Audio Pod

Audiobook Technology

Documentation

October 01, 2009

Audio Pod

Table of Contents

Audio Pod

What is Audio Pod

Audio Pod is an integrated audiobook technology that allows consumers to enjoy the audiobook experience without the traditional headaches associated with their use. Audio Pod provides you with a global audiobook environment that utilizes virtual audiobook technologies including the Drag & Drop Audiobook and Global MP3 Bookmark Technology. There are no CD's to cut and store, there are no resources to manage, there are no complicated business models, just a simple easy audio experience. A centralized Internet Lending Library and Social Space allows you to drag & drop audiobooks onto the Audiobook Player, the PortaPod Loader or your favourite eMail client. When you see a book cover, simply drag, drop and play.

Audio Pod Integrated Components

Audio Pod Audiobook Player

The Audio Pod Audiobook Player is a media player designed specifically to meet the demands of the audiobook consumer. Included as integral components of the player are a fully functional Table of Contents and complete collection of all open books using MP3 Bookmarks®.

The Table of Content allows you to position an audiobook to predefined places in an open book. For example, with a simple drag & drop, or mouse click, you can go to a specific chapter in a book, or go to individual stories in a book of short stories.

The MP3 Bookmarks allow you to resume playing any open audiobook right where you left off, anytime you want, with a simple drag & drop or mouse click. Audio Pod does not limit the number of bookmarks you have, so you can keep as many open books as you want. For example, you can be listening to the Godfather, drag & drop a couple of nursery rhymes or children's stories at bedtime, and go back to where you were after the kids are in bed. You also have the option of enabling your MP3 Bookmarks® globally, so you can switch from your home computer to your work computer and your audio experience is seamless. The best part is that MP3 Bookmarks are fully automatic; it is all done for you.

PortaPod Loader

The Audio Pod PortaPod Loader is an audiobook utility that allows you to load and unload audiobooks from your portable MP3 player using simple drag & drop capabilities. The need to buy an expensive portable device is eliminated. A small inexpensive MP3 music player is all you need. *Some proprietary devices are not supported.

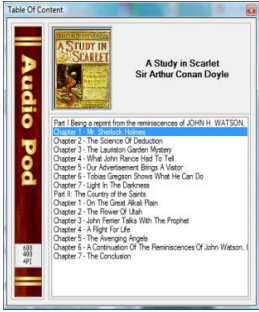### Internet Library and Social Space

The Audio Pod Lending Library and Social Space give you an integrated environment where you can borrow content selected from the card catalogue. Members can write reviews, rate books, share ideas and engage in discussion groups. You can build a circle of friends that share you values and ideas, and provide the richness of experience normally found only in book clubs.

Drag & Drop Audiobook

The basic units of audiobook management within the Audio Pod Environment are the Drag & Drop Audiobook, and the MP3 Bookmark. All you need to know is that, if you see a book cover, or MP3 Bookmark, you can drag & drop it. In most cases, intuition will tell you that sometimes a mouse click, or double click will work as you think it should, and it probably will. In most cases, you will also find that a copy/paste will also perform the same functionality.

What can I drag?

	Book Covers Anywhere you see a book cover, you can simply use your mouse pointer, select the book cover, drag it where you want it and drop it. If you drag the book from main audiobook player panel, the then current position in the book is dragged with it. Otherwise, the dragged audiobook is positioned at the beginning of the audiobook when dropped. You will find these book covers in all Audio Pod player and utility panels, in the web based card catalogue, in the Audio Pod social space, promotional graphics and in email messages.
	Table of Content Entries You can drag an audiobook from the various entries in an audiobooks table of contents. When you drag an audiobook table of content entry, the position that entry represents in the audiobook is also dragged.
	eMailed MP3 Bookmark® An MP3 Bookmark can be drag & dropped either to or from your mail client as a message attachment. In some cases, your mail client may not provide an inline expansion of the MP3 Bookmark and you will have to open it using your web browser. This is typically done just by a double mouse click.
	Generic MP3 Bookmarks MP3 Bookmarks can also be dragged from various other locations outside the Audio Pod environment. For example, you can drag an audiobook previously dropped on your desktop, web browser or even some word processors.

Technical Note

Versions of some operating systems, products and utilities incorrectly indicate status of an object that you are attempting to drag from place to place. This typically takes the form of 'nodrag' or 'nodrop' icons displayed during the drag attempt. If you encounter this, try your drag-and-drop operation anyway. Audio Pod utilities are commonly able to complete a drag and drop operation even when the operating environment says 'NO'.

Audio Pod

Where can I drop?

