



Monthly CONSORTIUM Call





PodCasting for Learning April 26, 2007

Transcription of Video Segment

[Link Here is TBD](#)

Interviewer:
Elliott Masie



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Elliott Masie: Welcome, Learning CONSORTIUM. Hello from Saratoga Springs, New York. This is Elliott Masie, and today our topic is 'PodCasting for Learning'. I am real excited to have you all join today. As of a few minutes ago, we had reservations for about 350 of our CONSORTIUM members. Today is April 26th, and we know that there will probably be a couple hundred more that will be listening to this asynchronously. In fact, they might be listening to this as a PodCast. What we are going to do - we are going to take a look at how PodCasting - and I am going to give it a broad definition - how PodCasting can be used for learning. Well, let's move straight into this topic: 'PodCasting for Learning.'

First of all, let me introduce a special guest. He happens to be here in the building today, attending our Performance Support Lab and when I found out he was here, I said, "Hey, I've got to seize the opportunity." So, please help me in welcoming Russ White. Russ White is with Apple Computers, and he is the Framework Architect for Sales Training. Hello, Russ.

Russ White: Hey, Elliott. It's good to be here.

Elliott Masie: Great. While PodCasting isn't what Russ does every day, they [Apple] are certainly leveraging it for their own training and their own learning, but since he lives in "Appleland" and a good percentage of our PodCasts are done with Apple hardware or software, I thought that it would be great to bring Russ into the conversation. So, we'll come back and forth to Russ over the course of this hour together. Let's talk about what we are going to talk about. We are going to talk about, basically, how do you make a PodCast to make sure it's a PodCast for learning?

Now, we know about a PodCast. Gosh! A PodCast could be a couple of songs; a PodCast could be somebody talking about their birthday party; a PodCast, however, could also be designed as an intentional learning segment: essentially, something that will achieve an instructional performance or knowledge objective, either by itself or with something else.

So, we are going to talk about, "How do you do that?" We've got a couple of examples. I know we have some people on the line who are going to want to pipe in their own experiences, and this is one of those sessions where we say there are no dumb questions. We know there are some people who have never even listened to a PodCast, all the way to people who may have a regular PodCast, either for their company or for some esoteric hobby that they have outside of work.

But Russ, let me start with you. So, how many PodCasts do you listen to a week?

Russ White: I have to admit, I've been listening to very few. I have actually switched my habits, though, to when I am not listening to the PodCasts, I am watching them.

Elliott Masie: Ah, and that will be another interesting thing, where we look at, "When do you make a PodCast an audio PodCast? When do you make it a video PodCast?" And for those of you who are out there in the future, "When do we make that PodCast be a virtualized PodCast?"

Somebody wrote in an email the other day and said, "Are there any scents? Are there any iPods that will emit, on command, a scent, so you have sort of an olfactory PodCast?"

Russ, I don't want you to give away any trade secrets from Cupertino but is there any work on the "smell pod" yet?

Russ White: I can definitely say that the iSmell is not in development.

Elliott Masie: Let's talk about what we mean by a PodCast first of all. A PodCast, as much as Russ might want it to be, doesn't have to involve an iPod. Lots do, but a PodCast really is a phrase that's come into favor that describes, initially, an audio segment that can be delivered so that you can either a) listen to it (on your computer, your laptop or your desktop) or b) that you can transfer that to another media [format].

Now, the most common media [format] to transfer it to would be an MP3 player or a portable player like an iPod, but you also could decide to transfer it to another media like a CD, or lately, I've actually been transferring them to my USB keystick - and sometimes I'll go to another computer and I'll listen to it on that computer. But it basically was a phrase that now has encompassed the use of audio delivered in that format.

Now, as you well know, it also can be a video PodCast; there are video iPods and other video MP3 players and we are seeing an evolution of that. And I think the phrase has stuck and it covers a wide range of things. For those of you maybe who are, in fact, familiar with a PodCast, let me play you a few seconds of a PodCast that's pretty interesting to me and near and dear to my heart, and don't scratch your ears because you may hear some languages other than just English in this one.

[PodCast Plays]

Elliott Masie: Well, I'll stop it there, but what did you just hear? You heard a PodCast. Now, this is a really interesting one. This comes from Shanghai, China. It is a PodCast from a company that I have - I am right now a student there. I am actually studying Mandarin using these PodCasts and you heard Jenny Zhu and Ken Carroll. Now Jenny actually, for those of you who are coming to Learning 2007, you are going to meet. She is coming over, and she is one of the most famous PodCasters in China. What their organization does (it's a Learning and Training organization) is they offer Mandarin training via PodCast (and I have been listening to a whole series of these PodCasts) as well as, they have a blended learning approach. There are some PDF files that go with these PodCasts; there are some activities that I can do online. There are - in addition, if I really want to, I can for a slide chart go in and have a conversation with Jenny or one of the other coaches over the Internet using Voice over the Internet and I can get coached in that process. But what you heard was a PodCast.

Now, Russ, when you heard that, what were the things you noticed about that PodCast?

Russ White: I think I noticed the - obviously, the different language - but it was done in a way that was conversational.

