Sam Williams: Welcome to the UP Tech Talk Podcast. Coming to you from the new academic multimedia studio on the University of Portland campus. Produced by Academic Technology Services. With your hosts Maria Herb and Sam Williams.

Thank you for joining us for the UP Tech Talk Podcast. Today we don't necessarily have a guest, but we do have with us our sound guy extraordinaire Ben Khan who is now joining us.

Ben Khan: Thank you for including me. Even though I'm sitting in the same chair and still recording you've put a microphone in my face, so thank you.

Sam Williams: Yes. Today we put the microphone in front of Ben because we are going to be doing a year-end podcast. Now that we're heading into the holiday season we're going to be having a podcast that's going out on December, I have to get the right date, 19th, will be this podcast. We'll also have a podcast coming up on January 2nd. Those will be the two holiday podcasts. We will not have guests for these two podcasts. Today, though, we have a topic of ... What is our topic today Maria?

Maria Herb: We're going to talk about media in the classroom. We'll cover some of the most popular tech tools that we've seen used throughout the year across all the disciplines. We're also going to, at the very end, talk about some of our favorite apps and productivity tools that we've been using throughout 2014.

Sam Williams: We've seen through some of our guests that we've had so far usage of media in the classroom. That can be simply just the usage of YouTube. We've seen quite a bit of that, where people have said, "I use YouTube as a part of my instruction." This is a way that people can bring experts into the classroom.

Maria Herb: Yeah, lots of people use YouTube. It's just so rich with resources of every kind. People use clips from movies, they use clips from other people's videos instructional or otherwise, in the classroom. That just really points to the fact that media's just become so entrenched in just about every discipline on campus.

Sam Williams: We've also seen media usage increasing since we launched our media space, which we'll talk about here in a little while. One of the things that we try to do within academic technology services is look at the language, or look at the terminology around technology. I know we're working on a course "The Language of Instructional Design" that will most likely be out before the end of the academic year. For this podcast we want to look at some of the terminology around media.

Maria Herb: When you hear terms like "screen-casting", "slide-casting", "podcasting" all these things can sound the same to people if they haven't really delved into creating media with these different types of applications.

Sam Williams: There's always a debate about which one they are, because I know myself and Maria have gone around a couple times on screen-casting versus slide-casting.

Ben Khan: Is it a podcast or a video podcast?

Maria Herb: Or vlog.

Ben Khan: Or vlog, exactly.

Sam Williams: Or vlog. We're going to dive into some of this terminology here to help you out. We'll start with what I think is the easiest, but really the easiest one is screen-casting. At least for me, I think visually it's easier for people to understand. That's really capturing the screen using some sort of software, and that's capturing your desktop. Either you're demoing software or maybe showing somebody how to fill out a form online, or you're just demonstrating something that you have to show from your computer.

Maria Herb: This has been around really a long time. Everything from how to setup an Excel spreadsheet to some of the more complicated forms, electronic health records and so forth that they use in nursing. This is a very popular tool. We see a lot of it here on campus.

Sam Williams: Information services, especially academic technology services, I can speak for our departments specifically. We have used just in time videos in the past on different technologies. Those have been screen-casts. They have been, again, us demonstrating how to use Moodle, demonstrating how to use media space, some of the other technologies that we support.

Maria Herb: Should we talk about a few recommendations on how to create your own screen-cast?

Sam Williams: With screen-casting, this is actually one of my pet peeves. That is I would say the number one pet peeve for any video whatsoever is audio. I don't think we think about audio when we think we're capturing a video, and everybody gets so into the video capture and video production. If you have bad audio nobody's going to sit through your video. I would say that's my number one. Getting a good quality headset. We use Logitech headsets throughout the office. Really, if you have a difference between a $30 headset and an $80 headset I would probably go for the $80 USB headset over the cheaper headset. There is a huge difference in quality of the audio that you're going to capture.

Really also making sure that use a headset. You don't want to use, or you can use, especially if you're just in a hurry and just want to capture some content depending on the audience, you can go ahead and use built in microphones in your computers, but know that you're going to pick up a lot of noise in the room, your dogs running around the house, or your children, whatever it is. Also echo in the room. You can definitely create a crisper, cleaner audio using some sort of USB headset. That would be my number one.

