

Podcasting Water Science

Robert Swanson & Rachael McLeod

Nebraska Water Science Center

Scott Horvath

Office of Communications

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Powered by ITAC



What is a Podcast?

- * AKA-netcast or webcast
- * A podcast is audio or video distributed through the internet as a continuing series with a common theme/angle
- * Syndicated or subscribed through RSS
 - * RSS=Really Simple Syndication





What is a Podcast?

- * Examples:
- * USGS CoreCast is the flagship of the USGS podcasting community
 - * www.usgs.gov/corecast/
- * Nebraska Water Science Center's "Nebraskast" is the first approved podcast for WSC
 - * ne.water.usgs.gov/podcasts/



What is a Podcast?

- * Not a screencast

- * "Screencasts" are different in that they're videos of your computer desktop showing how to do certain things, run software, use a website, etc with a voiceover of a person explaining what is happening

- * There are products like Camtasia, Captivate, etc that can do screencasts

- * Take time to produce, but can easily be used by other WSCs



Why Podcast?

- * Reach a different audience
 - * Younger audience doesn't respond well to printed newsletters
 - * Post-MTV
 - * Audio and video learning
- * Ease and economy of delivery
- * Extent of the message
 - * Reach the target at home, at recreation, in the car during commute



The Format

- * Podcasting is conversational at its' best
 - * Draws the listener or viewer into the discussion
 - * Feeling of being a part of or a witness to the conversation
 - * More like a fireside chat than a press conference
- * It is not...
 - * A lecture
 - * A press release
 - * Tightly scripted

The Format

- * The file format is how the audio is recorded and compressed
- * Usually in MP3 format
 - * We try to offer options
 - * WAV
 - * AAC
 - * CDA



How do I listen/view?

❖ Streaming vs. download

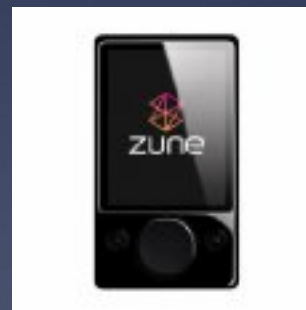
- ❖ Streaming = no files to maintain, but must be online
- ❖ Download directly allows freedom movement and time shifting