Elliott Masie: Right. And you heard some music in the background, you heard some sound effects in the background, and I will tell you that this PodCast is, for me, a really good example of a PodCast for learning. It's not just meant to be a dialogue or conversation; it's not Jenny and Ken just rapping about stuff. They have actually developed a very specific objective for this PodCast: it is meant to be, from beginning to the end, a structured program. They have looked at all the elements we might do in any kind of instruction. What are the key terminologies? What's the level of the learner? When do they use repetition? But what's interesting is, it's engaging and, in fact, I will tell you that I have been listening to these PodCasts now in places where I wouldn't ordinarily think about learning: if I am waiting on line or in my car or in some other situations. And they've really, to me, started to push the envelope of what a PodCast might look like. And I will tell you that they literally have folks around the world that are listening together and learning together with that.

Now, there are some other kinds of PodCasts for learning and I would like to kind of go through and talk about these, and Russ, feel free to comment as we go through them. One of the types of PodCasts that I look at that I think is an interesting one is, essentially, it's an interview PodCast, and the goal here is for us to go get a subject matter expert and for us to interview them. Once again, the goal would be that it would be a subject matter expert that perhaps most people might not normally get access to - certainly might not get access to in an asynchronous fashion.

Now, I stumbled on this after years of interviewing subject matter experts in classes, right after 9/11. It was literally the 12th of September. I am on a number of Federal Task Forces, and one of the things that one of the Task Forces asked me to do was, could I reach out and potentially get some people who were the sort of management gurus in the world who would be willing to talk about how do we recover from - at the workplace - the tragedy of 9/11?

So, what I did was, I got on the phone with some colleagues and friends and said, "Would you do an unrehearsed 3 to 5 minute interview?" So here's one that we did the next day with Ken Blanchard, the management expert and hero to many of us.

[PodCast Playing]

Elliott Masie: Now, what's interesting is, I reached out to about 12 major management experts from Tom Peters to Ken [Blanchard] to Marshall Goldsmith and other folks, and what was interesting is they all had very different views. Ken was talking about it in terms of patriotism and God; Tom Peters had a very different take and was talking about it as a challenge around beliefs and about not overreacting, but the ability to create the sort of almost Learning Objects - and this was before we knew the word PodCast - we put them up. We did this in conjunction with the National Association of Manufacturers, the Washington Speakers' Bureau and the Center for Association Leadership. And we literally had tens and tens of thousands of people that were listening to these.

Well, we would call this an interview conversation. And if we spend some more time - and I can send you the link later - we could actually go back and you can go back and forth in an interview. Now in this situation, you may or may not engage the subject matter expert in the design of that process. I had the kind of questions I wanted to ask, but I really didn't go over them ahead of time with these folks. I wanted to get a high emotional content and have it be an unrehearsed element. But in my brain, I wanted to move around and talk about what do managers say to folks? How do you deal with stress in the workplace?

One of the other pieces that's becoming a very popular form is the Coursecasting, and Coursecasting essentially is where I would go in and I would take a regular course that I am teaching in the classroom, put a microphone on and then capture it so that anybody can listen to it later on. The University of Texas and other places are doing this regularly for all their science courses and the theory is that somebody can be there, and if they have to go back to the dorm, they can later go back and listen to all of it or some of it. And some of the Coursecasting is actually synchronized into either slides or segments during that process.

One thing that we've done quite a lot is the 'Over the Shoulder'. It's the concept of, literally, if I could ask an expert to come to my workstation while I was doing the task, would you walk me through that? And what's real interesting here, and Russ, I want to bump back to you: you and I were talking before at lunch when we were planning our session today here, and you said to remind people that they can stop a PodCast. I mean, that almost sounds scary as an instructional designer: "they can stop it." What are you talking about with that, Russ?

Russ White: Well, it sounds scary when you think about stopping a PodCast, but think about when you are in the classroom and as the lecturer or the presenter, you are doing your part as presenting, and what happens when there is a question? Somebody raises their hand. And the same kind of thing can happen, so that interrupts the flow of your conversation, the lecturer or the presenter, but it gives the student the opportunity to engage in a different way.

So, with PodCasting, you've got a pause button so as the PodCasters play, you can actually structure your PodCast for a learning opportunity. You start your lecturing and then say, "Okay, we hit this point, press Pause. Do a learning activity outside of the PodCast and then continue on with the PodCast."

Elliott Masie: One of the really powerful PodCasts I listened to not too long ago was "A Drive Around a National Park," where literally you got the PodCast, you could download it before you went and it would basically walk you through the drive. Now, there were two modes. One mode is where you stopped it each time; the other, where you had to drive 23 miles an hour, and if you go 23 miles an hour, you got to the right rock at the right time. Well, you know me. I was like, speeding up, slowing down and I probably was a major accident risk that time.

Russ White: That would be the "treasure hunt" PodCast: "walk 15 paces toward the Sun. "

Elliott Masie: Now, you talked about how one of the things that people don't realize in most PodCasts is the concept in an iPod using the Museum Mode. Was that what you called it Russ?

