



U.S. PODCAST 360 REPORT 2021

MARCH 2021

Methodology: U.S. Podcast & Audio 360 2021



STUDY TIMING



U.S. Podcast & Audio 360 data was collected **February 19th through March 3, 2021.**

DATA COLLECTION



Online surveys using third-party panels were used to collect responses.

SAMPLE SIZE



Interviews were conducted among a total of **507 U.S. Gen Pop Ages 13+** and **2,013 Podcast Listeners**

QUOTA BALANCING



Gen Pop data is **representative of U.S. census population** including age, gender, ethnicity, and region.

CLICK BALANCING



For Podcast Listeners, click / contact balancing was done to ensure that the body of respondents who had a chance to take the survey were **nationally representative.**

Please [contact us](#) if you are interested in learning about additional or custom analyses.

Key Audiences



The following audiences are explored throughout the report.

GEN POP

U.S. General Population Ages
13+



MUSIC LISTENERS

Listened to music in the past
12 months (audio or video)



PODCAST LISTENERS

Listened to podcasts in the
past 12 months



AUDIO USERS

Listened to music, podcasts,
audiobooks, radio, and/or
meditation mindfulness in the
past 12 months



GEN Z

Born 1997-2007
(Ages 13-23)



MILLENNIALS

Born 1981-1996
(Ages 24-39)



GEN X

Born 1965-1980
(Ages 40-55)



BOOMERS / SILENT GEN

Born before 1965
(Ages 56+)

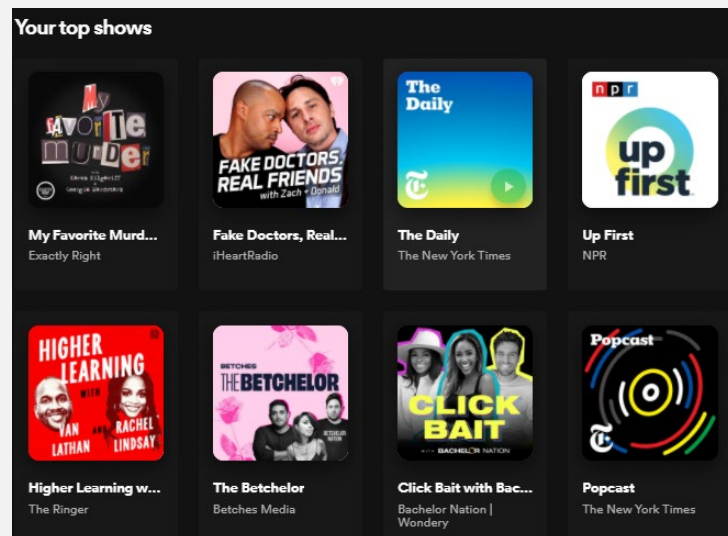


Context : Shows vs. Episodes

Throughout the survey, respondents were asked about **podcast shows and episodes**. Respondents were instructed that:

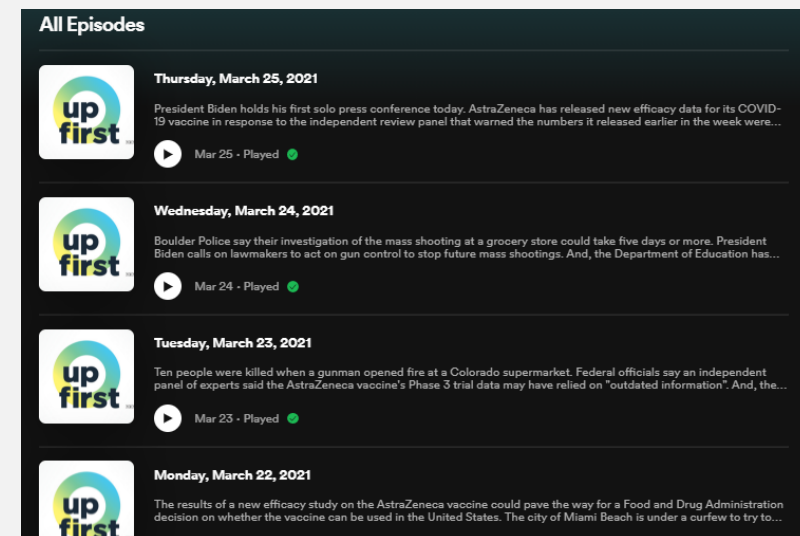
SHOWS

Refers to the **overall podcast program** (i.e., The Daily, Crime Junky, Pod Save America)