❖ Devices

- ❖ iPod, Zune, or mp3 player
- ❖ Computer
- ❖ Mp3 disk players

❖ Subscription services

- ❖ iTunes
- ❖ Podshow





Podcasting equipment

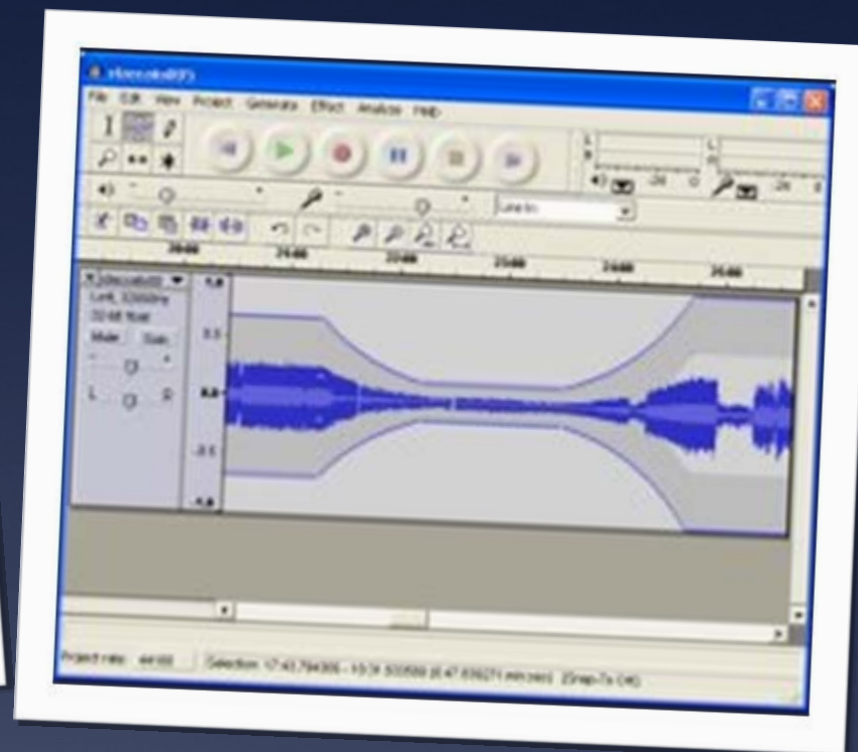
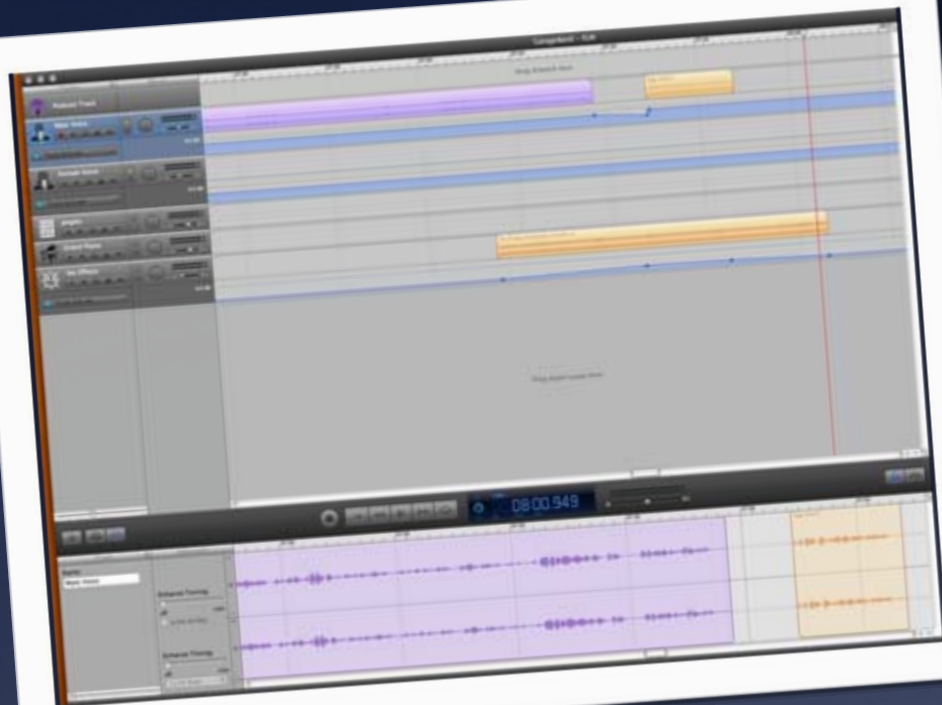
USB microphones to record direct to computer
Standalone hi-fidelity recorders
Set of good headphones
~\$500



Recording

- * Plan the message
- * Prepare
- * Find a quiet location
- * Practice
 - * Relax
 - * Have Fun!





Editing

Polish the presentation and clean audio “crutches”-ya’ know
Great free software is available for Mac or PC
5-6 hours for a 5-10 minute audio production (more for video)

Podcast equipment list

XLR to USB adaptor

http://www.shure.com/ProAudio/Products/Accessories/us_pro_X2u_content



Alesis ProTrack Mobile Recording Kit



<http://www.alesis.com/protrackmobilerecordingkit>



Publishing

Webpage
Player
Archive
Transcript



Nebraska Water Science Center Highlights USGS Nebraska Water Science Center Rolls Out Podcast Series



Podcast technology has finally come to the USGS Nebraska Water Science Center. Director Bob Swanson announced the unveiling of the new podcast series, called Nebraskast, earlier this month in what he hopes will be a creative and progressive way to bring information about the Center's activities to the public, elected officials and others.

"For us it means we're kind of on the cusp of breaking technology and using technology in every way we can to get this information to the public in a cost-efficient and timely manner," Swanson said.

You can hear Swanson talk about the new podcast series in its newest Nebraskast installment by accessing the audio file links below. Swanson said the new episodes will be released monthly and possibly more often if flooding events or other natural hazards occur. Topics will include ongoing water projects, releases of important findings in scientific reports, how to access public USGS databases and general information about how the USGS studies water in Nebraska.

"People don't have a lot of time, they're very busy," Swanson said. "This podcast will allow them to be in touch and aware of a number of different projects that they're interested in. It then gives them the links and the information they need to find out more about those subjects."