Russ White: Yes. There's Museum Mode or Kiosk Mode, and this is a feature that's supported on the iPods with the screen; it's not supported on the Shuffle, but it's a feature of the iPod in particular that allows you to format a Text file in much the same way you would an HTML file and load that file into the Notes Folder in your iPod. What that does is, it's accessible through the notes of your - clicking through the menu in your iPod. Once you get to that Notes file, this file is interpreted just similar to a web browser on your iPod and has text and hyperlinks to the various media on your iPod.

Elliott Masie: Great. One of the other modes, which I am real intrigued with, is the Performance Support Mode, and sort of appropriate, we are having our Performance Support Lab here. I was chatting recently with somebody from a very large restaurant chain and they are looking at PodCasts that would come not into an iPod, but would come into a french-fry maker or into another situation. So, literally imagine you are in a store and it's now closing time, and there is a button that says, 'Walk me through that,' and you literally would be able to be walk through, step-by-step in an audio fashion, how to clean a piece of machinery or how to do a task. So, there's some situations which we don't want to memorize it, but we want to be prompted. And one of the things I like about the Audio Mode is, I can do something and listen to it as I walk through there.

Now, what is critical for us, and I want to start to open up the lines here and ask for your engagement in two ways: either a) Do you have any question at all about PodCasting? Or b) We would love to hear from some of you that have done some early stage experiments, either in PodCasting - once again, it can be audio, it could be video and the like. So, either your questions or your comments, and in order to do that, on your phone keypad, you press star '(*) 1' and when you press star '(*) 1', it will pop up on my screen and we'll see who you are and we'll be able to take some or all of those calls. Anything we don't get to, we'll try to answer afterwards in an asynchronous fashion.

But one of the things - as we are waiting for some of these calls to come in - one of the things that I think is an intriguing element of this is that there is a tremendous misconception, Russ, that in order to

do a PodCast, everybody has to have a little cute device like an iPod or an MP3 player. Just tell folks of that rumor.

Russ White: You have to have an iPod.

Elliott Masie: No, or I'll press the mute button.

Russ White: No, you absolutely do not need an iPod for PodCasting, as much as I appreciate those of you that do have the iPods for your PodCasting. The PodCasts were a phenomenon that Apple actually didn't invent. It was generated by various customers in their use of the technology and it just adopted the name of PodCast. And so, you don't have to have an iPod: it works just fine, the technology is generally an audio file that can be played on an iPod in iTunes or straight from a Web Browser or downloaded to any other MP3 player.

Elliott Masie: We've actually found there's one - you've noticed on the CONSORTIUM and for Learning 2007, we'll probably have 90 to a 100 PodCasts. We offer them in a variety of formats where you can play it with a Flash Player right on the screen or you can play it through another music player or you can download them. We probably find about 80% of the people who listen to [one of] our PodCasts are actually streaming it live on the screen rather than transferring it to a device.

Well, we are loaded up with some wonderful questions here, so let me start with Dave Whipple, and I am going to un-mute you, Dave. Give me a second, there you go. Dave, are you there?

Dave Whipple: Yeah Elliott, thank you.

Elliott Masie: Good. Why don't you tell folks where you work?

Dave Whipple: I am Dave Whipple. I am the Manager of the Training Learning Consulting Team here at Halliburton.

Elliott Masie: Okay. What's your question, comment, thought?

Dave Whipple: Actually I am going to hand it over to Lilliana Salazer-Green, who is one of our team members here in the room that has the question.

Elliott Masie: Hi, Lilliana!

Lilliana: Hi, how are you?

Elliott Masie: Wonderful.

Lilliana: Good. We don't actually do PodCasting in our training, but it's definitely something that we are interested in and I was just wondering if maybe someone could a quick example of how they may have used a PodCast in one of their trainings?

Elliott Masie: Well, let me give you one that I have, and Russ, please jump in after I do. So, one example, for instance, might be that I have a course and I have three types of content. I have content I am going to do deliver in the course; I have that dreaded thing called pre-work, which is the stuff we help people do before they get to the course; and I have stuff that I can't cover in the course that I want to cover afterwards. So what I generally will do when I have a program is, I'll come up with three to four

PodCasts that go out to the individual between the time they register - and your LMS could actually trigger a link to this before they get to the program - and whether I track it or not, that's a choice. And those form the pre-work: they are contextual. Then, I have the stuff that I do in the course, and very often what I'll do is, even though I am covering it in the course, I'll give, for some key elements, I'll give people a PodCast that's either of my exact program or of some other program like that, so afterwards they can reinforce that content.

And very often there's content that's either more advanced than the course, remedial to the course, or [there's] not enough time in the course [to cover it], and I give it to folks to listen to afterwards. Now, does everybody do it all? No. But I will tell you that the level of preparation for our courses goes up significantly and, in some cases, I can take a course that might have been three days and bring it down to be two days, or one day.

Other times what I'll do is I'll use a PodCast to bring context to the content. So, I am delivering the content but I am giving them...for instance, in Halliburton, I might literally have interviews with 20 different field managers who've all had experience with the content that I am teaching. In class, I might play one or two, but I give it to them as either a CD or I give it to them, once again, down to their iPod.