	### Audio Pod Audiobook Player The main panel of the Audio Pod Audiobook player will accept any drag & drop operation. If the drop is successful, the audiobook will be loaded, otherwise you will hear an error alert indicating a failed operation. The new audiobook will be positioned correctly if there was position information contained in the drop. If the player was in a playing state when you dropped the new audiobook, then the new book will also start playing. The Table of Content and Bookmark panels will not accept a dropped object.
	### Audio Pod PortaPod Loader The Audio Pod PortaPod Loader will accept any drag & drop operation. If the drop is successful, the audiobook will be loaded, otherwise you will hear an error alert indicating a failed operation. The new audiobook will appear on the main loader panel.
	### Email Client You can drag & drop any MP3 Bookmark to your favourite email client. The bookmark will be formatted as an attachment to your email message. Various email clients handle the display and presentation of attachments in various ways. Although you may not see a graphic representation of the bookmark, you should see evidence of the attachment.
	### Generic MP3 Bookmarks MP3 Bookmarks can also be dropped onto various other locations outside the Audio Pod environment. For example, you can drop a bookmark on your desktop, web browser or even some word processors.

Technical Note

Versions of some operating systems, products and utilities incorrectly indicate status of an object that you are attempting to drag from place to place. This typically takes the form of 'nodrag' or 'nodrop' icons displayed during the drag attempt. If you encounter this, try your drag-and-drop operation anyway. Audio Pod utilities are commonly able to complete a drag and drop operation even when the operating environment says 'NO'.

Web Based Lending Library & Social Space

Audio Pod Inc has established an online web-based lending library and social space for its member. Access to the site is open to the public and anyone can come and browse. However, to interact with user or access content, you must subscribe. When you subscribe, you give yourself access to audiobook utilities that are generations above all others.

The lending library provides a visual card catalogue that allows you to search or browse for content that may interest you. Anywhere that you see a book cover, you can drag & drop it to your Audiobook Player or PortaPod Loader. That is all it takes to start your audiobook experience. Just Drag... Drop... Play...

The card catalogue also supports member feedback features including overall member ratings, member reviews and discussion groups.

When you become a member, you will receive a monthly allotment of audiobook hours for each month your account is in good standing. These hours will accumulate, so hours you don't use will roll over. Your account balance always appears on your home page.

Each audiobook is assigned a lending fee that is a value shown in audiobook hours. When you select a book and start listening to it, or loading it on your pod, your account is debited by the number of audiobook hours assigned to that audiobook. The number of hours assigned to a book will vary based on the duration and copyright fees that may apply to that audiobook.

Each time an audiobook is accessed by you, the lending fee in audiobook hours is charged against your account. See the Access Policy below. You can check the state of your account at any time simply by selecting the 'Account Balance' menu option that appears above your Account Balance.

Access Policy

A Drag and Drop operation performed from any source to any Audio Pod product will be interpreted as acknowledgment that the member is aware of the lending fee associated with a specific audiobook and consents that any subsequent actions that may result in a member's account being debited for the amount of the lending fee is done with that member's consent. For example, if you drag from a source other than the book detail page, we assume you know and understand what you are doing.
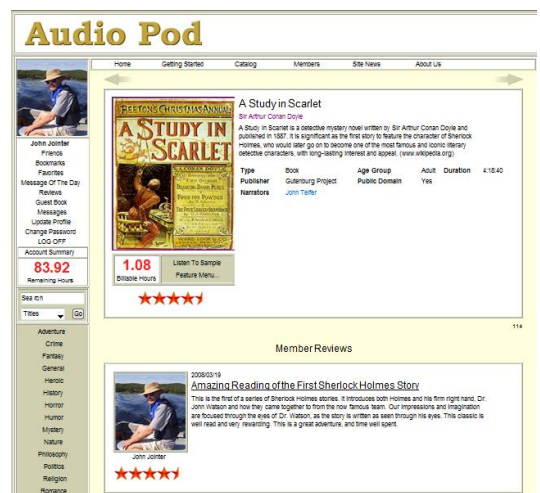
An audiobook is considered to have been accessed when a member first requests audio stream content for that audiobook from the library using either the Audio Pod Audiobook Player or the PortaPod Loader. Each individual access of an audiobook will have a duration that terminates after 90 days beyond the last access of that audio stream content following complete delivery of all audio stream content for an audiobook to a specific member. If the member accesses the audiobook on a subsequent occasion, an additional lending fee will be assessed against that users account for each additional access. For example, if you decide to read 'Dracula' this year and then decide to listen to it again 5 years from now, you will be assessed a lending fee for each access.