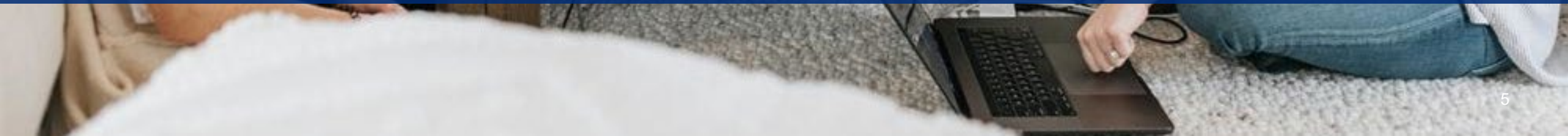
EPISODES

Refers to the **individual installments** within the series





HIGHLIGHTS

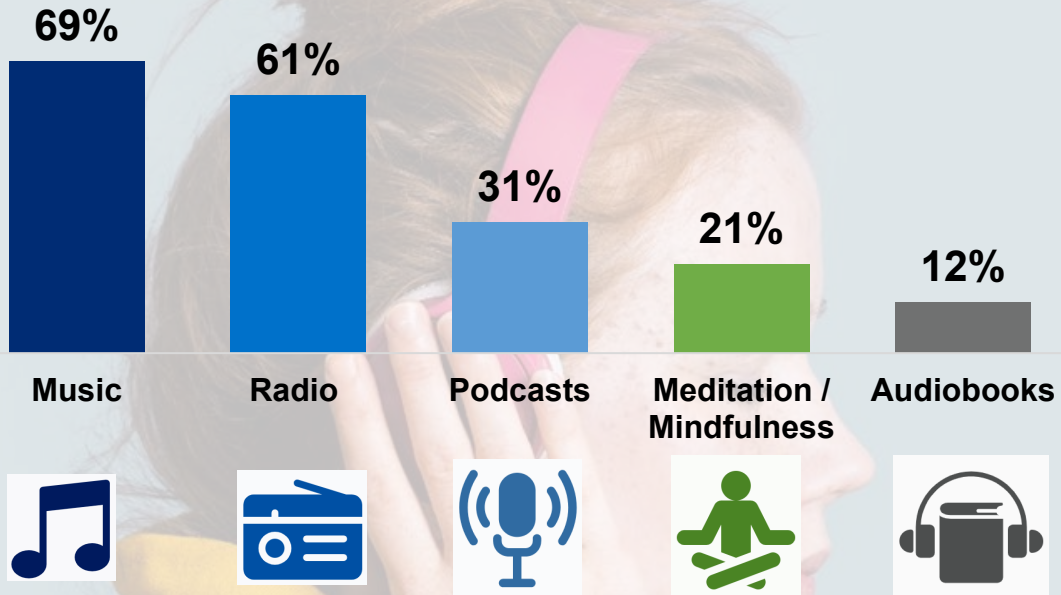


Despite niche engagement, podcasts see big spend potential



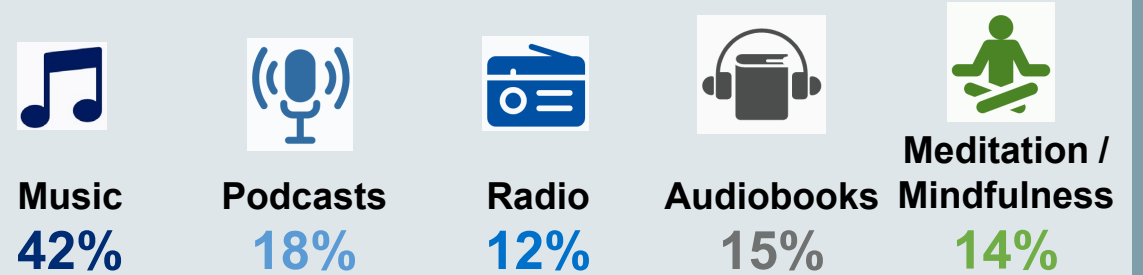
AUDIO LISTENERSHIP

Among Total Respondents



SHARE OF AUDIO SPEND

Among Gen Pop Audio Users



MILLENNIAL ENGAGEMENT

Millennials are **highly engaged with audio** entertainment, **spending more** in a typical month and being more likely to **listen to podcasts** than the average consumer

Listeners seek convenience and versatility for multitasking



DEVICES USED

Among Podcast Listeners



66%

of Podcast Listeners use **smartphones** for convenient listening at home and on-the-go

