Acast

Acast's Guide to Understanding Podcast Listeners in the U.S.

Acast Intelligence & Nielsen Media

2021 Report

Current Usage & Podcasts Attitudes

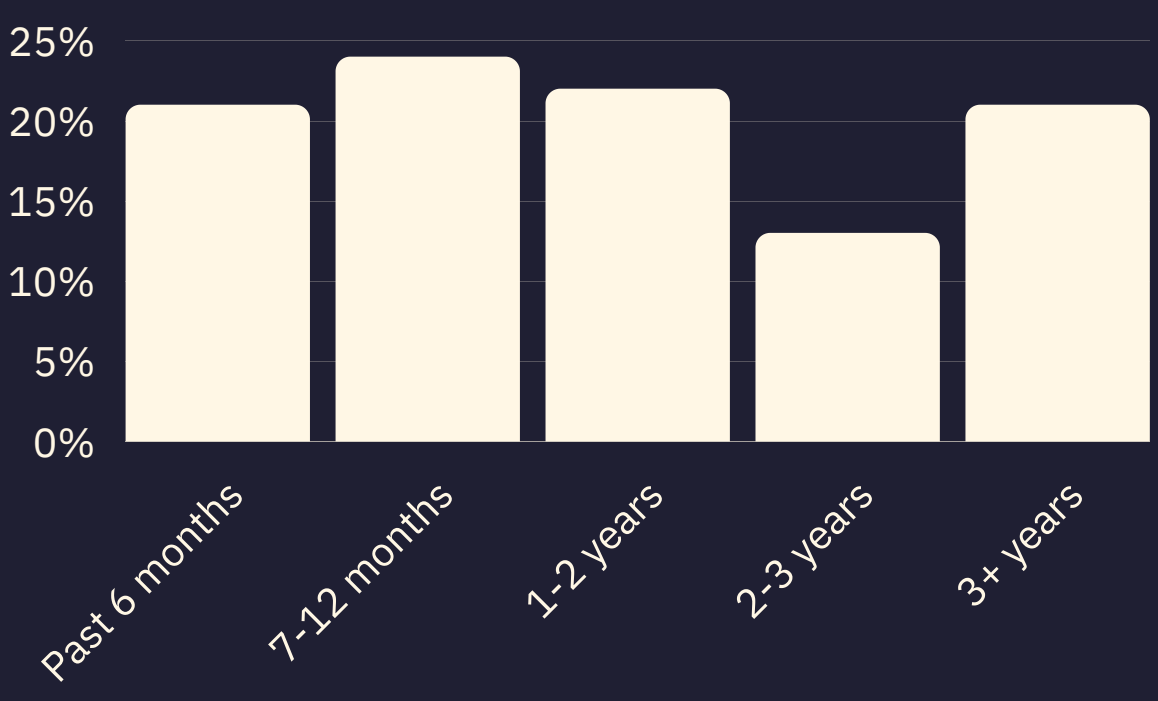
Podcasts hold listeners' attention, are attracting new listeners, and are appealing for a wide variety of reasons.

Podcasts deliver fantastic levels of listener retention.

62% of podcast listeners will listen to at least half of a podcast that is over an hour long.

57% of listeners listen to podcasts multiple times.

New listeners begin to listen to podcasts every day.

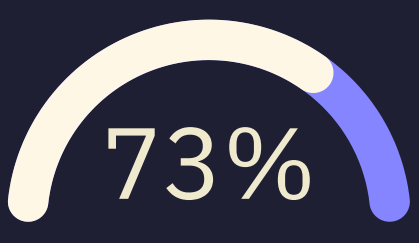


21% of listeners began listening to podcasts in the past 6 months. The same amount (21%) as more established podcast listeners who have been listening for 3+ years.