Maria Herb: I think for Mac users out there, I know it's just so easy to flip open your laptop and start talking. I do it all the time. Sam's recommendation is really spot on. A headset goes a long way, and it really does make a difference.

Sam Williams: Really in a pinch you can use the ear buds from your phone. I've done that in a couple of occasions. You have to hold the little microphone spot on the ear buds that you use for your cellphone, but I've used them in a pinch as well. When I've been traveling and I've had to do a quick video, just because I want to have good quality audio.

The other that I would suggest for people is to capture their content in the aspect ratio that they're publishing it in. Aspect ratio meaning ...

Maria Herb: You're talking about capturing the screen now.

Sam Williams: Yeah, actually a capture of the screen. You can do a full screen capture, but if you're trying to show text, especially small text in your video, and you don't zoom in you're going to have difficulty seeing it. I typically will capture at 1280 by 720. If you're application allows you to do that. I will capture in tighter on something. It's a one-to-one, a little bit more for the viewer on the other end. We can definitely give more recommendations on this, and some examples. We might have some examples that we can post as part of this blog that the podcast is on. Those would be my two main recommendations for screen-casting.

Ben Khan: Yeah, I think that's a good point. A lot of tools will give you just a box that you can drag the corner of, and you may be tempted to try to make that box fit your content. You'll end up with some wacky screen size that's not going to fit into a video player correctly. You'll want to avoid that temptation.

Sam Williams: If people are wondering about that, anytime you've seen a video online and you see these black boxes to the left or right, or on the top or bottom.

Ben Khan: Letter boxes.

Sam Williams: The letter boxes. That's usually because it's not captured at the 16 by 9 aspect ratio. It's basically widescreen versus the old-school square that we're used to.

The next item down here is slide-casting. This is Maria's favorite. This is the one that we go back and forth on. Did you want to talk a little bit about slide-casting.

Maria Herb: I think it's a really useful tool. We do see quite a bit of use of it here at UP. Voice-over PowerPoint would probably be the straight name for slide-casting.

Sam Williams: Right.

Maria Herb: We don't encourage you to actually use PowerPoint and do a voice over. What we would like to see is have you create slides and then create an actual slide-cast of those slides using a headset as Sam has pointed out, and using some of the technology that we have built in on campus for you through media space. That will enable you to capture your slides, do a voice over recording, and have a finished product that is usable and easily managed by you.

Sam Williams: I was going to say, the final product of that is a video.

Maria Herb: Yes.

Sam Williams: We're really talking about media. A lot of things that we talk about, the end product ends up being this .mov file or .mp4 file. It's a video file. There is a caution with voice over PowerPoint, because we do have people that still build them. We have a lot of people, it's moved away and using things. The file sizes of the Power Points end up extremely large, to the point where you can't get them out to people. Technically it can be cross-platform, but there has been some issues moving from Mac to PC, with the voice over Power Points. We definitely encourage people to build it into images and capture it as a slide-cast.

Maria Herb: The other thing that's nice about slide-casts is it really gives your student a sense of who you are as you talk to them, and point out things on the screen in front of them. Especially if you're on a mobile device, and you can use Explain Everything to do this, and I think we'll talk about that a little bit more. It enables you to pull in different images, different photographs, other pieces of graphic imagery, and then interact with them. Maybe with a pointer, or an arrow, or a drawing, or whatever. I feel that it's an interactive tool. If they're done well and on the short side they can be a really powerful learning tool as well.

Sam Williams: The very basic of that can be a capture of a PowerPoint is an example of more of a slide-cast versus a screen cast, which is again demonstrating something on your computer where you see the Start button and all that fun stuff.

The third item that we're going to bring up, and third and final really of this particular area, and then we'll go into some tools, is the podcasting. We were talking about this just before this podcast, what really makes something a podcast, or a video or podcast, or an audio file? Ben brought up a good reason why we would be looking at it as a podcast.

Ben Khan: That would be because it's episodic and it's syndicated. It's available for you to subscribe to via iTunes or an RSS feed. Whatever you happen to be using. That's kind of what makes it different than just some people recording themselves talk.

