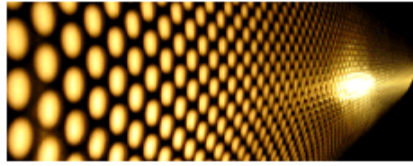


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BEST OF 2005: IDEAS

Radio Dreams Come Alive In The Podcast

Say you're crazy about wine. Along comes some free technology that makes it a snap to create your own radio show and distribute it over the Internet. On a whim, you decide to do a show on wine from your living room, call it GrapeRadio and, within months, have more than 10,000 weekly listeners.

Before last year, that would have been the stuff of daydreams. But in July, 2004, so-called podcasting software released by former MTV VJ Adam Curry democratized radio and let loose a wave of dormant creativity. There are now more than 20,000 podcasts online on topics from learning French to Scottish music. Although championed by indies, podcasting has been adopted by media giants such as Clear Channel Communications, Walt Disney, and National Public Radio. Everyone is trying to figure out how to make podcasting pay. As with bloggers, few podcasters are likely to make money. Even so, thousands can now create free content that will compete with traditional media for listeners' attention.

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