

[Cornell University](#)
[Search Cornell](#)

CHRONICLE ONLINE

[Search Chronicle Online](#)

Dec. 5, 2006

Slope Radio, after a rocking first semester, is ready to expand in '07

By Daniel Aloï

Slope Radio, Cornell's online radio station that has become an established campus presence after one semester of operation, plans to expand into new offices and television broadcasting in 2007.

The concept for Slope Radio sprang from an experiment in the fall of 2005 by its three creators, Yaw Joseph Etse '08, Alex Zahn '07 and Jeff Bookman '07, who began an online broadcast from their fraternity house.

"We had some friends abroad who heard it and said we could do something more legitimate with it," said Etse, the organization's president and information technology director. Those friends have since brought "The Gong Show," a variety program on the London School of Economics' student radio station, to Slope Radio.

Over the summer, Etse met with Tracy Vosburgh, the university's director of multimedia development and production, who became the group's adviser. She referred him to Michael Tolomeo of Cornell Information Technologies, who helped with logistics and with using CIT's multimedia server for the broadcast.



Lindsay France/University Photography

Yaw Etse '08, right, and James Norton '08 banter about myspace.com and other hot topics on the radio program "Open Mic with Joey & Jimmy," which airs live on sloperadio.com Friday nights from 6 to 8 during the semester. Copyright ©

Cornell University

Slope Radio began broadcasting over the summer and officially launched Sept. 4. The service broadcasts online at <http://SlopeRadio.com> 24 hours a day, with a variety of live shows offered between 4 p.m. and 2 a.m. from a studio in Appel Commons. The rest of the day, an automated computer program plays music including hip-hop, reggae and indie rock.

"If you tune in, you're going to hear anything from country to rap, and people seem to have been pretty receptive of that, overall," Zahn said. "In essence, it's good that we have no specialization."

The live programming includes music, news, comedy, interviews with performers coming to Ithaca, and talk shows on topics from sports to sex. Zahn's show, "Pit Stop," Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m., explores music, musicians and trends, and provides historical context.

"One day we did a show on bands that had evolved thanks to Myspace, which is a huge scene in itself," he said.

Students are always dropping by. During the "Open Mic" show on Fridays, "we usually do a top 10 list and talk about recent events and have freshmen come in and talk," Etse said. "It's intended to be comical."

All 23 shows are archived and available as podcasts on the Slope Radio site, which has around 1,000 listeners a

Cornell Chronicle:

Daniel Aloï
 (607) 254-1159
dea35@cornell.edu

Media Contact:

Press Relations Office
 (607) 255-6074
pressoffice@cornell.edu

Related Information:

[Slope Radio](#)

day, Zahn said. Besides entertainment, the service provides practical training for broadcasters. (WVBR-FM, owned by the nonprofit Cornell Radio Guild, is managed by students but operates independently of the university.)

"A lot of students feel there aren't enough opportunities to practice the production side of broadcasting," Etse said. "We're working with Geri Gay [chair of the Department of Communication] to set up some kind of lab, hopefully for credit."

The student activities fee and some donations have helped with equipment and operating costs. "It's been a problem getting advertising and funding because we're new," Zahn said. "We don't need a lot, but it would be nice to have better microphones and sound quality. Right now we're making do."

Slope Radio's student officers will be working during the winter break on revamping programming and on steps to establish a channel on CUTV.

"We've talked about getting our own channel that has Cornell news and Cornell events," said Zahn, who has co-hosted "Campus Insights" on Ithaca's public access station. "We could even maybe move to satellite [radio] if we get a big enough following the next few years."

Participation in Slope Radio is open to anyone in the Cornell community, and the station is taking proposals for new shows and applications for officers, producers and DJs; for information see <http://sloperadio.com/cgi/wp/community.php>.

"It's a lot of work to get it running," Zahn said. "We want to have shows that are politically driven or news-driven. We would like to provide another venue besides the Daily Sun to know what's going on."

Slope Radio will move its operations to 107 Willard Straight Hall next semester, over spring break.

"Looking down the road, we really feel like Slope Radio is a service, and a way that students can express their opinions," Etse said. "Next semester, we're really focusing on getting more student groups to have their own shows." The Whistling Shrimp improvisational comedy group has already approached them to do a show, he said.

##

[| December story index](#) | [| Cornell Chronicle Online Home Page](#) |