



# HOW TO BE IN PODCASTS

'MUST KNOWS' FOR EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

# Podcasts draw a passionate, leaned-in audience

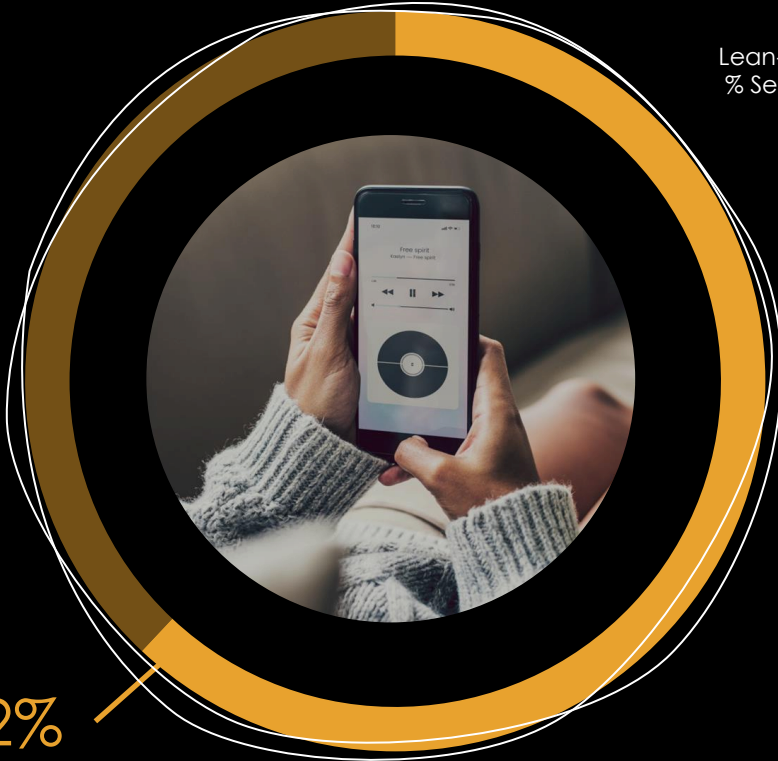
Passion - % Strong Passion  
(Top 3 Box on 10 Pt. Scale)



66%

Strong Passion For Favorite Podcast\*

Lean-Forward Listening  
% Selected



62%

Listen with Leaned-Forward  
(actively engaged in content, paying close attention)

Given the unique listening experience of podcasts...

WHAT CREATIVE  
STRATEGIES HELP  
BRANDS PUT THEIR BEST  
FOOT FORWARD?

## RESEARCH GOAL

Provide marketers with clear guidance for advertising in podcasts



## AD STRATEGIES

- Ad Length
- Music
- Voiceover Tone
- Contextual Alignment



# Research Overview

## METHODOLOGY

Ad effectiveness testing, leveraging experimental design, amongst an online panel of podcast listeners