Swanson said the podcast will appeal to a wide range of listeners, including researchers, policymakers, educators, the general public and other agencies.

Nebraskast: A NEWSC Podcast



Introduction to Nebraskast
Bob Swanson, the USGS Nebraska Water Science Center's Director, introduces you to the Nebraskast podcast series (8 Mb)



[Download podcast](#) (right click - save as)
A [transcript](#) is available.

[Archive](#) of all our podcasts.

Highlighted Publications

The Nebraska Water Science Center produces publications about water resources.



[SIR 2007-3098](#)
Water Quality and Fish-Community Data for the Niobrara National Scenic River, Nebraska, 2003-05



[SIR 2007-5177](#)
An Assessment of Hydrology, Fluvial Geomorphology and Stream Ecology in the Cardwell Branch Watershed, Nebraska, 2003-04

Nebraskast: A Nebraska Water Science Center Podcast Series

Can't see Flash? Install [Flash Player](#).



The Nebraska Water Science Center (NEWSC) presents this series of podcasts to help you understand hydrologic conditions in Nebraska and the role USGS plays in providing water information to you. Our "Nebraskast" is an audio and video series that is regularly delivered through the Internet. The NEWSC has the first approved podcast of a Science Center in the USGS and we've titled it Nebraskast.

Nebraska Water Science Center's Director Introduction to Nebraskast



Introduction to Nebraskast

Bob Swanson, the USGS Nebraska Water Science Center's Director, introduces you to the Nebraskast podcast series (8 Mb)



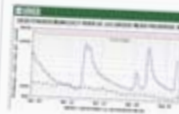
[Download podcast](#) (right click - save as)
A [transcript](#) is available.

Nebraskast Podcast Episodes



The NWIS Database

Dwain Curtis talks about the benefits of the National Water Information System (NWIS) database. (4 Mb)



[Download podcast](#) (right click - save as)
A [transcript](#) is available.

Transcription Services

For accessibility reasons, transcripts are a required component of a USGS podcast.

How much time do you have?

Budget for a transcribing service if possible, about \$1 per minute

<http://enablr.com>
iPod touch

USGS Nebraskast PoBSasts: Introduction - Windows Internet Explorer provided by Nebraska WSC

http://ne.water.usgs.gov/podcasts/NebraskastIntroduction/Swanson_Nebraskast_tra

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

USGS Nebraskast PoBSasts: Introduction

home projects information/data publications NAWQA HPWLMS links contact

internal



Search the Nebraska WSC:

Google Custom Search Go

DATA CENTER

Real-time data (S)

- Streamflow (S)
- Ground water (S)
- Water quality (S)
- Precipitation (S)

Historical data

- Streamflow (S)
- Ground water (S)
- Water quality (S)
- Annual Water Data Reports (S)
- Instantaneous Data Archive (IDA) (S)

WaterWatch (S)

- Floods | Droughts
- Current conditions

Data Networks

- Ground-Water Watch
- Missouri River Water Information Portal (MORWIP)
- Lower Platte River Water Quality
- DroughtWatch

Nebraska Water Science Center Podcast Series

Introductory Podcast transcript: Swanson_Nebraskast, January 16, 2009

Subject: Nebraskast
Interviewee: Bob Swanson, Nebraska WSC Director (BS)
Interviewer: Rachael Seravalli, Information Asst., Nebraska WSC (RS)

RS: Welcome to the second episode of Nebraskast, where we talk to real USGS scientists about the important water resources work they are doing all over Nebraska. My name is Rachael Seravalli. I'm with the USGS Nebraska Water Science Center. We're talking with Bob Swanson, who is the director of the USGS Nebraska Water Science Center. Welcome Bob.



BS: Good day, Rachael. It's a pleasure to finally be ready to launch Nebraskast.

RS: We're glad to have you. We're talking about the official release of our new podcast series called Nebraskast. I'll just let our listeners know, Bob, that around the office here you are known as a technically savvy guy. You keep up with a lot of the technological developments that are going on. So it might be obvious to you why the Nebraska Water Science Center would need a podcast, but it might not be so clear to our listeners. We have Web sites, we have BlackBerries, lots of different electronic ways to communicate. Why a podcast? Why this medium?

