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Law and Technology Podcasts

By Roger V. Skalbeck (<http://www.llrx.com/authors/339>), Published on August 27, 2007

During my commute on the Washington, DC metro, I rarely have enough room to *butterfly* my newspaper, let alone actually get a seat. Since I can't read law and technology news *en route* to work, I now listen to it instead. Unsurprisingly, there are numerous high-quality podcasts in these areas. Based on my personal experience, following are a very select handful of useful podcasts covering topics such as technology policy, law, and web development.

Podcasting: Not just for iPods anymore...

As most people probably know, podcasts are electronic audio files that you can download to listen on a portable media player such as an iPod. The name podcast comes of course as a derivation of iPod + broadcast. For a quick overview of this, check out [Wikipedia's entry on the topic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting>) .

Just because the coined term has "Pod" in the title doesn't mean that you have to own an iPod to listen to them. You can also listen to them a player such as a Creative Labs Zen or the Microsoft Zune. Increasingly, you can play many podcasts directly from within a web browser.

Also, you don't have to synchronize your podcasts using Apple's iTunes software either. You can also use the [Zencast organizer/](http://www.zencast.com/) (<http://www.zencast.com/>) , [NewsGator's FeedDemon](http://tinyurl.com/22h5sz) (<http://tinyurl.com/22h5sz>) , an open source program called ([Juice](http://juicereceiver.sourceforge.net/) (<http://juicereceiver.sourceforge.net/>)) and several other RSS readers.

Law-Related podcasts

[This Week in Law](http://www.twit.tv/twil) (<http://www.twit.tv/twil>)

This Week in Law features a discussion of legal topics relating to technology and the Internet. This is hosted by well-known blogger/attorney Denise Howell (author of [Bag and Baggage](http://bgbg.blogspot.com/) (<http://bgbg.blogspot.com/>)), featuring panelists such as Ernie Svenson (aka [Ernie the Attorney](http://www.erniethattorney.net/) (<http://www.erniethattorney.net/>)) and intellectual property lawyer Cathy Kirkman, author of the [Silicon Valley Media Law Blog](http://www.svmedialaw.com/) (<http://www.svmedialaw.com/>) . In spite of the name, TWIL episodes don't come out weekly. Nonetheless, all of them have been good so far. For instance, the third episode includes a detailed discussion of contract rights and copyright implications of RSS feeds. Another featured an interview with the founder of attorney rating site [AVVO](http://www.avvo.com/) (<http://www.avvo.com/>) , together with discussion of the lawsuits filed against them.

[LexisNexis Mealey's podcasts](http://www.lexisnexis.com/mealeys/podCasts.aspx) (<http://www.lexisnexis.com/mealeys/podCasts.aspx>)

LexisNexis owns the Mealey's family of publications, and this podcast is a way to distribute their headline news stories. It is obviously commercial in nature (there are advertisements for the Lexis Total Litigator in every installment so far). Nonetheless, the General News podcast

coverage is done well, and there have been technology cases that I heard about on this podcast before learning of them in any other source. They offer localized podcasts covering legal news in California, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Texas.

[SCOTUSBlog podcast \(http://www.scotusblog.com/\)](http://www.scotusblog.com/)

This popular blog focused on the Supreme Court often contains podcasts that feature interviews and commentary by law professors and attorneys analyzing issues before the Supreme Court. The podcasts available so far have included a conversation with former Solicitor General Charles Fried on his new book, a discussion with Linda Greenhouse, and analysis of important cases on the court's current docket.

American Bar Association Podcasts

At least two ABA sections produce podcasts available on the association's website. [The Litigation Section Podcast \(http://www.abanet.org/litigation/podcast/\)](http://www.abanet.org/litigation/podcast/) is a bi-weekly show covering practical tips, tactics, and interviews with trial attorneys. Recent topics range from "Don't Blow Your Closing Argument" to "Should I Google the Jury".

The ABA Center for Continuing Legal Education produces [CLE podcasts \(http://www.abanet.org/cle/podcast/\)](http://www.abanet.org/cle/podcast/) and they sell Apple iPod devices preloaded with ABA-CLE programming in areas such as business law and labor and employment law.

In addition, the Law Practice Management Section just launched a podcast series called [The Digital Edge: Lawyers and Technology \(http://www.abanet.org/lpm/lta/archives/podcasts.shtml\)](http://www.abanet.org/lpm/lta/archives/podcasts.shtml). The inaugural show covers electronic marketing.

Other Sources for Legal Podcasts

If you are looking for a law-related podcast on just about any topic you can think of, two great places to check out are the [Blawgcast directory at Justia.com \(http://blawgsfm.justia.com/\)](http://blawgsfm.justia.com/) and the [Legal Talk Network \(http://www.legaltalknetwork.com/index.php\)](http://www.legaltalknetwork.com/index.php). Both of these come highly recommended.