Test or control ads served in a wide range of podcasts

Post-exposure survey measuring impact on brand KPIs

Total N=3,091



## BRANDS

MEIOMI  
*Coastal California Wines*

CERVEZA  
**Modelo**  
*Special*

EGG-LAND'S BEST

# The testing framework

Creative strategies tested via experimental design

## AD LENGTH

Same ad,  
shorter or longer versions



## MUSIC

Same ad,  
with different types of music



## VOICEOVER TONE

Same ad,  
with different voiceover tones



Mellow



Upbeat

## CONTEXTUAL ALIGNMENT

Same ad,  
aligned with contextually  
relevant content

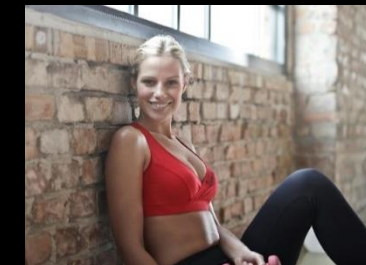


Ad for fitness apparel



Podcast about health and fitness

Aligned



Ad for fitness apparel



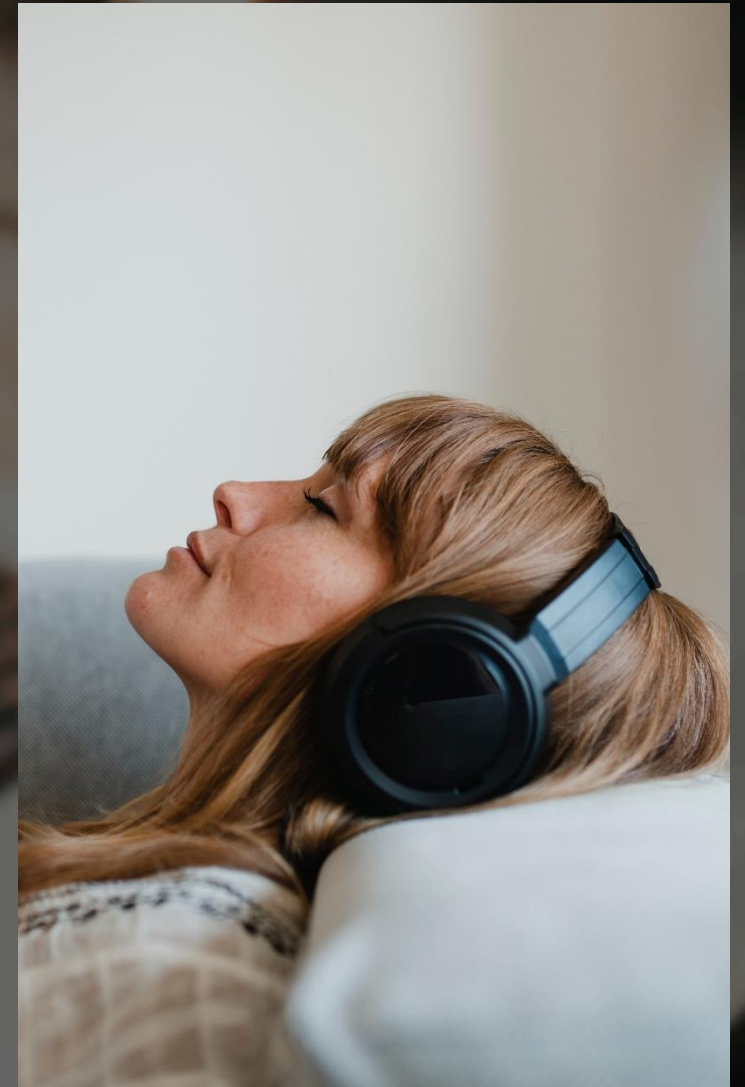
Any podcast genre/topic

Not Aligned



# DOES AD LENGTH MATTER?

Creative Strategies:  
Short vs. long audio ads

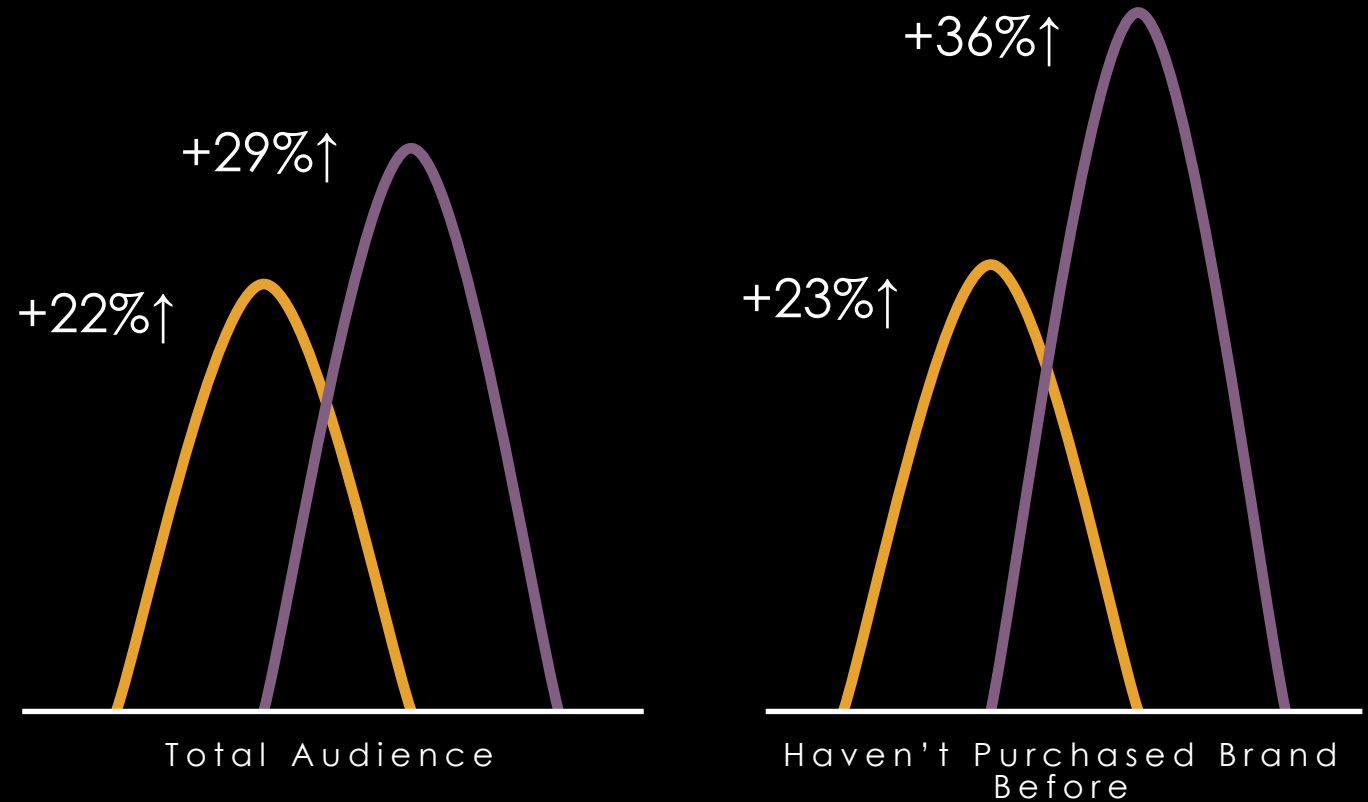


# Longer ads create more memorable experiences, especially with potential new customers

Impact on Aided Ad Recall, By Audience

Delta (% Exposed - % Control)

