

Publish Fusion ZONE

www.fusion-zone.com

From the Market Experts at Ziff Davis

Your ultimate middleware resource

MIDDLEWARE

SERVICE-ORIENTED ARCHITECTURE

IDENTITY MANAGEMENT

ENTERPRISE PORTAL

BUSINESS INSIGHT

CONTENT & COLLABORATION

Podcasting Gets Enterprise Play

October 2, 2006

While Apple is fighting trademark wars over the term "podcast," corporate America is finally embracing it. Last week, Apple began circulating cease-and-desist letters to companies Apple thought were unfairly using the term. Apple has its own issues, but let's face it: The word "podcast," which already is included in the dictionary, has joined the select groups of brands that have become part of the vernacular of everyday products, such as Kleenex (tissues), Band-Aid (bandages) and Xerox (copying). But whatever you want to call it, podcasts (digital audio downloadable content) are the latest tool in flattening out the enterprise.

Take IBM, for instance. Executive Editor Stan Gibson reports that IBM is one of many companies using podcasting to reach out to employees, customers and partners. The digital audio files are easy and cheap to create, manage and use, and replace boring and nasty meetings and memos. But the bigger (and probably unintended) payoff is what podcasting is doing to corporate culture.

In IBM's case, podcasting is "lowering the center of gravity" by enabling lower-level managers to create and publish their own podcasts for their own employees and customers. "IBM has a history of hierarchy and bureaucracy. We want to break that down," Ben Edwards, manager of new-media communications for IBM, told Gibson. "New media can play an important and catalytic role. ... It's desirable because people increasingly trust individual voices over institutional and corporate voices."

General Motors, another company known for its establishment culture, also has seen the light, even going so far as to use podcasting to create "viral buzz," said Michael Wiley, director of new media at GM. When companies such as GM are looking to create viral buzz, you know that podcasting has definitely outgrown the consumer world to become a must-have corporate communications tool.

Other technologies that IT managers can't live without, but for different reasons, are security patches. Microsoft does as much as it can to keep up, but it's not enough, and security researchers have picked up the slack to form the Zeroday Response Team, or ZERT. The group can respond faster than Microsoft to zero-day attacks and get out a temporary patch until Microsoft issues the official patch, reports Senior Writer Ryan Naraine. ZERT fills a gaping void in the security landscape and heats up the debate over whether users, and Microsoft, should rely on third-party patches.

Contact eWEEK Editor Scot Petersen at scot_petersen@ziffdavis.com.

Copyright (c) 2006 Ziff Davis Media Inc. All Rights Reserved.