

## The History Of Podcasting

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2  
3 Have you ever wondered how podcasts came about? The word "podcasting" was coined in  
4 2004, combining two words, iPod and broadcasting. Ironically, this definition is somewhat of a  
5 misnomer since neither component is completely accurate. Neither podcasting nor listening to  
6 podcasts requires an iPod. You can download and listen to podcasts on your mobile phone, a  
7 tablet, a laptop or just a regular desktop computer. The name association came about simply  
8 because Apple Computer's iPod was the best-selling portable digital audio player when  
9 podcasting began. What's more, no over-the-air broadcasting is required either.

10 Podcasts and podcasting created such a buzz that even the editors of the New Oxford  
11 American Dictionary jumped on the podcasting bandwagon by declaring "podcasting" word of  
12 the year for 2005. The term was defined as "a digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar  
13 program, made available on the Internet for downloading to a personal audio player."

14 The term, podcasting was coined by the journalist, Ben Hammersley, and then popularized by  
15 former MTV VJ (video jockey) and media entrepreneur, Adam Curry. Mr. Curry launched a  
16 popular website for sharing podcasts and helped the media take off. He is known as the  
17 "Podfather" due to his efforts.

18 Other names or alternative interpretations of the letters, "P-O-D" were proposed, the most  
19 popular of which was "Personal On Demand". Technology writer, Doc Searls came up with this  
20 phrase back in September 2004. Terms such as "audio-blogging", audio magazines" and  
21 "webcasting" have also been offered to describe this unique form of media distribution. Other  
22 "pod"-derived phrases including "podcasters", those who create podcasts, were also coined.

23 The popularity of podcasting spread like wildfire because of the rapid adoption of MP3 players  
24 and the desire of consumers to have fresh content. Podcasting flourished because it gave  
25 people more control over what they listened to, and the freedom to take their programs with  
26 them. Nowadays with devices capable of storing large amounts of data and the relatively  
27 cheap cost of streaming, podcasts are more popular than ever.

28 Not since blogging has a technology seemed so unexpected and been so quickly and widely  
29 adopted. As the internet reaches more and more people around the world and as the cost of  
30 producing a podcast decreases, the popularity of the media is expected to skyrocket. The rising  
31 popularity of podcasts is seriously challenging conventional radio's broadcasting model and is  
32 making conventional media extremely worried.

33 In 2005 when iTunes was less than two years old, roughly 4.8 million people downloaded a  
34 podcast. Compare that to figures from 2018 and you see numbers that are hard to believe.  
35 From 2017 to 2018 there were a total of 36.3 billion downloads/streams. There are over 500  
36 thousand active podcasts on iTunes.

37 A study by Bridge Ratings in November 2005 showed that approximately 20% of users who  
38 have ever downloaded and listened to a podcast do so on a weekly basis. This group  
39 downloads an average of six podcasts per week and spends approximately four hours a month  
40 listening to the podcasts they download.



- 1 This study projected even more dramatic growth in the industry in the future. According to
- 2 Bridge Ratings, by 2010, podcast audience growth was expected to reach a conservative 45
- 3 million users who will have ever listened to a podcast. Aggressive estimates place this number
- 4 closer to 75 million by this date. Little did they know but that number would be achieved just
- 5 by one show, The Adam Carolla Show, which had a total of 59 million downloads between
- 6 2009 and 2011. Podcasts would increase in popularity reaching a total of 7 billion downloaded
- 7 by 2014.

### Comprehension / Vocabulary Questions

1. Which word means to invent a word or expression that has never been used before?
2. Which expression means to become involved in an activity that is already popular due to its success?
3. Why is Adam Curry known as the “Podfather”?
4. Which expression means to spread with great speed?
5. Why did podcasts become so popular?
6. What other media was podcasting compared to, due to its success?
7. Which verb has the meaning, to increase or rise extremely rapidly?
8. Compare the popularity of podcasts in 2005 to 2018.
9. How would you evaluate the accuracy of the predictions made in 2005 about the future of podcasts?
10. Why is podcasting making traditional media channels, like radio, worried?

### Gap Fill

Podcasts and podcasting created such a .....that even the editors of the New Oxford American Dictionary jumped on the podcasting ..... by declaring “podcasting” word of the year for 2005.

The popularity of podcasting spread like .....because of the rapid adoption of MP3 players and the desire of consumers to have fresh content. Podcasting ..... because it gave people more control over what they listened to, and the .....to take their programs with them.