● :15 Sec Ads ● :30 Sec Ads



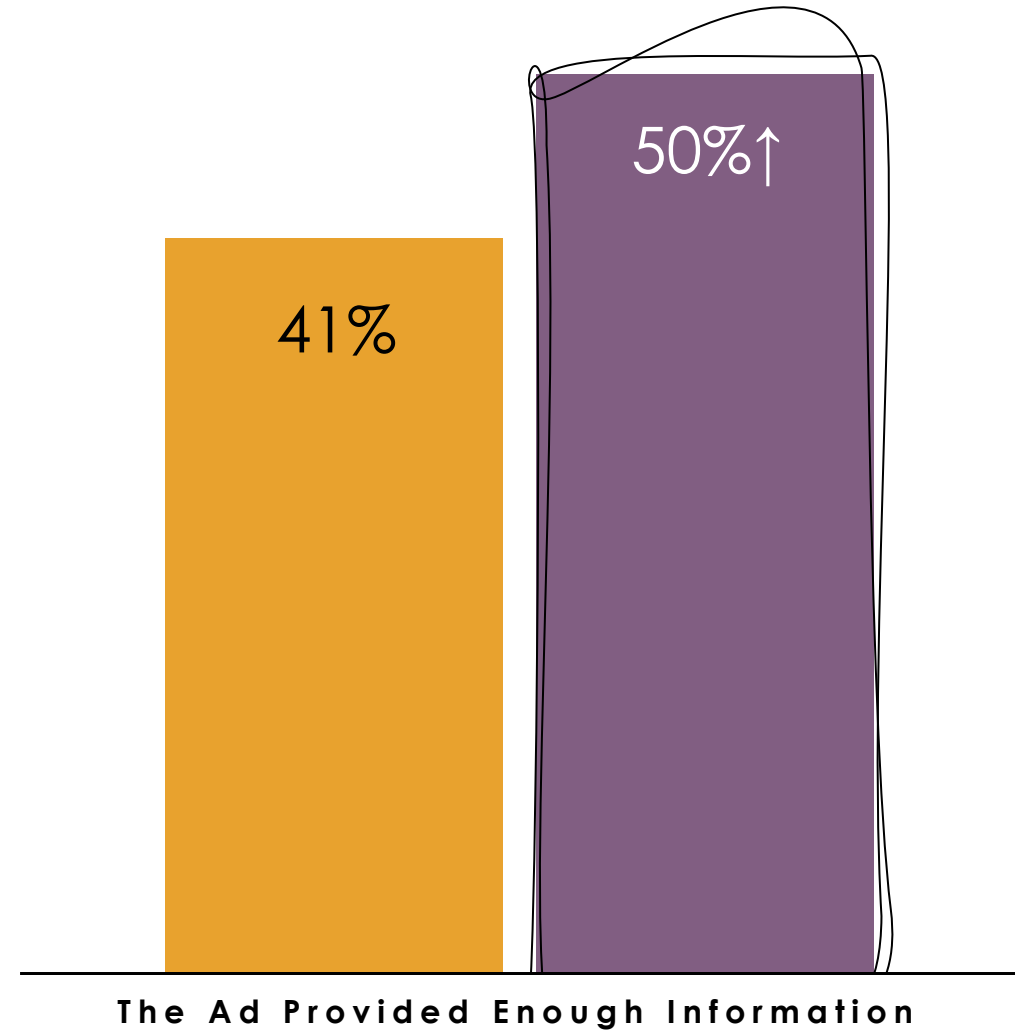
Total Audience: Control n=304; 15 Seconds n= 304; 30 Seconds n=300  
Haven't Purchased Brand Before: Control n=133; 15 Seconds n=118; 30 Seconds n=134  
↑: Significant difference at >= 90% confidence between exposed and control  
Q: Which of the following brands, if any, do you recall hearing during the podcast?

# In fact, podcast audiences appreciate the amount of info in longer ads

Ad Perception, Among Total Audience

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

● :15 Sec Ads   ● :30 Sec Ads

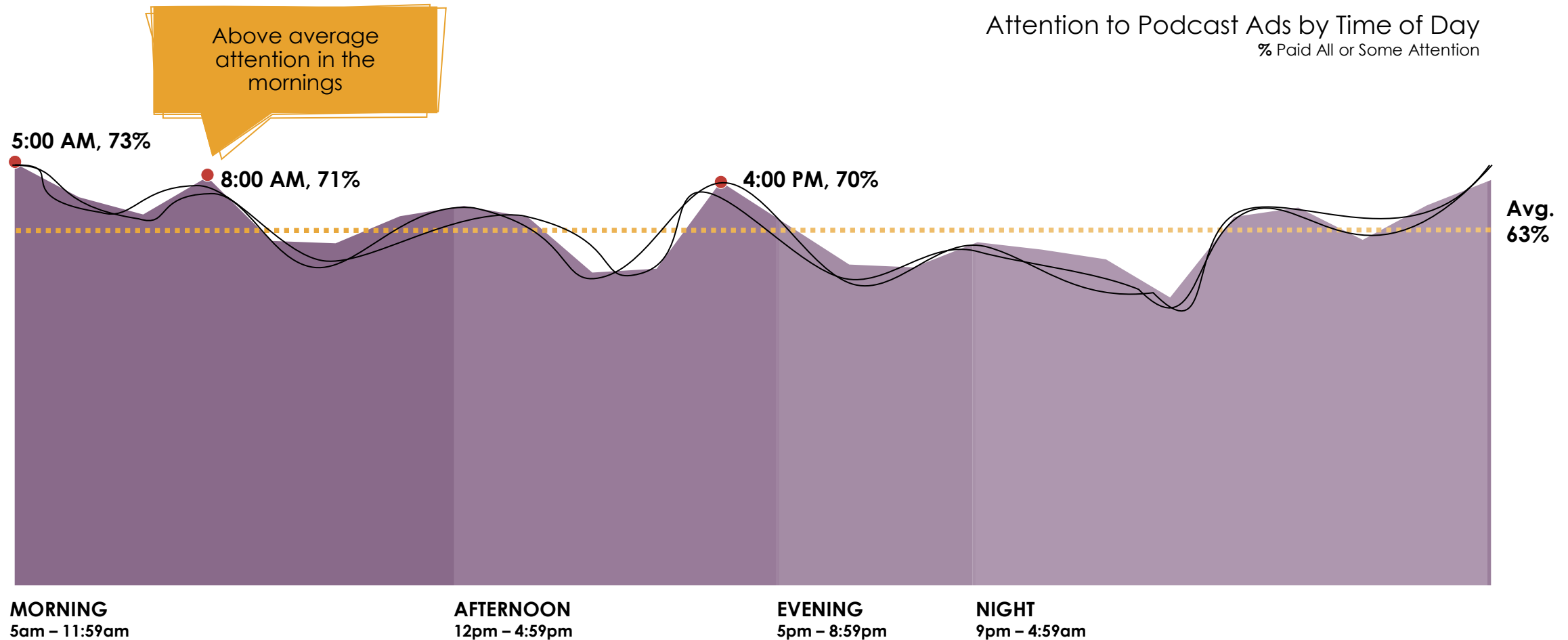


Total Audience: 15 Seconds n=284; 30 Seconds n=301  
↑: Significant difference at >= 90% confidence between :15 second and :30 second ads  
Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the ad?



