Title of Session: SIGTC - Podcasting
Moderator: Karen Connaghan
Guest Speaker: Tony Vincent
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Room: SIGTC Group

KarenConna: I'd like to welcome our guest tonight...

KarenConna: Tony Vincent!

KarenConna claps

LoriBu claps

KarenConna: Tony is going to share with us his experiences with podcasting

BJB2 cheers wildly

TonyVi feels welcome

KarenConna: Before we get started, let's introduce ourselves by...

KarenConna: telling who we are, where we're from and our connection to education.

KarenConna: I'll start

KarenConna: Camilla is the President of SIGTC!

CamillaGa: Hello, trying again, my name is Camilla and I am an avid podcaster waiting to see what Vincent is going to share.

CamillaGa: Hi David

KarenConna: I'm Karen - Educational Technology Specialist for an Intermediate Unit near Philadelphia

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler. I'm a HelpDesk volunteer for Tapped In and I lead a math and technology discussion here in Tapped In. I'm in northern New Jersey, near New York City

LoriBu: I'm Lori Burch from Hilton, NY (near the Buffalo/Rochester area of NY near Lake Ontario). I'm an instructional tech specialist at the elementary level - formerly a classroom teacher for 16 years

DavidWe: Welcome to Tapped In, Camilla

CherylGst3: I am new to podcasting and I am about to embark on this exciting adventure with my fifth graders

DianeHe: Diane Heitzenrater, eastern PA and I am a technology teacher at a middle school

CherylGst3: Michigan here

JonMa: Hello, my name is Jon Mamon. I am a technology resource teacher for a MS and HS in Manssas Park Va

JeanB: I am a tech director in Coeur d' Alene, ID.

TonyVi: I'm Tony Vincent from Nebraska. I'll be sharing lots more about myself soon enough.

KerenS: Hi - I work with teachers and administrators throughout the district in instructional technology -- in the Los Angeles area

GayleB: Hi. I'm Gayle Britt teacher and assistant principal in northern California. I'm studying Chinese and get weekly lessons via podcasts. I'm eager to learn more about them.

AndreaGP: I am Andrea Pokrzywinski from Ashland, Wisconsin. I am a technology coordinator for a regional Agency. I am a podcast wannabe. I look forward to learning more.

DavidWe has always wanted to meet a "podcast wannabe"

KarenConna: I think we have everyone introduced

TonyVi high fives the podcast wannabe!

KarenConna: lol

DavidWe smiles

KarenConna: Before we start, please detach your chat windows

KarenConna: Select the actions drop down in the top right corner and choose detach

KarenConna: Also...

KarenConna: remember that if Tony types a website link in the chat window, remember to hold down the control key while clicking the link

KarenConna: Once again, I'd like to welcome Tony and thank him for sharing his experiences with us.

CamillaGa: same for macs and pcs?

KarenConna: Tony would you like guests to ask questions as we go, or hold them to the end?

DavidWe: You can hold down the Command (Apple) key on a Mac

TonyVi: Let's hold the questions until the question time--unless it has to do directly with what I'm typing about.

TonyVi: Greetings everyone! I'm thrilled you're here! I'm Tony Vincent coming to you live from my red office in Omaha, Nebraska.

KarenConna nods

TonyVi: (No, I don't have more than one office in my home, it's just the one I have is red, well, more like a cranberry color).

TonyVi: http://learninginhand.com/tappedinchat/Office.jpg

TonyVi: I'm going to give you some information and links for the first part of this chat. Then we'll proceed with questions and answers.

TonyVi: Let me give you a little background. Currently I'm the technology specialist at Willowdale Elementary School.

TonyVi: Click Sat or Satellite to see an aerial view of my school: http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&q=16901+P+Street,+Omaha,+NE&btnG=Search&ll=41.206015,-96.179048&spn=0.002409,0.004876&t=k&output=html

TonyVi: I teach students, model lessons for teachers, and conduct staff development. Most importantly, I collaborate with classroom teachers to help them craft and execute lessons to meet the needs of the learners in our care.

