2025

audio
buyers guide

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introduction

This paper is a collaboration of the IAB Australia Audio Council

The IAB Australia Audio Buyer's Guide, updated for 2025, has been developed by experts from the IAB's Audio Council to help planners, and buyers navigate the advertising opportunities that the new world of audio creates.

The guide provides harmonised definitions for digital audio and an overview of the audio advertising landscape in Australia. It offers key considerations and best practices for digital audio campaigns to optimise audio for success.

Australian online audio consumption has continued to grow to provide even more attractive audiences for advertisers. According to Edison Research, 77% of Australians aged 12+ have listened to online audio in the last week, up from 66% in 2021. Monthly podcast listening for Australians has increased from 37% in 2021 up to 48% in 2024 [1].

IAB Australia research has found streaming digital audio and podcast advertising usage has continued to rise. In the past twelve months, 8 in 10 media agencies now report streaming digital audio advertising is a significant or regular part of their activity. Over a third (76%) report that podcast advertising is a significant or regular part of their activity [2] .

Digital audio (including podcasting) saw the highest growth rate of all reported digital ad formats in the IAB Australia Internet Advertising Revenue Report CY 2024, with a YoY growth rate of 17.8%, with the market revenue totalling $313m [3].

1   Edison Research The Infinite Dial 2024 (Online Audio= Listening to AM/FM/ DAB+ radio stations online and/or listening to audio content available on the internet including podcasts and streaming services).
2   IAB Australia Audio Advertising State of the Nation Wave 9 2025
3   IAB Australia Internet Advertising Revenue Report CY24

table of content

In today's highly mobile and connected consumer environment, audio advertising delivers:

> Large and growing audience reach

> Effective reach with mobile consumers

> Ability to deliver a message where screens cannot

> Measurable outcomes

> Strong responsiveness to advertising

> An intimate and personalised environment steeped in context

> Brand safe message environments

the opportunity

One of the fastest-growing content mediums, digital audio is capturing a growing share of attention across the globe. Nielsen estimates that 79% of audio consumption occurs while consumers are engaged in activities where visual media can't reach them. Hence, it's become increasingly important for brands to integrate an audio strategy into their content marketing plans.

Despite the growth in digital audio, the monetisation of the audio market has not kept pace with the growth in the consumption of audio services. Further, measurement and attribution have proved challenging for advertisers. The industry needs to work together to convert the promises of audio advertising into reality.

The foundations are already in place, with several core characteristics making digital audio highly attractive for advertisers:

quality and trust:

Audio offers premium inventory closely associated with the editorial content and high transparency of where the ad is shown.

control:

Private marketplaces are a common model for programmatic audio, giving sellers the necessary control they need.

high share of voice:

Most audio environments, particularly mobile devices, offer brands an unbeatable share of voice in a one-to-one audience setting. Ad loads in podcasts are low and narrator-read ads generate an additional connection between advertising and content.

data-driven creative:

Audio provides enormous opportunities for creative optimisation at a low incremental cost of personalisation due to moderate production costs and a seamless combination of audio elements from a 'toolkit' into a storyline.

not screen dependent:

Audio is on when screens are not.

powerful complimentary medium:

Audio can assist in driving improved display, search and social performances.

audio types

Before we delve into the digital audio advertising landscape, you might ask, *"what is digital audio"*?

It's a good question, as audio covers such a broad and dynamic array of options available to consumers.

For this guide, "digital audio" refers to any online audio listening streamed or downloaded on any device connected to the internet. The technical distinctions between streaming and downloading are virtually invisible to the listener but can impact the way that advertising campaigns are planned, bought and measured.

streaming

live radio

music

original narrative content

catch up radio

podcast

This definition includes four key content types (see left).

Streamed audio is delivered over a continuous connection between the audio source and the listener.

This connection enables real-time audience measurement and advertising reporting of impressions. The connection is initiated at the beginning of listening and ends when the listener ends the listening session.

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Download:
Podcast listening by download means that the listener has selected an audio file to listen to later.

