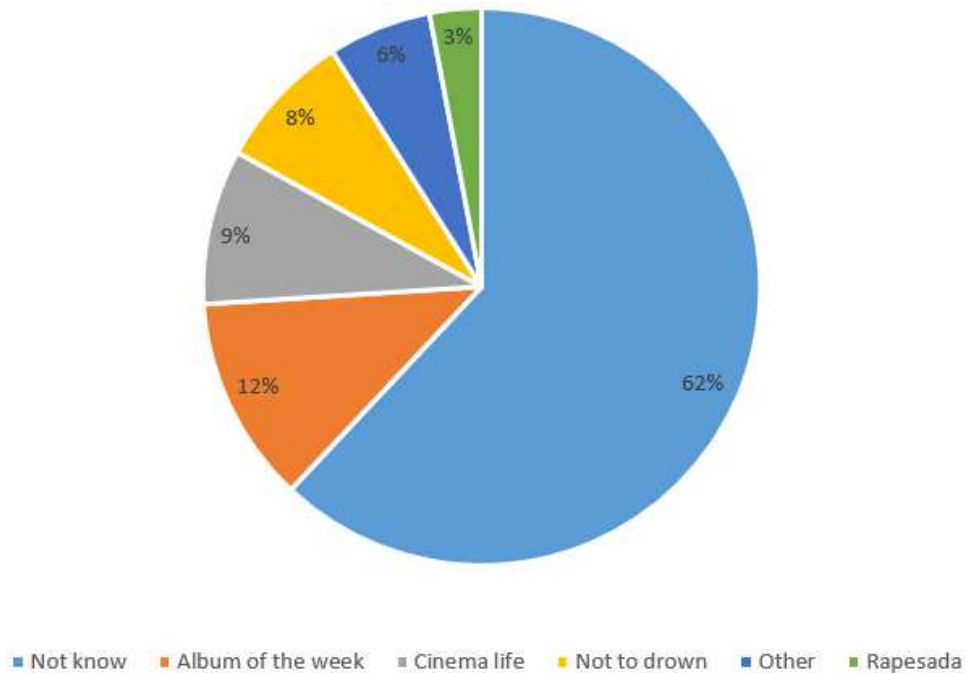


Figure 1. Program that respondents would welcome as a podcast