

M-AUDIO

Podcast Factory

How-to Guide

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Thank you for choosing the M-Audio® Podcast Factory. The Podcast Factory is your complete, professional audio solution for any Windows or Macintosh computer. It combines all the hardware and software you need to easily record, edit, and publish professional-sounding podcasts. The bundle includes the Podcast Factory recording interface, the M-Audio Broadcast Microphone with desktop stand, cable, and soft case, as well as software for recording, editing, and publishing podcasts.

What Is Podcasting?

Podcasting is a term that describes a way for you to post audio content to a website so your listeners can easily access it. Generally, listeners subscribe to and download the audio content from the internet and save the files to their computer the same way they would record a TV show on a VHS or DVD recorder. The listener can then use a computer or MP3 player to play back the content.

The basis of a podcast is an MP3 file. In order to transform a simple MP3 file into a podcast, you must use an XML text file technology called RSS (Really Simple Syndacation). The RSS text file links to the MP3 file to include information about the date the podcast was recorded, the title of the podcast, and the description of the recording. This enables listeners to use various software applications to look for new RSS text files and automatically download the newest episode of their favorite podcasts.

Start Creating Your Podcast

After you have unpacked all the items from the Podcast Factory, read through the included Podcast Factory recording interface manual. This manual describes each component included in the bundle and explains the steps for installing the USB recording interface. Following the manual is the best way to successfully install the interface and become familiar with its feature set.

After you have installed the Podcast Factory recording interface, it is time to connect the M-Audio Broadcast Microphone. Plug the three-slot female end of the included microphone cable into the bottom of the mic, making sure to match the 3 pins of the mic with the 3 slots of the cable. After the mic is connected to the cable, turn down all the levels of the Podcast Factory recording interface and then plug the other end of the cable into the back of the recording interface. You may now connect speakers or headphones to the recording interface as well. Next, we will begin installing the software that comes in the Podcast Factory. Each software title has a specific function in podcast creation that will be explained here.

Record Your Podcast Using Audacity Software

To install the Audacity software, put the black Podcast Factory CD into the CD drive (this is the same CD that contained the Podcast Factory recording interface drivers). When the Podcast Factory screen appears, click on the drop-down menu next to "Product" and select "Audacity," then click the "Install" button below. This will install the Audacity software in the same way that any other software is installed to your hard drive. It allows you to select the folder where you would like to install the files, and gives you the option of setting up a desktop icon. Simply follow the installation instructions that appear onscreen.

In the Audacity software, there are eight menu selections at the top of the screen: File, Edit, View, Project, Generate, Effects, Analyze, and Help. The Help menu contains a complete Audacity manual that explains the deeper features of the program (including how to edit and add effects to your recordings). The guide you are currently reading only covers the basic features, so please refer to the full manual to access all of Audacity's features.

To get started, simply turn up the mic input and output level on your Podcast Factory recording

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interface and make sure the mix knob is set to playback. On the top of the Audacity software screen, click on the record button (the round button with the red circle—third from the left). As soon as you press record, Audacity will create a new track in the below window and record everything you say into the mic.

You will need to make sure you get the correct level on the mic input and output levels. To set the level, simply adjust the knobs on the interface to suit your personal taste. You may need to record and play back a test file a couple times until you reach a comfortable level.

After you have finished recording, click on the File menu to save or export the file.

Be sure to check the Audacity website at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> to look for updates to the Audacity software that add features and functionality.

Preparing your Podcast with Podifier

Now that you have recorded your podcast and saved it to your computer, the next step is to add the RSS 2.0 text to your MP3 file, which converts it into a podcast.

If you have a server or website, or if you use one of the many online services that offer server space, Podifier will help you create an RSS feed for your MP3 file and publish this file to the web. If you do not have your own website or access to a server, then please read the next section ("Other Ways to Publish a Podcast").

Insert the green Podifier CD into your CD drive. Click on the Podifier icon to install it to your hard drive and follow the onscreen instructions to complete the installation. After the installation, the Podifier icon should appear on your desktop. Click on the icon to start the Podifier program.

The Podifier interface gives you space to enter information and descriptions about your podcast, including its URL, date, title, etc. When you are done entering this information, click "Next." The next screen allows you to select an MP3 file by clicking "Add" and selecting the correct folder and file. Podifier will take your MP3 file and add the RSS text file for publishing.

Many of Podifier's features are easy to understand, but if you need to learn more about a specific item, click on the Help menu at the top of the Podifier screen.

Other Ways to Publish Your Podcast

If you do not have your own server or access to a website, there are other ways to put your podcast on the internet. Online services like BlogMatrix, AudioBlog, Liberated Syndication, PodBus and Podblaze offer space to upload and store your podcast. Some of these services offer free hosting while others will charge a small fee for different storage limits. Please refer to the different web sites for more information. To use a hosting service, simply sign up for an account and upload your MP3 files.. With some of these services, you will not need to use the Podifier software to generate the RSS feed, simply record your audio file and save the MP3 file to your hard drive. Check each service for details, and be sure to check www.m-audio.com for more information about podcasting and publishing your podcast.

The podcast service hosts mentioned above are examples only and are in no way associated or affiliated with M-Audio or Avid Technology, Inc. and M-Audio does not guarantee the performance or availability of these services. Podcast Factory is not endorsed, sponsored, or approved by these companies.

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