Sam Williams: Definitely. We have Karen Eifler and the [Garaventes 00:11:18] Center, her and Father Charlie.

Maria Herb: Father Charlie, yes.

Sam Williams: They build out these episodic in nature. This podcast that you're listening to right now is an episode of a podcast series. Also syndication. If you haven't clicked on it yet, on this page there is a ...

Ben Khan: There's a very attractive subscribe widget in the blog post that someone made.

Sam Williams: That Ben put on there, yes. You can definitely subscribe to us, and make sure to subscribe to us, because then you can make sure that you're downloading the most recent episode of UP Tech Talk.

In all of this we're talking about, a large majority of this we are talking about video now. In the past we might have delivered an audio file as an audio file itself, or we might have distributed a PowerPoint with audio embedded as we mentioned earlier. So much of the content that we create now is video, because it's so much easier now to distribute video. Especially if you're captioning your video for accessibility. Video is accessible to everybody, on mobile devices, on your computers.

Just as an example, since August we've had 1482 media entries played 16450 times. These are analytics that we've pulled out of media space, so keep in mind that these are just our media space, caltura media space numbers. This doesn't take into account YouTube or a screen cast or whatever other people are using. In the last year we've had 2616 media entries played 34190 times. I like the big numbers here. We have a total of 4013 entries, both audio and video, in media space stored there currently. Again this doesn't take into account anything that's being stored currently by professors and the University in YouTube.

Maria Herb: It just shows you that we use a lot of media and we create a lot of media and we consume a lot of media.

Ben Khan: It looks like the numbers are just going up based on the year-over-year versus just the fall term numbers.

Sam Williams: Yeah, we can see that since August we've had the 1482 media entries, just since August that were played. There's some days where we have up to 800 views in a single day on some of this content, depending on what the content is. This comes down to, we've talked about the terminology, we've talked about the fact that we are using it, and we gave some impressive numbers hopefully for people to hear. Really what we get often is what are those tools? How can I build this content?

Maria Herb: Yeah, how can I make it?

Sam Williams: We can go down the list here of some options for people for screen casting and slide-casting. Just recently we got a request for somebody for Camtasia. For faculty they will contact and say I need Camtasia. We will often come back and ask them a little bit more, a few more questions about their scenario. It's not that we're trying to discourage people from Camtasia, because I have to say Camtasia is my absolute favorite screen casting tool. It can be used for slide-casting as well.

The reason why we ask the questions is because there are alternatives to Camtasia. Especially if you don't have the budget for Camtasia. If were to go what is your project, and you say I have zero money for my project. We have one option which is screencastomatic.com.

Screencastomatic.com is a website that you can visit. It sounds a like hokey but it actually is a real product. That is a place where you can go, and using a Java plugin on the website you can do a capture of your screen and save that video file. What's great about that is that you could then, using Movie Maker or iMovie, whatever it is, you can edit that video down. Especially if you've made a bunch of mistakes, maybe you want to use a portion of it in another presentation, it gives you a file that you can have on your computer. The free version of it, you will have a "screencastomatic.com" watermark.

Maria Herb: Watermark, yeah.

Sam Williams: If you don't care about the watermark it's a great way to get started, especially if you're unsure of your skillset and you just kind of want to play around and see if this is a medium for you. That's a great way to start.

We also have screen casting built into media space. A caution with media space is that it's basically a straight-up capture. There's not editing. You can trim the beginning and the end. Again, if it's about getting something done quickly, you can log into media space, do an add new screen capture, capture the content, and add the link to your course. It's a very quick turnaround time to work with that one.

Ben's actually been working on one of my favorites. We're working on a course on Explain Everything. I'm not sure how far we are with the actual course. We do have options for desktop, and we do have options for mobile. I know I can talk a lot about Explain Everything, so I don't know if you want to talk about Explain Everything.

Ben Khan: Sure, it's just a platform that let's you markup, annotate, and do a voice over for various different kinds of content right on your iPad. You can bring in PowerPoint files directly, talk over them, mark them up, etc. It also gives you just easy, the ability to do that very easily using the iPad's built in microphone and camera, things like that, if you want to supplement that material with video, audio, etc.