TonyVi: Before becoming Willowdale's technology specialist in August 2004, I taught fifth graders. Since my first year of teaching, I've maintained a website for my class.

TonyVi: My students named our site Planet 5th and I kept that name all six years I taught fifth grade. My students and I loved having an authentic audience for our work. The quality of student writing soared as they knew parents, friends, family, and strangers

would be enjoying their work on Planet 5th. Students even took more care in their artwork.

TonyVi: Here's a page with the "history" of Planet 5th: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/p5/info/p5history.html

TonyVi: Here's a page with student work from the 2003-2004 school year: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/p5/projects.html

KarenConna . o O (nice projects)

TonyVi: You can see from the student work page that our projects include more than just art and writing. We also did quite a bit with digital video. Although it's not listed on the link above, we've done some online audio projects in the past.

TonyVi: In November 2004 I began listening to podcasts. This was before iTunes included the ability to "catch" podcasts, so I used software called iPodderX. As luck would have it, just as I was finding education podcasts (along with some entertaining ones), the battery in my iPod mini went out. So, I had to send it in for repair and I was without an iPod for two weeks.

TonyVi was bummed.

TonyVi: Once I got my iPod back in December 2004, I enjoyed listening to educators like David Warlick (Connect Learning) and Steve Dembo (Teach 42) on my iPod.

TonyVi: I kept searching for podcasts for elementary students. Or, better yet, podcast by elementary students. By January 2005, I found none.

TonyVi: I was excited by the idea of podcasting with Willowdale students. In the past, I had done a lot with digital video online. However, DV takes so much time and effort. I knew doing just audio would be so much more manageable.

TonyVi: I worked with a second grade teacher. She identified six students from her class who needed an alternative literacy center from what the rest of the students were doing in class. These six kids were beyond what she had to offer. So, we arranged for this group to be the first Willowdale students to podcast.

TonyVi: I developed a Willowcast Guide, complete with worksheets to help students plan for their segments. My current guide for this version can be downloaded here:

TonyVi: http://learninginhand.com/podcasting/RadioWillowWeb.pdf

TonyVi: The students met with me a couple of times and I played a podcast by middle schoolers as an example. Rebecca was chosen as host. She's a great student and certainly adds character to the podcast when she says "Wadio WillowWeb."

TonyVi: I worked on the RSS feed and web page for Willowcast #1 while the rest of the school participated in Valentines Day parties. Later that night, Willowcast #1 was online for the world to access. I believe that these second graders were the first elementary students to podcast.

TonyVi: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/radio/shows/Willowcast01.html

TonyVi: Willowcast #1 was then used as a model for all of our podcasts to follow. The only thing we eventually changed in the format was that each Willowcast now focuses on a single curriculum topic.

TonyVi: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/radio/

DavidWe: Way cool, Tony

HelenK: great stuff!

KarenConna nods

TonyVi: Thanks! We're proud of our hard work on these. I can't believe the first one turned out so well!

TonyVi: We immediately got great feedback from listeners world-wide! This was great because students really understand that Radio WillowWeb has a real-life audience. In fact, we keep two very important things in mind through the planning and recording of a podcast: audience and purpose.

KarenConna: I love the idea of its use as alternative literacy center--great differentiation strategy

TonyVi: The audience for Radio WillowWeb is kids. If adults listen, that's great, but our focus is on other kids. When students don't know how to word something, I remind them of our audience. For instance, the audience may not know who Mrs. Kelley is. So, if she is mentioned in a podcast, the students need to explain that she is Willowdale's principal.

TonyVi: Radio WillowWeb's primary purpose is to educate our audience. Students' secondary purpose is to entertain. We know that if our podcasts are not entertaining, kids won't want to listen.

TonyVi: Radio WillowWeb is arranged in segments for several reasons. Segments allow students to work with partners or independently on their segments. The whole group doesn't need to be involved in each segment, saving time. Plus, the students feel a real sense of ownership of the segments they produce.

TonyVi: Additionally, segments help pace the podcast so the listener gets variety.