Audio Pod

Audio Pod Audiobook Player

The Audio Pod Audiobook Player is simple and easy to use. In order to access an audiobook, simply drag & drop an audiobook from the Audio Pod card catalogue, or MP3 Bookmark, and drop it on the player. Then push the play button. In a second or two, you will be listening to an audiobook. If the player was already playing, the dropped audiobook will also play.
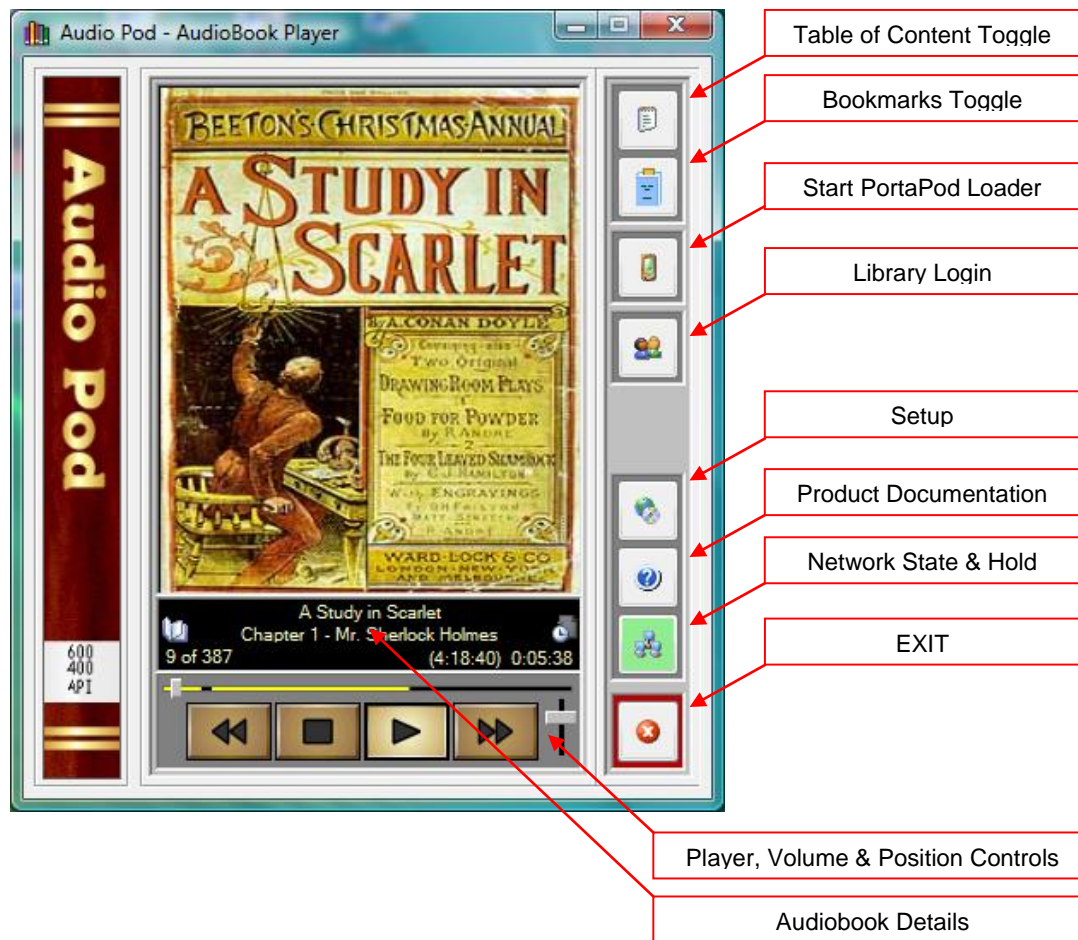
The Audio Pod Audiobook Player will allow you to drag an MP3 Bookmark directly from the book cover of the currently loaded book. When you start a drag, an MP3 Bookmark is created for that book at the position you were in the book when you pushed the mouse button.

A single mouse click on the main book cover display will toggle the audiobook player between playing and stopped states.

The book spine on the left of the player is a hot area. A single mouse click on the main book cover display will toggle the audiobook player between playing and stopped states. A double click will log you into the Audio Pod Social Space. You can also use it to move the player around on the screen.

In some cases, your audiobook experience may be financially supported through the use of advertisements. These will be displayed on the main screen. If you choose to visit the website of an advertiser, simply click on the advertisement and you will be taken there.

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents shows a number of predefined MP3 Bookmarks associated with the audiobook that is currently loaded in your player. You can select any table of Content entry using a simple drag & drop from the Table of Contents to Audiobook Player. The audiobook will immediately reposition to the selected position. If the player was playing at the time, then the player will start playing at the newly selected point. In some cases, it may take a second or two in order to re-sync the virtual media stream and the MP3 Bookmark for that audiobook, depending on the speed of your computer and its workload. A double mouse click will do the same thing.