Lastly, we found a number of higher-end courses - well, literally, let's say it's a high-potential program - [and] they'll give an iPod pre-loaded with the content that they want folks to have. So, there's no excuse about how to get it down to the iPod in case they don't have a teenager there. Does that make sense to you? Did you follow that example?

Lilliana: Yes, they probably lend themselves a little bit more to instructor-led training then?

Elliott Masie: Not necessarily; I gave you an example of where I was using it to extend instructor-led training as a blend. But the example that I gave you before, which I think is a really interesting one from China is a - there is an example, just another dose of this here for a second.

[PodCast Playing in Chinese]

Now, in that situation, we are basically looking not at a blended learning program, but you actually can pick up a fair amount of the skill in well-structured iPod lessons. But in that case, once again, they have other things that are extended, that are visual activities and the like. So, thanks very much.

Let me take one other - we are going to jump over to Rich from Honeywell. Rich, you are on the line.

Rich Hoeg: Yeah, hi! Couple of things first just with respect to the question just asked about using PodCasts. This is Rich Hoeg at Honeywell in Minnesota, and we are using them in what we call our Executive Books program and like you were talking [about] earlier, many of them are like 20-minute interviews, and they tend to be author interviews where the author is talking about a book. And to give an example, "The World is Flat" on globalization by Friedman. We then create it if you actually just go out onto the web and search for some of these and subscribe via RSS, the amount of material is just phenomenal.

And we've got other examples of marketing strategy. You were talking about Ken Blanchard and we've got a PodCast of his on one of his new books. But what I'd actually press the button about -- well, before I go on the other thing is, we're actually not even using iPods or MP3 players. We have this little device that costs about \$25. It's a little FM transmitter that hooks into a car's cigarette lighter. You just

take your thumb drive, you insert it, it's got a USB interface and you can play PodCasts on your car radio for all of an investment of \$25.

Elliott Masie: Absolutely. And yeah, let me jump in here for one second, Rich, and I'd be curious if you -- your position on this as well, Russ. What I have been finding is the more work I do in this PodCast scenario, the shorter the segments get for me. So my goal actually is to try to get these segments to be pretty short. So, even 20 minutes often feels long. I'd be more likely to say, "Here are three modules on 'The World is Flat'" or, "Here are three elements of what Friedman has," and very often people take the first, likely take the second, then maybe later take the third.

We've actually found that if you can get the size of the PodCast in that 10-minute range, more people will start it and finish it. If I make it 20, a lot of people often won't even start it. So, I try to bridge or link these. Russ, any experience you've had with duration?

Russ White: Yeah. We use duration for the attention span aspect, but we also use it for the content creation aspect. One of the most successful PodCasts we do is with our sales leaders. We strongly believe that peer-to-peer learning is the most engaging way that our people learn. And so, each week we interview different sales leaders to have them impart knowledge on to the sales force. And it's very difficult for us to say, "Oh, come into the studio and give us an hour in the Webcast studio and we can disseminate information that way."

It's real easy to say, "Hey, do you have time for a 15-minute phone call?" And we can simply record the phone call, edit out some of the noises and the "uhm's" and the "ah's" and we've got a PodCast that we can turn around very rapidly. So, time-wise, from an attention span of the listener is one thing, but it's also easier to get content creators to dedicate less time when they know they are having less time to commit.

Elliott Masie: I would agree, unless the PodCast is an actual interview with a reasonable number of questions. If it's a monologue, no matter how good the content is, I wouldn't want to exceed 8 or 10 minutes.

Rich Hoeg: The other thing that I just wanted to talk about is how - believe it or not - easy it is to create these and I have got a little tutorial on my blog, but you don't need to be an audio file; you can use just a basic laptop. There are some pretty darn good microphones for \$50/\$60 and then there's free software from Open Source called Audacity, and for an investment of basically nothing, you can be out there and creating content. I have got my own PodCast series that I have been focusing on, 'Web 2.0 Tools', and basically about the only thing I found is, make sure they don't call on a cell phone, have them call on a landline, and...

Elliott Masie: You are absolutely right; if you are not asking the person to do an hour - I have interviewed people from Germany and what not and all you need is a decent telephone. I'll give you even - a simpler example of that, Rich, is the service that we are using that you've dialed in is called Accuconference and it's a couple of pennies a minute per person, but you can set it up so that I can call from anywhere, from any phone. Somebody else calls in and it automatically records it and as soon as I'm done it downloads an MP3 or Wave file of that. So, we are making it simpler and simpler. And you can go way up. Apple has GarageBand, a lot of people are using PodCasting studios and the like. So, thanks very much.

Rich Hoeg: Thank you.

Elliott Masie: Before we go on - and by the way, we have some other folks on the line [and] we'd love to hear from some of them. There are no questions that are dumb; we'd love to hear from your experiences, good and bad. Press star '*' 1' and you'll pop up into the queue, and I have got a few people waiting and I'll get to [them] in a second.