DavidWe likes variety

TonyVi: When we record, we use a USB headset microphone. However, we didn't start using the headset until Willowcast #9. Before that, we just used the built-in microphone. I made students get very close to the eMac's mic. It was uncomfortable and students had to record several times to get the right level of audio.

LoriBu nods

TonyVi: If you have poor audio, no one is going to listen.

TonyVi: With a USB headset, the mic is always kept the right distance from the child's mouth. We don't have re-record nearly as often.

TonyVi: http://learninginhand.com/tappedinchat/HeadsetMic.jpg

KarenConna . o O (headsets are the way to go)

TonyVi: And with recording, students practice before actually recording with me. Often parent volunteers take students into the hallway and listen. The volunteers give tips for pacing, volume, enunciation, etc.

TonyVi: What's interesting is we have one microphone, so when you hear student talking to each other, it was not recorded as one continuous conversation. We paused the recording so the mic could be passed on.

TonyVi: Sometimes the host is not actually present when a segment is recorded. However, the host may have a short conversation with the students who recorded the segment. The voices are put together in postproduction.

TonyVi: The students can't wait to hear the end product!

TonyVi: For postproduction, I do all of the adding of music, sound effects, etc. This can be time-consuming and I don't think classroom teachers would be happy with me to take students out of class for a couple of hours to work on postproduction, as this working on this doesn't have the same educational value as writing and recording. Plus, I enjoy this part.

DavidWe smiles

TonyVi: Most of our music comes from fifth graders who complete a GarageBand unit with our music teacher. I collect their project and put them on a CD. I then have lots of podsafe music, all put together by Willowdale students.

CamillaGa: Interesting! I use a mic setup with a USB converter in our TV studio to do podcast. Makes a world of difference.

KarenConna: Wonderful idea to use student garageband work

TonyVi: Podsafe music is audio that is copyright friendly to play during a podcast. Educators have to be careful because educational fair use doesn't apply when you're redistributing the audio over the Web for anyone to consume.

TonyVi: There's some podsafe music links on this page: http://learninginhand.com/podcasting/create.html#postproduction

LoriBu smiles

DianeHe: Tony, are you using audacity or the mac and do you use splitters on the audio ?

CamillaGa: I have a 5th grade tech team that manage all the production and the post production. We use Garageband as well to add music

TonyVi: We use Macs and GarageBand.

DavidWe notes that when it comes to audio/video, MACS RULE

TonyVi couldn't agree more.

CamillaGa: Audacity is cross platform and works really well to edit podcast

DavidWe smiles

TonyVi: We're so flattered that others are using Radio WillowWeb as a model for their podcasts.

TonyVi: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/radio/podcasts.html

KarenConna: You've developed a great model Tony

DavidWe agrees

KarenConna: Your students should be proud to set the bar

TonyVi: Thanks Karen. Our model is very manageable.

LoriBu also agrees

TonyVi is ready for questions.

DavidWe: Tony are you presenting any of this at conferences? NECC, for example?

KarenConna nods -- manageable is key

TonyVi: No, I'm not presenting at NECC--the deadline is so early, that I never make it.

DavidWe smiles

TonyVi: But I do present at lots of conferences and workshops.

DavidWe: Well, come to San Diego and you can present during my session

DavidWe nods

KarenConna: Tony recently did a workshop at Montgomery County IU near Philadelphia

DianeHe: I was there!!

TonyVi: It was so fun--and it seems one whole day workshop isn't enough time!

TonyVi: There are so many tips I've learned along the way.

TonyVi: One question is how do I schedule this...

KarenConna: Tony, what has been the most challenging aspect of doing the WillowCast?

TonyVi: I work with classroom teachers and I pull out the students to record. Before that, I meet with students two times to get them going on their segments. Then they work a few days in their classrooms on the podcast guides and scripts.

TonyVi: We've got it down to a science where once I put together today was made in record time--and it's just as great as the others. It will be posted tomorrow.

JonMa: Tony, I am not that familiar with podcasts. Do you [have] a step by step guide for the educator?

LoriBu: Do you always work with the same class or different classes?