Progressive Download:
Many Podcast apps have a "Play it now" function which gives the users a "stream-like" experience. From an ad technology perspective, the ad is still delivered via progressive download, meaning the content is downloaded while the user listens.
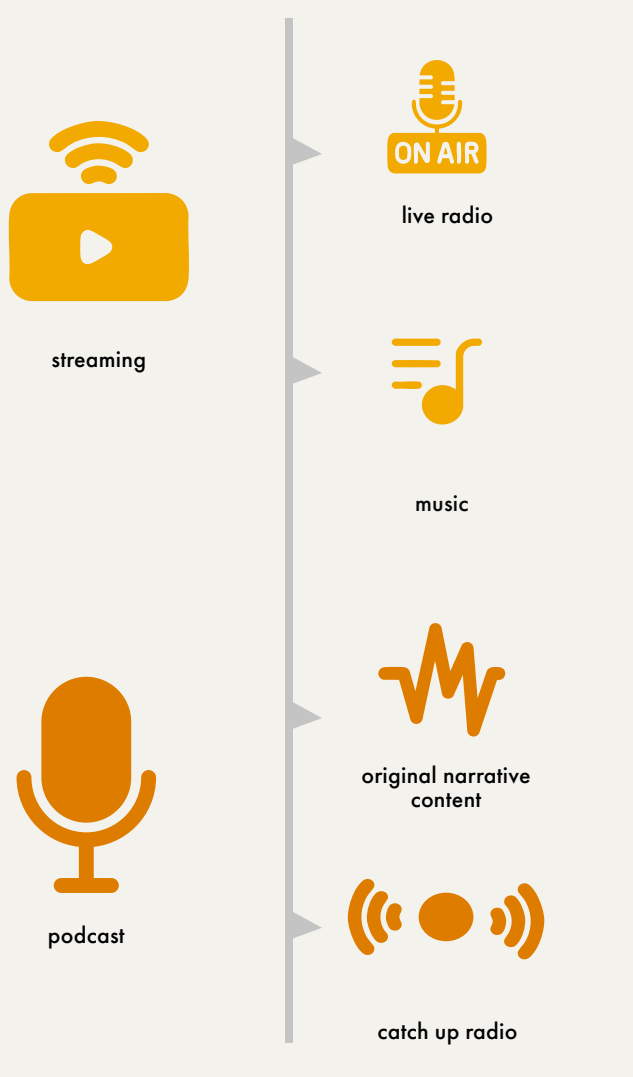
the digital audio advertising opportunity

Digital audio advertising is one of the fastest growing areas of the digital market, with growth being led by streaming audio and podcasting consumption as well as marketing investment. An explosion in content shows little sign of slowing with new channels, such as connected cars and radio apps in smart speakers, increasing the opportunities for advertisers to reach listeners

Streaming

Streaming offers a substantial opportunity for advertising, where the audio advertising plays between the songs of streamed content via a connected device. A range of inventory is available from streaming services such as Spotify, iHeartRadio, LiSTNR, Nova Player, YouTube Music, SoundCloud, etc.

Podcasts

Audio by nature, is an especially intimate form of communication, and podcasts take this intimacy further than other types of audio. Unlike other mediums, many podcasts are tailored to niche audiences. As a result, listeners can find their community and bond with hosts who share their humour or quirky personal interest.

Research shows that 60% of their audience tune into podcasts to educate themselves, and consumption of education podcasts has listed 53% year-on-year among Gen Z [4]. The research also found that podcasts are instrumental in building communities, allowing people to find and connect with their tribes [5].