You know, Russ, we would be, I guess, unethical if we didn't talk about the problems with PodCasting and some of the weaknesses as well. I would tell you that one of the things I want to make sure [of] is that you don't confuse that sending somebody a file equals learning: it's a learning asset. It's very critical that you still go through an instructional design process even though you are using a more rapid and some would say, 'informal' media format.

Russ White: These interviews that I was talking about with our sales leaders, the instructional designer that puts those together does spend the same amount of time crafting the questions and producing the content post production as with just about any other course. So, the production value, even though it is a faster turnaround for us, all the same processes that we do as instructional designers still come into play.

Elliott Masie: It's also, to me, really critical that you do the same level of testing to see whether you've reached your objective. And once again, there are other - there are lots of objectives. It may be a behavioral objective, it maybe a skill objective, it maybe a context around content objective, it maybe an inspirational objective: I mean, after 9/11, literally our goal in those interviews was to put, on a personal level, some well-known people to provide some emotional and intellectual support in that.

The other thing I think you can't discount is that some people still are going to have difficulty with either, a) where do they listen to [it]? I had one company, and literally, somebody filed an HR complaint that they didn't like wearing a headset. It made them feel goofy and that they didn't want to be asked to learn in an environment in which they had to put something over their head.

In another situation we found a dilemma, and that's why I want to make sure when you think of PodCasts, you don't just think about getting into the device, but it's something, "so I don't have the device, I don't want to carry one, but I want to listen to it. "

The other element is [that] there are people who are hearing challenged. So, very often when we do PodCasts, we'll go out and do a transcript; we'll do an audio transcript to both being 508 compliant, but also to acknowledge that - and like any kind of training - there's good, bad and ugly. You've got to apply a really good and, I think, these are classical principles of instructional design.

Now, in a few minutes we'll take one or two more questions and you and I'll talk about some of the things that make for good or bad design. But, let me, he's been patient and our friend and colleague Pete Weaver from DDI. Are you there, Pete?

Pete Weaver: Yes, Elliott, I am. How are you?

Elliott Masie: I am wonderful today. Thank you. What's on your mind?

Pete Weaver: Well, I am here with a team of 5 or 6 of my colleagues and one of the questions that's been kicked around, and I am sure you even asked this, is how is this different from what you and I both remember in the '70s and early '80s in terms of the audio cassette revolution for training? Many companies were born and died trying to distribute intellectual property through the notion of these little cassettes that were in our cars back in those days.

Elliott Masie: Right.

Pete Weaver: Now, clearly one of the ways is, this is a lot easier distribution. The cassettes had to be physically transported, trucked, mailed, whatever. Another point you made well is, there are different ways to hear it as you play. There's not just one device, which was the audio cassette. But, in another way, if training didn't take off, so to speak, because of being able to listen to audio cassettes, why would it take off because we now have MP3 files?

Elliott Masie: I think you are right on. Pete, I was guessing you were going to raise that. Where I see it's powerful is as a sweetener. I am not here saying that you are going to stop doing classrooms, you are going to stop doing intensive courses, we are not going to do leadership training and so we are going to send somebody an iPod. Ain't going to happen, okay? But, what I do think, and I don't think we can discount that first point that you made, the distribution quality, the ability to get something rapidly to lots of places...the problem we had with the cassettes (I remember I used to send out cassettes before a conference...I was probably one of the first folks that did that) the dilemma was that I had to have two people all day stuffing cassettes and about a third of them got mashed in the mail. But the ability that somebody can register at 11:00 and at 11:05 they can hear a PodCast from me about what we are going to talk about is powerful.

The second level, and we are not fully there yet, Pete, but I think this will change. I can imagine [you can] change it for the kinds of training and work that you do at DDI is that we don't just think about the PodCast that's coming from the experts, but that we also think about how did they come from the field? How do we get an ability to do a program and then ask people go and start to apply the program? We get PodCasts coming from folks who are doing it, who normally, if we will pull together in a class, could all share that response, but that we could actually get it from multiple places.

I am not predicting that this will be a revolution in learning. What I am predicting, like a lot of current technology innovations, we'll borrow the power of PodCasting, we'll borrow the habit of PodCasting and we'll start to look. And already people have done, a good example: number of companies, probably some of them that you work with at DDI, are using this as part of their recruitment, selection, and onboarding process all the way down to one which is, here's a PodCast about 'What to expect your first day at work,' Another one being, 'Here are some PodCasts from people who came from your University and are now working at our company.' So, the ability to produce the stuff for less allows us to create a number of them, so we don't have to do a one-size-fits-all, but theoretically, we could start to customize it a bit more with that.

Russ White: Elliott.

Elliott Masie: Yes.

Russ White: There's one more aspect of PodCasting that really lends itself to Pete's dilemma. The audio cassettes - yes, we have got multiple ways of delivering the PodCasts, but one aspect of PodCasting that gets overlooked because people think that it's complicated is the RSS subscription. Hence, with an RSS subscription, you can have your listeners subscribe to your content and then every time you post your content, they automatically receive it. So your distribution model changes radically from a poor model where your student has to go get the content to an RSS subscription where you can push the content out to them as soon as you've delivered it.