PODCAST LISTENING LOCATIONS & OCCASIONS

Among Podcast Listeners



My home



Relaxing



Car



Chores



Cooking



Exercising

TYPICAL LISTENING TIME

Among Podcast Listeners



Morning



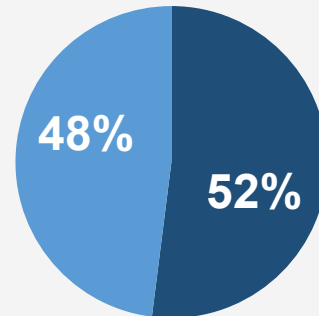
Afternoon



Evening

PRIMARY VS. BACKGROUND

Among Podcast Listeners



- Primary Listening
- Background Listening



Popular formats and genres entertain and educate

MOTIVATIONS FOR LISTENING

Among Podcast Listeners



#1

To be entertained



#2

To learn more about a topic



#3

To learn something new



#4

To stay informed

TOP GENRES

Among Podcast Listeners

News & Politics



34%

Comedy



33%

Entertainment



29%

Educational



29%

True Crime



28%

Society & Culture



26%

Sports



24%

A combination of offerings drives streaming interest



TOP PLATFORM FEATURES

Among Podcast Listeners Currently Using A Podcast Streaming Platform



High quality
audio



Price of
subscription



Easy to use
interface



Expansive library
of podcasts

IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC

Among Podcast Listeners



90%

Listen to **music**

56%

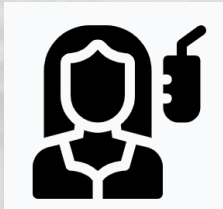
Agree "I prefer to listen to
podcasts on the **same**
service I use to stream music"

Hosts have the power to influence listening and spending



HOST INFLUENCE

Among Podcast Listeners



77%

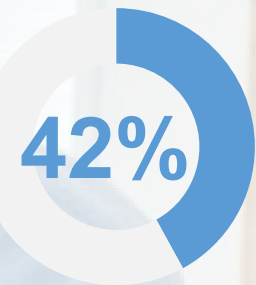
Of Podcast Listeners agree that “**Host personality is important to me in deciding which podcasts to listen to**”

66%

Of Podcast Listeners are more likely to listen to a podcast if it is **recommended or promoted** by a podcast they already enjoy

ADVERTISING

Among Podcast Listeners



Trust ads more when the podcast **host(s) recommend** the product or service

Exclusive content plays an important role



EXCLUSIVE CONTENT ATTITUDES

Among Podcast Listeners



54%

Agree *"I would try a new streaming platform if they offered an **exclusive podcast** that interested me"*

52%

Agree *"I would **follow my favorite podcasts** to a different streaming platform"*

31%

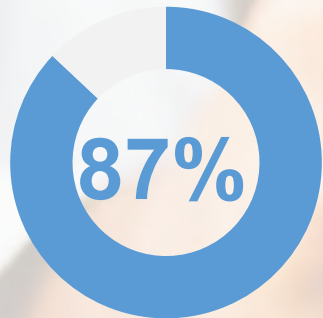
Of current podcast streaming service users consider **"Offers exclusive content"** a key factor when choosing a podcast streaming platform

Advertising is welcome and enjoyed when relevant



ADVERTISING AWARENESS & EFFECTIVENESS

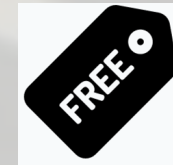
Among Podcast Listeners



Of Podcast Listeners
hear advertising during
their shows
(only 13% skip ads)

ADVERTISING ATTITUDES

Among Podcast Listeners



77%

Agree “Ads are **acceptable** as long as I’m able to listen to podcasts **for free**”



56%

Agree “I would like ads that are **more tailored** to the products or services **I would actually buy**”

Revenue opportunities should be explored further



PODCAST EVENT INTEREST

Among Podcast Listeners

Likely to attend in the next 12 months

21%

In-person
podcast
events



29%

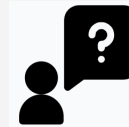
Virtual
podcast
events

WILLING TO PAY FOR...