If you drag and drop a Table of Content entry to your mail client (or the desktop) the MP3 Bookmark created will have position information connected with it that corresponds to that position in the audiobook.

You can also drag & drop a Table of Content entry onto the PortaPod Loader. This will drop the entire book into the loader, and you will be ready to load your pod.
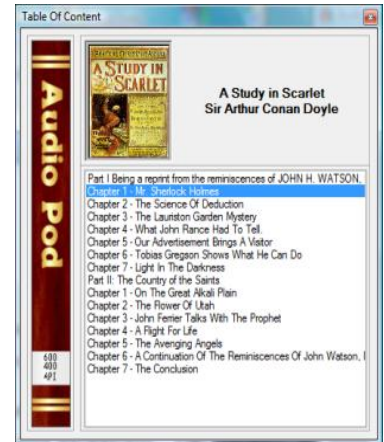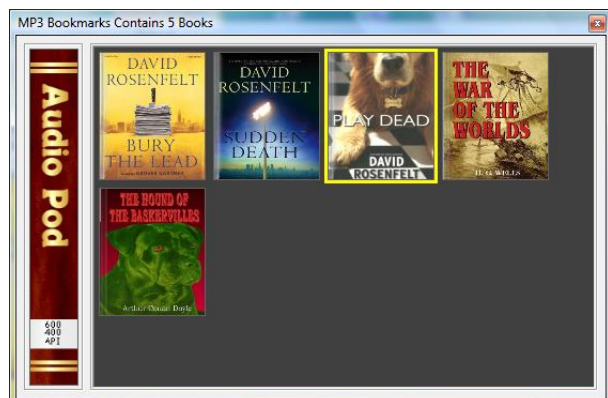
MP3 Bookmarks

The Audio Pod Audiobook Player maintains an MP3 Bookmark for every audiobook that you have open. Each MP3 Bookmark for each open audiobook maintains your current position in that book. When you change books, or turn off the player, your position is automatically updated to a position that is offset back from your current position by about 30 seconds. This offset is applied so that, when you restart the audiobook, you can pick up the story where you left off and provide you with a feeling of continuity to the story you are listening to.

When you drag & drop an MP3 Bookmark entry from the bookmark display, you also drag the position information that is associated with it. If you drop it on the audiobook player, the player will automatically switch audiobooks for you and reposition the audiobook to the bookmarked position. If the player was playing at the time, the audiobook you just dropped will start to play. A double mouse click will do the same thing.

If you drag and drop an MP3 Bookmark to your mail client (or the desktop), the created MP3 Bookmark will have position information connected with it that corresponds to the bookmarked position in the audiobook.

You can also drag & drop an MP3 Bookmark onto the PortaPod Loader. This will drop the entire book into the loader, and you will be ready to load your pod.

The audiobook player will cleanup an MP3 Bookmark and all associated resources when you reach the end of an audiobook unless you have checked 'Retain Forever' in your setup. If you have 'Retain Forever' selected, you can keep a bookmark as long as you want, but when you want to get rid of it, you will need to delete it yourself.

At any time you choose, you can delete a MP3 Bookmark. Simply select an MP3 Bookmarks using a single mouse click. The Audiobook will be highlighted. When you have selected the MP3 Bookmark that you want to delete, simply press the delete key on your keyboard, and they are gone.

Technical Note

The Audio Pod Audiobook Player employs advanced virtual media and memory management technologies. If at any time the audiobook player decides it needs resources to function effectively, open audiobooks will be scavenged to acquire needed resources. Audiobooks with older MP3 bookmarks will be scavenged more extensively than more recent MP3 Bookmarks. However, all audiobooks that are open are subject to this form of resource management.

Quick Find

Audio Pod provides you with the ability to do a quick, ad-hoc search of the content of the library looking for something specific, without visiting the Library website. Simply enter relevant keywords and push the 'Go' button. You will receive up to 45 books. As with all other Audio Pod utilities, each book cover is also drag-and-drop ready. Keep in mind that, even though you have not selected these audiobooks from the Library Website, your account will be charged for any audiobooks selected in accordance with the Audio Pod Access Policy.

