

Review: Bookmark for public radio saves your place

March 11 2009, By DIRK LAMMERS , Associated Press Writer



The Radio Bookmark by Sky Blue Technologies is shown in this photo taken Tuesday, March 3, 2009, in Sioux Falls, S.D. The device allows public radio listeners to tag shows or stories so they can later catch them in their entirety on the Internet. (AP Photo/Dirk Lammers).

(AP) -- I'm sort of a public radio junkie, so if I'm in my car and the kids haven't usurped the radio dial, I'm likely tuned to "Morning Edition," "Marketplace" or "Fresh Air." Unfortunately, my short daily commute often leaves me catching just part of a compelling story or interview.

Help has arrived with the [Radio Bookmark](#), a [key chain](#) device that lets me tag shows or stories so I can later catch them in their entirety on the Internet.

The gadget from Sky Blue Technologies can't be bought. It's a gift

offered by at least 50 [public radio](#) stations to members who contribute at a certain level - typically about \$120 a year. Sky Blue founder Chris Baker says there's no plan to adapt the technology to [commercial radio](#).

Bookmarking a story, show or segment couldn't be simpler. Just hit a button and the device remembers the date and time you were listening to the station. (The version I tested actually sports two buttons marked "1" and "2," allowing you to set each to a different participating station in case you're in an area with more than available one public [radio channel](#) .)

The Radio Bookmark doesn't record anything. It simply makes a time stamp, and the real work is done once the device is plugged into a computer's [USB port](#).

After a simple installation process the first time you connect the bookmark - in which you choose your station and set up the playback software - whenever you plug the device in, it brings up a list of bookmarked clips in your Web browser.

The bookmark can time-stamp up to 128 radio segments, a total you're unlikely to exceed because the list is cleared whenever you connect the device to the computer. The length and specificity of a clip can vary. Some presses of the bookmark will later call up an entire 60-minute show, while other times you'll see individual segments.

For instance, if you hit the button while listening to Garrison Keillor's News from Lake Wobegon during "A Prairie Home Companion," you'll be offered a 16-minute clip of just that bit.

The audio player is anchored in the Web page's bottom frame, leaving most of the top section for NPR, PRI or American Public Media to display links to related material or a text transcript of the story or show.

How soon you can listen to a particular clip depends on how quickly the station or network uploads it to the Internet. Some will be available in a matter of hours, while others could take a day or so.

There's nothing technologically complex about the Radio Bookmark, but it's a great way to ensure you don't miss something that briefly caught your ear.

On the Net:

<http://www.radiobookmark.com>

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