Reasons for listening to podcasts:

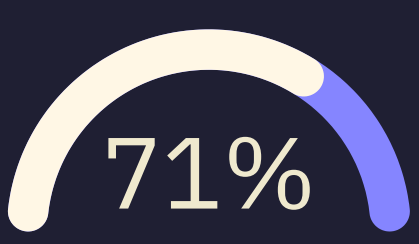
VAST

73% of listeners agree that there is a podcast available for all my interests



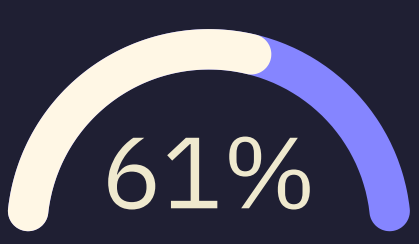
INSIGHTFUL

71% of listeners agree podcasts give deeper insight than other media channels



FRIENDSHIP

61% of listeners agree their favorite podcasters feel like friends



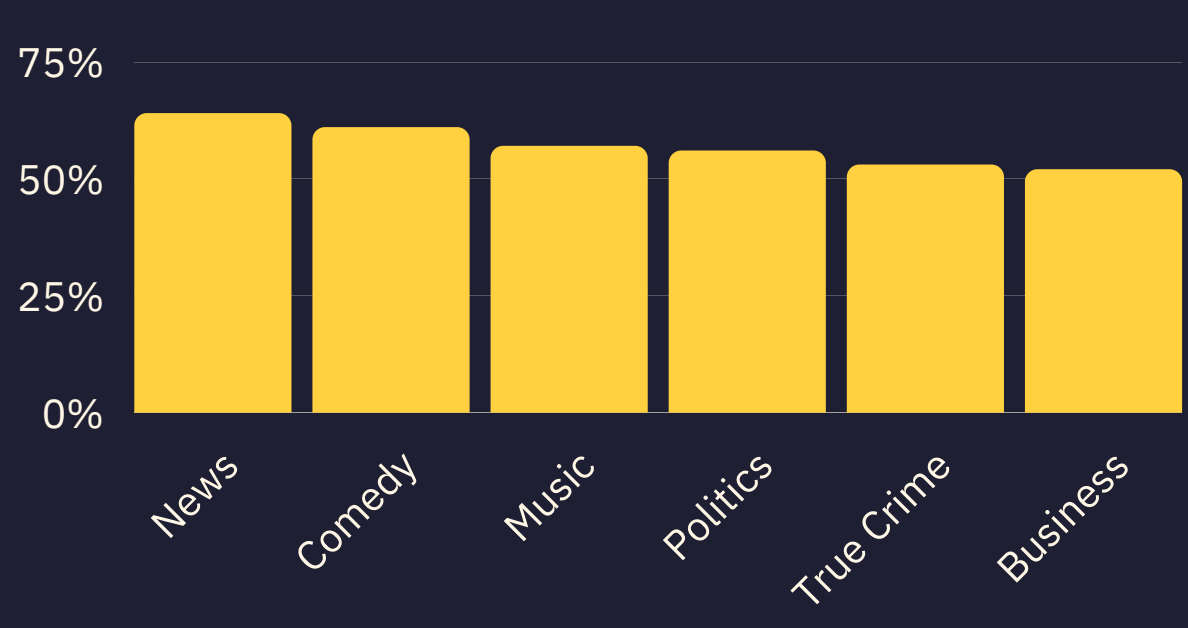
Data via Nielsen Media, N=2000, USA Monthly Podcast Listeners, Conducted in July 2021, A18+

What They're Listening To

Podcast listeners are consuming both fiction and non-fiction podcasts, in a variety of genres and episode formats.