Maria Herb: I think the really nice thing about that app it that it made producing these things fun. People like to use it, they like to just use their finger and grab the draw tool and make a little mark on the slide. They can do it from anywhere, and they like the ease and the convenience of it. I think that that's really been an important app for us this year.

Sam Williams: I had a professor once talk about the fact that Explain Everything gave the math professors infinite white space. They could draw on the screen, so math formulas or whatever, pinch it 'til it was very small and push it out of the way, and keep going. They didn't have to start a new slide, they didn't have to do anything. If they needed to go back to something they could pull ...

Maria Herb: Swipe over.

Sam Williams: Yes, you could go back to that little item and pull it bigger again, or push it back and make it smaller again. This whole time all you do is click the record button and be recording everything as you're talking. Not even using a headset, it's actually usually pretty good audio. I'm happy to report after the Educause conference that I was at in September, that Explain Everything is on all mobile devices. It is on the Surface, so you can get it on the Surface, you can get it on an Android, and you can get it on iOS. It's the first time that you see a $3, I think it's like $2.99 app that really gives you a powerful tool to do slide casting presentations. That's definitely one that we bring up.

Recently we've been exploring a couple other options for the capture of content. I have a note here to talk about multi-desk displays. It's not so much that a multi-touch display allows you to do screen capture. It allows you to interact with your screen during a screen capture, which means that you can do something very similar to being on an iPad, which is you can annotate on the screen and be capturing it using Camtasia, which is a screen capture utility that we've talked about briefly here and there. Screencastomatic, media space is built in. You have the ability to have a capacitive pen and draw on the screen.

We've seen professors download tests from Moodle and then hit record and go through the test, and give feedback, video feedback to their students. We've seen this in a language course, we've seen this in a couple of others. Really what helped was that they could use the pen right on the screen. I'm really going to encourage more and more people to have these multi-touch displays, even in their offices, for being able to quickly annotate on top of the screen for this content.

The last item before we go into our apps, because I want to make sure I bring it up, is Elmos. I'm going to be doing some videos to share with people, kind of a "did you know" video series. I don't know. Everybody's like, "I didn't know that piece of software did that" or "I didn't know that that equipment did that." A lot of people don't know that you can put a flash drive or an SD card into the back of an Elmo, and of the Elmos that we have in our classrooms. There's a remote that goes along with your Elmo. You can hit record and record everything that you're drawing on it. If you have a piece of paper under your Elmo you can be drawing on it. There are built in microphones, which I wasn't aware of when I was first investigating this.

All you have to put the flash drive or SD card in, hit record, and start drawing and talking. At the end pull that SD card or flash drive out, upload the resulting video to media space, it converts it, and you can use it in your course.

There's definitely solutions for a variety of people and different learning styles and teaching styles that can really be accommodated.

Eventually you're going to be seeing a lot more videos coming out of academic technology services this spring as part of our professional development projects that we're working on. Definitely be on the lookout for some videos on each of these topics and especially on the Elmo one, because I think it's one that could really benefit quite a few people for creating quick media on the fly.

Maria Herb: Right, again it is something that most people don't know about. The more we can get the word out the better.

Sam Williams: I think a good way to wrap up, since we talked about Explain Everything as a mobile app, we'll just kind of segue into this last part of this podcast, which we might do more in the future when we don't have guests. Is this idea of our favorite app. I'm just going to let you guys go, and I will come in at some point. Ben, what is your favorite app?

Ben Khan: The pro-tip for the app that you need to get is a password manager. You really need to be using complex, not easy to guess passwords, and it's just impossible for the human brain to remember all of those passwords along with all the other things that you have to keep track of. I am currently using Last Pass. I believe it's free up to 25 passwords. I have more than that, so I'm paying the dollar per month subscription fee.

My other app recommendation is the WordPress app. If you run a WordPress blog at all it makes it really easy to pull out your iPad, Bluetooth keyboard, type something up and hit submit. From wherever you happen you be, on the road or coffee shop, where ever. I think those are two pretty good ones.