# Brands can consider leveraging longer ads, especially when ad attention is highest

While attention to ads is high throughout the day, peaks occur during **commute times**





# WHAT KIND OF MUSIC, IF ANY, SHOULD AUDIO ADS INCLUDE?

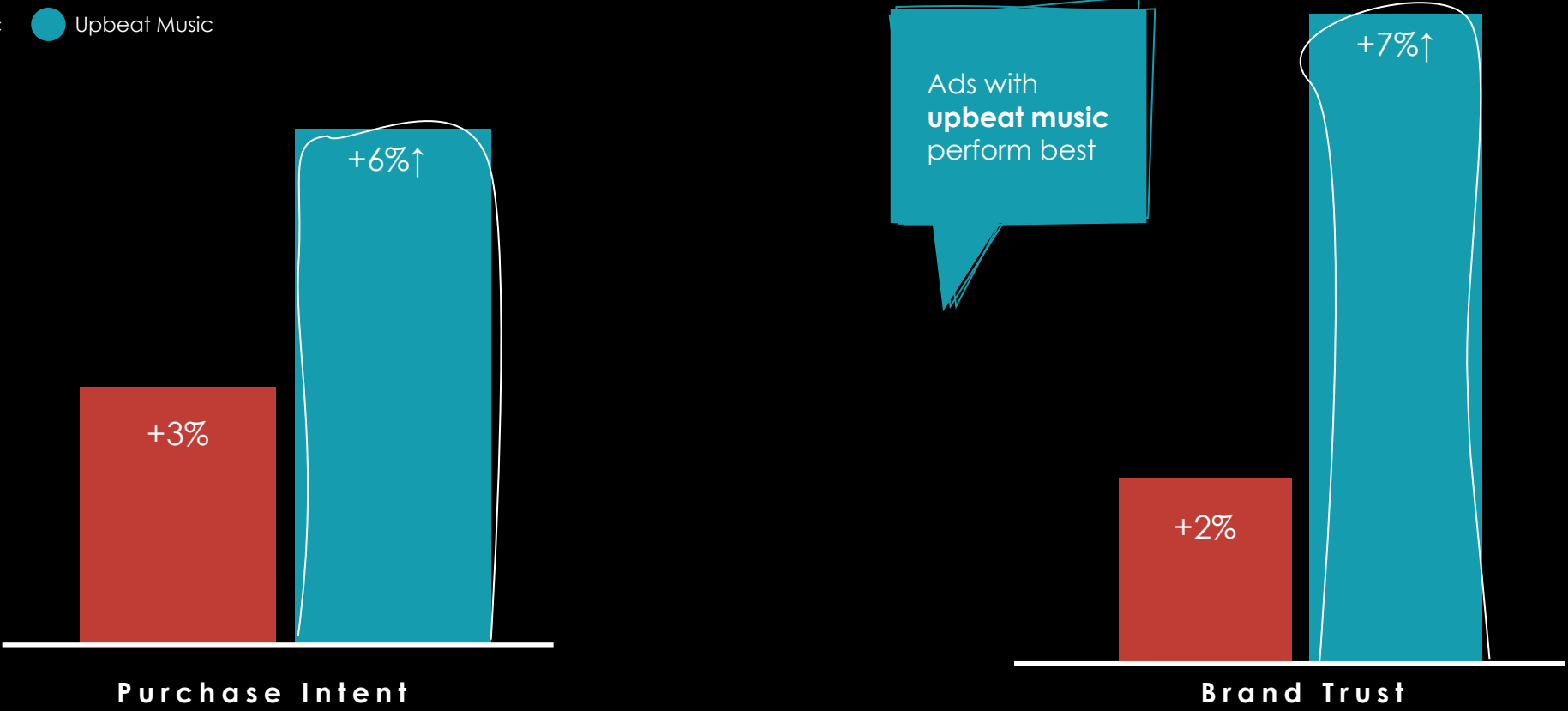
Creative Strategies:  
Mellow music vs. upbeat music



# Whether focused on the short- or long-term objectives, music tempo makes a difference

Impact on Persuasion Metrics, Among Total Audience  
Delta (% Exposed – % Control)

Mellow Music Upbeat Music



Upbeat music n= 302; Mellow music n= 301; Control n=304  
↑: Significant difference at >= 90% confidence between exposed and control  
Q: How likely are you to research products for the following brands?  
Q: The next time you are [actioning], how likely are you to purchase the following?

# Upbeat music infuses excitement and energy into the info being conveyed

Why Ads With Upbeat  
Music Are Preferred



## Energized Info

“

She had a cheerful voice which  
lifted my mood.

Narrative was excited, more  
energy.

It's more exciting and more  
compelling.

It was presented in a more  
exciting manner.

It was cheery and  
knowledgeable.

It was elaborated more than the  
rest and I felt like there was  
more energy.

The background music...was  
more riveting and more in line  
with the mood of the podcast so  
it was my favorite ad.

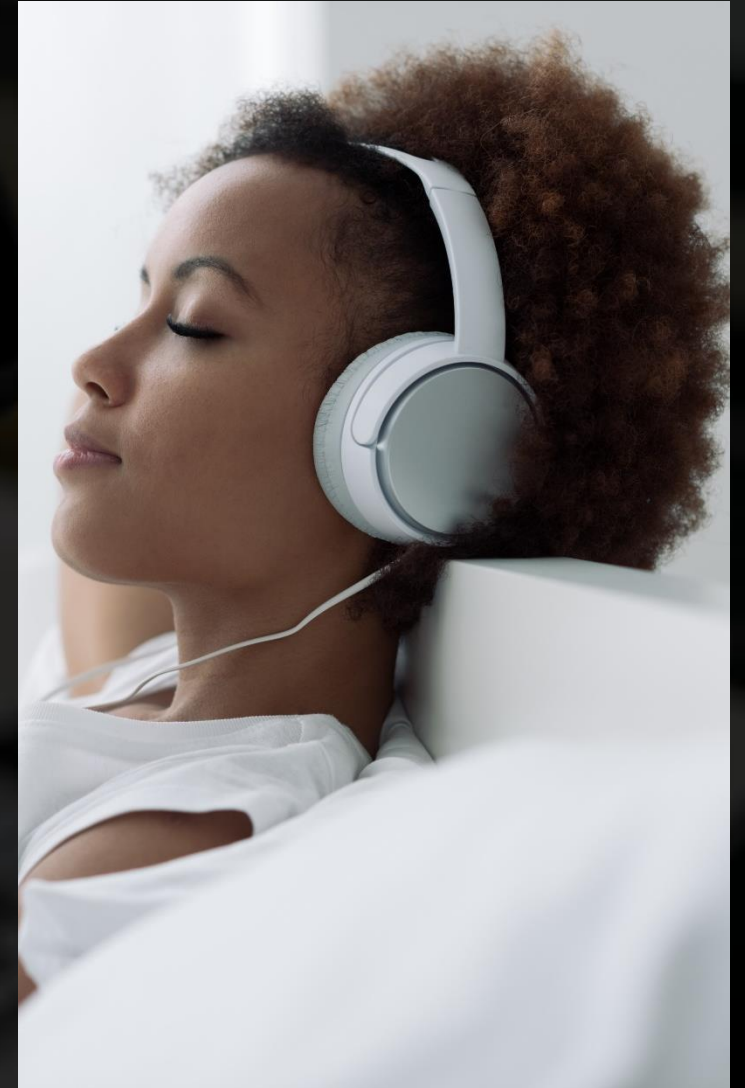
I liked the music in the  
background, and it was easy to  
follow.

