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About : Podcasting

Podcasting for Arts Marketing, College Recruitment and Fundraising

From John C. Havens,
Your Guide to Podcasting.

Podcast Consultant Arthur Lubow of AD Lubow, LLC

I got in touch with Arthur Lubow, President of AD Lubow, LLC to ask about his Podcast Consultant work, along with his audio, video, and graphics work in general. If you get the chance, I highly recommend you surf The AD Lubow site as its combination of flash animation and other lush graphics make it a really enjoyable visceral experience. It's a great example of where art and commerce can meet in the sense of providing an aesthetically appealing experience to a client/audience while still taking care of business.

Can you please discuss your podcast/videocast services?

We create, format and post video podcasts as part of our overall 360 degree branding approach for our clients in the arts, education, health care, fundraising and corporate responsibility.

I love the mini-documentaries you do for fundraisers. How did that idea come about, and how has it helped/affected viewers?

We were producing many four to five minute films shown at fundraising events around New York City. We soon adapted those

for use as rich-content multi-media presentations for the websites we design. When podcasting came along, it seemed like the next natural step to post some of these little films on iTunes. After all, it's free—and that obviously appeals to charities and foundations.

Once we started, we found the podcasts made a terrific and very involving complement to print ads. For example, we created a print ad for Inner-City Scholarship Fund about Regis Philbin visiting his grammar school in the Bronx. You can only say so much in print. And even if a picture is worth a thousand words—what do you do when you need a thousand and one? So the ad refers readers to the podcast, a 5-minute vignette about Regis's visit and his involvement with the scholarship fund. And if potential donors, after reading the ad and viewing the podcast would like to go still deeper into the subject, they can read a Q&A on the Inner-City Scholarship Fund website. Or, they can view another episode about ICSF—on, for example, bringing art into New York's inner-city schools. See our podcast, Learning to Look. That's 3-D Branding: inviting readers to go deeper and deeper with communications that fly off the page and into people's hearts and minds.

Podcasts started as a conversation piece. But there are no ends to the uses you can dream up. For example, one of our clients, Big Apple Circus loved the idea of loading their Clown Care Unit mini-documentary onto an iPod and giving the device to major donors. The Clown Care Unit, as you can see in this little 3-minute film (reduced by our staff from a 20-minute film produced a few years ago by another firm) entertains critically-ill children who are under intensive care in pediatric units of major hospitals. This episode, narrated by the wonderfully supportive Paul Newman, makes a nice counterweight to the two season previews we've produced for Big



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Apple Circus's "Grandma Goes to Hollywood" and "Step Right Up." Without any publicity I was amazed that the first season preview we posted on iTunes was downloaded more than 3,000 times over the first two months it was up.

Can you talk about your "Idea Lab?" Why is podcasting/ videocasting a good application to promote literature in your mind?

We have a department called the iDEA Lab in which we dream up and display new concepts. Right now, current and potential clients are allowed in to see the first prototypes we created for podcasting children's books. Publishers with foresight and imagination can see how engaging these productions are—imagine a child in the back seat of a car or airplane with his/her iPod loaded with a series of high-quality children's pieces; you can see the potential of this relationship. In addition, we've created "bonus material" pieces where an author/illustrator explains the thought behind the creative process. Parents, our potential buyers, like this. We'd like to sell these kidKasts on iTunes, but we don't view these as replacements for printed books. Quite the contrary, we view these as catalysts for book sales, much the same as movies prompt people to read the works they're based upon. Despite the inevitable prophecies, new media never vanquish the old. TV didn't wipe out radio. There's room—and a time and a place—for everything.

Can you talk about your guided tours a bit?

A really terrific use for audio podcasting is the idea of virtual college campus tours and self-guided museum, botanical garden and tourist district walks. Again, they're no substitute for human to human contact. But because they're easily updated, customized to different

About : Podcasting *(continued)*

users and exist in their own space and time, they're a wonderful and welcome addition to the mix. They also allow viewers the advantage of taking a tour with an organization's best representatives. For that reason, I like the podcasts we've done for the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. The acting students describing their school look great; and they aren't acting.

In terms of adoption of the technology, you mentioned your art clients can preview their new seasons. Were they eager to adopt the technology?

Some have been very eager. Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, Long Island's leading venue for classical concerts and popular entertainment has the very challenging task of making customers understand the range of concert choices available. Our "Great Fun." season preview podcasts allow potential ticket buyers and subscribers to see, hear and hopefully feel all the great music and theatre available. The podcasts try to be more like the theatrical experience itself.

I loved the fact that you said you're trying to make podcasting essential for all your clients but beyond the first few episodes they don't always want to move forward.

The more we report our cause aright to the unsatisfied-- to paraphrase Hamlet-- the more ranks of the recalcitrant begin to dwindle.

You talked about the fact that you love that pod/videocasts unite the various talents in your firm and that people have fun working on these projects. Can you talk about collaboration and how your pod/videocasts are enhanced because of all of these different talents? Do clients understand this?



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I do love the collaboration and the rounding up of all the talents and skills we've been developing in all the various discipline. I love the fact that the art of podcasting can involve a collaboration among writers, marketers, illustrators, flash animators, videographers, recording engineers, editors, photographers, photo retouchers, special effect designers, musicians, announcers and more.

It's tremendously rewarding to work together and see a good result. At the same time, I adore the idea that sometimes all of the above talents can be found in a single person working with the exquisite technology we have. I do think our clients appreciate the plethora of talent, versatility and craft possessed by our young staff.

In terms of content, you talked about how making a 2-5 minute film has to be something people want to see. You consider your work "mini-films" versus ads/pitches. How do you work with clients to promote the idea of creating pieces that are more focused on content than sales?

Since the dawn of television, creatives have been forced to live within the confines of 30 seconds, and some have become masters of the genre. But now, with the advent of podcasting, creative work can be as long as your power to hold your audience's interest. It's an amazing new development; and a whole new craft to learn. Whether it's a conceit or not, I do like to think of our work as mini-documentaries and miniature entertainments. The goal is sales and brand building through interest, imagination and involvement. Podcasts aren't thrust upon people as commercials are—viewers come voluntarily. But to hold their interest and not misuse their precious time, these pieces must possess the quintessence of brevity. (I'll say no more).

The logo for 'About: Podcasting', with 'About' in a large, bold, black font, a red circle with a white dot inside, and 'Podcasting' in a smaller, bold, red font.

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