BS: It's very important to the U.S. Geological Survey to be able to communicate its



Things to Know

- * The Director and the Public Affairs Officer will have to approve it before the request can be sent to DOI for approval
 - * Karen Wood is the approving authority
- * Audiovisual Authorization Request Form (DI-551) that must be submitted and approved before ***any work can begin on an audiovisual project***
- * Regional Communications approves each episode – CC oc_web



Additional Considerations

- * Doing something simply for the sake of doing it is not the approach you want to take...have a strategy
 - * You need to have a legitimate reason for doing a podcast series
 - * What's the goal?
 - * Would be more beneficial to do an occasional podcast for the USGS CoreCast?

Additional Considerations

- * What format will be used?
- * What is the budget?
- * What information resources are available for the production?
 - * Technical experts, research documents, printed materials, other productions
- * Will graphics, music and/or animation be needed?
 - * Graphics, music and animation can often be very helpful
- * Is travel for production necessary?



Additional consideration

- * How will you track results?
- * Is it worth your time?
- * Who's going to determine topics and maintain a schedule?
- * Who's going to do the interviews?
- * Who has a good speaking voice?
- * Who can edit the audio and learn audio editing, filters, etc. ?
- * Figure 10 episodes as the “learning period”

Nebraskast Progress

- * Intended to be a monthly series
- * Three audio episodes produced
 - * Starting 4th and 5th this week
- * One video cast ready for approval
- * Bureau and interviewee approval and for each episode then moved from HQ to Central Region Office of Communications
- * RSS feed established
- * iTunes subscription now available



ne.water.usgs.gov

Go Online



YouTube for WSCs

July- August

North Dakota WSC

Questions?



Podcast equipment list

Blue USB Microphones

Snowball



Finally, a USB mic that's not only easy to use, but sounds as good on your desktop as it does in a professional recording studio. Meet the Snowball; the world's first professional USB mic.

Whether you're recording a guitar at your kitchen table or a complete band in the studio, the Snowball can capture it with detail unheard of before in a USB mic.

The Snowball is a direct plug n' play mic that connects to either a Mac or PC -- no additional software is needed. With its dual capsule design and unique three-pattern switch (cardioid, cardioid with -10dB pad and omni), the Snowball can handle everything from soft vocals to the loudest garage band -- and it's ideal for podcasting. Check it out and you'll see why it's the coolest mic in town.

[Go to the Snowball Main Product Page](#)



