

# Bloggers, Podcasters Add New Spin to Show Coverage

The number of booths, products and industry experience on the show floor is staggering. For anyone who wants to get up-to-the-minute information on new products, this is the place to be.

That is, unless you're a consumer. But Tim Grahl is making it so that cycling enthusiasts, including consumers, will be privy to what's taking place here.

He and his business partner Mike Queen have launched the Crooked Cog Podcast. They are producing 10 to 15 podcast episodes daily. Each podcast includes spotlights of new products, conversations with retailers from around the globe and interviews with industry professionals.

Grahl's podcast project has been featured in the Outdoors section of iTunes, and past interviews have included guests such as National Moun-

tain Bike Champion Marla Streb, Nick Sande of Surly Bikes and Tim Jackson, brand manager for Masi Bikes.

Crooked Cog Podcast is part of the Crooked Cog Network, a coalition of cycling-related Web sites that also includes Bluecollarmtb.com, Twentynineinches.com, Commutebybike.com and TheBikeBlog.com.

The podcasts are recorded and produced with full radio production quality, and the Web site network garners over 250,000 hits a month, according to Grahl.

"This summer I was getting antsy to add something new and decided to jump into the world of podcasting. I launched the Crooked Cog Podcast in July, which has grown extremely fast in popularity with thousands of downloads," he added.

Grahl is roaming the hall floor, carrying his own sound equipment and a computer with editing software. He and his crew are conducting interviews and releasing them throughout the day. The average podcast lasts 15 to 20 minutes.

Podcasts and other new forms of media bring a new variable to how information is disseminated, Grahl said. Exhibitors also can benefit from the added communication dimension that podcasting brings.

"[Exhibitors] are already spending thousands and thousands of dollars to be at these tradeshows, and podcasting and blogging allows them to maximize their exposure by providing a large amount of coverage and information to the consumers," Grahl said.


D.L. Byron is the principal of Textura Design, developers and consultants

of business blog Web sites. This year, he and his supporting crew swept in for their inaugural Interbike with the mission to further popularize cycling through Bikehugger.com.

Byron is publishing blog entries from the show on commuter bikes, sport-utility bikes and the culture of "those odd products in the 10x10 booths." His colleague, Mike Rogers, is working from a fitness and sport angle.

The draw of blogs is easy to understand, Byron said.

"Generally, as with all blogging, it's the conversations, immediacy and frankness. We're working with companies now to review products and not do so in a typical magazine fluff piece. We're going to ride, commute, and bang on products with hard-working reviews," he said. **BRAIN**




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