”



# WHAT SHOULD THE TONE OF THE VOICEOVER BE?

Creative Strategies:  
Mellow vs. upbeat voiceovers

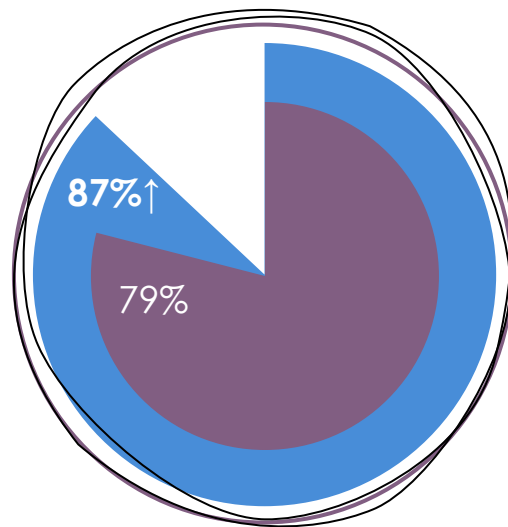


# In podcasts, ads with a mellow voiceover capture attention and are easier to follow

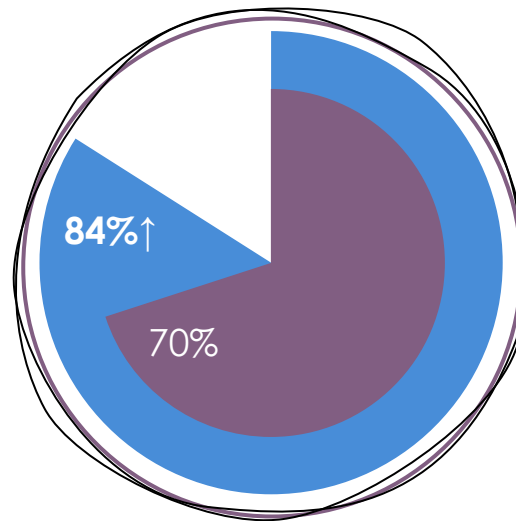
Ad Perceptions, Among Those In-Market for Product

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

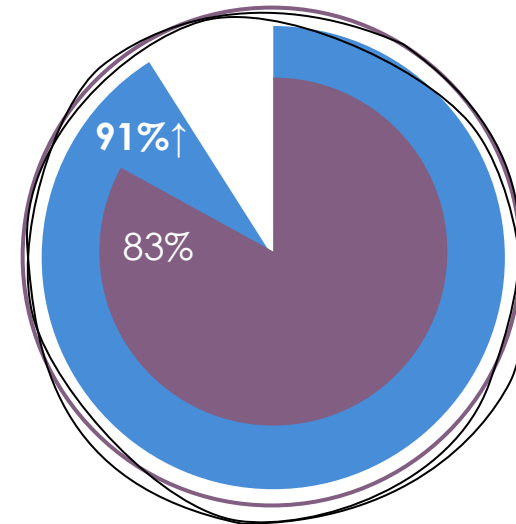
● Mellow Voiceover    ● Upbeat Voiceover



Was Likeable



Caught My Attention



Was Easy To Follow

# Listeners say mellow voiceovers are a more natural fit with podcasts

Why Ads With Mellow Voiceovers Were Preferred



Calm



Because it was more mellow like the podcast

The voice was more calming

The person in ad had a much softer voice with a calming presence

Natural

The tone was more relaxed

The spokespersons tone goes better with the podcasts tone

Fit with Podcast

It went well with the podcast

It's the lift in her voice during the first ad. It is too excited when placed with such a serious podcast story.

The softer version left me more interested in the message. It felt more respectful, too



# Ads with a mellow voiceover are more effective across branding KPIs

Impact on Brand Metrics, Among Those In-Market For Product

Delta (% Exposed – % Control)