For best search results, keywords should be logically linked. For example, all keywords should relate to one of the title, the author's name, or plot content. If you mix them, the results you receive from the Quick Search may not be as accurate as you like.
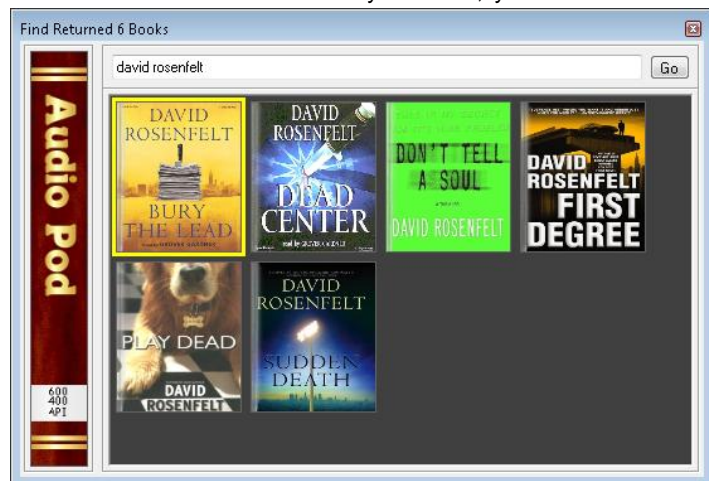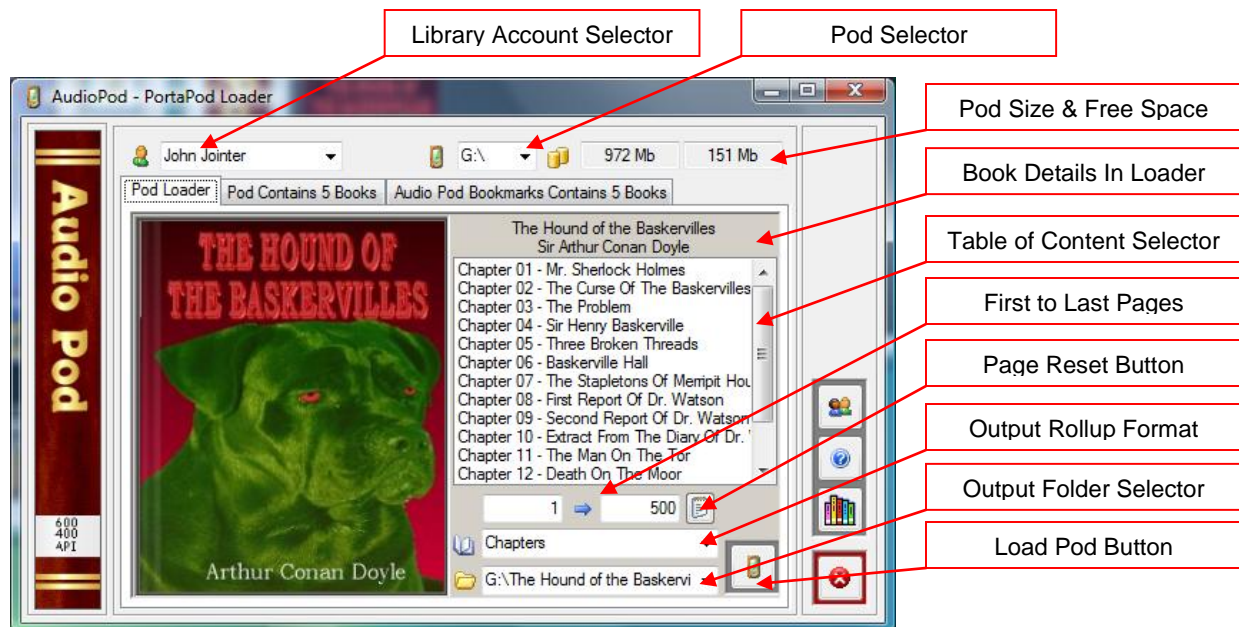
AudioPod PortaPod Loader

The PortaPod Loader is the Audio Pod utility to manage audiobooks on your portable handheld device (pod). There are two basic functions performed. The first is to put content onto your pod, and the second is to get content off of your pod.

Just a quick word about pods here. The basic MP3 player is designed for music. These are small streams of audio and are generally played in minutes. If you lose your place while listening to music, it is no big deal. Audiobooks are a different matter, so Audio Pod has developed technology to address some of the outstanding issues and overcome some common problems. These will be discussed later.

You will also note that pod loading and cleanup can be a relatively slow process. Although pod memory is slow during actually writing operations, the biggest delays you will experience is with the internal file mangers. Some pods are faster than others.

Pod Loader

The process of loading audiobook content to your pod is very simple. Plug your pod into your USB port and tell the PortaPod Loader where it is using the 'Pod Selector'. Drag & drop an audiobook to the PortaPod Loader, and push the load button. It is that easy.