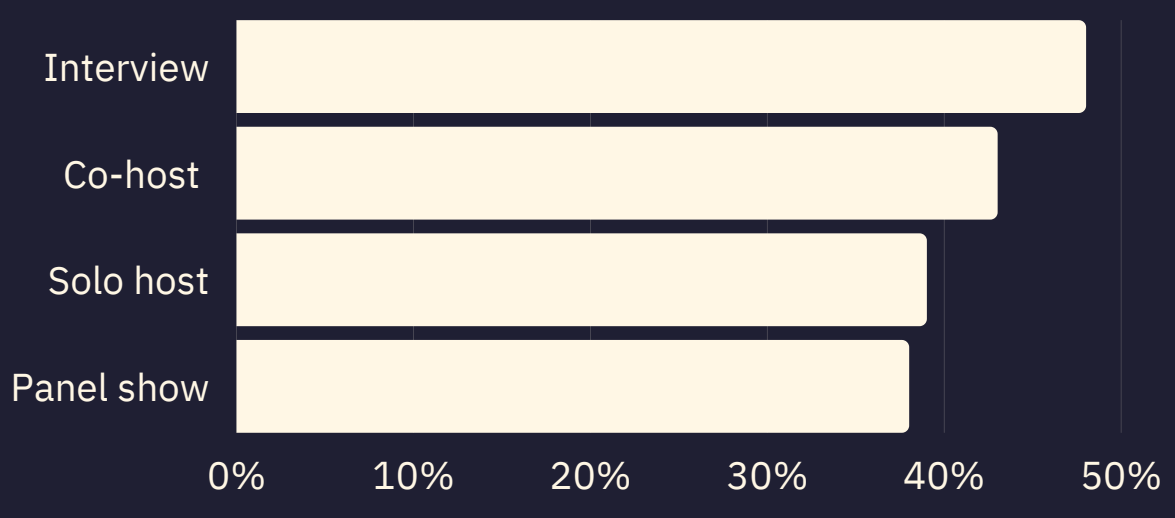
The majority of podcast listeners are listening to both fiction and non-fiction.

News and Comedy podcasts are most popular.



64% of listeners tune into News podcasts at least weekly, more than any other genre. Close behind are Comedy podcasts (61%).

Podcast formats they are listening to:



Interview podcasts with a host interviewing a different guest each episode are the most listened to podcast format. The 2nd most popular format are podcasts with regular co-hosts discussing topics together.

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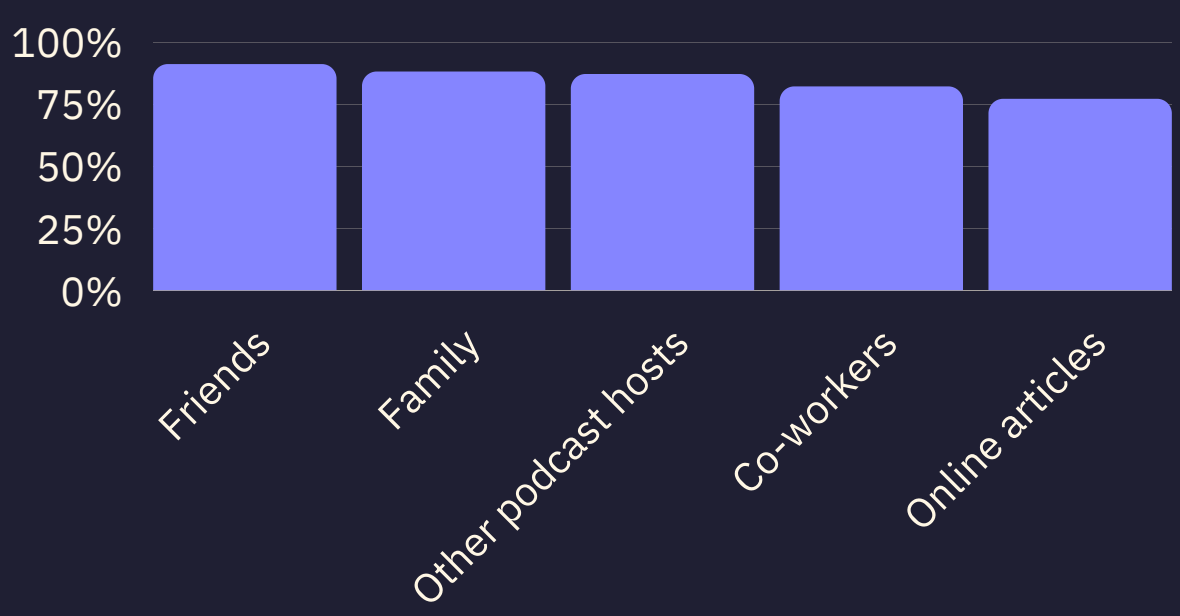
Discovering New Podcasts

