Anchor’s redesigned app focuses on podcasting

If you’ve always wanted to start a podcast, Anchor’s new update is for you. The shortform audio app is fully embracing podcasting today with the launch of Anchor 3.0, which includes a redesigned app, the service’s debut on the web, and tools to distribute a show and track its success.

Anchor’s app used to be a bit like Snapchat for audio: you’d record a bunch of brief audio clips, and they’d disappear from your channel after 24 hours. Now, that format’s gone in favor of longer shows that stick around as long as you want and are meant to be listened to outside the app.

Image: Anchor

With the new update, creators will be able to string their audio clips together into one long recording — aka a podcast — and distribute it to Apple’s and Google’s podcast platforms, as well as Spotify, Overcast, and Pocketcasts. Anchor will handle hosting the podcast, and it says the service will be free, no matter how popular a podcast gets or how many podcasts you want to host.

The app has now been redesigned to focus on podcast creation. When you open it, you’ll launch right into a recording screen. All you have to do is pick the phone up to your ear and start talking to get a recording going. There are a bunch of other really nice features for making the podcast feel richer and more interactive, too: Anchor includes built-in sound effects

and transitions, it lets you pull in music clips from Spotify and Apple Music (though you can't export these for listeners outside the Anchor app), and there's a neat feature that lets listeners send you messages, which you can drop right into a podcast to respond to.

None of that is new to Anchor – it's all been there for existing creators – but the big difference is that you'll now take all the audio segments you've recorded, drag them into the order you want, and then save it all as one big file, instead of pushing the clips to your Anchor station one by one.

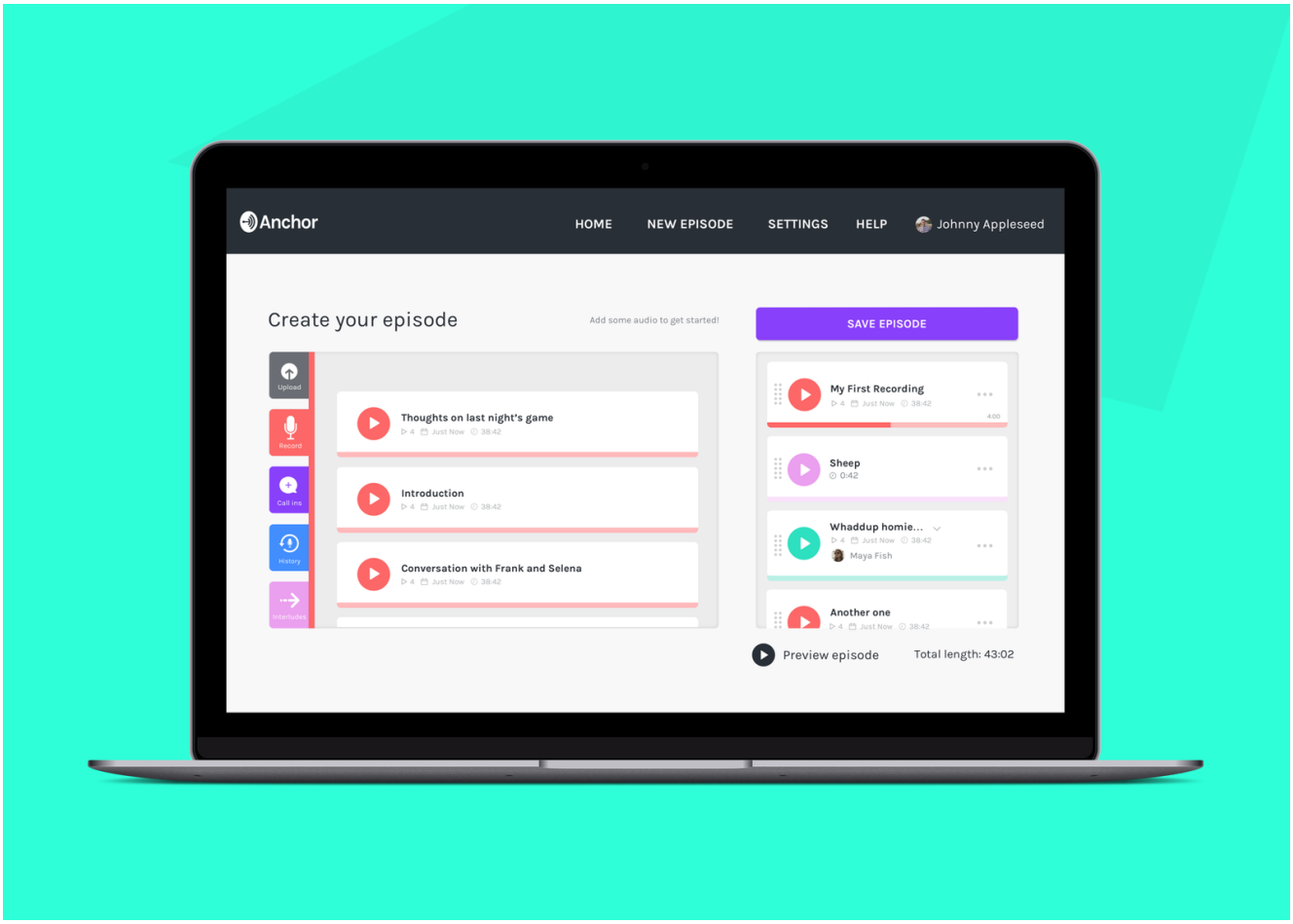


Image: Anchor

Anchor is also launching on the web today, where nearly all of those same creation tools will be present. (Music, notably, is

missing, but you can upload your own files.) I saw Anchor CEO Mike Mignano demo the site, and it looks impressively easy to use — it basically turns podcasting into a drag-and-drop experience, where you just organize clips of audio and drag in the effects you need.

These tools almost certainly won't be enough for pros — you can't edit out mistakes or awkward pauses or do anything to cut down on a noisy background, for instance — but it should be plenty for someone who's just getting started and doesn't want to deal with all that. That said, Anchor does have some notable names working on its platform, including *BuzzFeed News* and *The Outline*, but it sounds like they're both using the service for distribution rather than creation.

"I think what we're best at right now is empowering creators." And mostly, distribution seems to be what Anchor's web presence is for. Creators will see analytics telling them about how many listens their podcasts have received. And listeners will be able to visit a dedicated page for each podcast, from where they'll be able to play the episodes and find subscribe buttons for all the podcast platforms Anchor supports.

You'll still be able to find and discover shows inside of Anchor, but the experience is different than it used to be. "Listen" is in its own tab, where you'll open into something that looks reminiscent of Apple's App Store, filled with new and featured podcasts. It looks like a fine place to discover shows, but it clearly isn't the app's main focus anymore. "I think what we're best at right now is empowering creators," Mignano told me. "Our view is: both are super important; we think it's more impactful right now to focus on creators."

Mignano also spoke to how Anchor might eventually make money and said it won't be off of creators. "We view creators having to pay for services as friction. Even $10 a month will stop an ambitious creator," he said. Instead, the goal will be to help

podcasters monetize their shows. That could be through pairing them with advertisers, or through enabling subscriptions or tip jars. “There are a bunch of proven models out there that you can imagine we’ll explore,” he said.

https://www.theverge.com/2018/2/22/17033344/anchor-3-podcasting-tools-platform-hosting