By default, the PortaPod Loader will load the entire audiobook by chapters. However, you do have options that can override this setting. You can choose to load only part of a book if you want. You set the first and last pages that you want loaded simply by changing the page numbers in the page number fields. You can do that manually, or by selecting one or more Table of Content entries and have the page numbers automatically adjusted. When you push the load button, only the selected content will be loaded.

You also have the option of how the content is loaded on your pod. By default, content is loaded by chapters. However you may choose to load you pod by page groups or even by single pages. Without fast forward or rewind capabilities, position indicators or persistent position markers, it is very easy to lose your place in a large media stream. Loading smaller sections makes it easier to get back to where you were, and the basic scrolling display of the music players will tell you which page, page group or chapter you were in. However, as you increase the number of individual segments a media stream is loaded by, you will also increase the amount of time it takes to load your pod. Some pods can take 3 seconds or more to load an individual audio segment.

Pod Cleanup

After you have finished with the audiobook content on your pod, removing it is very easy. Simply connect and identify your pod using the same procedure that you used when loading it. Select the 'Audio Books on Pod' tab. You will see the books that are loaded on your pod. With a single mouse click, select the audiobooks you want to delete. These will be highlighted. Then push the delete key.
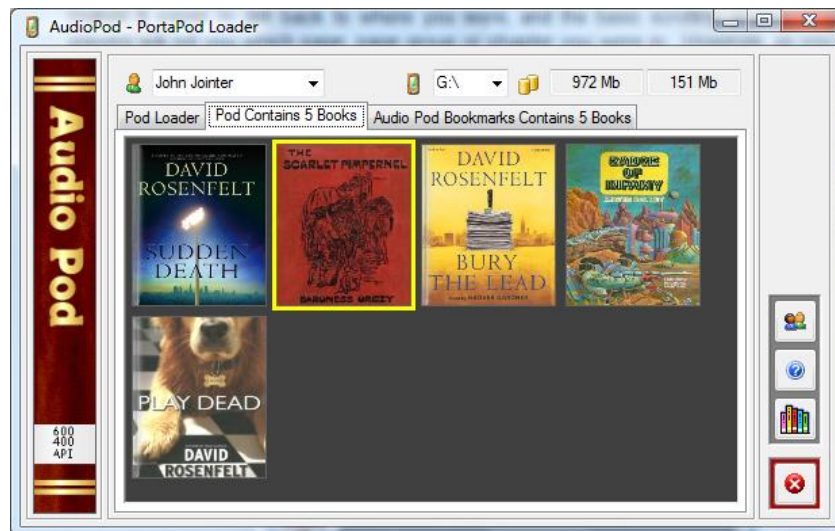
Technical Note

The Audio Pod PortaPod Loader is designed to be used with any MP3 player that presence itself to the operating system as a 'Flash Disk', 'Flash Memory Device' or 'Flash Memory Card'. You need an MP3 player that uses UMS or MSC (they are the same thing). This type of player functions as a mass storage device and will show up on your computer as an external drive (eg "E:\"). If you have your MP3 player plugged into a USB port and cannot see it as a disk device, then the player is not compatible.

DO NOT use a player that uses Digital Rights Management (DRM), Microsoft's Media Transfer Protocol (MTP) or an internal database structure. If the MP3 Player requires Windows Media Player 10 or better, you are probably looking at one of these players. These players tend not to be compatible without a lot of fiddling around and even then it's not guaranteed. You will need to turn off DRM/MTP and put the player in UMS mode. Refer to the Frequently Asked Questions at our website for an up to date list. The list of devices that are not compatible includes the IPOD, ZUNE, Samsung and Kindle. You cannot use them.

Accessibility

Audio Pod recognizes that some of it's members will require assistance interacting with the Audio Pod Audiobook Player. In our ongoing process of development, the following features have been provided.

Drag & Drop Book Covers

The basic design of the Audio Pod Technology envelop provide easy access to content through the ability to drag a book cover from anywhere and drop it on the player. The book cover images have been sized to provide reasonably large and detailed targets.