Elliott Masie: Now, Pete, I am going to say two words, It's like the graduate when they talk about plastics, okay? "Mobile phones," because when you start to think about the end point of reception being now not your computer to your MP3 player, but now the ability to either request it or push it to your mobile phone. I mean, I am on a Board of Trustees and on a couple of other emergency groups and we have been debriefing what have we learned after this Virginia Tech piece. What if we literally had the piece so that within an hour, we could get a Broadcast to every student that can contextualize what just happened and what we are going to do with that?

So, I certainly think that the next step to keep our eye on is as PodCasts become available, to move over the cell network or over the wireless network. I know we can't talk about it, but certainly, when Apple comes out with their new phone, you are going to see some functionalities there that will make it interesting.

But I am 56, and so, like you, I have lived through a lot of hype and I am not here to hype the PodCast: I am here to say, if we are going to do them, let's do them instructionally smart, and let's view, how do we use them as a sweetener in that process?

Pete Weaver: So, those are great perspectives. Thanks, Elliott. We have been taking a lot of good notes here, appreciate the...

Elliott Masie: And you know the good thing? When this is all over, it's a PodCast too. Take care. Let me jump over here to Mike Kemmler from Grant Thornton. Mike, your line is open.

Mike Kemmler: Hey Elliott, I have a question for you that is directed a little towards what Russ was talking about with the RSS Syndication. It's more of a comment. I am trying to push our firm a little toward doing PodCasts and our team subsequently for doing PodCasts. And one of the things that I've really realized is the power of PodCasting is in that syndication, is in the development of channels. And I am wondering if you can speak to that a little bit because what I am finding is that when you look at a PodCast piece and you go one at a time, one learning object here, one segment here, and then you compare that to the development of learning channels and structures and syndicated content, that the syndication really seems like a really powerful tool that we could be using more.

Elliott Masie: Okay, and stick with me on this. I am going to give a non-technical technical explanation.

RSS, Really simple Syndication, and for a lot of people, their eyes get blurry here. Let's change it; let's call it Feeds, okay? Now, what a Feed essentially is is that I can subscribe to a regular PodCast. So I can literally go on, and there are a variety of ways of doing it. I can do it with my browser; I can do it with a special piece of software. I can go on and I can say, "You know what? I want to get -- every time this PodCast of this genre comes out, I want to get it delivered to my desktop or all the way to my device."

So, I literally subscribe to about 16 PodCasts. Now, I don't listen to them all; in fact, when they come in, I look at them and sometimes I sample them, but the model there is the voluntary Feed. So if you want a good example, you can start to go on and we'll have on our www.learning2007.com site regular PodCasts that will be fed, so somebody can subscribe. Last year we were up to about 1,800 people; every time we did a PodCast, literally, you see a half an hour later they had a Feed that did that.

The second part of the Feed, though, and that's what gets me real excited, Mike, is in one case it's, "I voluntarily ask for the Feed." But let's imagine that you could hook your learning management system up so that the LMS created the Feed for you based on your role, so we get role-specific, based on your

competency, based on your interest, maybe based on your last performance review. Or, maybe if you are in the sales area, based on changes in a product that you have a history of selling. So, now we are going to hook the LMS into the Sales Management System, and in that situation, it's still a Feed, but now I am not requesting it but it's coming from someplace. And I am totally resonating with you that as we make that a no-brainer, and for some folks I will tell you that their RSS Feeds still feel a little geeky, we've got to get it to a point where it is a very simple 'click and happen'. And there are software packages and models and I really think we've got to get our IT department to demystify and simplify that, because then we get into an interesting situation.

So let's say I buy a product and I am buying that product. Better yet, okay, Grant Thornton, you are an accountant company, so let's say I'm one of your clients. Now, any time there's a tax change related to my status, I'm going to get a PodCast from Grant Thornton about the implications of that tax change. And once again, it could go to my computer, it can go to my iPod or MP3 player, and soon it might actually go to my phone.

Russ, you want to add anything to that?

Russ White: That's all good; everything you said is spot on.

Elliott Masie: Good. That's fine. So, okay, thanks much, Mike. I'm going to go to Vasselle Barber. Vasselle are you there?

Vasselle Barber: Hi. Yes, it's Vasselle.

Elliott Masie: Vasselle, and what organization are you with?

Vasselle Barber: I'm with Mercer HR Consulting,

Elliott Masie: Great.

Vasselle Barber: My question is about a challenge with PodCasts in that you can't quickly rewind or jump back or forward to a specific point in an audio or video PodCast that I know of. So, I was just wondering if anyone out there has - knows if they have a method - if there is method to address that challenge, or are manufacturers like Apple looking at enhancements to their technology to address that need?

Elliott Masie: And he is actually here so we will take advantage of it. So Russ, I'm right with her on this; you know, I want go to what I want to go. I want to skip that funky weird music at the beginning, I want to -- when are we going to get either chapters, markers or the ability to navigate?