As the internet reaches more and more people around the world and the cost of ..... a podcast decreases, the popularity of the media is expected to ..... . The rising popularity of podcasts is seriously ..... conventional radio’s broadcasting model and is making conventional media extremely worried.



### Answers

1. Which word means to invent a word or expression that has never been used before? **To coin.**
2. Which expression means to become involved in an activity that is already popular due to its success? **To jump on the bandwagon.**
3. Why is Adam Curry known as the “Podfather”? **He launched a popular podcast sharing website that helped the media gain initial success.**
4. Which expression means to spread with great speed? **To spread like wildfire.**
5. Why did podcasts become so popular? **Due to the rapid adoption and popularity of personal audio players and people’s desire to have fresh, new content.**
6. What other media was podcasting compared to, due to its success? **It was compared to blogging.**
7. Which verb has the meaning, to increase or rise extremely rapidly? **To skyrocket.**
8. Compare the popularity of podcasts in 2005 to 2018. **Since 2005 podcasts have grown in popularity beyond the expectations of almost everyone. In 2005 there were only 4.8 million downloads. From 2017 to 2018 there were a total of 36.3 billion downloads or streams.**
9. How would you evaluate the accuracy of the predictions made in 2005 about the future of podcasts? **The predictions were partly accurate. They predicted that podcasts would increase in popularity but they under-predicted how popular they would become by a long margin.**
10. Why is podcasting making traditional media channels, like radio, worried? **Podcasts can be downloaded or streamed at any time of the day; they are often free and only require an internet connection. There are hundreds of thousands of podcasts, providing the listener with an abundance of choice.**

### Gap Fill

Podcasts and podcasting created such a **buzz** that even the editors of the New Oxford American Dictionary jumped on the podcasting **bandwagon** by declaring “podcasting” word of the year for 2005.

The popularity of podcasting spread like **wildfire** because of the rapid adoption of MP3 players and the desire of consumers to have fresh content. Podcasting **flourished** because it gave people more control over what they listened to, and the **freedom** to take their programs with them.

As the internet reaches more and more people around the world and the cost of **producing** a podcast decreases, the popularity of the media is expected to **skyrocket**. The rising popularity of podcasts is seriously **challenging** conventional radio’s broadcasting model and is making conventional media extremely worried.



## Speaking Task – Role-play

## Role 1

You are Adam Curry. You have been invited to the popular podcast “Forward to the Past”, a podcast that explores revolutionary technologies in human history. They want to interview you about the role you played in popularizing podcasts.

## Checklist:

- Research Adam Curry.
- Make a list of what he did.
- Be prepared to talk about your ideas/thoughts and feeling at the time.
- What are your predictions for the future of podcasting?

You must use the following words: wildfire, to coin, to skyrocket and media.

## Role 2

You are the host of the podcast “Forward to the Past”, a podcast that explores revolutionary technologies in human history. You have invited Adam Curry on to talk about his role in the popularization of podcasting.

## Checklist:

- Welcome Adam to the podcast.
- Ask Adam 5 questions related to his role.
- Follow up two of his answers with further questions.
- Ask him about his predictions for the future.
- Thank Adam and finish the podcast appropriately.

You must use the following words: bandwagon, to stream, challenging, and buzz.

## Debate Topics

- Podcasts will never become as popular as traditional media.
- Podcasts will decrease in popularity as video streaming becomes cheaper and therefore more widespread and popular.

## Discussion Topic

- How has the media changed over the last 5 years?

## Discussion Topic

- What will be the next trend in media distribution?

## Discussion Topic

- The quality of internet-based content versus traditional media

## Discussion Topic

- Your favorite podcast to listen to and why



To spread like wildfire .....	A buzz .....	To jump on the bandwagon .....
To flourish .....	To skyrocket .....	To stream .....
Media .....	To coin a phrase/word .....	To popularize .....
Blogging .....	To take off .....	Misnomer .....
.....	.....	.....
Talk about... You experience with YouTube/Spotify/SoundCloud	Talk about... What you use the internet for	Talk about... Where/when you listen to music/podcasts
Talk about... How things become popular online	Talk about... What types of media you consume	Talk about... Big trends you have seen in technology

### Writing Task

Podcasting may be the king now but what will be the next big trend?

Podcasting is hugely popular but will it continue in popularity or will something else take over?

Write about the following topics:

- A brief history of podcasting.
- The reasons why it has become successful.
- Your predictions for the future and your reasons why.