Technology and Web Development podcasts

[This Week in Tech \(http://www.twit.tv/TWiT\)](http://www.twit.tv/TWiT)

By the time this goes to print, there will be more than 90 weekly episodes of This Week in Tech ("TWiT") online. Featuring technology journalist Leo Laporte "and friends", TWiT is a roundtable discussion of the biggest technology news each week. It is very well produced and is often quite entertaining. If you like the main TWiT podcast, poke around their website to discover their other shows.

[CNet News Tech Politics Rundown \(http://news.com.com/2030-12835_3-6133242.html\)](http://news.com.com/2030-12835_3-6133242.html)

Tech Politics Rundown is a show co-hosted by News.com executive editor Charles Cooper and chief political correspondent Declan McCullagh. It is usually less than twenty minutes long, covering legislative updates and political developments in the technology area. Recent shows have looked at the future of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, privacy and antitrust issues

with Google and Microsoft, and Net neutrality.

[Future Tense \(http://www.publicradio.org/columns/futuretense/\)](http://www.publicradio.org/columns/futuretense/)

Produced and hosted by Jon Gordon, this podcast covers up-to-the-minute technology topics in daily five-minute segments. From electronic privacy and digital democracy to spam and computer worms, Future Tense covers the rapidly changing world of technology.

[Boagworld \(http://www.boagworld.com/\)](http://www.boagworld.com/)

This show is named after the main host Paul Boag, a British web designer. It regularly contains interviews with British and other European web design professionals, covering topics such as microformats, web standards, accessibility and general industry updates. There is a recurring segment called "Client Corner" focused on the business side of running websites, touching on topics such as development contracts and content ownership.

[.Net Magazine podcast \(http://www.netmag.co.uk/zine/podcast\)](http://www.netmag.co.uk/zine/podcast)

This is another podcast run by Brit Paul Boag. This is a companion podcast to the UK-based .Net Magazine, which seemingly has nothing to do with Microsoft's .Net programming language. Instead, this show features a roundtable-like discussion of web design topics. Though there are only a handful of episodes in this name, it continues a podcast for the former magazine "Practical Web Design" which is equally good. After listening to too many American voices, this pair of British-based podcasts presents a welcome change of pace.

Newspaper and Radio Technology podcasts

While many podcasts take a more of a conversational tone, a number of media companies, including newspapers and radio stations produce podcasts of their technology coverage. Two of the best in this area are from the *New York Times* and *National Public Radio*. The advantage to these is that stories are typically well researched with high production values.

[New York Times: Tech Talk and David Pogue \(http://www.nytimes.com/ref/multimedia/podcasts.html\)](http://www.nytimes.com/ref/multimedia/podcasts.html)

David Pogue is one of the best-known newspaper columnists covering technology. In fact, he was one of only a handful of journalists to get an iPhone before it was released. On his *New York Times* podcast, Pogue personally reads his weekly technology column. They are short, enjoyable and well-written.

Another good technology podcast from the *Times* comes from their Tech Talk section (<http://www.nytimes.com/ref/technology/techtalk.html> (<http://www.nytimes.com/ref/technology/techtalk.html>)) This weekly podcast covers updates in telecommunications, the computer industry, and general technology topics. There are also good tips on fixing computer problems.

[National Public Radio \(http://www.npr.org/rss/podcast/podcast_directory.php\)](http://www.npr.org/rss/podcast/podcast_directory.php)

Through the National Public Radio website, you can find dozens of podcasts of shows from multiple providers, including those produced by NPR directly. One of the best is simply titled NPR: Technology. This is a compilation of technology-focused stories taken mostly from

Morning Edition. When you can't tune in to an NPR broadcast on time, listening to them on an MP3 player is the next best thing.

[DIGG's Most Popular Podcasts: Technology \(http://digg.com/podcasts/view/tech\)](http://digg.com/podcasts/view/tech)

DIGG is a great social news sharing site where users contribute links to articles, videos and podcasts. Registered members then rank this content so the most popular items show up higher on the site. To vote for something you "Digg" it and otherwise you chose to "Bury" it. If you're looking to find podcasts on specific technology topics, or if you want to view others' comments about them, DIGG is great destination.

Two Final Distractions

Sometimes listening to law and technology podcasts makes me feel too much like I'm taking work home with me. Other times I just need short distractions. Here are two final suggestions for good humorous content.

[The Onion Radio News \(http://www.theonion.com/content/radionews\)](http://www.theonion.com/content/radionews)

Much-loved humor publication The Onion delivers its trademark brand of snarky humor and tongue-in-cheek absurdity in wonderful one-minute segments. These come out every day, and they may cause you to laugh out loud.

[Wait, Wait... Don't Tell Me \(http://www.npr.org/programs/waitwait/\)](http://www.npr.org/programs/waitwait/)

Every weekend, NPR broadcasts what they call "an oddly informative news quiz." This is a very funny news quiz show where listeners call in with a chance to win a recording of Carl Kasell on a home answering machine. If you're too busy doing other things on the weekends when this airs live, download this hour-long show to laugh on your own schedule.

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