Aligning with Rituals

The contextual foundation for audio
Audio is a daily **Ritual** at the heart of our day

"I plan many activities around audio content. I draw and paint to it, I read with audio content whether it's following along to an audio book or listening to calm nature sounds. I walk and exercise to it, too. Music and podcasts have helped me stick to my walking goals as the time flies faster when I have something to listen to and think about."

Luka B. 30
Minneapolis, MN

74% OF LISTENERS CONSUME AUDIO DURING THEIR DAILY RITUALS

40% OF LISTENERS PLAN THEIR DAY/ACTIVITIES AROUND AUDIO CONTENT

Source: Audio Rituals: The Soundtrack Of Our Daily Rituals
Rituals offer opportunities to connect with hyper-engaged listeners

“[When I am walking] I would be listening to a podcast, mostly, sometimes music, but mostly podcast. And...it could be any podcast. It would mostly be about things that I really like. And I would be listening to those podcasts, tech podcast or a very specific technical podcast. I like to do some walking. I can just really dive into the podcast, what I'm watching and just listen to it and really enjoy it.”

Artin B, 33, Seattle, WA

“I plan my activities around audio content. I draw and paint to it, I read with audio content, whether it's following along to an audio book or listening to calm nature sounds. I walk and exercise to it, too. Music and podcasts have helped me stick to my walking goals as the time flies faster when I have something to listen to and think about.”

Luka B, 30, NB · Minneapolis, MN

“It's all mood based and like whether I feel like I need some motivation or I'm feeling kind of like melancholy and I want to listen to something kind of sad and content that I seek out is like anything that I think I can learn from that can teach me something that I don't know. I would say I'm pretty engaged in my podcast while I'm doing chores. Like I'm listening, I'm not taking notes or anything, but like, I'm listening and absorbing.”

Alexis K, 24, Tucson, AZ

Source: Audio Rituals: The Soundtrack Of Our Daily Rituals
With the richness of audio experiences, should brands strive for contextual alignment?

If so, how?
What is Contextual Alignment?

**GENRE BASED**
Aligning with audio content genre that is contextually relevant to the brand

**Example:** Serving an ad for a new credit card in a financial podcast

**RITUAL BASED**
Aligning with audio ritual/behavior that is contextually relevant to the brand

**Example:** Serving an ad for athleisure while working out
How We Did It

WHAT
Controlled testing to quantify the impact of genre and ritual-based contextual alignment.

HOW
Recruited weekly audio listeners from a representative online panel. Participants were then randomized to exposed or control groups. Listeners selected content to listen to for ~ 30 mins. Listeners then answered brand metric questions to determine ad effectiveness.

SAMPLE SIZE 1,920

TEST CELLS

GENRE BASED

No alignment vs Genre alignment

Not aligning with content that’s contextually relevant to the brand vs Aligning with content that is contextually relevant to the brand

RITUAL BASED

No alignment vs Ritual alignment

Not aligning with a ritual that is contextually relevant to the brand vs Aligning contextually with the ritual the participant is performing while listening

Each test group had a unique control group that was exposed to a control ad (public service announcement)
### What we tested

**3 VERTICALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beauty &amp; Fashion</th>
<th>Health &amp; Wellness</th>
<th>Travel/Adventure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>Society &amp; Culture</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcast</td>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wide Range of Audio**
For those with propensity to buy, context amplifies the info in audio ads

How does contextual impact the way ads are perceived?

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No alignment</th>
<th>Contextual alignment (Genre or Ritual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Audience: No Alignment N= 720; Contextual Alignment N= 720
In-Market: No Alignment N= 331; Contextual Alignment N= 323
↑ Statistically significant difference between groups at ≥90% confidence

AD “TAUGHT ME SOMETHING NEW”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL AUDIENCE</th>
<th>IN-MARKET FOR PRODUCT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62%</td>
<td>73%↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8
When compared to ads that have no alignment, contextually-placed ads perform better.

**How does contextual (genre or ritual) impact brand opinions?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-Market For Product</th>
<th>Deltas (Exposed – Control)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THE BRAND &quot;FEELS RELEVANT TO ME&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+8%↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THE BRAND &quot;EXCITES ME&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+10%↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contextual alignment matters for metrics that matter most

How does contextual impact brand KPIs?

In-Market For Product Delta (Exposed – Control)

No alignment

Contextual alignment (Genre or Ritual)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>No alignment</th>
<th>Contextual alignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Intent</td>
<td>+6%</td>
<td>+12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search Intent</td>
<td>+7%</td>
<td>+12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Favorability</td>
<td>+8%↑</td>
<td>+9%↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In-Market:

No Alignment Control N= 220; Exposed N= 222
Contextual Alignment Control N= 210; Exposed N= 216

↑ = statistically significant difference between groups at ≥90% confidence
Regardless of the path to context, alignment drives intent to search

How does each type of contextual impact SEARCH INTENT?

In-Market For Product
Delta (Exposed – Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Exposed</th>
<th>No Alignment</th>
<th>Exposed – Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Market For Product</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual Based</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

↑ = statistically significant difference between groups at ≥90% confidence

In-Market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Delta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genre Based</td>
<td>+16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual Based</td>
<td>+15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contextual alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Delta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genre or Ritual</td>
<td>+2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In-Market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Delta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genre Based</td>
<td>+6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual Based</td>
<td>+6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aligning with audio **rituals** extends beyond search to purchase

How does Ritual alignment impact brand KPIs?

