



Interview: Sébastien Babolat, a French Expatriate and Creator of French Podcasts in California

Meet Sébastien Babolat, the ‘father’ of French language podcasts! Every week, 40,000 people on the net download Sébastien’s podcasts to practise their listening skills and to discover different aspects of French culture. Find out what a podcast is and why they’ve become so popular.

Céline Anthonioz: You manage a website of French podcasts*. Concretely, what is a podcast?

Sébastien: A podcast is no more than just a radio show that you can listen to anywhere at anytime. This is the new way of listening to your favourite radio show – no need anymore to stick close to a radio box and wait for your show to air: you can now download it and listen to it on your MP3 player (ipod, zune or anything). The ability to do so, led to the creation of many independent radio shows, without any specific knowledge or understanding (and without the hassle!) of a streaming program by air-waves or FM/AM band.

C.A.: Would you please explain what else the website offers?

S.: During the weekly show that I have produced for more than 2 years now, I have greatly expanded what I offer: I try to expose the listeners to all of the cultural aspects of French culture, as I believe that this is the best way to learn a language. On each show, I play some French artists, a book or a movie review, some words and

lar book a week), a video vocabulary to associate words with a picture... And much more!

To help listeners in their learning experience I answer any of their questions on a forum. They also can share their thoughts, travelling tips and discovery of anything French by posting articles on the blog that was made for them.

C.A.: Every week, there are 40,000 downloads on the podcasts you create! What makes them so popular? What type of subjects do you speak about?

S.: After speaking to a lot of listeners, I think that what

sentences on a specific topic and a conversation (and a grammar point). On top of the “show” there is a transcript so listeners can follow and read what is said, I also propose a bilingual book, with a side by side text (a chapter of a particu-



I try new ways to help people understand French as it is spoken: videos with commentary, books, audio books, tips and tricks for travelling in France, exercises, dictations...