Sam Williams: They are very good apps. As long as you don't forget the password for your phone, you will definitely be able to benefit.

Ben Khan: I just have to have my thumbprint.

Maria Herb: Yeah, or your retina.

Sam Williams: We don't have the retina on ...

Maria Herb: We're not there yet.

Sam Williams: We're not there. You could do facial recognition, log in. You can do the others. I know I was thinking the other day, because somebody was like, "I could just wait until somebody's asleep and put their finger on their phone to get into their iPhone." That's being real sneaky. I don't know if I like those people around.

Maria Herb: I know, exactly.

Sam Williams: Now that we have, what is it? Google Wallet and Apple Pay and those things, there's a lot more. Somebody was telling me recently, I think it was Dr. Eric [Entil 00:23:35] was talking about, I don't remember which one.

Ben Khan: I think Eric had said something about he'd rather give you his phone than his wallet, because you could do a lot more damage with the wallet.

Maria Herb: Yeah, he used the Apple Pay the day it was ...

Sam Williams: Yes, the day of. Also I've heard that there's a state that's looking at putting driver's licenses on your phone. Basically so much of you is in your phone, I would actually love to get to that day.

Ben Khan: Definitely.

Sam Williams: Just because I'm not one, it actually goes back to a bad back, I don't carry a wallet often because of it. Anybody that has bad back problems knows something about that. Maria, what do you have for us for your choices?

Maria Herb: One app that I really like is DownCast. We were just talking about podcasting a minute ago, but this is called a pod catcher. It enables you to tell it what podcasts you want it to go catch for you. It will bring them all into this app, and you can create playlists and it makes it just so easy to listen to This American Life, Marketplace, and the Mob.

Sam Williams: UP Tech Talk.

Maria Herb: UP Tech Talk. I just subscribed the other day because Ben put that really cool button on there. That's really an app that I use every single day. Another one that I just love, being still new to Portland, is the Food Cart PDX app. I still am learning where the pods are. I'm just a food cart kind of person, really. I just love this little app that tells you where all the pods are and let's you just find something good to eat all the time.

Sam Williams: Not every app has to be educational of course. Really, there's a lot of entertainment app for our phones. One that I found as part of some graduate work that really was helpful is Feedly. The Feedly app, but also Feedly the website. They work together. That is so I can aggregate blogs back to one place, so that way I can get the blog post and get my news feeds into a single source. Feedly is a great option, especially if you again want to follow the Tech Talk blog, you could put that into your Feedly. I have to constantly plug our stuff here.

Maria Herb: I know we do.

Sam Williams: The one that I tried out today, I was over in the school of nursing, and they were wanting to do some 360 degree tours of their brand new facility. They've got some really cool simulation labs that they've been building out. I found a, let me get the exact name here, I think it's DMD Panorama I believe. With this one, what I was able to do, you have the panoramic option within your iPhone, so I can create a panorama. This one actually allowed me a little bit more control, as I'm holding the camera, and it gave me some guidance as I'm rotating around in a circle. For this one all I did was find a little chair that was on wheels and rotated around a circle, and I just sat there and spun myself in a circle and created a 360 graphic and video that I could possibly use later. It's just a fun little app that people can try downloading.

I would say that's a good place for us to stop today for our UP Tech Talk blog. Again we didn't have a guest today, but I really thank Ben for jumping to this side of the microphone and joining us.

Ben Khan: No problem, it was fun.

Sam Williams: We will have him again on the next podcast that we do. We're going to be doing a, we did an end of the year podcast, we're going to start 2015.

Maria Herb: Yes, a looking-forward podcast.

Sam Williams: As a part of that we do have coming up in January, so the first week of class we have Dr. Eric Entil's podcast. On January 23rd we will have Peter Papus talking about iBooks and apps that he's using. We have some really fun podcasts coming up. Eric's I believe we're talking about just technology usage in the classroom.

Maria Herb: Right.

Sam Williams: Definitely be on the lookout for those two. We will see you in 2015.

Thank you for joining us for another episode of the UP Tech Talk podcast. Just a reminder that we post a new podcast every Friday morning. You can find us at Techtalk.up.edu.