A New Era of Influence

Podcasters’ emergence as one of today’s most influential figures in media
Monthly podcast consumption is skyrocketing

Monthly podcast listenership is expected to grow by double digits in the next five years, with an estimated 60% of Americans listening to podcasts at least once a month.
Podcasts are the main source of information for things most important

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

75% of listeners say podcasts are their main source of information for topics in which they’re most passionate

86% Millennials are the most likely to use podcasts as their main source of information on topics in which they’re most passionate

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the below statements about the podcasts you listen to?
Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028
Total N = Millennials: 589
Today’s menu

1. **Podcasts: The Medium that Gives Back**
   Learn why listeners find themselves turning to podcasts more often, and how this unique medium serves to holistically enhance their lives.

2. **When Intimacy Becomes Influence**
   Understand the intimate role podcasters play in the lives of listeners, and how their unmatched authority translates into influence.

3. **Seizing Brand Opportunities**
   A go-to guide of actionable steps advertisers can take to effectively leverage the podcast medium.

4. **Vox Media Opportunity: Most Influential for All Generations**
   Learn why Vox Media is the most influential of podcast networks.
Our mission

The Role of Podcasters

Understand the role podcasters play in the lives of listeners

Brand Opportunities

Identify opportunities for brands to effectively leverage the podcast format
Podcasts: The medium that gives back
Podcasts fill a void that shorter-form content cannot

While short form content satisfies dwindling attention spans, podcasts deliver on the high-quality, in-depth information consumers crave.

____ offer(s)... % Selected

**In-depth information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Podcasts</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Popular video app</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
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**Exposure to current topics/conversations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Podcasts</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<td>Popular video app</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Podcast content isn't just information, it's uniquely trusted information.

Adam
Podcast Listener
Millennial
He/Him

“I can’t really…have time to really educate myself on everything going on. There’s just too much information out there. So for the podcasts I listen to...I’m not missing the important stuff and I trust that they’re picking the important stuff.”

79% Strongly/Somewhat Agree
See podcasts as being superior to content on social media.
Podcasters are leaving a positive imprint on listeners

82%  Have had a positive impact on their life

80%  Feel like a friend to listeners as they listen to the podcast
Podcasts draw in listeners for personal fulfillment

Why people listen to podcasts

80% Millennials are most likely to listen to podcasts for self-actualization, followed by Adult Gen Z (70%) and Gen X (70%).

Question: What are your top 3 reasons for listening to podcasts?
Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028
Total N = Adult Gen Z: 624; Millennials: 589; Gen X: 427

Listen to podcasts for self-actualization (net score)

- 72% Connect deeply with myself/my identity
- 72% Connect with topics that I'm passionate about
- 80% Motivation
- 80% Inspiration
- 80% Personal Growth/ Self-Improvement
Podcasts deliver on the desire for self-actualization

79% of listeners say listening to podcasts motivates them to be better versions of themselves

86% of heavy listeners agree that podcasts motivate them to be better versions of themselves

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the below statements about the podcasts you listen to?
Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028
Total N = Heavy Listeners: 1,776
Heavy Listeners: Listen to podcasts ≥ multiple times a week
When intimacy becomes influence
Listeners make time and consider that time meaningful and valuable

Listeners’ feelings about their podcast-listening experience
% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

73%
Say it’s critical for them to get in listening time each week with their favorite podcasters

88%
Consider the time they spend listening to their favorite podcasters as meaningful

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the below statements regarding your favorite podcaster(s)?
Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028
Listeners feel intimate connections with podcasters

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

68% say they have a deep connection with their favorite podcasters

81% of Millennials agree that they have a deep connection with their favorite podcasters
Since the personal connection runs deep, listeners are eager to show support for their favorite podcasters

88%

Engage in activities to support their favorite podcasters outside of the podcast
Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your general podcast listening experience?

Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028

Podcasters hold unrivaled influence among their listeners

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

90%

Agree that listening to podcasts have made them more open to new perspectives and/or topics
Podcasters are more influential than social media influencers

How often _____ have changed my mind on something I once believed in, by Generation % Very/Somewhat Often

- **Podcasters**
  - Adult Gen Z: 81%
  - Millennials: 87%
  - Gen X: 70%

- **Social Media Influencers**
  - Adult Gen Z: 53%
  - Millennials: 72%
  - Gen X: 45%

**Question:** How often have the following people managed to change your mind about something you once believed in? This could be for any topic or subject matter.

