Save your podcast subscriptions online

If you're using iTunes to download your podcasts, have you ever had it crash, or otherwise screw up your library of music? Chances are, you didn't lose your actual music, you just had to re-add it to your library. But what about your podcast subscriptions? You probably had to scour the web looking for the websites of podcasts which you never visit just to get your RSS feeds back.

Here's a solution that lets you subscribe to your podcasts using online tools so you never lose a subscription again.

Ok, first, let's go through all the tools I'm going to use:

1. Google Reader
2. Feedburner

That's it!

First, if you don't have one already, get yourself a Google account, and head over to the Google Reader website. Google Reader is an RSS aggregator that lets you tag your different feeds with arbitrary terms. Since we're talking about podcasts here, I suggest you tag your podcast feeds with 'podcasts'. I use the plural *podcasts* rather than the singular because it lets me distinguish the media feeds from the blogs I read about *podcast**ing***. *Podcast*, the singular form, would match them both.

If you have your feeds in an existing aggregator, like Juice, that lets you export an OPML file of your feeds, Google Reader will allow you to import all of them at once by clicking on the settings option in the upper right and then clicking on the **Import/Export** tab. This is by far the easiest way to go. If you can't export your feeds, you'll have to copy each one, and subscribe to them in Google Reader individually. Fortunately, this is the only painful part of the process.

GoogleReader.jpg

GoogleReader-NewFolder.jpg

After you have all your podcast feeds imported into Google Reader, and you've tagged them all with a

uniquely identifiable term, you need to export the feed for all items tagged with that term. Click back to the main google reader page, and then click on settings again, and go to the Tags tab. You should see your 'podcasts' tag along with an RSS icon, a series of concentric orange quarter-circles. Click the icon to make the feed public.

GoogleReader-MakeTagFeedPublic.jpg

Click on the 'view public page' link to view the exported items. This page should have an ATOM feed associated with it. ATOM is similar to RSS, but most podcast readers can't understand it. We have one more major step to go before iTunes can download your shows.

Copy the ATOM feed for your podcasts and head over to Feedburner.com. Drop the URL for your ATOM feed in the box on the front page, and check off the "I am a podcaster" check box. Click the next button. If you don't already have a Feedburner account, the website will give you the chance to sign up for one now. You can also take this opportunity to pretty-up the name and address for the feed you're going to be subscribing to in iTunes.

FeedBurner-BurnYourFeed.jpg

That's pretty much it. Now just take the new feed you've created, and subscribe to it in iTunes using the Advanced menu, Subscribe to Podcast (or the podcast downloader of your choice). The URL for your feed will be something like **http://feeds.feedburner.com/<what you typed in>**. Now, when you want to subscribe or unsubscribe to a podcast, just go to Google Reader, add the RSS feed, and tag it with 'Podcasts' and the shows will get automatically downloaded.

FeedBurner-YourBurnedFeed.jpg

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