## Mellow Voiceover

Aided Ad Recall +31%↑

Brand Is Trustworthy +11%↑

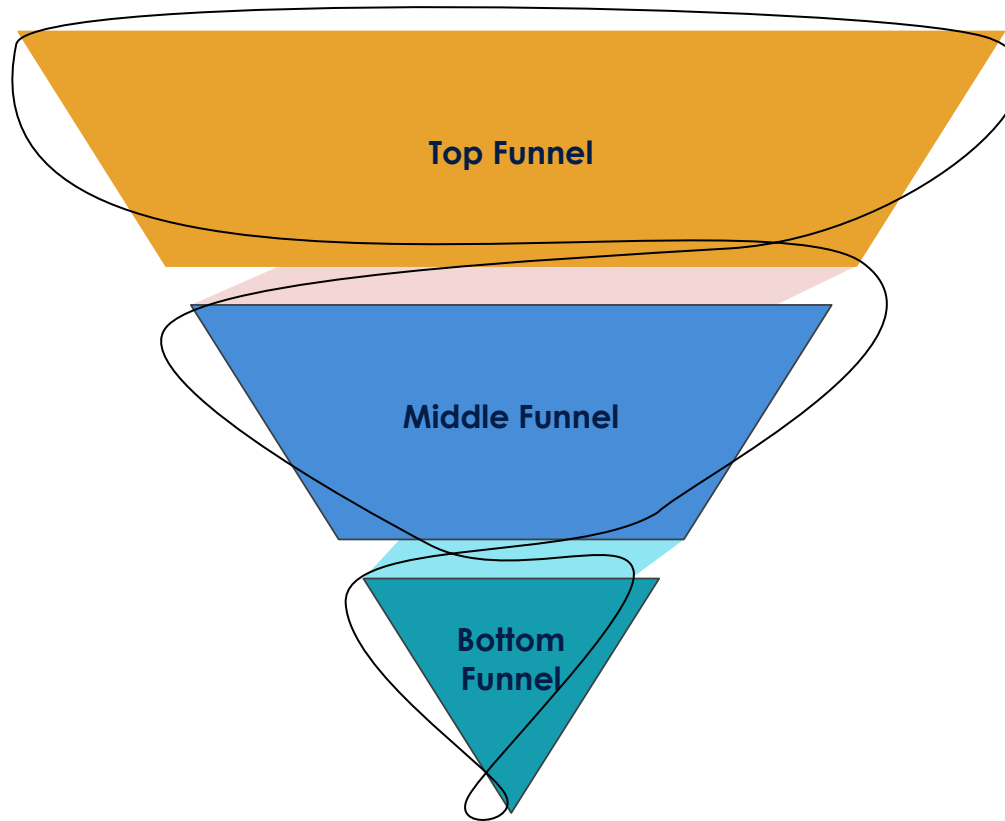
Purchase Intent +12%↑

## Upbeat Voiceover

Aided Ad Recall +18%↑

Brand Is Trustworthy +1%

Purchase Intent +0%

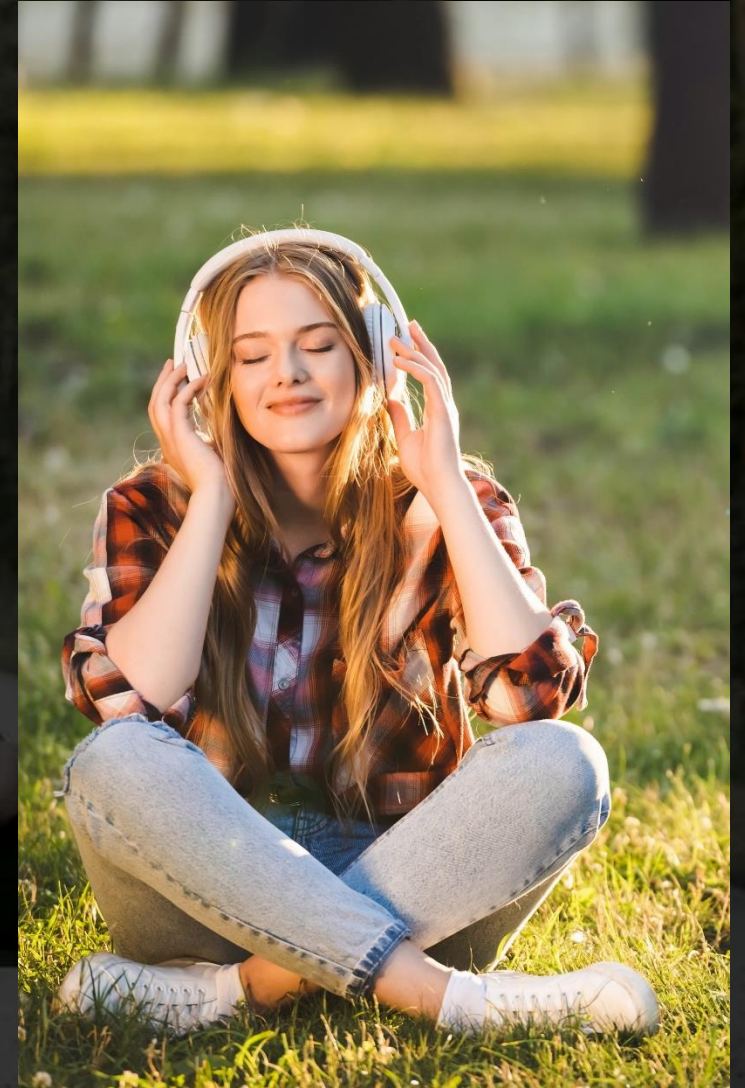






# WHAT ROLE DOES CONTEXTUAL ALIGNMENT PLAY?

Creative Strategies:  
Contextually aligned with podcast genre vs. not



# Contextual alignment comparisons

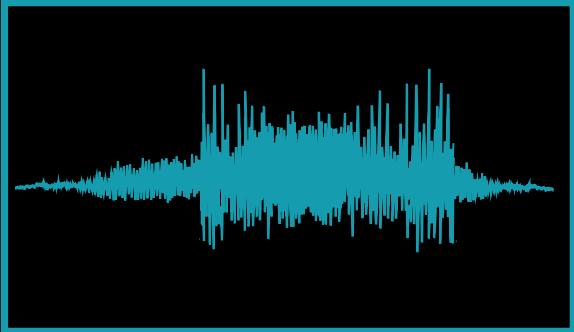
An Example

## CONTEXTUAL ALIGNMENT

Ad is served into content genres/topics that are relevant to the product being advertised