In-Market For Product
Delta (Exposed – Control)

No alignment

Ritual alignment

In-Market:
- No Alignment Control N= 112; Exposed N= 114
- Ritual Alignment Control N= 104; Exposed N= 110

↑ = statistically significant difference between groups at ≥95% confidence

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**TOP FUNNEL**

**MIDDLE FUNNEL**

**BOTTOM FUNNEL**

- Learn more about the product
  - Ritual: +11%
  - No Ritual: -2%

- Purchase intent
  - Ritual: +6%
  - No Ritual: +10%
Listeners feel more connected to brands when hearing ads during audio rituals.

**How does Ritual alignment impact feelings of connection?**

**In-Market For Product**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delta (Exposed – Control)</th>
<th>NO ALIGNMENT</th>
<th>RITUAL ALIGNMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+3%</td>
<td>+12%↑</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In-Market Control N=112; Exposed N=114
Ritual Alignment Control N=104; Exposed N=110
↑ =statistically significant difference between groups at ≥90% confidence
Audio helps motivate and energize during rituals

I listen to content because I am...

- Running General Errands: 85%
- Doing Home Maintenance: 84%
- Exercising Outdoors: 83%
- Preparing a Meal: 83%
- Driving: 83%
- Commuting Home from Work/School: 82%
- Having Breakfast: 81%
- Having Lunch: 81%
- Having Dinner: 81%
- Cleaning: 81%

I would be less productive [without audio]...

I use audio to help me do things that I need to do, put laundry away, do the dishes, clean the house, stuff like that.”

Alexis K., 24, Woman
Tucson, AZ
Listeners who felt energized or excited were more receptive to the ad

What impact does mood have in ad effectiveness?
Total Audience Exposed – Those who felt energized/ excited vs. those who did not

The ad “was something I was open to at the time”
+16% Lift

The ad “caught my attention”
+24% Lift
The **ENERGY** of audio amplifies ad effectiveness

What impact does mood have on ad effectiveness?

Total Audience
Delta (Exposed – Control)

+5%

+10%↑

**SEARCH INTENT**

FELT ENERGIZED/EXCITED DURING AUDIO LISTENING

DID NOT FEEL ENERGIZED/EXCITED DURING AUDIO LISTENING

↑ = statistically significant difference between groups at ≥90% confidence
What Now?
Considerations for Brands
When aligning contextually, the strength of the match matters

The stronger the match between the ad and the content or ritual, the bigger impact

What is the impact of the strength of the match between content/ritual and the ad?

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

**GENRE BASED**
- **Strong Match with Content/Ritual (Rating 7-10)**
  - Brand Favorability: 73%
  - Purchase Intent: 76%
- **Weak Match with Content/Ritual (Rating 1-4)**
  - Brand Favorability: 47%
  - Purchase Intent: 56%

**RITUAL BASED**
- **Strong Match with Content/Ritual (Rating 7-10)**
  - Brand Favorability: 78%
  - Purchase Intent: 80%
- **Weak Match with Content/Ritual (Rating 1-4)**
  - Brand Favorability: 48%
  - Purchase Intent: 51%

Note: * = statistically significant difference between groups at ≥90% confidence.
Plan beyond **dayparts** with rituals

**Self/Home Time**
- Bath, dying hair, home improvement, laundry, travelling
- *Classical Rock, Alt, Business or Finance Podcasts*

**Commute Time**
- Driving to work
- *R&B, Tech Podcasts*

**Workout Time**
- Running, walking, at gym, walking the dog
- *R&B, Top 40 Tech Podcasts*

**Early Morning**
- Cooking breakfast, drinking coffee
- *News, Rap*

**Mid-morning at Home**
- Yardwork, cleaning, baby napping, work
- *R&B, Tech or Parenting (Kids & Family) Podcasts*

**Afternoon**
- Cooking lunch/dinner, picking up kids from school
- *Sports and Comedy Podcasts, Classic Hits*

**Evening**
- Workout, walking the dog, spending time with spouse.
- *Hip Hop, Classic Rock, Alt*

**Night/Winding Down**
- Dishes, going to bed, skin care
- *True Crime Podcasts*

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Source: Audio Rituals: The Soundtrack of Our Daily Rituals
Consider aligning with rituals where listeners are most engaged

Top rituals when listeners are most engaged in Audio sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Very/Somewhat Engaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HAVING “ME TIME”</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUTTING MY CHILD TO BED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXERCISING OUTDOORS (RUNNING OR JOGGING)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HAVING A SNACK</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WALKING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUTING TO WORK/SCHOOL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GETTING READY TO LISTEN TO SPORTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GETTING READY TO PLAY SPORTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUTING HOME FROM WORK/SCHOOL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRIVING TO PICK UP MY KIDS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRINKING COFFEE</strong></td>
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[When I am walking] I would be listening to a podcast, mostly, sometimes music, but mostly podcast. And...it could be any podcast. It would mostly be about things that I really like. And I would be listening to those podcasts, tech podcast or a very specific technical podcast. I like to do some walking. I can just really dive into the podcast, what I'm watching and just listen to it and really enjoy it.”

Artin B, 33, Seattle, WA
Implications
Implications

Drive bottom funnel with

**Contextual**

Ensure contextual targeting is a part of your digital audio planning to drive transactional next steps

Amplify with

**Rituals**

Explore rituals to reach a highly engaged audience and amplify the effectiveness of your audio buy
Thank You