Research also shows that Australians find podcasts meaningfully engaging; podcasting ranks number one for content associated with learning and expanding personal knowledge, content that is mentally engaging, and content that is a good use of my time [6].
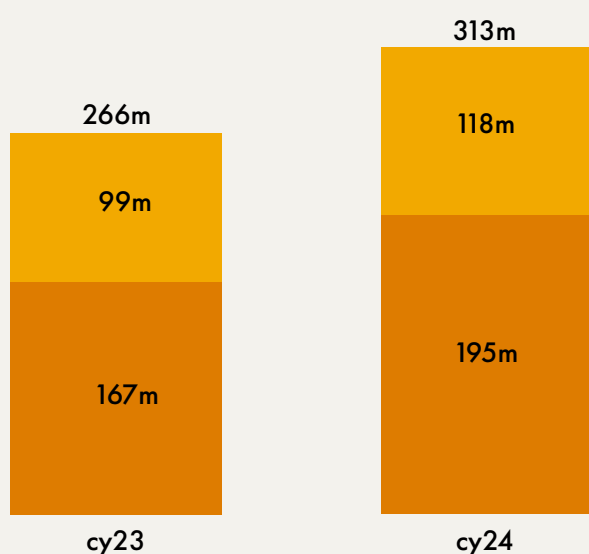
4   Spotify Advertising Research Podcasts and the Attention Sweet Spot
5   Spotify's Culture Next 2024
6   Acast Sounds Smart Report 2022

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the landscape in australia

The audio landscape in Australia has grown exponentially over the last few years. There are more audio publishers and content than ever before.

As a result of these new audio services and the increase in opportunities, investment continues to grow with the total streaming audio ad market worth $195m in CY24 and podcast ad revenue totalling $118m.

Podcast and streaming audio advertising expenditure, by financial year ($ millions)

	cy23	cy24
Total	266m	313m
Podcast	99m	118m
Streaming	167m	195m

| total audio	podcast	streaming
+17.8% on cy23	+19.1% on cy23	+16.9% on cy23

Source: IAB Australia Internet Advertising Revenue Report

This demand for digital audio has been growing gradually as consumer media diets grow alongside the development of options to consume audio content. This presents a significant opportunity for advertisers to reach audiences in a personal and highly engaged environment at previously inaccessible times.

With so many elements impacting listening habits, it's critical for advertisers to plot out the audio publishers into a planning matrix to understand the value of the content and the role of the advertising within each environment.

audience - weekly online audio listening-% of australians 12+

Year	%
2024	77%
2023	74%
2022	71%
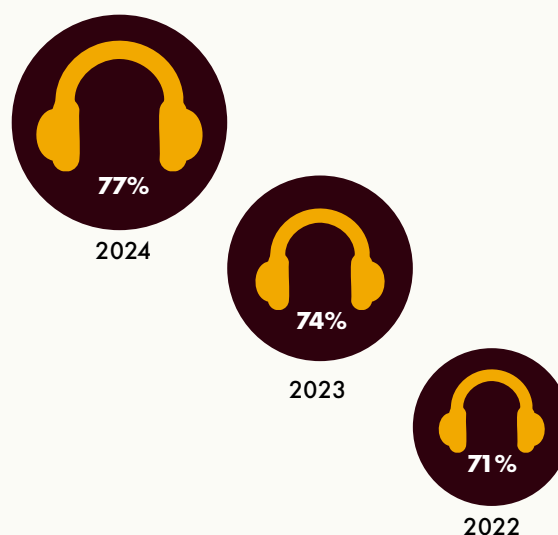
digital audio advertising formats

Let's start with some of the available formats in the digital audio advertising space.

audio creative formats

Audio formats which can carry advertising are:

Pre-Roll - an ad that plays before the content

Mid Roll - an ad that plays during set points during the content

Post Roll - an ad that plays after the content is complete

These ad placements can be delivered in a range of standard and data-driven or interactive creative formats:

standard

Brand Commercials:
Typically available in standard lengths such as :15, :30 and :60 seconds; these ads are scripted and recorded by the advertiser or the publisher with the brand owner's approval. They are dynamically inserted (ad-served) into streams and podcasts.

Brand Voice Talent Ads
These ads are pre-recorded by a professional voice talent selected by the brands marketing team, in line with their strategy and target demo, to maintain brand standards or consistency and ensure a specific tone or style.