<http://bluemic.com/products/>



Samson Zoom H4



<http://www.samsontech.com/>

Podcast equipment list

XLR to USB adaptor

http://www.shure.com/ProAudio/Products/Accessories/us_pro_X2u_content



Alesis ProTrack Mobile Recording Kit



<http://www.alesis.com/protrackmobilerecordingkit>

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XLR to USB adaptor

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Audacity



<http://www.alesis.com/protrackmobilerecordingkit>

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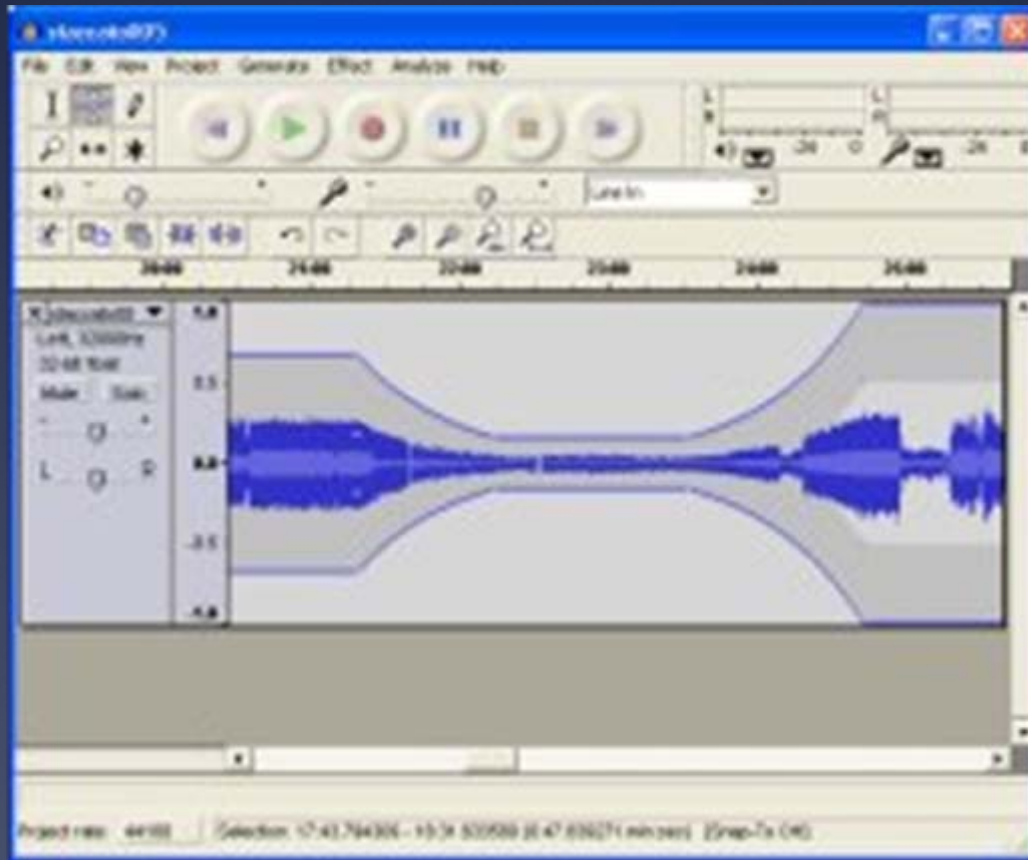
Alesis ProTrack Mobile Recording Kit