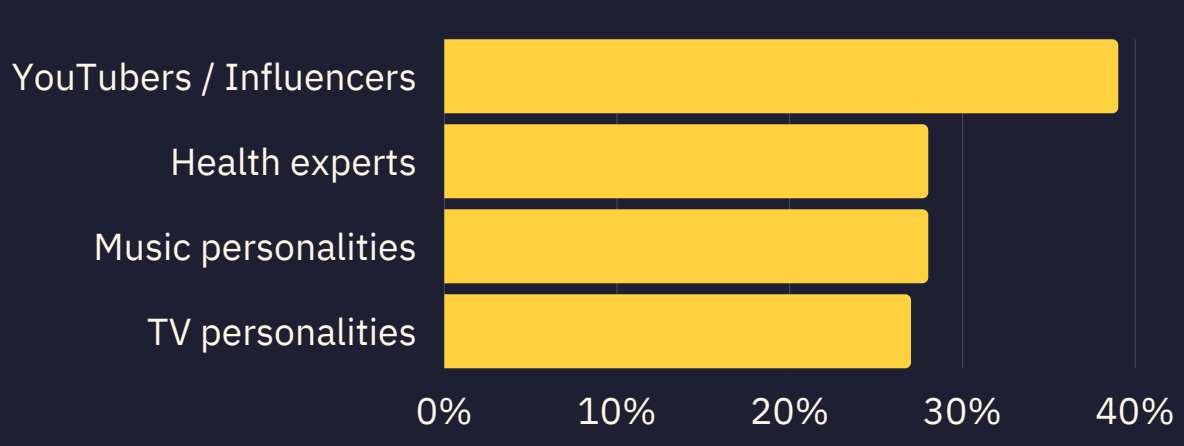
Listeners are trusting of a variety of sources for recommendations, and want their favorite social media stars to start podcasts.

Listeners trust podcast hosts nearly as much as family for podcast recommendations.



A strong strategy for podcast creators and companies to grow their audience is through podcast advertising and cross promotion.

Who they want new shows from:



Listeners want new podcasts from a variety of creators, with YouTubers / social media influencers being most preferred to join the medium.

Top 5 factors that influence podcast discovery:

#1 - Genre Category (87%)

#2- Description (84%)

#3- Episodes Length (80%)

#4 - Ease of Finding Similar Podcasts (80%)

#5 - Frequency of Episode Release (76%)