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Host Read Ads:

Also known as Live Reads, primarily used in podcasts and live radio. Host reads are ads that are created by the host themselves, to be served as a live read, dynamically or via streaming ad insertion, leveraging the trust between the listener and the host. There is a belief that this format feels more organic, and is successful in driving engagement due to a familiar voice and friendly tone.

data-driven & interactive

Dynamic Ad Insertion (DAI):

DAI is a format that uses technology to insert advertisements into digital content as it is downloaded. This allows ads to be integrated into audio or video downloads, with the added benefit of targeting based on geo-location, demographics, and user behaviour.

Streaming Ad Insertion (SAI):

SAI differs from Dynamic Ad Insertion in that the podcast content pauses and the ad is served/streamed separately allowing for the ability to report the ad was started and listened to via impression and completion rate reporting - because the ad is served to the user separately this also allows for additional elements to be delivered to the user including clickable formats e.g. Call to Action Cards (format description below)

Call to Action Cards (CTA):

CTA Cards are clickable visual elements that accompany audio creatives. They provide listeners with the opportunity to engage with the brand's URL in real time, enhancing direct interaction.

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Dynamic Audio Creative (DCO Audio):

Data-driven audio ads that can change script parts based on real-time data feeds like time, day, weather, location and other data. For example, the opening line to a script could include the day of the week. The advertiser could record seven versions of the opening line to be dynamically inserted on different days to create a more personalised message.

Shake Me Ads:

Audio ads that have a call to action written into the script designed to encourage mobile listeners to take action by shaking their phone to open a website URL, make a phone call or download an app.

Voice Activated Ads:

Audio ads that allow users to respond with their voice to complete a specific call to action, like having information emailed or text messaged to the user or opening a specific website. Voice-activated ads require the listener to have a microphone connected to the playback device (e.g. mobile phone).

how to buy digital audio advertising

The role of audio in your media plan:

There are a number of strong value propositions for digital audio advertisers throughout the marketing funnel:

AWARENESS

> Scale - an already large and growing audience
> Incremental reach to other media activity (TV, OOH, BVOD, Social, Display)
> Data to drive on-target reach

INTEREST & CONSIDERATION:

> Personal one-to-one advertising experience
> Access to content environments based on specific topics and genres
> Trusted voices drive high engagement and responsiveness to ads

CONVERSION:

> Data, targeting and technology to drive and attribute website traffic, sales and acquisitions
> Promote call to action through digital inventory

ADVOCACY:

> Word of mouth to drive loyalty
> Create brand ambassadors with the power of their voice and community

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digital audio advertising formats

So, how can you buy digital audio? There are three ways to buy digital audio - direct, self service or programmatically

direct

Managed service by the publisher

Access to formats and sponsorships that may not be technically possible to transact programmatically

Fixed/guaranteed impression delivery

Fixed/guaranteed pricing

Highest inventory priority

self service platform

Platform tools allow small businesses and marketers to create, manage, and track audio ads on streaming platforms.

Allows advertisers to run, manage and track campaigns, even if they don't have a lot of experience with traditional advertising.

programmatic

Self-service by the buyer through their DSP

Access to all publishers in a single buying platform for ease of transaction

Control delivery with the flexibility to optimise, pause, and adjust the campaign

Unified campaign reporting

Ability to frequency cap across different buys and publishers

Buy types:
Open exchange
PMP/UFR – private marketplace / unreserved fixed price
PG – programmatic guaranteed- fixed impressions and pricing

targeting

There are various ways to target audiences with digital audio advertising, these targeting options are largely the same across direct and programmatic buys.
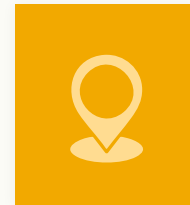
device:
Desktop, Mobile, Smart Speakers, Car Entertainment System, Game Console, Smart TVs

content format:
Genre, Topic, Show/Title, Mood, Playlist

time:
Daypart, Hour, Minute, Day of week

geo:
Country, State, City, Post Code, Proximity, Latitude/Longitude

operating system:
iOS, Android, Windows

audience data:
First-party publisher data including Age, Gender, Interests, Cross-Platform Content Interactions, Passions, Purchase Intent, Geographic Behaviour, Remarketing

contextual data:
Weather, activities (exercise, working from home etc.)