Russ White: They are there; you just have to know how to author them. So the authoring tools: you have fast forward, you have rewind built into your players. The authoring capabilities - what you want to look for in your authoring tools are Chapter Markers.

I'm obviously most familiar with the Mac tools, and GarageBand that comes with the Mac helps you build those Chapter Markers right in. And with those Chapter Markers, if your player supports it, which includes the QuickTime Player and the iTunes player, you can jump ahead and you can actually name the chapters what you want to call them. In some cases, you can actually attach a URL to that chapter as well, so that people can click off to a URL as part of that chapter.

Elliott Masie: I think what you going to see and what you are hearing from Russ is we are going to go through a maturation of the technology; some of the stuff is there but isn't self-obvious, self-evident either to the designer or the user, and we are going to have to make it more self-evident.

I also am looking for more of our Learning Content Management Systems and Authoring tools to get optimized around the speakers. I'm totally with you that we need to be able to make this efficient and very often I want to go back and hear it again or I want to skip forward. Ironically, the stuff that I listen to from ChinesePod and others are using these kind of Markers, and it is really helpful with them.

Russ White: It tends to be a content creation problem. The technology is there: your tools, your selection of tools, may not allow for it.

Elliott Masie: Great. I hope that was helpful; thank you very much. We have got a bunch of other folks, so we are going to go into quick fashion, some quick questions and I'll give some quick answers. Brenda Enders, are you there?

Carolyn Dangin: This is Carolyn Dangin. I am here with Brenda Enders at SSE and we have a question about the technology - the technological requirements. Are there any things that you need to consider in the way of what format you save it in and file size? What are the best practices when you don't really know what your audience is going to have?

Elliott Masie: Well, basically I would tell you that you want to be able to record this. And, depending on which tools you use, a lot of people might use it within the Apple format, they might use it within a Windows format or in an open source format.

I actually end up saving it in a couple of formats. I usually make a wav file, an MP3 file, an Apple format file. You want to be able to - at least when you go to distribute - break it into some smaller chunks, particularly since you may have some folks who are on lower bandwidth levels in that sense. I will send some follow-up links that are some pretty good. I don't mean to insult you. There are some good sort of, "PodCasting for Dummies" or PodCasting 101 sheets, and I'll get you some of that material, Brenda. Okay?

Brender Enders: That would be great; so that's where we are starting from.

Elliott Masie: Great. Thanks very much. Let's jump over here to Jenny; are you there Jenny Blackburn?

Jenny Blackburn: Yes I am. Hi, Elliott.

Elliott Masie: Great. And what company are you with?

Jenny Blackburn: Genentech.

Elliott Masie: Great. And what's on your mind?

Jenny Blackburn: My question is about LMS; just how is it problematic to post a PodCast on an LMS or is it just like any content?

Elliott Masie: Okay, reason I am laughing: we just had our LMS User Group, and by the way, we've got 7 hours of the video PodCast from that, that are now online in public open source domain, and we

talked a lot about audio. I get real excited about video because I think that adds another dimension to it. But I asked every one of the LMS providers there, "Well are you PodCast-ready?" And I got generally, this kind of fuzzy thing, which is, "Well, we can handle anything." Okay? But that wasn't what I asked. "Are you PodCast-ready?"

Like any asset, there is a way in which every LMS can in some ways track it. Now, do they make it easy? Do they make it easy to deliver it? Do they deliver it with an embedded player so you can listen to it or view it right on the screen? No. In some of the cases they've got a challenge of "What are they tracking?" For instance, are they tracking that you downloaded it? Are they tracking that you listened to it? Are they tracking that you listened to it and got to the end of it?

I'll tell you that, in general, they are tracking that you downloaded it or maybe that you started it. Now, if you are listening to it on the server, you can track it some more.

Let me give you one other issue which I think is obviously germane for a company like Genentech. What if somebody downloads it and leaves the company? Or what if they download it and the FDA says, "That's no longer true." So, there is a growing conversation about what's called 'Revalidated PodCast' where literally you would get a PodCast and there would be digital rights that would say, "You can listen to it today," or "You can listen to it today until tomorrow", but if you go to listen to it again, it has to go online and revalidate that you're so authorized to listen to it, or be that it is still true. And I know a lot of folks who are in - I would assume that you are in a compliance environment, Jenny.

Jenny Blackburn: Yes.

Elliott Masie: Yeah. And as soon as I say these kinds of people, the ears pick up because, "Oh yeah, I like to track these now. It gives me a little bit of security around who is listening to it and are they listening to it and when they'd listen to it and is there some degree of tracking with that?" So, we're certainly seeing that.

I will tell you that we have to all, as an industry, and we are selling you to push within the CONSORTIUM to get the LMS and the LCMS vendors to more rapidly build some standards around how they're going to deal with a PodCast. And hey, Russ, maybe I can get Apple to help me with this. So -- I'm serious -- that we really get them to acknowledge and embrace that we all are wanting to make this a part of how we deliver learning. So...