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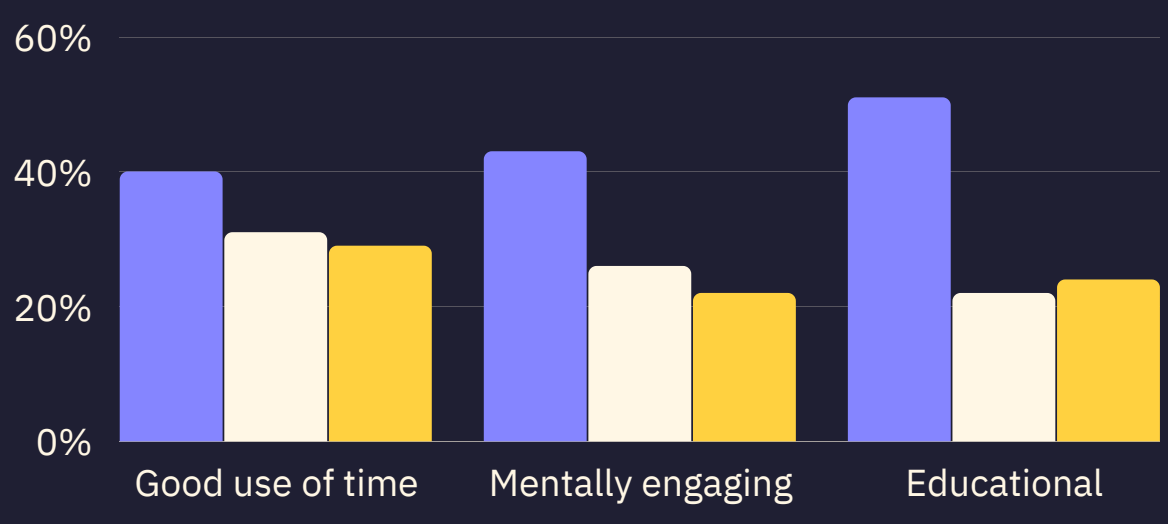
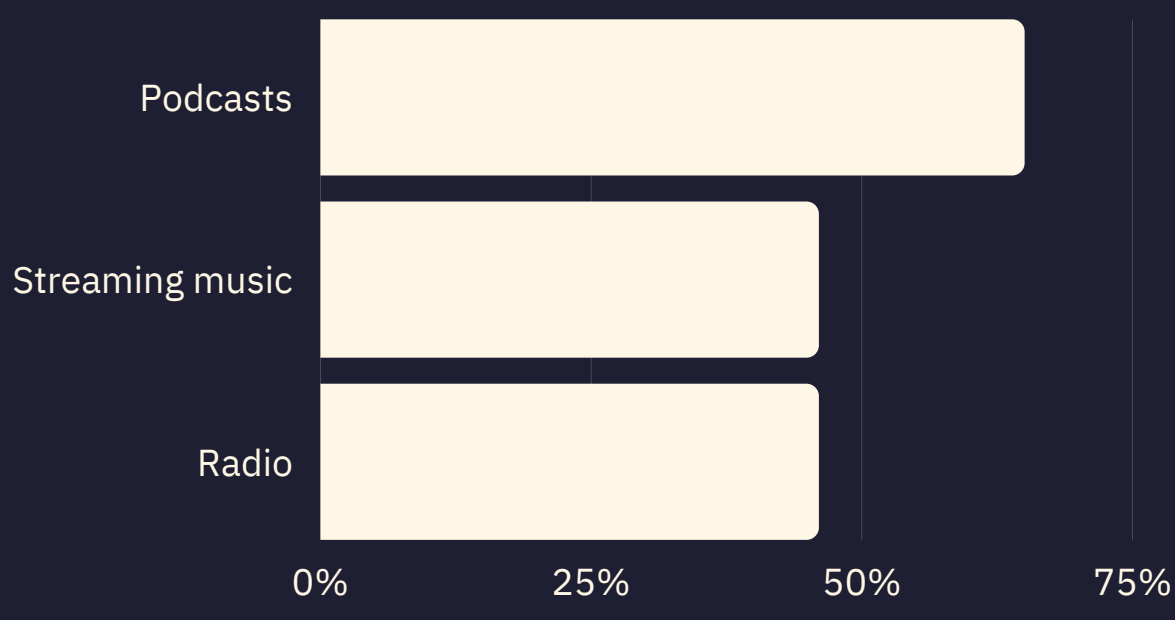
What Makes Podcasts Unique

People think podcasts are a good use of their time, which leads to high current levels of engagement and intent to listen more in the future.

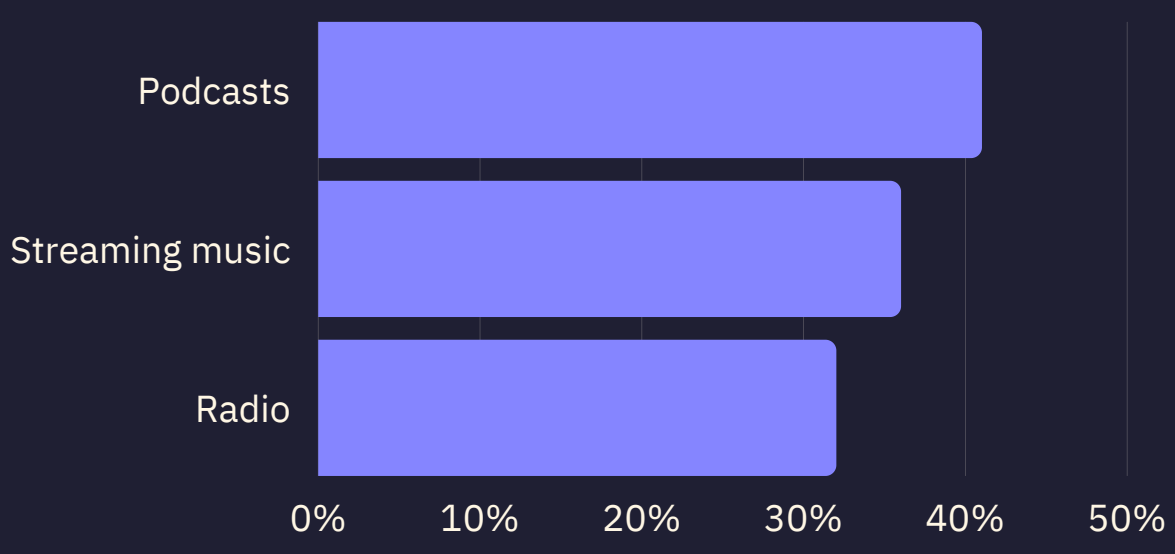
Podcasts are more associated with being a good use of time, mentally engaging and educational than **streaming music** and **radio**.