others:
Device Language

digital audio data targeting
in a world of both on & off platform consumption

The digital audio landscape is highly fragmented, with listeners consuming content across multiple platforms. From publisher-owned ecosystems (LiSTNR, iHeart Radio, Nine Audio, Nova Player) and streaming services (Spotify, Apple Music) to off-platform devices like smart speakers and connected cars, this diverse consumption poses a challenge for marketers aiming for efficient audience targeting.

To address this, publishers and industry groups have invested in data-driven strategies, including centralised authentication via registration walls (e.g., RadioApp, LiSTNR). This first-party data (1PD) approach, using privacy-compliant identifiers like hashed emails, enables proprietary targeting and strategic partnerships through data exchanges and clean rooms.

However, most audio consumption still occurs on third-party apps, where reliance on MAIDs—like cookies for display ads—is diminishing. Platforms like iOS are limiting data collection, and third-party providers are hesitant to share insights due to competitive risks.

As a result, the industry is shifting towards advanced contextual targeting using probabilistic cohorts, leveraging panel data, semantic content analysis, and IP-based insights. Larger publishers who combine 1PD with IP-based targeting can tap into both on- and off-platform inventory, ensuring broader reach. This dual approach—leveraging first-party data and behavioral identifiers like IP and MAID—will be crucial for the future of digital audio targeting and attribution.

audience and ad effectiveness measurement

Audience and campaign measurement for digital audio advertising is determined by how the audio is consumed. It is, therefore, essential to consider the type of listening that a user is engaged in - streaming or podcasts.

podcast
original and catch up

audience:
Hosting platforms, listening apps & AU Podcast Ranker Unique Listeners, Downloads

campaign:
Impressions Delivered, Unique Reach, Frequency, Search Term monitoring, website traffic, completion rate, Interaction/Click-through rate

streaming
live radio and music

audience:
Streaming, Analytics Platforms, Unique Listeners, Active Streams, Total Listening Hours

campaign:
Impressions, Unique Reach, On-Target Reach, Frequency, Completion/Listen Thru Rate

Podcast Measurement:

There are different metrics and tracking capabilities that will allow you to measure the success of your podcast advertising campaign depending on the objectives you set.

Measuring Reach & Frequency:

When you are given costs/CPMs for an advertising campaign they are in relation to the number of 'impressions' the publisher will deliver across your campaign, and these impressions are the number of times your ad will play across streaming or podcasting.

Your 'reach' is the number of individual people that have heard your ad at least once during the campaign.

When you divide your total impressions by the amount of people who have heard your ad, you get your campaign frequency. This is the average amount of times a listener has heard your ad.

Frequency across podcasting is usually measured at an episode level, whereas the frequency across your streaming campaign is measured across the full campaign.

Tracking podcast promotion :

In a similar way to tracking traffic to a website, if you're promoting a podcast across other podcasts, make sure you are pushing the networks to add a pixel so you can track the traffic in the same way as above.

These are currently created through Chartable but will soon be migrated into Megaphone, and are compatible with the majority of hosting platforms (Omny, Acast, Spotify's Megaphone etc).

brand impact

Brand studies are tools used to measure brand metrics that cover awareness, familiarity, favourability, consideration and intent. They can also cover claimed behaviours and attitudes. These metrics are most commonly measured via responses to surveys delivered across the life of a campaign. Best practice surveys adopt a control and exposed research design to quantify the difference between those who did and didn't see a campaign. Groups are also demographically matched to ensure the only difference is advertising exposure, allowing the incremental impact of audio advertising to be measured.

attribution

Audio attribution technology has seen significant innovation recently. Historically downloaded podcasts have traditionally used offer codes, unique URLs, and vouchers to measure campaign effectiveness. New tools are now available from all publishers to provide attribution success metrics, including:

website traffic

Using tracking pixels, users who visit a brand's website can be directly attributed back to hearing the audio ad. The use of multiple pixels can measure site traffic, various events (e.g. newsletter sign up), and purchase/ conversion.

footfall

Publishers and advertisers can utilise location technology providers to identify users who've heard a brand's audio ad and then visited a particular location, store, event or neighbourhood.

return on investment

Over the last few years, research and measurement companies have been analysing an increasing number of campaigns that have included streaming audio and podcast activity allowing agencies and advertisers to assess the impact of audio in their media mix.