TonyVi: Most challenging has been getting kids to research well. I do lots of lessons about where to get info and make sure it is valid (and interesting to our audience).

CamillaGa: We have different models in Arlington, but mostly the classroom teacher will prep the kids and a student team takes over the production

TonyVi: Jon, yes I do! http://learninginhand.com/podcasting/index.html

JonMa: Thanks!

AnnabellI: are any classroom teachers helping with this or is it up to you as a tech coordinator?

DianeHe: Do you ever have 2 or 3 students discussing a topic? How do you do that with the mic?

TonyVi: After their GarageBand unit with our music teacher, I know we'll have some fifth graders putting together the postproduction.

TonyVi: We have had "interviews" and we just record in short segments and piece them together.

KarenConna: How are the students selected?

JonMa: What types of topics are discussed?

CamillaGa: spontaneous discussion is a great way of podcating student learning and understanding

AnnabellI: Is anyone using pcs and other MP3 players?

TonyVi: The classroom teachers and I collaborate on what should be done, who is involved, and when they do it.

TonyVi: But the classroom teachers don't get into the techy side of things.... yet.

LoriBu: But is all the work done by you and the students in terms of the research and the podcast?

CamillaGa: we use PCs as well as Macs and Audacity

CherylGst3: Tony is it possible to add a page onto my school's website to upload the podcast or does that use to much space on the school server?

LoriBu: I'm just getting started and will be using PCs

AndreaGP: Tony, what compression rate are you using for your audio? I like the way you have embedded the audio in your web pages. Are you RSS feeding any of your podcasts?

TonyVi: There are several ways to go about a podcast. One choice you have to make is if it is going to be spontaneous or scripted. We choose scripted because we want a polished end product. However, spontaneous podcasts certainly have their places!

KarenConna: I mentioned earlier that your beginning idea of alternate literacy center was a great way to differentiate both up and down. Have your found that teachers see the podcast in that light?

TonyVi: I post my podcasts on our school server and it doesn't take up much space. No one has complained to me yet!

TonyVi: Thanks, Andrea. I embed the audio so kids can access it easier. There is an RSS feed and you can find Radio WillowWeb in iTunes.

CamillaGa: We use a $5 a month service that allows you to upload your mp3 in a second

KarenConna: Camilla's school was featured in a podcast article printed by the Washington Post

TonyVi: Yes. I have worked with groups of all skill levels. The teachers love this as a differentiated activity. Parents and students love it too.

AnnabellI: What is the name of that service?

TonyVi: Ok, I'm not doing a good job of keep up with the questions. If I don't answer your question, just please ask again. Thanks!

KarenConna: Have you found that parents want to be actively involved?

CamillaGa: slapcast.com

CamillaGa: very easy

JonMa: What equipment, software etc is required?

AnnabellI: Have you used any books as resources to learn this stuff or did you just learn by doing?

AndreaGP: Camilla, can you share your podcast site? Does anyone else have a site they can share too?

TonyVi: Parents help students with their scripts and with practicing. They like to listen to. It seems to make school more "real" to them and has a great home-school connection.

DavidWe smiles

TonyVi: Families sit around their computers and listen to Radio WillowWeb.

DavidWe: Nice connection for the parents

CamillaGa: You can go with a free software such as Audacity or a build in Mac software such as SoundStudio or Garageband

LoriBu nods

TonyVi: I learned this by doing. The web is a great resource for all this. I also tried to put everything someone would want on my site: learninginhand.com

CamillaGa: It is very interesting, you can reach about 350 downloads a day with a podcast

KarenConna: Tony's site has lots of great resources. Be sure to visit after our chat.

CamillaGa: mostly parents, but the international community listens!

CherylGst3: kudos for Tony's site

TonyVi: I've been contacted by people writing grants to do podcasting. The thing is, I'm not sure its grant material because you won't need much software or equipment! Maybe getting iPods to listen to them on...

CamillaGa: Great work, Tony

LoriBu nods emphatically

TonyVi: Thanks, guys!