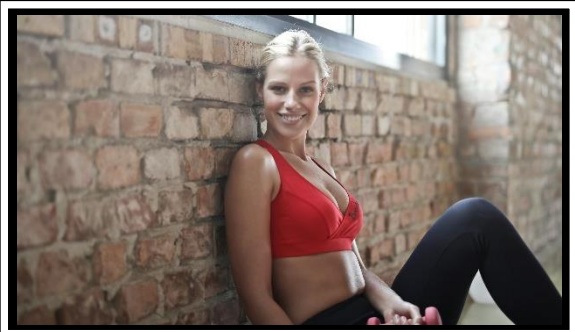
Ad for fitness apparel



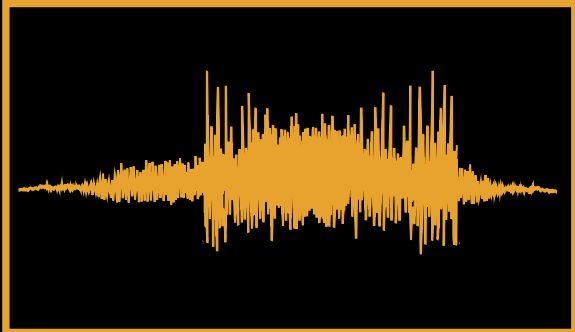
Podcast about health and fitness

## NO CONTEXTUAL ALIGNMENT

Ad is served into any popular content genres/topics



Ad for fitness apparel



Any podcast genre/topic

# The strongest driver of how people perceive ads has nothing to do with the ad at all

The biggest impact in ad performance is not the ad itself, it's the content that surrounds it

## Impact on Ad Opinions, Among Total Audience

Deltas

- Contextual Alignment (% Aligned - % Not Aligned)
- Music (% No Music - % Any Music)
- Voiceover (% Mellow - % Upbeat)
- Ad Length (% :15 - % :30)

	Contextual Alignment	Music	Voiceover	Ad Length
Ad likeability	+11%↑	(+0%)	(+0%)	(-1%)
Caught my attention	+13%↑	(+5%)	(+6%)	(-2%)
Fun to listen to	+14%↑	(+0%)	(-1%)	(+0%)
Resonated with me	+18%↑	(-1%)	(+2%)	(-2%)
Vibed well with the podcast	+19%↑	(-5%)	(+0%)	(-2%)
Got me excited about the brand	+17%↑	(-5%)	(+1%)	(-3%)

Contextual n= 340; Non-contextual n= 302; Upbeat music n= 302; Mellow music n= 301; Upbeat voiceover n= 301; Mellow voiceover n= 301; Ad length :30 n= 300;

Ad length :15 n= 301

↑: Significant difference at >= 90% confidence between groups

Q: Overall, how did you feel about the ad?

Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the ad?

# Contextual alignment amplifies ad performance

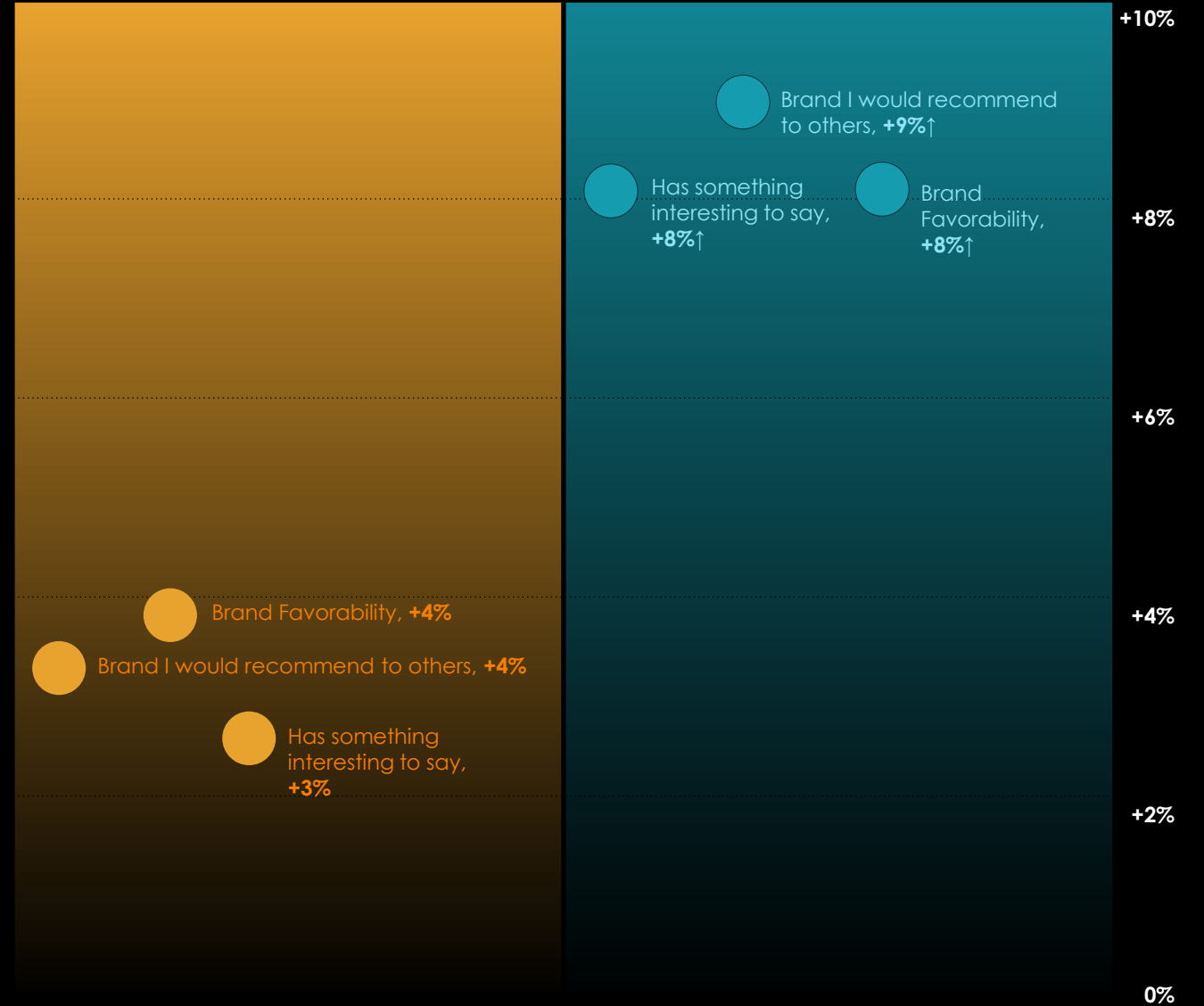
Impact of Contextual Alignment, Among Total Audience  
Delta (% Exposed- % Control)