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creative best practice

storytelling tips & creative best practice

The most successful digital audio campaigns are executions that are unique to the medium and to the specific program. Many publishers and platforms offer creative resources to enable development of digital audio spots that are unique and appropriate for specific types of content.

Storytelling tips:

Treat audio as its own canvas. Instead of trying to adapt a TV ad into a spot, let audio be its own creative within the big idea. Here are some audio storytelling tips to get you started.

Tell a story with sound (sound triggers imagination):

When listeners hear sound design or a soundscape, their imaginations kick in to fill in the picture. This is called "Theatre of the Mind". By imagining, the listener is participating. As each listener fills in the rest of the story in their minds, they add their personal touches to it. For example, the sound of a bustling market will pull up different images and memories for different listeners. This gives brands a powerful tool to engage consumers and draw them into their message. At the same time, consumers add their personal touches to what they hear.

Tap language & craft copy:

Audio is storytelling at its purest. Since the time of our ancestors sharing stories around the fire, audio is one human talking to another. Think about language: Should your ad be in English or include some local lingo? How would your target audience speak, and what feels suitable for your brand? Craft your copy to share your brand message authentically.

You have a voice so use it:

Think about what voice would suit your brand and its story. In the intimate digital audio space, loud voices become louder in the listener's headphones. Instead, adopt a tone that feels more real. With the way people consume media today, trends are shifting towards more genuine content and less scripted.

Constraint inspires creativity:

Use this precious time to create clever ways to tell your story. In this age of shorter attention spans, instead of creating one spot, a solution could be a campaign of shorter ads that cover a variety of talking points.

creative best practices

Keep it conversational:

How would you connect with consumers in this intimate space? For starters, there's no need to scream! Keep voices conversational and speak like you were talking to a friend.

Get to the point:

Attention spans are shrinking, so state the purpose of your message quickly and talk about what your brand/product can do for consumers. Focus on the most essential point you want the listener to walk away with. Less is more, so keep your message simple and clear. If it suits the story arc, consider early and multiple brand mentions.

Personalise for effectiveness:

Your message will be heard in an environment very different from the message-to-the-masses of radio. Rethink your creative format. First and foremost: Disrupt. Don't interrupt. Consider how your audio ad can disrupt (innovate or improve) and not interrupt (frustrate or suspend) the listener's experience.

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Build a one-to-one connection:
You're most often speaking to just one person at a time, and ads personalised to the listener see higher engagement. Consider a targeted approach for your message. For instance, if you're targeting Sydney, say "Hey Sydney".

Instil a sense of urgency:
If there are exclusives or sales, time-sensitive messaging instills a sense of urgency and could lead to greater purchase or footfall opportunities. When paired with listeners on the move, your message can lead to a 2x higher return on your advertising spend.

Use your sonic branding:
If your brand has a sonic logo, audio mnemonics, sound elements, or even a jingle, don't be shy to use them! Where brands rely on logos, colours, and typefaces in visual media, in audio, think about what branding would sound like. An audio identity offers an impactful way to enhance your brand's message and leave an impression.

Include a call-to-action (CTA):
CTA's are crucial for driving online action. Ads with a CTA can see a 4.4x lift in footfall compared to those that don't [7]. You can even match the CTA to how they listen, such as a "Tap" for Mobile or "Click" for Desktop, or drive to a URL on screen-less media, such as smart speakers or in-dash connected cars. If attribution tagging is enabled in podcasts, the CTA can be as simple as 'search XYZ', , noting the impression can still be attributed back to the podcast listener.

