

Podcast Suite Guide

This document is designed to help you get started in the HSJMC Podcast space. For any further questions regarding topics not explicitly covered here, please consult your instructor or contact Wally Swanson (swans290@umn.edu) or Will Deery (deery006@umn.edu)

Startup

The RodeCaster

All of the audio in the podcast suite is run through the RodeCaster Pro unit. Most of the settings have been preset for you, so there is no need to tweak any settings within the RodeCaster itself. Your main concerns will be the microphone levels, headphone levels, and external connections.

Turning on the RodeCaster

To turn on the RodeCaster, push in the red power button located on the back right side of the RodeCaster.



Setting Levels: Headphones

To adjust the volume of the headphones of the RodeCaster, use the knobs located on the top right of the device. Each knob is labeled with the set of headphones it is connected to. For reference, position one is the middle setup with the RodeCaster

in front of it, position two is located to the left of position one, and position three is located to the right of position one. There is currently no area set up for four, so do not worry about that position.

The knob located on the far right adjusts the volume of all the microphones, while the individual knobs adjust the headphones for their noted positions.

Setting Levels: Microphones

To adjust the gain or volume of the microphone input, use the sliders of the corresponding position on the RodeCaster. Each microphone is labeled and color-coordinated with its respective setting on the device. A good rule of thumb for this adjustment is to have your audio fall in the 15-30 range on the RodeCaster home screen. If you go any higher than this range, you risk microphone peaking (audio distortion) while going below this range risks losing the audio altogether.

USB Connection

Currently, the RodeCaster is connected via USB to the Mac directly in front of it. As such, the volume of the Mac is controlled by the RodeCaster. To adjust the volume of the Mac, use the USB slider.

Microphone Muting

If you need to mute a specific microphone while recording, push the button located on the right side of that microphone's slider. This red button with an audio symbol and a slash through it is the microphone mute for each microphone. While this button is pushed, the button will glow bright red and the microphone label on the RodeCaster will be highlighted red. To turn the mute off, simply press the button again.

Using Other Devices with the RodeCaster

To use input devices other than the microphones provided, such as your phone, there are two options at your disposal. The first option is to connect your phone directly to the RodeCaster using the provided red connection cable. This cable should always be plugged into the RodeCaster. If it is missing from the podcast

space, notify Wally ASAP. The other option is to use a Bluetooth connection. To connect to the RodeCaster using Bluetooth, You must first push the blue Bluetooth button located on top of its respective volume adjuster. This allows for the RodeCaster to be paired to a new device. From there, find the RodeCaster Bluetooth connection in your device's Bluetooth option menu (Labeled as RodeCaster Pro in most Bluetooth windows) and select it. To adjust the volume of the Bluetooth input, use the slider to set the necessary level.

Audio Software

There are two main pieces of audio software that you will likely be using in the podcasting space: Audacity and Audition. You may also use ProTools if you have the experience with it. We will cover how to use these programs below.

Audacity Use

To open Audacity, navigate to the blue headphone icon located on the bottom of the screen:



After opening Audacity, make sure the Audio Setup settings are correct. Here is the list of the correct settings for the Audio Setup tab.

- Host: Core Audio
- Playback Device: RodeCaster Pro Stereo
- Recording Device: RodeCaster Pro Stereo
- Recording Channels: Depending on what is necessary for your project, either Mono or Stereo

After checking the settings to make sure they are correct, you should be set to begin recording. To record in Audacity, click the red circle button located at the top of the page to begin recording. To stop recording, click the square Stop button. To

pause the recording so that you can pick up where you left off, click the Pause button located to the left of the green arrow Play button.

After you complete your recording session, you will need to export your audio file to an external device such as a flash drive. **DO NOT SAVE YOUR AUDIO TO THE HARD DRIVE OF THIS COMPUTER.** The Mac is not a reliable place to store your files, so it is best to put them onto your own device. To export audio, use Shift+Command+E or go to File-Export Audio. Make sure to name your file, and that the rate (usually 44100Hz) is the same between your saved file and the audio track. From there, make sure to select the device you are saving onto, and export the file.

Audition Use

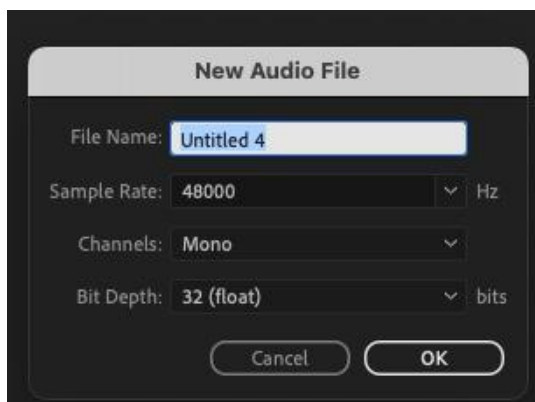
To use Adobe Audition, navigate to the application with the Au icon.