Russ White: Yeah, we do, and one comment I have on that regarding the compliance areas: just because you want it to be a PodCast doesn't necessarily mean it has to be a PodCast. If you have gone through the whole -- and once you get going on this churn of creating this PodCast content, there may be content where you don't want to PodCast. You may just want to stream.

Elliott Masie: And by the way, there are some things that are not appropriate for a PodCast. For instance, I'm not sure I'm going to send out a PodCast that goes, "Oh, welcome to 49:02. You're fired today." I mean, there are certain pieces of corporate information you don't necessarily want to do on a PodCast. So that's why I think it goes back to instructional design.

Well, we have a lot of people that are waiting, but I really have time only for one more question. He has been very patient and I'm going to go to Jason Diamond. Your phone's open, Jason.

Jason Diamond: Hi Elliott. It's good to talk to you again.

Elliott Masie: Tell people - remind people where you're from.

Jason Diamond: Yeah, I'm from The Ken Blanchard Companies and...

Elliott Masie: And you heard some of Ken from five minutes ago.

Jason Diamond: Yeah, that was good to hear, and actually, Ken leaves a daily message with our entire company each day via voicemail that we have been working on PodCasting - the whole company on our internal site - we use SharePoint - so that's one way we're using it.

But the other thing that Ken has talked about for many years is just the ability to sustain learning. I mean, we get into the idea that you go to a classroom and you learn, but we've had the challenge of sustaining that learning over time. And what we found was the PodCasting is just a lot of very creative ways, cost efficient ways and customizable ways, to whatever our clients are going through in their own language to be able to create a PodCast that follow up long term beyond the classroom. So, there is all kinds of models. So, if you go through our Leadership Model, there are ways that people can come back and get specific, short PodCasts, and we're even playing with videocasts of having Ken and Scott Blanchard, his son, do two to three-minute segments on a specific topic that relates back to what they learned in the classroom. So, we're trying to sustain learning that way.

Elliott Masie: I don't know if you would remember; last year I did these really short about 60-second pieces of Ken and played them out at Learning 2007 and we put up on our site. We probably had about 40,000 people listening to those. This concept that it doesn't have to be six minutes...it literally could -- I mean, he did one story which people kept saying, "Hey, you heard that little 60 second piece of Ken? It's really helpful."

Jason Diamond: It has turned out to be very valuable because it's not just about the classroom; now it's a whole new model.

Elliott Masie: Great, thanks very much. As we wrap up, let me just share with you a couple of lessons learned that I found, and I've been doing PodCasting probably as long as most folks have in this field. One is, I think that starting with the genre that people are comfortable with is really helpful. One of the genres that I have used is the Radio Show or the Talk Radio Show. In fact, it's interesting; I was on the other side of the PodCast. A couple months ago, I was PodCasted for a show that happens every week called the 'Cranky Middle Manager Show'. Just listen to about ten seconds of this.

[PodCast Plays]

Elliott Masie: Now, what you're hearing there is, the guy who does the Cranky Manager, that was his lead in, and he does it as a Radio Talk Show. One of the things we found is listening to two voices is easier than listening to one, and in that case, he has a real attitude in it, but once again, tens of thousands of people listen to a show, and now it's one of the ones that I get RSS.

Secondly, make sure that if you're doing this that you understand that sometimes you have to talk a little bit slower on a PodCast. Very often, people get a little nervous doing it and they speed up, and I like to actually talk over the phone as a little hidden thing. A number of the players actually have an ability to listen faster. So I literally will often get a PodCast, and if for some reason I want to listen to it at three times the speed, it goes really tweeky but it helps. But for the average person, I'll actually slow down about 10% or 15%.

The last piece I did is a PodCast for Learning. It's really critical to me to be in full disclosure. I want to say at the beginning why I'm doing the PodCast, what my expectations are. I mean, we go back to Mager's Instructional Design Models of how we do that. And make sure that somebody - you protect their dignity as a learner to know what is it that I'm going to get, at level of detail, and what are the resources afterwards to the follow up? And I've got to tell you, it's the learning PodCast. I'm almost always following up; and nobody asks the question, "will people pay for these?" And it's interesting, because I think people will. I think, first of all, people will pay for subscriptions, whether it's an internal chargeback or the like -- but mostly what they will ultimately do, like any form of learning, is they will pay for performance.

So, what our challenge to do is to really build PodCasting for Learning as a performance, as a knowledge and as a tool that really helps people get to their objectives that they need.

Russ, we are honored to have you here. We have been chatting with Russ White. Russ White is a Framework Architect for Sales Training at Apple Computers. So, thanks much for joining me today Russ.

Russ White: Absolutely Masie - Elliott.

Elliott Masie: That's okay; you can call me Masie.

Russ White: And it's [The] Masie Center. Thank you, Elliott, and I'm going to go finish up my class downstairs.

Elliott Masie: And I can't wait to see what the iPhone looks like; we'll talk about that offline.

So, okay everybody. That's it. This is Elliott Masie from the Learning CONSORTIUM saying thank you very much for joining us. Remember, in May our topic is "The Overwhelmed Learner". I hope I haven't overwhelmed you today and we'll be talking to you soon. Yours in Learning.

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