CamillaGa: I wrote one to Best Buy and got it funded. $2,500

LoriBu: what did you get with the grant, Camilla?

CherylGst3: wow! Camilla good for you I'm jealous

TonyVi: Again, I just think it is amazing that others pattern their podcasts after what we do in Omaha. The kids really think it is great and makes them do an even better job on their shows!

DavidWe smiles

GayleB: Thank you, Tony. Great information!

CamillaGa: It is there for anyone to apply

TonyVi: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/radio/podcasts.html

CamillaGa: Thanks Tony!

KarenConna: Tony, Jon asked what equipment and software is used. Do you want to tell what you are using?

TonyVi: I wrote one for Best Buy that was funded this year, but we're using it for handheld computers--which can play podcasts as well as have access to hundred of pieces of education software.

TonyVi: Students can listen to draw, writing, etc. on the same device.

CamillaGa: here is my site, http://slapcast.com/users/jamestown

TonyVi: We're using a Mac with GarageBand and a USB Microphone.

TonyVi: For the RSS feed, I use a program called Feeder ($30).

LoriBu: Just recording on the computer then, not on a handheld device?

TonyVi: You need a webserver (I use our district's) and a blog or web page.

TonyVi: Some handheld can also record, but the it's easier to do it on the computer.

BillCon joined the room.

KarenConna: Tony has some wonderful handheld resources on his site also

KarenConna waves to Bill

KarenConna: Tony, does your district have more than one elementary school?

TonyVi: Yes, we have 23.

JonMa: What if any obstacles where there when you started doing your podcasts?

LoriBu: Any issues raised by "the techies" in your district?

KarenConna: do you only do the podcast at the elementary level?

TonyVi: Well, a year ago it was not as easy as today.

CamillaGa: for sure!

TonyVi: I had to learn to do lots of things on my own--but luckily I'm a life-long learner.

TonyVi: Also, there was no one to help me in my school or district and there were no examples for me to follow.

TonyVi: But I liked it that way.

DianeHe: Do you use student names? \

AnnabellI: have you written a book yet?

TonyVi: We use student first names with permission.

CamillaGa: One of the things that make podcasting stay alive is the access by parents and the global community

AnnabellI: Did you have to write an acceptable use policy

TonyVi: I have a handhelds book out, but no podcasting book.. yet.

TonyVi: We just included it on the form parents fill out each year.

CherylGst3: Tony where could I get the handheld book?

CamillaGa: We use first names but no last names

TonyVi: Cheryl, I'm glad you asked!
http://www.tomsnyder.com/Products/product.asp?SKU=JANHAN

AnnabellI: Great information

JonMa: How long is each podcast? How much time is required to record one?

TonyVi: I hosted a parent night about blogs and podcasting in November.

TonyVi: Parents LOVED it! They really got into the idea of subscribing to content.

LoriBu: that's a great idea, the parent night!

KarenConna nods to Lori

TonyVi: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/blog/index.html

TonyVi: They were amazed to see Radio WillowWeb right there in iTunes... Just a couple of click away from Cold Play.

CherylGst3: lol

KarenConna: Do you have any future plans for Radio WilloWeb? Any new directions or adventures? Will you do video?

CherylGst3: well guys I need to head out. Thanks for the info. Have a great week

TonyVi: Please visit and post in Learning in Hand's discussion forums about podcasting and post any more questions you might have that don't get answered tonight:

TonyVi: http://learninginhand.com/forums/index.php

DavidWe weighs Radio WilloWeb vs. Cold Play

TonyVi: We might do all of those things.

LoriBu: Tony, I noticed most of the classroom and teacher blogs at your school don't have a commenting feature. I forgot to notice about your podcast. How do you get feedback, or don't you?

KarenConna waves goodnight to Cheryl

TonyVi: We're doing a soundseeing field trip in February.

TonyVi: Lori, people email feedback.

LoriBu: thanks

TonyVi: My school district's policies do not allow for posting on our website.

CamillaGa: video is not more complicated than podcasting

TonyVi: Policy needs to get with the times, in my opinion.