Podcasts drive higher levels of focus than other audio.



In the next 6 months, consumption of podcasts is likely to increase in comparison to other types of audio.



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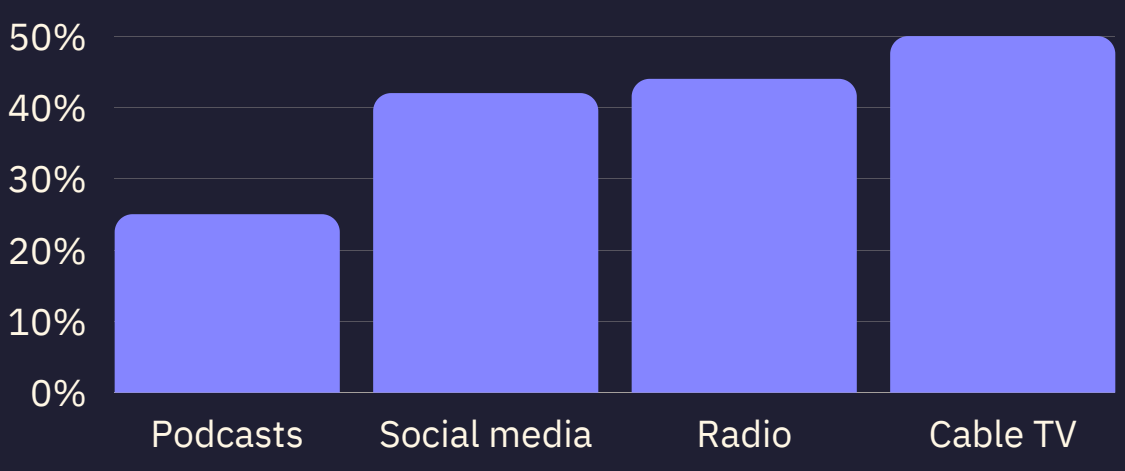
Ad Preferences & Attitudes

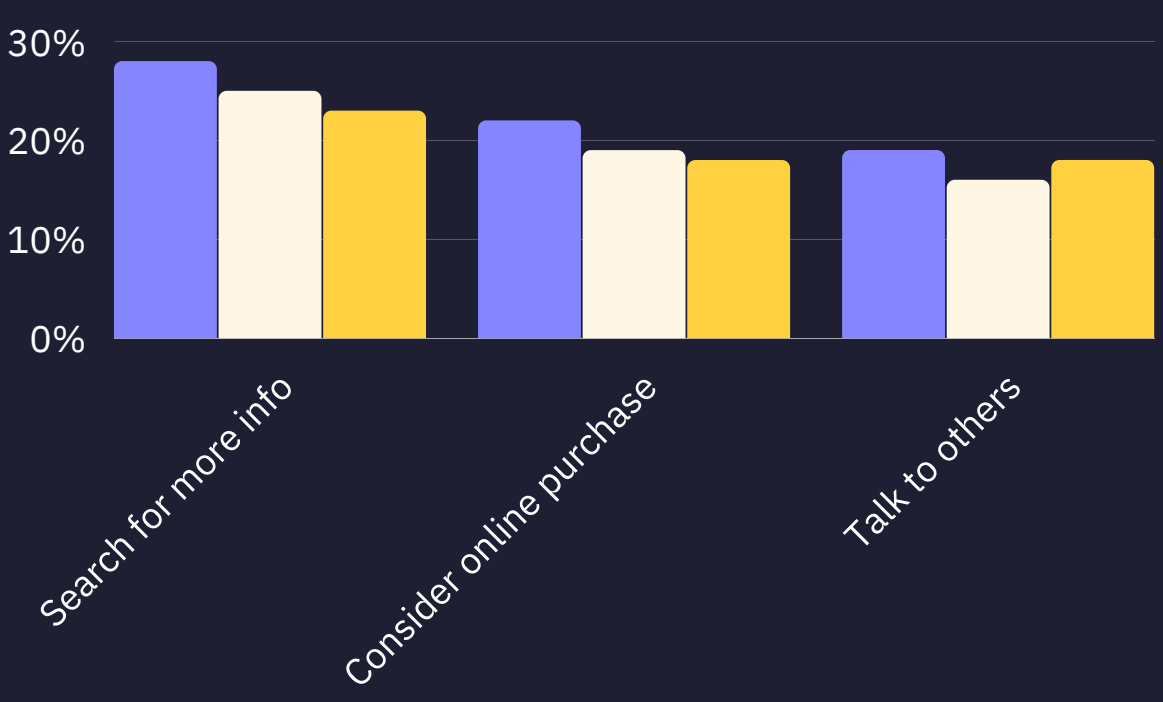
Listeners think podcasts have fewer ads than other media, are more likely to take action because of podcasts ads, and listen to ads to support their favorite hosts.

