Lesson 19

Distributing Your Podcast

In this lesson, you will learn how to get your podcasts posted online and set up on various podcast distribution websites. You will also learn what a podcast hosting site is, what a podcast distribution site is, what the differences are, and why these solutions are used by podcasters.

After reading through **The Basics of Podcast Hosting & Distribution** handout below, your teacher will review how to post podcasts to *Soundcloud* and *Spotify*. While you won't be doing these actions yourself for this project, it is important information to know if you ever want to start a podcast of your own.

Finally, you will take a 10-question quiz on the information presented in this lesson and submit it for assessment.

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The Basics of Podcast Hosting & Distribution

Your podcast episode is finished. You have exported it to your computer or hard drive. Now what? The information below will tell you everything you need to know to get your podcasts out for the world to listen to.

If you remember Lesson 1, you might recall that a podcast is an audio program that you listen to using a computer or mobile device. They can be about any topic and in any format. Podcasts differ other types of audio files in several ways. Podcasts use a service called **RSS** (**Really Simple Syndication)** that allows these programs to be made available on a variety of platforms, including Spotify, iTunes, Stitcher, and Audible (among others). You can **subscribe** to podcasts so that you can be notified when a new episode is available.

Why do you need all of this? Can't you just post your podcast to your class or school website and be done with it? Sure, you can, but most sites will simply post a link to your audio file. If someone clicks on that link, it will download the file to their computer. They will then have to open a media player, find the file, and play it. Not very convenient, is it? They will also have no idea that your podcast is on the site, or if a new episode is available for download. Podcast hosting and distribution sites make it possible to **stream** the audio – which simply means just playing it by clicking on a play button – no downloading required. These sites also allow you to copy an **embed link.** These links allow you to post a branded player on other sites, meaning that a listener will be available to stream your podcast on that site.

But how do you get an RSS feed and how to you post your podcasts online so that others can find them? The first thing you need to do is identify a good **podcast hosting site**. The term hosting just means a place where you can upload and store your podcasts. What makes a podcast hosting site special is that it will automatically create the RSS feed for you. The good news is that most podcast hosting sites are FREE! They also have paid subscription plans that give you some cool features, but the free plan is often all you need to get started.

Soundcloud.com is a great podcast hosting site that allows you to post podcasts on your own channel for free. It is also a podcast distribution site. The free account allows you to post up to 3 hours of podcasts per month. Your teacher will be setting up a channel just for your projects (if they don't already have one), so you don't need to do this. Your teacher will be able to access the RSS feed once the channel is set up by clicking on the 3 dots in the upper right-hand corner, then clicking **Settings>Content**. You will find the RSS feed URL right there. You will need to **copy** that RSS feed URL for use with podcast distribution sites like Spotify, iTunes, Stitcher, and other podcast distribution sites.

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It should be noted that you can distribute your podcasts on Soundcloud, and many people do. Many podcasters make their podcasts available on as many sites as possible to reach a wide audience, so it's a good idea to look at other podcast distribution sites.

Spotify is one of many terrific podcast distribution sites. Like many other distribution sites, Spotify does not allow you to host your podcasts on their site. Instead, they require you to host it elsewhere (like Soundcloud) and they simply make your RSS available to the many listeners and users they have. This is a VERY important distinction:

- **Podcast hosting sites allow you to set up a podcast channel, post audio files, and then generate a custom RSS feed for you to use.**

- **Podcast distribution sites use the RSS feed from your hosting site and then make your podcasts available to the vast number of users they have.**

Like Soundcloud, you will need to have a Spotify account to get your RSS feed available on the site. Spotify has accounts just for podcasters that you can create here: https://podcasters.spotify.com/. Once again, your teacher will be setting up a channel just for your projects (if they don't already have one), so you don't need to do this.

The process is very similar for podcast distribution sites such as iTunes and Stitcher.

That's it! You are ready to get your podcasts out there for the world to hear!