DavidWe smiles

TonyVi: But video is more time consuming.

LoriBu smiles and nods

KerenS . o O (soundseeing field trip ....hmmmm..sounds interesting)

TonyVi: After doing so much video, podcasting is so welcome in my book!

KarenConna: a little more risk with video published public too

TonyVi: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/charactercounts/index.html

CamillaGa: We have actually gone over to use video cameras to capture sound and video which gives us a lot of flexibility

TonyVi: That's a nice idea, Camilla.

BillCon: More production and producing involved with video!

TonyVi: The video camera can act as a great microphone.

AnnabellI: how much server space do you use

CamillaGa: absolutely

TonyVi: Right now Radio WillowWeb uses 128MB.

TonyVi: Not to bad on size, I must say...

DavidWe volunteers to give Radio WillowWeb more memory

TonyVi: Thanks, David!

LoriBu: Do you compress the audio files or just post them as is after recording and editing?

CamillaGa: if you have restrictions on posting to your webpage, an external service is nice

KarenConna: You have such great information and such wonderful experiences to share Tony. Why don't you host a monthly discussion in Tapped In?

CamillaGa: mp3 files

TonyVi: I compress them as MP3 at 64kbps stereo. We could go mono, but some music and sound effects are just better in stereo.

LoriBu: Thanks

KarenConna: I know that you'd have lots of avid participants who'd just love to share and learn from you.

TonyVi: Camilla, our district policies do not allow any content that we send parents or students to on a different server than our own.

CamillaGa: The new Garageband has a podcast feature

TonyVi: The new GarageBand is awesome! Have you used it, Camilla?

CamillaGa: yes,

CamillaGa: love it

KerenS would love a monthly discussion ...

LoriBu Lori would too

TonyVi: Hmmmm, I might just do that monthly discussion... We'll talk later.

CamillaGa: Karen, what do you think

CamillaGa: at tapped in sharing discussion around podcastingt

TonyVi: I like the jingles. And I like that the metronome is off by default.

TonyVi: It's the little things that matter.

KarenConna: Yes - absolutely - a great idea

JonMa: I would definitely tune in!

CamillaGa: let's do it!

BillCon: Castblaster on my tabletpc is great

KarenConna: Yes, Castblaster is nice

TonyVi: I hear that's a good application, Bill.

DavidWe wants to thank Tony for a SUPERB discussion

KarenConna: Okay Camilla

CamillaGa: how about sharing curriculum ideas and samples?

LoriBu claps and claps for Tony's discussion tonight!

BillCon: Yes has all the tools at your pen tip

TonyVi: Just remember: Classroom management, knowing your audience and purpose, and creativity contribute more to a successful podcast than knowing all about audio encoding, RSS feeds, FTP, and web page creation.

KarenConna: I'm a fan of garageband also. Haven't used the new version yet

CamillaGa: Thanks Tony! WONDERFUL SESSION!

KarenConna: Great points Tony!

TonyVi: I hope you can see how podcasting fits with our school's philosophy on technology:

TonyVi: http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/technology/

BillCon: You can publish (ftp) right from castblaster

KarenConna: Wonderful session

JonMa: Tony, thank you for all of the great information.

DianeHe: Thanks Tony and Karen for hosting

KarenConna: Thank you so much for sharing so openly and willingly

TonyVi: Finally, I encourage all of you to please send comments to the student podcasts you listen to. Include where you are from and what you specifically liked about the podcast. Taking a couple of minutes to communicate this can make a podcasting class' day!

LoriBu: Thanks for reminding us that it's the content that makes the podcast!

ChrisWB: great info

KerenS: Thank you so much Tony -- this has been .....inspiring!

TonyVi: Thank you all for "listening", asking, and sharing!

TonyVi: This was fun!

HelenK: thanks so much, great session

AndreaGP: Thanks for sharing your great work!

TonyVi: Thank Keren, I'm glad this was worthwhile!

GayleB: Great! Thanks.

KarenConna: Thanks to all of you for attending and sharing as well

CamillaGa: Thank you Karen for organizing!