Unlike other media, people do not think podcasts have too much advertising.



Only 25% of podcast listeners think that podcasts have too many ads, compared to 50% for cable TV.

Ads on podcasts are more effective at getting listeners to take action than **ads on streaming music** and **ads on radio.**

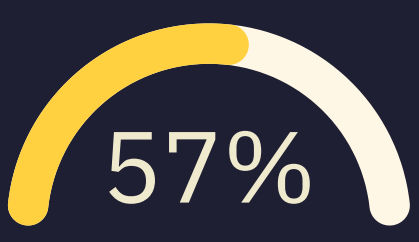


*Nielsen research also shows that podcast listeners recall an impressive ~2/3 of ads.

Podcast Advertising Attitudes:

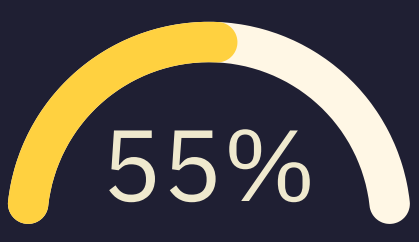
SUPPORT

57% of listeners agree that listening to ads is is an important way to support my favorite podcast hosts



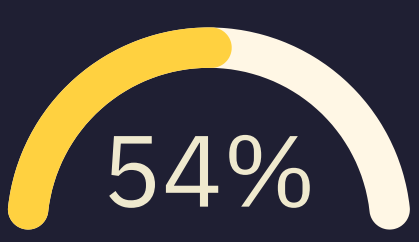
POSITIVITY

55% of listeners agree they develop more positive opinions towards brands that advertise on their podcasts



TRUST

54% of listeners agree that they generally believe podcast hosts when they endorse products or services