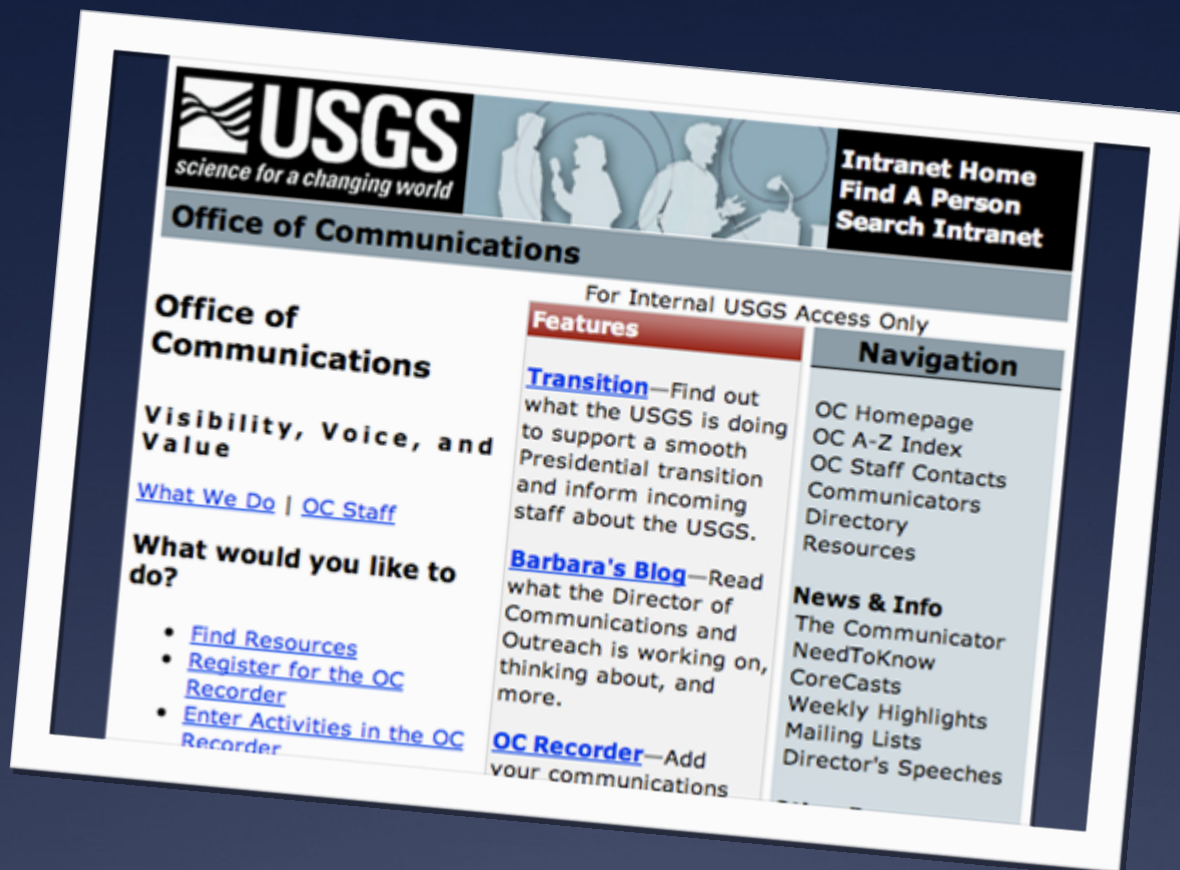


<http://www.alesis.com/protrackmobilerecordingkit>

Podcast equipment list

Audacity





Approval

http://internal.usgs.gov/communications/audio_visual_policy.asp

Approval

* DI-551 and approval By Karen Wood

Audiovisual Authorization Request

Attachment to DI-551 (additional info about request)

Responses in bold face type.

1. A thorough description of how the new Visual Identity Communications Framework has been followed and incorporated into the product and packaging. Please clearly demonstrate why an audio visual product was chosen over another type of product. (The Visual Identity Communications Framework is available on the USGS Intranet page at: <http://internal.usgs.gov/visual/manual/>).

The audience for the podcast series has been thoroughly considered. It will be created with the lay person (minimal scientific background/understanding) in mind but doesn't preclude peaking the interest of those with more advanced scientific knowledge of water research. We expect the content to dovetail with ongoing projects (with links on our public Web site) and newly released publications (also with links) and will use the podcast to generate more interest in and direct more traffic to those Web pages. The podcast is by now a common communication medium, and we plan to create both downloadable and streaming files to facilitate access. Printed and other online products will be generated as funds allow.

2. What is the purpose or theme of the intended production? (What do you want to achieve? What do you want the audience to do/learn? A helpful idea is to try to summarize your purpose or theme in a single sentence.)

Our purpose is to disseminate information about our WSC's projects and products to the public, decision makers and regulators through interviews with actual USGS scientists via podcasts.

3. Who is the specific intended audience for the production? (Technical? General? Professional? Students? One of the most important considerations in production is the nature of the audience -- each audience can require a different approach.)

The intended audience includes the general public, potential cooperators, regulators, members of the news media, and decision makers.

4. How will the product be used/shown/distributed? (How will your intended audience obtain the information you want to provide? You need to have a distribution plan which includes the ways you will get the product to the targeted audience(s). Given the difficulties of distribution, the more specific you can be, the better -- e.g., how many copies of your product need to be made? How will it be packaged and shipped? Where will you get the addresses for shipping? Are there other potential users? Will this information be available via the WWW?)

The product will be distributed via our public WSC Web site as a downloadable or streamable podcast. Interested listeners will also be able to subscribe to the podcast to be notified when new episodes are posted.

5. What format will be used? (For a broadcast-quality product, nothing less than Betacam SP is acceptable. File footage (B-roll) also needs to be made available to the Office of Outreach (e.g., landslide footage of the Bay area.) for possible other uses.)

The podcasts will be created and posted in the mp3 format.

6. What is the budget?

The budget will be covered by the hourly wage of the WSC's information assistant, who will be recording and producing the podcast.

7. What information resources are available for the production? (i.e., technical experts, research documents, printed materials, other productions -- please include key contact information such as names, addresses, telephone and email.)

Corecast podcast team, including:

Scott Horvath: shorvath@usgs.gov

Dave Hebert: dhebert@usgs.gov

8. What relevant visual materials are available for the production? (i.e. existing film or video footage, still photos, historical paintings, etc.)

For now, the podcast will consist only of audio files.

9. Will graphics, music and/or animation be needed? (Graphics, music and animation can often be very helpful, but should be carefully considered, since it could have a significant impact on the budget.)

Yes, music and sound effects will likely be included but these will be accessed via a Website with free, public-domain music and sound effects files.

10. Is travel for production necessary? (Travel could be a significant part of a production budget.)

Yes, travel will sometimes be involved, but will likely coincide with travel for other projects for which funds have already been budgeted.