Among Podcast Listeners



Bonus
episodes



Ability to ask
questions



Video
episodes



Host meet and
greet

MERCHANDISE

Among Podcast Listeners

38%

Have purchased
**podcast
merchandise**










53%



of Podcast Listeners agree “I
am likely to watch if my
favorite podcast were turned
into a **TV series or movie**”

Recommendations for the podcast and audio industry




-  ✓ Target **Millennial listeners** who are more likely to **listen to podcasts** and invest more heavily in **audio formats** for entertainment.
-  ✓ Keep episodes **within an hour** to keep listeners engaged and returning. A **targeted approach** may be needed to focus on **entertainment vs. education** to draw in non-listeners and focus on the right competitors.
-  ✓ Utilize **social media** and **cross promotion on other podcasts** to spread the word about new shows, especially leaning on the **influence of podcast networks and hosts**. Social should also be leveraged to position podcasts as entertaining and educational **to convince non-listeners**.
-  ✓ Streaming platforms should continue to **integrate podcasts and other audio offerings**, especially music, as listeners seek ease of use and an expansive library of content all in one place. Services already offering this are more likely to convert users to **paid subscribers** and see **greater satisfaction** from current users.
-  ✓ Advertising partners should prioritize ads at the **beginning of the episode** which grab consumer attention. Furthermore, utilize **host influence** and keep commercials **entertaining** and **relevant** to the specific audience.
-  ✓ Consider other areas to **monetize** beyond streaming subscriptions and advertising. Special attention should be given to **merchandise and events** which have a sizeable group of consumers' interest.
-  ✓ Explore opportunities to **adapt podcast content** for the big screen as Podcast Listeners are big **movie and TV watchers** and are more likely to pay for these forms of entertainment than the average consumer.

Beyond the topline insights offered here, the full Podcast 360 report further explores:

- ✓ Deeper dive on audio landscape listening, time, and money spend
- ✓ Demographics of podcast listeners
- ✓ Genres with the most active listeners
- ✓ Sources of discovery for podcasts
- ✓ Usage and satisfaction with specific podcast streaming platforms
- ✓ Types of ads listeners have heard and preferred
- ✓ Podcast Listeners' engagement with other forms of entertainment
- ✓ Insights on generational differences

To purchase the full Podcast 360 report or commission analysis to gain deeper insights into how podcasting fits within the entertainment landscape, please [contact us](#).

About the Study

The background of the slide is a photograph of a hand holding a smartphone. The phone's screen shows a podcast application interface with a 'RADIO HIP' header, a play button, and a list of podcast episodes. The background is dark with bokeh light effects.

This study is an in-depth look at consumers' behaviors, attitudes and preferences for engaging with podcasts and other audio content such as music, radio, and audiobooks. It includes actionable insights on what specific audiences are looking for, what drives discovery, and what opportunities exist in the podcast and audio landscape.

Insight Categories



THE AUDIO ECOSYSTEM

- Consumption across popular audio activities (e.g. podcasts, music, audiobooks, talk radio, music radio, guided meditation, etc.)
- Time spent and share of time across audio activities
- Money spent and share of money across audio activities
- Devices used for audio activities

PODCAST CONSUMPTION

- Frequency (e.g. daily, weekly, etc.)
- Share of time listening actively vs. passively in the background
- Listening Occasion (e.g. while driving, exercising, working, etc.)
- Post-listening behaviors (e.g. post a rating, review podcast, discuss with friends, follow on social media, etc.)

PLATFORM

- Platform awareness and usage
- Subscriptions
- Satisfaction of currently used service

PODCAST CONTENT SELECTION

- Typical format listened to (e.g. series, ongoing, scripted vs. non-fiction, etc.)
- Episode length
- Number of shows listened to in a typical week
- Top genres
- Podcast discovery sources
- Motivations for listening (e.g. to learn something new, to relax and calm myself, etc.)

Insight Categories (con't)



ENGAGEMENT

- Engagement with show / hosts on social media, membership, and video platforms (e.g. Instagram, Twitch, YouTube, Patreon, etc.)
- Types of accounts followed (e.g. hosts, producers, show, media company, etc.)
- Willingness to pay extra for added features (e.g. extra episodes, video episodes, fan club membership, etc.)

ADVERTISING

- Types of ads (e.g. host-read, discount codes, etc.)
- Perceptions of ad types / likelihood to buy
- Willingness to pay for a premium, ad-free model
- Products / services purchased through podcasts

EVENTS & MERCHANDISE

- Live show interest and attendance
- Virtual show interest and attendance
- Merchandise interest and purchase behavior

ENTERTAINMENT INTERESTS

- Entertainment interests (e.g. sports, music, games, esports, etc.)
- Cable subscription
- Streaming services currently subscribed to
- Music genre fanship
- Film & TV genre fanship
- Likelihood to watch if favorite podcast were turned into a TV show or movie