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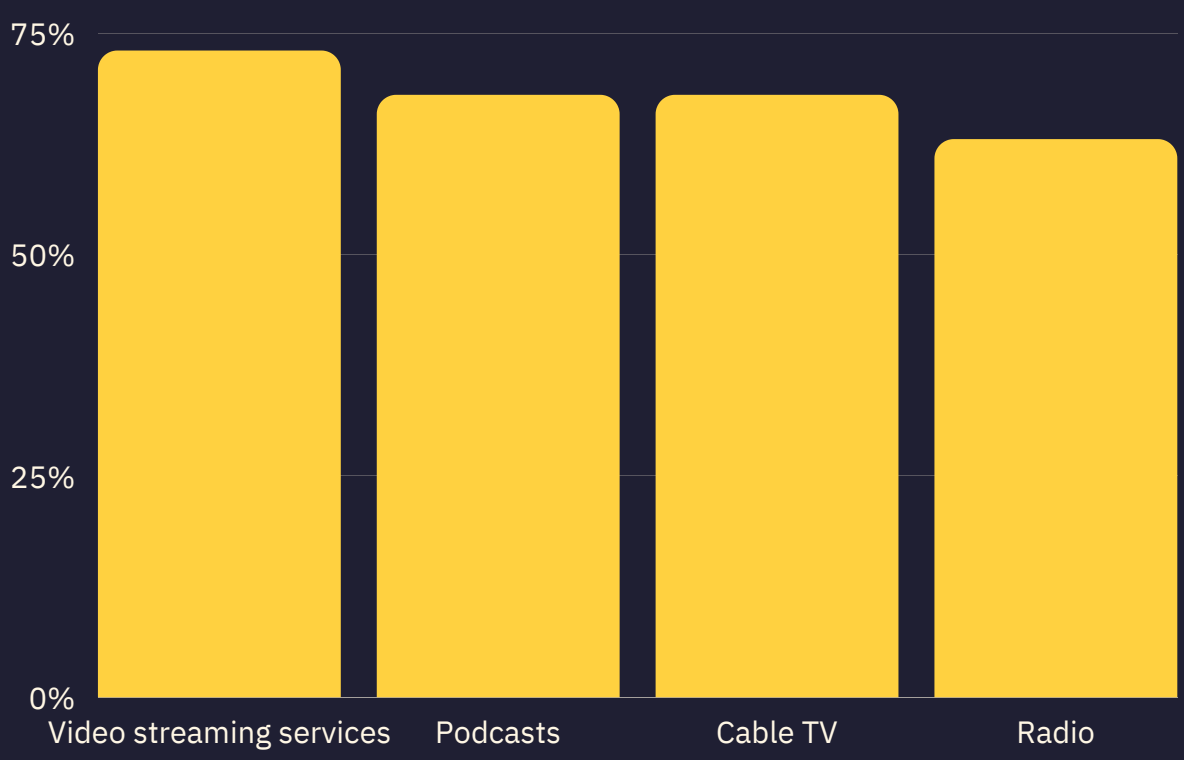
*Nielsen 2020 Insights

Inclusivity in Content & Advertising

Most podcast listeners think podcasts are generally inclusive of minority audiences, but work is still needed to include all, particularly in advertising.

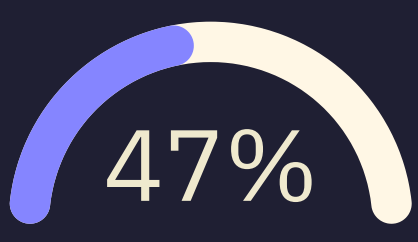
68% of podcast listeners think that podcasts are inclusive of minority audiences, similar to most other media channels.



Advertisements on podcasts are perceived as more inclusive than radio ads, but most podcast listeners do not think that racial, gender identity, or sexual orientation minority audiences are well represented in podcast advertising, **meaning that advertisers have to do to better represent everyone.**

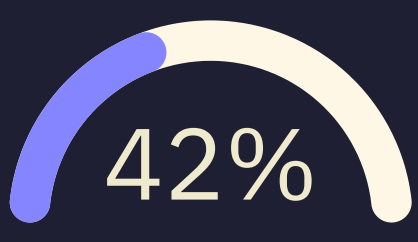
RACIAL MINORITY

47% of podcast listeners think that racial minority audiences are well represented in podcast ads, up from 40% on radio



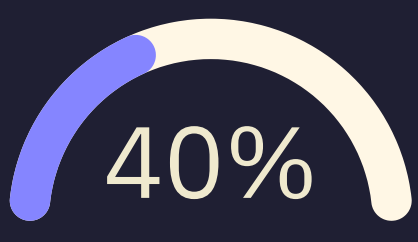
GENDER IDENTITY

42% of podcast listeners think that gender identity minority audiences are well represented in podcast ads, up from 34% on radio



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

40% of podcast listeners think that sexual orientation minority audiences are well represented in podcast ads, up from 32% on radio



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Acast 2020 & 2021 Highlights

Beyond the podscape as a whole, it is an incredibly exciting time for Acast – here is why.

Acast has a vast reach.

Acast hosts more than 30,000 podcasts with approximately 300 million listens per month.

During 2020, there were approximately three billion listens to Acast-connected podcasts.

In 2020, net sales were SEK 592 million.

Acast has a global footprint across 12 countries.

Acast is growing.

In Q2 2021, Acast had 880 million listens and 130% net sales growth.

Acast has a wide range of advertising options including audio ads, sponsorships, branded content, and more.

Want to learn more about our research study or advertisement offerings?

Drop us a line at sales.us@acast.com