Book Cover Play/Pause Toggle

The two largest elements in the main Audio Pod Audiobook Player display are the image of the book cover and the book spine graphic. A single mouse click on either of these will toggle the player between play and stop.
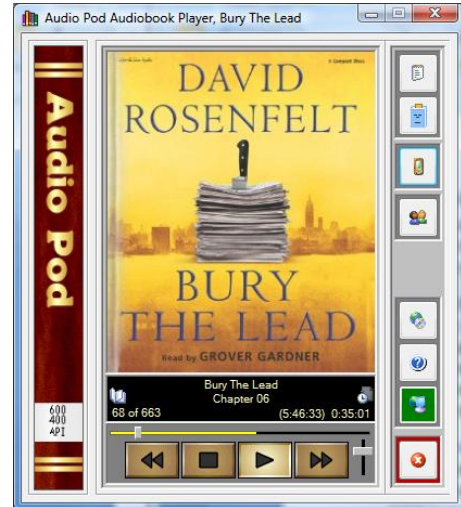
Book Spine

There book spine at the left edge of each Audio Pod display. This provides a large target that contrasts with the surrounding display. Holding down left mouse button over the book spine will allow you to move the display around the screen. A double click on the book spine will launch your browser and log you into your home page on your website. As mentioned above, a single click on the book spine on the Audiobook Player display will toggle the player between play and stop.

Helpful Hints

Hint 1

If you have difficulty selecting books, you can have a friend or family member assist you. Share your Subscriber Number and Password with them and they will be able to preload books in your Global MP3 Bookmarks® from their player or the Library. When you start your player, the books are there. Your helper can be anywhere in the world with access to the Internet.

Hint 2

Have a friend or family member send you a book, or selection of books, by email. Then simply drag and drop the book cover from the MP3 Bookmark® in the email message into your audiobook player.

Common Audiobook Player Keys

Key	Action
All QWERTY Keys	Toggle Play/Stop audiobook player
Page-Up	Go to the next page in the audiobook
Page-Down	If more than 10 seconds into the current page then return to the beginning of the current page, otherwise go to the beginning of the previous page.
Shift Page-Up	If more than 10 seconds into the current chapter then return to the beginning of the current chapter, otherwise go to the beginning of the previous chapter.
Shift Page-Down	Skip to the end of the current chapter, ready to play at the beginning of the next chapter.
CTRL Plus	Increase reading speed by 10 percent to a maximum of 190 percent of normal.
CTRL Minus	Decrease reading speed by 10 percent to a minimum of 70 percent of normal.
CTRL 0	Set reading speed to normal.
F1	Launch browser containing Help Documentation.
F4	Open Setup Dialog
F5	Set Focus to Audiobook Player.
F6	Open and set focus to Table of Content Dialog.
F7	Open and set focus to Bookmarks Dialog.
F8	Launch Find Dialog.
F9	Launch Browser, connect to the Audio Pod Library, then Log In.
CTRL F9	Launch Browser, connect to the text based Audio Pod Card Catalog, then Log In.
F10	Accept Push-Audiobooks and new Bookmarks From Library.
F12	Launch PortaPod Loader.
Tab	Next Control
Shift Tab	Previous Control
Control V Shift Insert	Paste content of clipboard to the Audio Pod Player

Audiobook Player Specific Keys

Key	Action
Alt F4	Close Audio Pod
Control C Shift Delete	Put a Bookmark from the Current Book at the current position on the Clipboard

Illustration Dialog Keys

Key	Action
Escape Alt F4	Close Dialog

Table of Content Keys

Key	Action
Escape Alt F4	Close Dialog
Right Arrow Down Arrow	Select Next Table of Content Entry
Left Arrow Up Arrow	Select Previous Table of Content Entry
Enter Space	Position the loaded book to the selected Table of Content Position.
Control C Shift Delete	Place a Bookmark representing the Selected Table of Content Entry on the Clipboard

Bookmark Dialog Keys

Key	Action
Escape Alt F4	Close Dialog
Right Arrow Down Arrow	Select Next Bookmark
Left Arrow Up Arrow	Select Previous Bookmark
Enter Space	Load the Selected Book into the Audiobook player and position the audiobook to the bookmarked position. Move the selected audiobook to the top of the bookmark order.
Delete	Delete the Selected Bookmark.
Control C Shift Delete	Place a copy of the Selected Bookmark in the Clipboard

Microsoft Narrator & HotKeys

Microsoft Narrator is an accessibility tool provided with your Windows XP or Vista operating system. The XP version appears to be superior to the Vista version. This utility 'reads' elements of the user interface that will allow you to interact with it using keystrokes, hot keys or mouse pointer.

To open Narrator, use:

Start - All Programs – Accessories – Accessibility - Narrator.

To open Narrator using the keyboard:

Press CTRL+ESC, press R, type narrator, and then press ENTER.

Windows Narrator is a product of Microsoft Inc. At Audio Pod, we make our best effort to provide the accessibility components used by Narrator but we assume no responsibility for Windows Narrator, its operation or functionality. Narrator is not available for all languages.