● No Alignment ● Contextual Alignment

+

IMPACT ON BRAND

-



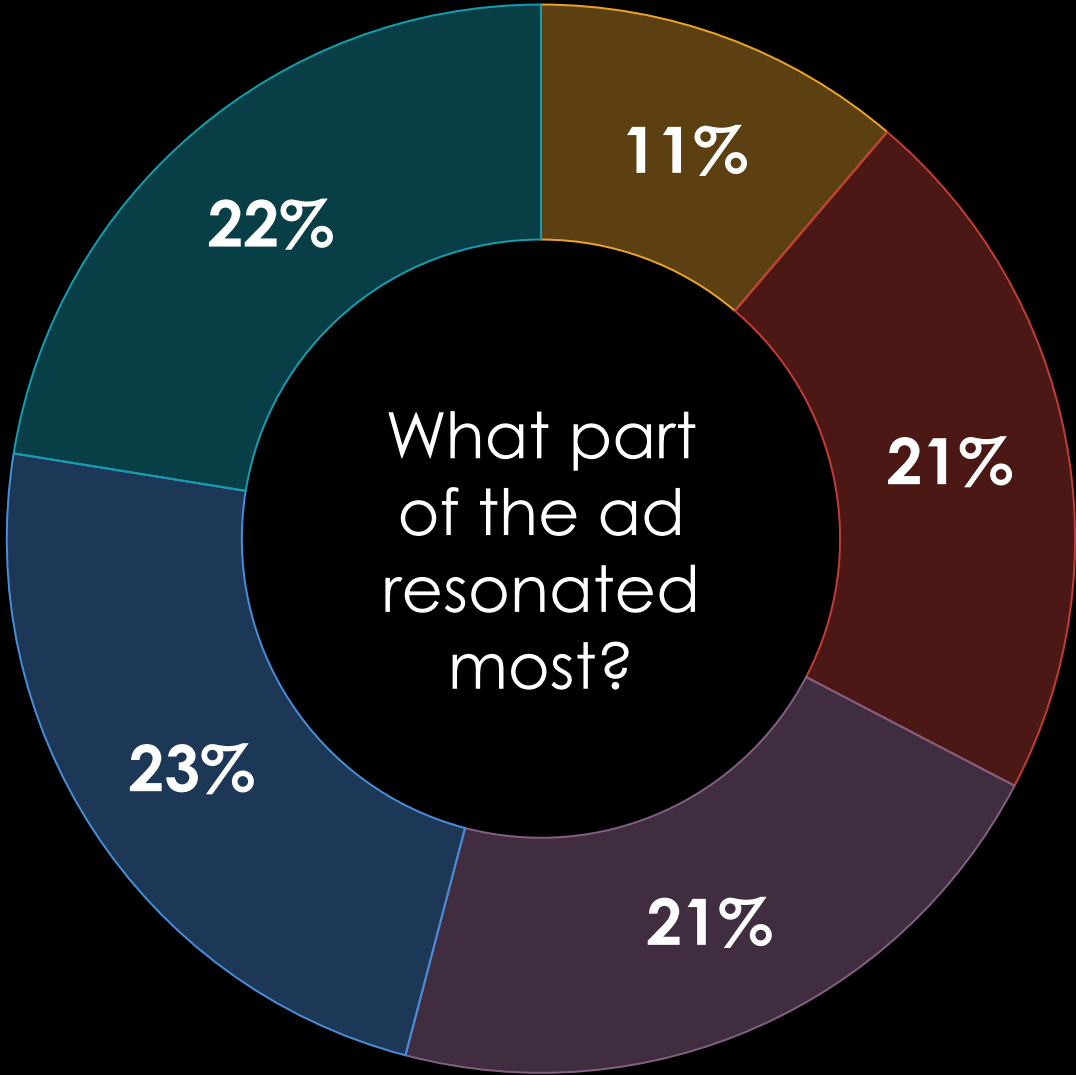
Contextual n= 340; Control (non-contextual) n= 343  
 †: Significant difference at >= 90% confidence between exposed and control  
 Q: What is your overall opinion of the following brands?  
 Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about [brand]?

A man and a woman are seated at a dark table in a studio environment. The man, on the left, is wearing a light-colored shirt and a brown vest. The woman, on the right, is wearing a patterned top and a long brown skirt. They are both looking towards each other. The background is dark with studio lighting fixtures and plants. The text "IN SUMMARY" is overlaid in the center in a yellow, sans-serif font. There are several white, wavy lines drawn across the image, framing the central scene.

# IN SUMMARY

# Brands should carefully consider all aspects of podcast ads

Most aspects of the ad resonate as much as the product itself (except music) – all which advertisers can easily tweak



Aspects of Podcast Ads that Resonate Most - % Selected

- Music
- Tone
- Product
- Narrator
- Information Conveyed

# Creative strategies for **effective podcast ads**



	RECOMMENDATION	RATIONALE
AD LENGTH	Use :30 sec ads, especially for driving acquisition and when attention is at its peak (commute times)	Listeners are in the mindset for detailed information and brands should deliver on this expectation
MUSIC	Leverage upbeat music to energize listeners as they absorb the brand message	Upbeat music enhances the info being conveyed and can drive short- and long-term goals
VOICEOVER TONE	Consider voiceovers that have a more mellow tone, as opposed to upbeat and overly energetic	Using a mellow tone may be less jarring during podcasts, allowing listeners to more easily follow the information being conveyed
CONTENT ALIGNMENT	Contextual alignment is worth a premium; brands can expand to other types of content to continue building reach	Contextual alignment has the power to change the way people perceive the ad above and beyond many creative tweaks – simply because the ad fits in with the listeners mindset during exposure

A dark, semi-transparent overlay covers a photograph of two women sitting at a table in a podcast studio. They are both looking towards each other and smiling. In the center of the image, a large, white, circular graphic contains the text 'THANK YOU' in bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. The graphic is surrounded by several thin, wavy lines in red, cyan, and yellow. At the bottom of the image, there are logos for 'M/GNA MEDIA TRIALS' and 'Spotify'.

**THANK  
YOU**

**M/GNA** MEDIA TRIALS

