Show: Tech Bytes
Host: Todd Miller
Guest:
Overview: Tech Bytes is a technology podcast, produced by the Digital Services department at Niles-Maine District Library about technology news and useful technology tips.
Episode: Tech Bytes #37 - Google Notebook LM & Telehealth in the Library
Episode Description: In this episode, we discuss Google's new NotebookLM tool and a new Telehealth Booth at Waukegan Public Library.

[Music - Tech Bytes theme]

Hi, and welcome back to Tech Bytes. I'm your host, Todd, and today, we're talking about a new artificial intelligence tool that Google has rolled out, called NotebookLM.

NotebookLM is a research assistant, which allows a user to upload one or multiple files and that information is then summarized. One option for that summary is an AI-generated deep-dive, two-person conversation in the style of a podcast episode.

To be honest, NotebookLM was the first time that I really had a jaw-dropping response to an artificial intelligence tool. Within a matter of moments after reading a news blurb about it, I opened the tool, uploaded the transcript for a past episode of Tech Bytes, and waited for a couple of minutes. The resulting distillation of the transcript, presented in the format of a podcast episode produced results that truly shocked me.

So, here's what we're going to do… After the break, I'm going to talk about a new telehealth booth at Waukegan Public Library, which allows patrons to conduct private telehealth appointments from the library. Then we'll have another break, and after that, I'll play NotebookLM-generated audio about the topic. I uploaded both the transcript that I wrote as well as the PDF of a news article from the Lake County News-Sun about the grand opening of that Telehealth Booth to give the language model the appropriate context for the topic.

We'll be right back.

[Music - Tech Bytes theme]

Ok, we're back, and like I mentioned, I want to talk about a brand new Telehealth Booth at the Waukegan Public Library. A colleague shared a recent article from the Lake County News-Sun by Steve Sadin about the grand opening of the library's Telehealth Booth, and how it provides access to healthcare for the library's patrons.

From the photos in the article, the booth looks like a standalone box or pod, with a frosted, sliding glass door. Inside, there is a desk and chair, along with a web-cam-enabled computer, a strong internet connection, a headset, medical equipment like a blood pressure monitoring

device, and other helpful information for patrons who book the space for conducting telehealth video calls with medical providers.

The article quotes Executive Director of Waukegan Public Library, Tiffany Verzani, who said of the booth, "Our new telehealth booth aligns with the library's focus on digital equity and access to technology, health and wellness supports, and providing new ways for community members to connect with leaders, experts, and each other in a safe and welcoming environment."

In my experience in the Digital Services department of the Niles-Maine District Library's computer lab, people often attempt to use public computers to participate in video calls, be it for medical, legal, professional purposes or otherwise. Since the public computers don't have cameras and microphones, some people encounter access issues if a web-cam-enabled laptop and/or a private study room is not available for them to use. Something like this booth allows a patron to book it in advance of an appointment, and know that the tools and space will be available for them at the right time.

I'm really excited to see this type of service coming to a nearby library, and I hope that this trend of innovative digital services continues to bring more access opportunities for members of the community.

[Music - Tech Bytes theme]

Ok, now, like I mentioned, I'm going to play a sample of audio that was created by NotebookLM, with my transcript and the aforementioned news article as the context for the generated audio.

[Artificial Intelligence-Generated Audio - Google NotebookLM]

Ok, a real human is back in the room. And what we previously heard was a piece of audio that was generated by Google's new AI tool, NotebookLM.

Tech Bytes is recorded in Studio A on the lower level of the Niles-Maine District Library, where Niles-Maine cardholders have access to the recording equipment and software that were used to produce this episode.

Thank you for listening, and if you have any technology questions, you can find us on the lower level, at the Library's technology desk. You can also email us at digitalservices@nileslibrary.org.

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Last, the thoughts and ideas portrayed on this podcast do not necessarily reflect those of Niles-Maine District Library.

[Music - Tech Bytes theme]