

Podcasting Across Nebraska

Final Report

2006-2007

Podcasting Across Nebraska is a collaborative effort to help Nebraska communities or regional groups develop podcasts which promote tourism, events, recreation, historic sites, and other activities. Through the program, the City of South Sioux City and South Sioux City Public Schools; the Highway 14 Association; the North Platte/Lincoln County Convention and Visitors Bureau; and Panhandle Public Health District and Panhandle Podcasting Partners received hardware and software as well as training on how to create and produce podcasts.

"I've gotten great feedback," said Sandy Hatton from the Highway 14 Association. "It's been very educational. We didn't know anything about podcasting before participating in this program. We're planning to offer another podcasting training session."

"It's been invaluable in promoting city services and various activities. It is generating economic development opportunities. Departments give us ideas for podcasts all of the time. We definitely plan to keep producing video podcasts."

--Danny Bligh, City of South Sioux City

Participants produced 25 podcast episodes. The podcasts are having a positive effect on the promotional and information dissemination efforts of participating communities.

"It's been invaluable in promoting city services and various activities," said Danny Bligh with the City of South Sioux City. "It is huge for us. It is generating economic development opportunities. Departments give us ideas for podcasts all of the time. We definitely plan to keep producing video podcasts."



Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy congratulates the South Sioux City participants. Pictured (Left to Right): Greg Koiznan, Lance Martin, Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy, Lance Swanson, and Danny Bligh. Photo by Jon Wilson, UNL New Media Center.

Participating in the program has made participants more aware of and more interested in other interactive communication technologies. Participants are also more confident about their ability to learn and use other new technologies.

“It opened our eyes and helped us realize that technology isn’t quite so scary. Creating podcasts is easier than we thought and very effective. Participating in the program has given us the confidence to explore other technologies.”

--Muriel Clark, North Platte/Lincoln County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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Project partners include the NITC Community Council, University of Nebraska, Network Nebraska, Department of Economic Development, Division of Tourism, Network Nebraska, Technologies Across Nebraska, Nebraska Lied Main Street program, and Apple Computer. Training was provided by the University of Nebraska Extension educators. Podcasts produced through the project are being hosted by Network Nebraska. Funding was provided through the Nebraska Information Technology Commission Community Technology Fund.

“The communities involved are excited.” said Sandy Patton. “It is great to show what is happening in communities and to promote them.”



Bruce Sandhorst, Lieutenant Governor Rick Sheehy, Todd Jensen, and Karl Schlitt visiting at the University of Nebraska New Media Center. Photo by Jon Wilson, UNL New Media Center



Participants listen to podcasts at the Highway 14 Association training in Fullerton.



Superintendent Jeffrey Anderson, Senator Annette Dubas, Sandy Patton, and Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy at the presentation of podcasting equipment to the Highway 14 Association.



University of Nebraska Extension Educator Connie Hancock gives participants an overview of podcasting.

Outcomes

- Twenty-five podcasts have been created through the program.
- Approximately 30 resource providers were trained at the initial training sessions conducted by the University of Nebraska New Media Center in August 2006.
- 29 individuals from the 4 participating groups received training on podcasting.
- Seven additional training sessions were held, training approximately 100 individuals. Future training sessions are scheduled for Grant, Lincoln, and the Nebraska Rural Institute in Holdrege. Ainsworth and Kimball have expressed interest in a future training session.
- Through a grant from the Digital Story Telling Center, 10 University of Nebraska Extension staff will receive training on podcast production to capture community development in action.

Impact

- **Participating in the program has made participants more aware of and more interested in other interactive communication technologies. Participants are also more confident about their ability to learn and use other new technologies.**

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“It has definitely broadened my knowledge,” said Sandy Patton from the Highway Association. “Constantly new things are perking up my ears.”

Jessica Davies from the Panhandle Public Health District commented, “We’re excited for new ways to disseminate health information to young people.”

- **Podcasting is having a positive effect on participating organizations’ promotional and information dissemination efforts.**

“It’s been invaluable in promoting city services and various activities,” said Danny Bligh with the City of South Sioux City. “It is huge for us. It is generating economic development opportunities. Departments give us ideas for podcasts all of the time. We definitely plan to keep producing video podcasts.”

“It has helped our promotional efforts overall,” said Muriel Clark from the North Platte/Lincoln County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

“It has been a great tool to provide information to students and teachers,” said Lance Swanson from South Sioux City Public Schools. We will continue to use podcasts to get information to staff and students. We plan to use it in the classroom more. One teacher is already creating videos showing how to solve math problems so students can refer to it at home if they get stuck on a homework problem.”

Lessons learned

- The program has generated a lot of enthusiasm.
- Podcasting is easier than many people think.
- Participants cited training as the most valuable aspect of the program.
- There are limited training opportunities to learn how to create podcasts or to utilize new technologies in Nebraska for those not involved in K-12 or higher education—especially in rural communities.
- Podcasts need to be incorporated into an organization’s overall marketing plan.
- It is important to include links to individual episodes from an organization’s Web site. An organization’s Web site is probably the most important vehicle for delivering podcasts.

- Participants marketed their podcasts in a variety of ways including :
 - Putting links to individual episodes from the organization's Web site.
 - Disseminating information about the podcasts to listservs.
 - Putting information on the podcasts in newsletters.
 - Playing the podcasts at meetings and giving demonstrations on Podcasting.
- Post-training technical support was critical to the success of the program. All participants had at least one question or request for assistance in troubleshooting a problem. Most of the issues were related to uploading files to the server and creating XML feeds.



Lieutenant Governor Rick Sheehy awards podcasting equipment to Lisa Cox.



Jessica Davies receives podcasting equipment from Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy.

Podcasts Created

As of August 24, 2007

- **South Sioux City CardinalCast**
 - Tourism
 - Economic Development
 - Spring Services
 - Mobile Communications Bus
 - National Night Out
 - Cardinal Virtual Building

- **South Sioux City Public Schools Digital Life Podcast**
 - Internet Safety
 - Middle School Introduction
 - Operation Care Bear
 - Welcome to South Sioux City: Tour of Middle and High School
 - Internet Safety Night Part 1
 - Internet Safety Night Part 2
 - High School News

- **North Platte/Lincoln Co. Convention and Visitors Bureau podcast**
 - Sandhill Cranes
 - Attractions and Events
 - Buffalo Bill State Historical Park
 - North Platte Canteen
 - Fishing in Lincoln County
 - Nebraskaland Days
 - Cottonwood Massacre

- **Panhandle Public Health District and Panhandle Podcasting Partners Podcast**
 - Alliance Walking Tour
 - West Nile Virus

- **Highway 14 Association Podcast**
 - Pop-In
 - Fullerton

- **Podcasting Across Nebraska**
 - Podcasting Across Nebraska Year 1 Report

Links to these podcasts can be found at <http://www.nitc.ne.gov/cc/podcasting/podcasting.html>.