**Total Audience (Weekly Podcast Listeners):** 2,028

**Total N:**
- Adult Gen Z: 624
- Millennials: 589
- Gen X: 427
Podcasters are now more influential than the original influencers

Media figures whose influence matters most to listeners
% Selected

- 15% Social Media Influencers
- 10% TV/Movie Celebrities
- 75% Podcast Hosts

Question: From the list below, whose influence matters most to you?
Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028
Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your general podcast listening experience?
Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028

Listeners are making smarter decisions because of what they hear in podcasts

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

Say they have **made smarter decisions** because of what they have heard in a podcast

77%
Podcasts serve as a resource for decision-making across nearly every facet of listeners’ lives

Types of decisions made using podcasts as a resource

- Self-improvement: 50%
- Health/Fitness: 44%
- Business: 38%
- Financial decisions: 38%
- Life-changing decisions: 36%

Question: Have any of the below resources helped you (in any way) in making the following types of decisions?
Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028
Podcasts inform all types of decisions, big and small, more so than social media.

Types of decisions made using podcasts as a resource

- Self-improvement: 156
- Health/Fitness: 138
- Business: 119
- Financial decisions: 119
- Life-changing decisions: 113

Question: Have any of the below resources helped you (in any way) in making the following types of decisions?

Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 2,028

ABOVE: PODCASTS INDEXED TO SOCIAL MEDIA (100)
Seizing brand opportunities
Podcast ads capture the attention of consumers like no other medium, ultimately driving purchases for the majority.

68%
Pay more attention to podcast ads than ads they come across elsewhere (e.g., TV, social media)
% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

51%
Have been persuaded by a podcast ad to purchase or try the product/service
% Selected
Beyond driving purchases, podcast ads are highly effective in introducing new services or products.

77% of listeners say podcast ads have exposed them to new products or services they otherwise wouldn’t have known about.

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree
Listeners prefer more high impact and substantive podcast ad formats

Question: There are many different ways brands can advertise in podcasts. If you had control over the advertising in a podcast, what format would you prefer?

Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners)= 2,028

Ad formats preferred by listeners

- Entire episode sponsored by a single brand
- Ads that offer a lot of useful information about the product/service
- Ads that provide promotional codes to save on products/services
- Ad-free podcasts that are created by a brand (e.g., mattress company doing a series on sleep)

ABOVE: INDEXED TO AVERAGE (100)
Don’t shy away from sharing descriptive information

Podcasts are an ideal environment for brands to share strong brand propositions/details as listeners are most receptive to detailed information while listening.

Question: You mentioned you’ve either successfully purchased or tried purchasing a product you heard about from a podcast ad. What was it about the ad that motivated you to seek out and try the product/service?

Total N (Weekly Podcast Listeners) = 1,030

Ad attributes that motivate listeners to purchase:
- Description of the product/service: 124
- Host’s sincere interest in the product/service: 109
- Host’s endorsement of the brand providing the product/service
- Promo code offered

Above: Indexed to Average (100)
Podcast ads present fewer barriers to purchase than ads on other platforms

Even though podcasts present the least number of barriers, there is still ample opportunity to streamline the purchase process — most notably, making it easier for listeners to find and purchase advertised products.
Recommendations

Leverage podcasts to drive purchase decisions
Podcasts serve as a uniquely trusted resource of information and have been the basis of many decisions, including purchase decisions

Collaborate with podcasters for their unrivaled influence
Work with podcasters – as a trusted authority in people’s lives, they are quickly emerging as the next wave of influencers

Activation ideas
• Take advantage of podcasts throughout the purchase funnel, including awareness-building
• Involve the podcaster in the creative when possible
• Ensure the creative is relevant for the podcaster and the show
• Consider ways to streamline the purchase process for listeners
Thank You
We used a mixed-methods approach

Focus groups
Total: n = 15
3 Focus groups
1 hour interview
Diverse representation across age, gender, race/ethnicity, and income
Weekly podcast listeners

Online interviews
Total: n=2,028
Nationally representative across age, gender, race/ethnicity, and income
Weekly podcast listeners