Windows Narrator Hot Keys

Reading Options

Function	
To read an entire window	click the window and then press CTRL+SHIFT+SPACEBAR
To get information about the current item	press CTRL+SHIFT+ENTER
To get a more detailed description of an item	press CTRL+SHIFT+INSERT
To read the title bar of a window	press ALT+HOME
To read the status bar of a window	press ALT+END
To read the contents of an edit field	press CTRL+SHIFT+ENTER, or use the arrow keys
To silence the speech	press CTRL

Keyboard ShortCuts

To switch to another program	press ALT+TAB
To go to the next button or tool	press TAB
To go to the previous button or tool	press SHIFT+TAB
To select an item from a drop-down list	use the arrow keys
To select a check box or option button	press SPACEBAR
To open Utility Manager	press Windows Logo Key + U

Browser Keys (Internet Explorer & Firefox)
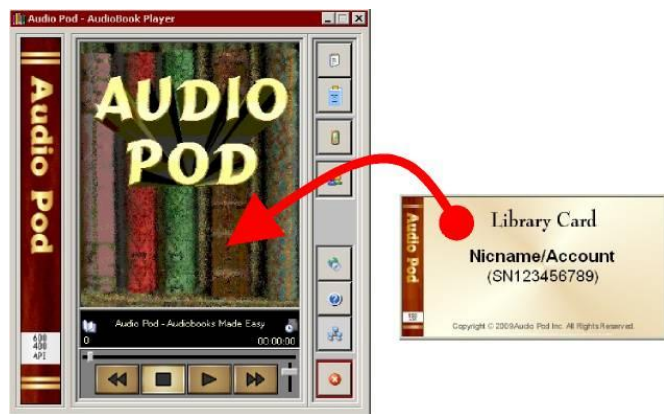
To Copy an Audiobook from a webpage	press Application Key to display options menu use arrow keys to move to 'Copy Link Location'/'Copy Shortcut press Enter (use Shift-Insert to paste it into Audio Pod)

Installation

In order to install and use the Audio Pod Audiobook Environment, you must be an Audio Pod member. Subscribing is easy and can be done by visiting our website (http://www.audiopod.ca). When you successfully become a member, you will receive a confirmation email message that will include your Drag-and-Drop Library Card. You will need this Library Card to complete your setup.

- On the Audio Pod website, go to the 'Download' page under the 'Getting Started' menu.
- Select the 'AudioPod Player' installation kit in '.zip' form.
- Download and open the Archive (.zip) file.
- Double click on 'setup.exe' to install.
- Close the archive.
- Start the Audio Pod Player
- From the confirmation email sent to you after registration, drag your Library Card from your mail client and drop it on the audiobook player. If your mail client will not allow this, select the entire email message (using the 'Select All' option in your email client) then either drag-and-drop the entire message to the audiobook player, or do a copy/paste of the message to the player. You will hear a triple beep confirming success. If this is not successful, open the setup dialog and manually enter your assigned Account Number and your password and press the OK Button. If you forgot your Account Number or password, you can request these using the Website menu option.
- Your setup is complete.

Return to the website, select a book, then... **Drag... Drop... and Play...**.

Library Card Options

Member	A text string to remind you who the owner of this library card is. The dropdown arrow lets you select another existing Library Card, allowing multiple members on this player.
Account #	The account number you were assigned when you subscribed.
Password	Your current password. When you change your password on the website, you will need to update this copy of it at the same time.
Workspace	The location of the workspace for Audio Pod will use for all members. Do not assign individual workspaces to multiple users. Audio Pod assume you have full rights to manage all content in this location. Do not assign an existing folder as workspace that is not an Audio Pod workspace. In the event that an existing location is used, the content of that folder may be deleted.
Space Limit	How much disk space (in MegaBytes) the audiobook player is allowed to use for this specific member. The audiobook player will operate efficiently in as little as 20 MB. Larger amounts of space should be assigned to maximize efficiency, and to handle a larger numbers of open books. Assigning too much space will waste your resources and increase management overhead. 500 to 2000 MB should be sufficient for most users with 10 to 20 open books. If you keep more open books, then more space will be beneficial.
Global Bookmarks	Allows your MP3 Bookmarks® to be available to you globally. That is, you can maintain the continuity of your audio experience even after you go from one computer to another. The use of Global MP3 Bookmarks® requires access to the Internet during bookmark operations. If not checked, MP3 Bookmarks® are retained locally only.
Retain Forever	Allows the Audio Pod to retain MP3 Bookmarks® until manually deleted. If unchecked, the Audio Pod will clean up the bookmark and associated resources when you reach 'THE END'.
New (Button)	Create a new Library Card for another member who also uses this player.
Delete (Button)	Delete the Library Card currently in the display.