

# Becoming a Soundwriter: Final Project

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The podcast was first introduced by Adam Curry (a former MTV DJ) and Dave Winer (a software developer. Looking for a way to download radio broadcasts onto the iPod, the two used two relatively simple methods to extract audio files to the iPod. The original program designed to create the “podcasts (iPod broadcasts)” created by Curry, was called iPodder. In 2014, narrative podcasts, especially true crime shows, were introduced to pop culture, thus increasing the popularity of the podcast. Since then, podcasts have continued to grow by leaps and bounds. “In 2023 and beyond, podcasts can be many things. They can be a daily news broadcast, a fictional audio drama, a video interview show, or a live stream.” ((Ortal Hadad *Podcasts: The history of podcasts & when they were invented*)

Currently, I am the CEO of a small business consulting firm and I have been looking for ways to grow my business starting this January. Life has been incredibly hectic, and I have struggled just to get my day-to-day work done, so growing was starting to look like a goal that I would have to put off, yet again, until I signed up for English 611 at Texas A&M-Commerce for the fall semester of 2023. The class intro included a brief overview that led me to believe that I may gain valuable insight into the digital skills that I lacked yet needed to be successful in creating additional content for my business. When we began the coursework, I thought I may have made a mistake. Soundwriting? What on earth was that? As I would soon come to

realize, it was my ticket to focused content that was strategically planned to develop growth. The first few assignments assisted me in opening my mind concerning planning strategically what was said, how silence was used, etc.

Roughly a month ago, right when the course was getting super fun, I hit a downward spiral that would overload my schedule and put me right back where I started at the beginning of the semester, without content, and without hope of creating it. I have multiple autoimmune diseases and one of them likes to cause inflammation of the vascular system from time to time (it's been five years since my last one). I developed a blood clot behind my left knee, again. Since I have a new set of doctors, it took several weeks to get everyone caught up and to get a plan underway. Thank God, I didn't develop another pulmonary embolism in that time. During this time, I was trying to work, attending 2-3 doctor appointments a week, and trying to recover from a pretty significant flare. As I began getting better, I thought, "OK, I still have a chance of getting caught up in my classes if I buckle down." No sooner did I have that thought that I was contacted by my tax attorney (we are in the middle of a very significant case with the IRS) stating that she needed some documents immediately. As a business consultant, it is also the end of the year and my clients have pressing needs, so, another roadblock. The following week was my husband's spinal surgery. He would be immobilized and reliant upon me for four to six weeks. He also owns a business, so I would have to split my time. I found myself working on my

client's needs at night while he rested, and driving him all over during the day. A week after his surgery, I attempted to try to get back on track and created my first podcast episode with Adobe Audition. I used ChatGPT to help me develop a script and then, I just dove in. I watched the introductory videos and began to “play” with the software. I was so far behind that I didn’t really take the time needed to master the software, nor to plan my podcast to really focus on creating a good soundwriting production. I simply threw it together, made a few adjustments and turned it in.

At this point, I began to really think about my final project and what I wanted my podcast to look like. Who I wanted it to appeal to, and how I would go about determining what I would discuss. ChatGPT had given me a few good ideas, like a name for my podcast, but it was extremely generic in planning the content, so I sat down and brainstormed ideas for the podcast. I developed a plan for the podcast, including content, audience, and duration. Next, I reached out to a few clients and asked them if they would be willing to assist me by allowing me to interview them. Since they are taking on another business venture, a podcast fell right into their plans. Lucky me, I just gave myself a lot more work...

I drafted a script for the first podcast, met with one of my clients for a brief lunch to discuss, and planned the date and time that we would do the

interview. In the meantime, I started watching YouTube videos on creating podcasts and editing them using Adobe Auditions.

The night before our appointment, I sent the final script to my clients and asked them to get back to me with any suggestions and/or changes. I was not prepared for them to completely hijack my podcast! The feedback I received changed the entire direction of my podcast and was almost entirely drafted by the clients. Eventually, we agreed upon a middle ground.

The day of the recording was nerve-wracking. I felt like my clients had an expectation of me and I wasn't sure that I could produce the quality that they were in search of. As I began speaking, I sounded rehearsed, like I was reading off of a screen (which I was). It took a good five to ten minutes for me to settle in and take on a more natural demeanor, but I did, eventually.

On the day I began editing, I wished that I had read Chapter 5 of *Soundwriting: A Guide to Making Audio Projects*, before I started recording. In Chapter 5, Rodrigue and Stedman explain how separate tracks help you to “organize [the]different assets that you might want to edit separately.” (Rodrigue and Stedman *Soundwriting: A guide to making audio projects*) And that clips are “smaller...sections of audio that can easily be moved along or between tracks.” (Rodrigue and Stedman *Soundwriting: A guide to making audio projects*) While I didn't read the chapter before I began editing, I

seemed to, somehow, know that this was how I needed to organize things. Rodrigue and Stedman discuss noise reduction in Chapter 5, as well. I struggled with the audio in my interview because my clients insisted on sitting in their sitting room with the microphone in the center of the room and the echo was terrible. Especially when I added the tracks in that I recorded in my office. I had to add multiple effects to get my audio to match between tracks. The last two tracks still do not match, but I am out of time, so I am leaving them. I was able to edit out misspoken words, unnecessary interjections, and pauses, but I still was not able to confidently use the equalizer.

Overall, I feel like I made incredible growth in the use and understanding of Adobe Audio for editing my podcast. I thoroughly enjoyed this project, and I am proud, overall, of what I accomplished. It still needs some fine-tuning and will need to be further refined before I post it to my website or any podcast media site. I'm sad I wasn't able to perfect my project, but I am so glad that I came as far as I did despite the hang-ups I encountered this semester. I look forward to continuing to work with Adobe Audition and to building and producing my very own podcast.

“Podcasts: The History of Podcasts & When They Were Invented.” *Riverside*, [riverside.fm/blog/podcasts#:~:text=Who%20invented%20podcasts%3F, few%20years%20earlier%20in%202001](https://www.riverside.fm/blog/podcasts#:~:text=Who%20invented%20podcasts%3F,few%20years%20earlier%20in%202001). Accessed 11 Dec. 2023.

Rodrigue, Tanya K., and Kyle D. Stedman. *Soundwriting: A Guide to Making Audio Projects*. Broadview Press, 2023.