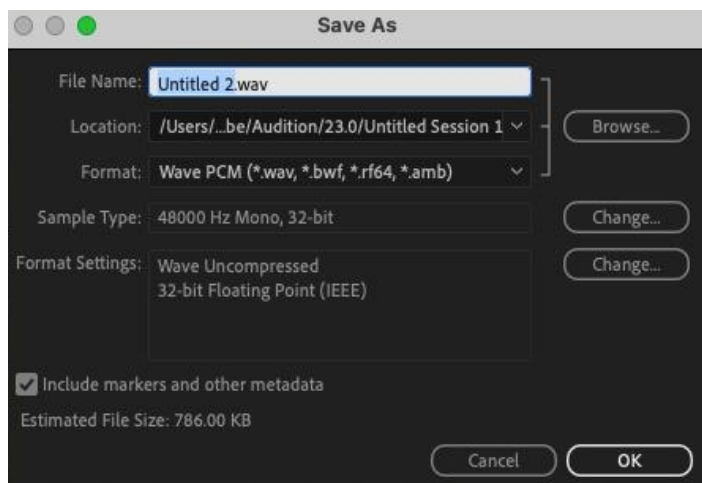
Click it to open Audition. Audition is a little more complicated than Audacity, but you will likely only need the basics in order to use it effectively.

Audition works similar to other DAW's (Digital Audio Workstations) in that the red button starts the recording, the square button stops the recording, so on and so forth. Where Audition starts to get more complex is the amount of customization you can do with the audio.

For the sake of this guide, we will focus on recording and proper exporting of files. Once you are in the Adobe Audition window, create a new session by using either Command -> N or by selecting File -> New -> Multitrack Session. Then select the proper settings for your recording. Below is the current version of Audition's window for this:



Once the settings are properly configured, hit the OK button to open your session. From there, use Shift -> Space or hit the red Record button to start your recording. To stop your recording, you can either use the Space key or the square Stop button. Once you are done with your recording, you will want to export your audio file. To do this, either do Shift -> Command -> E or go to File -> Export -> File and set the file's name and format to the ones that you need. Also be sure to select your own external drive (SD card or Flash Drives work as well) in order for the file to be saved properly. Once you are done, make sure to save any lingering work by using the Save function (File -> Save) and exit Adobe Audition.



ProTools Use

If you are more comfortable with using ProTools, it is also a great option for audio recording. To use ProTools, navigate to its respective icon:



Once you are in ProTools, it runs similar to the previously mentioned workstations, with a few notable differences. If you would like to use ProTools, reach out to Wally to get the ILoc key for the podcast studio. You will need it in order to use ProTools.

Alternate Recording Option

If you do not wish to use audio recording software, you also have the option to use the RodeCaster Pro to record your audio. To do this, insert the SD card you plan on saving your audio to into the RodeCaster, and use the recording button labeled REC to start and stop recording.

Microphone Technique

Proper mic technique and etiquette can really make or break the quality of your audio. Here are a few tips to maximize the recording quality while using the recording space;

- While using more than one microphone, make sure the microphone heads are not pointing in the same direction as another microphone. Doing this will cause a low hum to be present in your recording
- Mic positioning: the microphone should be pointed in a slight angle at the mouth of the person that is speaking into it. Always make sure you are talking forward and try to avoid mumbling. This will maximize clarity in your recording
- Try your best not to adjust your microphone arm while a recording is live. Microphone handling sounds are very apparent in audio mixes, so try to limit the amount of adjustment you are doing while mics are live
- The RE20's work best with being close to your mouth. The usual estimate for distance can be done by taking the distance between the tip of your pinkie and thumb when you have both fingers extended. Try your best to stay within that range while recording in order for the microphone to pick up your full voice

Other Aspects of the Podcast Suite

Lighting

Currently, there are 6 programmable lights within the Podcast Suite. This lighting has two presets which can be toggled on via the switch located to the left of the door. Preset "A" utilizes 4 of the 6 lights to provide lighting for the second and third positions in the suite, while preset "B" uses all 6 of the lights in order to light the entirety of the space.

Upon request and at least a 24-48 hour notice, you can request specific lighting settings. This can include setting a particular brightness level within the room, along with some RGB programming via the ETC ColorSource device. This notice gives our technical specialist the time to reprogram the lights and to ensure that a preset for your requested settings is easily accessible.

Reservations

In order to use the Podcast Suite, you must submit a [Podcast Production Request](#) form as well as receive training on how to use the Suite from one of our technical support staff or your instructor. This allows you to be prepared to use your time in the Podcast Suite effectively, as well as letting us know you understand how to use the space.

Note that the maximum reservation time for the Podcast Suite is two hours.

Anything beyond that time slot must be approved by both technical staff and your instructor, and must not overlap with other pre-existing reservations.

For any further questions regarding reservations, please contact either Wally Swanson (swans290@umn.edu) or Will Deery (deery006@umn.edu).

Troubleshooting

Common Issues

If you do not hear audio from your playback make sure that the volume to your headphones is on, the slider for the USB connection is up, your Audacity/Audition

session has the correct playback device selected, your volume in Audacity/Audition is turned up, and that you have your microphone slider up at the time of recording.

If you do not see your saved files within your external drive, make sure that your save route is set in the correct way. To do this, go to File>Save As> and look under the storage devices selection. It is recommended that you name your external drive ahead of time so that it is easier to spot.