Unlike oil and water, these blend better on Internet radio

By Rosalie Ann LaGrutta
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Where can people go to get their technology and arts information all in one place?

Just log on to www.techarts.wordpress.com and listen in on Brian Kelley and John LeMasney's "Technology and the Arts," which is broadcast every other Wednesday. The Internet program launched in December.

"A podcast is a file that is downloaded by computer for viewers on 'time shifted' media," said Mr. LeMasney, 34, an instructional technologist at Rider University with a bachelor of fine arts degree in sculpture from the University of the Arts, in Philadelphia, Pa.

"It can be viewed at any time. A podcast can be equated to a radio program, but you can always go back to view and listen to a podcast online. It's an online radio program," he said.

To create a podcast, Mr. LeMasney said, one needs a computer, an Internet connection, microphone, recorder and software to get the program. "Technology and the Arts" uses the Audacity program.

Some of the tools of the trade include microphones and headphones, a four-channel mixer that connects the two microphones, and the recorder they use when interviewing guests for the podcast.

Mr. Kelley and Mr. LeMasney have produced nine 30-minute podcasts so far, using their individual interests and know-how — technology for Mr. Kelley, the arts for Mr. LeMasney. Their next podcast will be available on May 2.

The two men first met at Rider University in May 2001. Mr. Kelley was a Web content coordinator for Rider's Web site, while Mr. LeMasney managed the Rider University Web server.

"One day, John and I were talking on the phone," said Mr. Kelly, 35, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in journalism in 1997. "We expected to be on the phone for a few minutes, but it turned out to be one hour. And the conversation kept leading toward the development of a podcast."

When they started talking about combining their interests, abilities and experiences, they decided starting a podcast would serve that purpose.

"We produce our own show and write our own theme music," Mr. Kelley said. "We don't have to pay an editor, because we do that ourselves and we don't have to pay advertisers."

Though the finished product is 30 minutes long, a lot more time is taken in preparation for each podcast. Planning takes up to an hour, Mr. Kelley said, and a recording session can take up to two hours.

Ideas for shows run the gamut. Being a lover of old radio shows, Mr. Kelley took inspiration from Gregg Taylor's Web site, "Decoder Ring Theatre," which provides modern takes on old radio shows like "The Red Panther," which was based on "The Shadow," a detective-type story on radio from 1936 until 1954.

The men turned this idea into a podcast, but it ran 59 minutes, so they had to take it all out.

Another idea, which proved successful, was an interview at the Montgomery Center for the Arts in Montgomery Township, where Mr. Kelly interviewed some of the organization's artists.

Another interview for the podcast included a conversation with Eddie Kramer, former producer for Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones and The Beatles. One of the topics included virtual music. For this podcast, "it took about 10 hours to pull the whole thing together," Mr. LeMasney said.

Both agreed to consider the podcast a labor of love, because there's no financial remuneration in it for them. They love talking to people about the things that interest them (technology and art). There is no cost to them other than their time spent in interviewing guests and preparing the podcast.

What the men get out of their podcast is personal satisfaction, the opportunity to talk about the things that interest them most, and the chance to meet new people who share their interests.

"Planning and presenting a podcast takes little or no money, as long as you have the tools for it," Mr. LeMasney said.

For more information about the Technology and the Arts podcast, visit www.techarts.wordpress.com or send an e-mail to technology.arts@gmail.com.

Staff photo by Rosalie Ann LaGrutta

Brian Kelley (left) and John LeMasney, chat about their favorite things — technology and art — on their podcast. New episodes premiere every other Wednesday at www.techarts.wordpress.com.