Context & content matter:

Did you know listeners rank the quality of the ad content, and its relevance to them, as the top two contributors to a satisfying ad experience? Reaching consumers at the right moment can lead to results like 2.7x higher awareness and 5.3x higher intent [8] , over campaigns with basic demographic targeting.

Use context to find the right canvas:

Playlist keywords give us clues to the listeners' context within the moment they're listening, their setting, their current genre preference, and even their preferred BPM. So much so that campaigns that include playlist targeting drive 2.1x higher intent than campaigns that don't [9]. Match your message to their preferences, style, or vibe.

Get the beat of your ad right:

If your audio spot has a music bed, meet your audience where they are and consider a similar genre of music to their listening preferences. (At the same time, not all ads need background music.) Whether the mood is workout, cooking, chill or party, there's endless opportunity to get creative with how you reach your audience in context.

Keep your messages relevant:

Consider content interests that align with your brand message. You can now reach comedy buffs, culture lovers, and more through podcast listener targeting. For example, suppose you're looking to drive awareness of a new comedy series or want to reach people who are into sports. In that case, you can find listeners of podcasts with similar topics and target them with a relevant message.

8   Spotify Nielsen Brand Effect Studies, 2018

9   Spotify First Party Data, global, based on daily content hours / daily active users, free users multiplatform, May 2019

considerations for audio advertising creative should include:

> Use audio creative that is specific to digital audio: not already used from TV or video ads.

> Recognise the fact that the screen may in fact be turned off or not exist at all. A call to action should not rely on a screen activation or companion banner interaction.

> Tell a story. Allow the listener to visualize your product or brand; "theatre of the mind" opportunities drive better engagement.

> Create an episodic experience: listeners tune in to hear content they are interested in.

> Be authentic, speak softly to carry a big idea. Be clear and stay on specific message. Repetition, especially clever repetition works.

> Try avoiding skits, jokes or testimonials that make it difficult for listeners to connect with your brand.

> Rely on a familiar voice, leverage the friend-to-friend connection personalities have with their listeners. Limit the amount of voices necessary, as multiple voices confuse the listening experience.

> Keep a consistent pace, tone and tempo, saying more with less. (Target: 55-75 words per :30 ad).

> Localize your message, know that you are speaking to people in their personal spaces, often consuming content solo. Many customers are listening to music on their own, with headphones, so think of your entire audience on a per individual (1:1) basis.

> Make sure host reads ads follow truth-in-advertising guidelines.

> Podcast adverts which sound as though they are additional segments of the content resonate the closest with listeners.

key terms definitions

1st Party Data (1PD)

Premium data collected directly by collected directly by media owners from their audiences via login/sign up, competition entries, website content browsing etc.

2nd Party Data (2PD)

Premium 1st party data collected by a partner company or client and shared with media owners.

3rd Party Data (3PD)

Aggregated data from various external sources (e.g. Oracle, Commscore etc.)

Active Signed Up User

An active user (last 30 days) who has completed the onboarding process (provided their age, gender, DOB).

Active Stream (AS)

Listening to content for 60 seconds or longer.

Active Users (AU)

Users who open the app. These people can be categorised into their frequency habits:
> Daily Active Users (DAU),
> Weekly Active Users (WAU),
> Monthly
> Active Users (MAU).

Ad Markers
Chosen points in a podcast episode where ads are dynamically inserted.

Aggregator
A platform or app (like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or Google Podcasts) that collects and organizes podcasts for easy listening by users.

Average Monthly Listener
Average number of unique users who have listened at least once within a 28-day period.

Average Weekly Listener
Average number of unique users who have listened at least once within a 7-day period.

Addressable Advertising
Digital ad inventory that includes an identifier such as Cookie, Device ID or Hashed Email (HEM) that can be used to target digital advertising.

Average Active Sessions Per Day (AASD)
Average number of active streams per day for a selected period.

Average Time Spent Listening (ATSL)
Average time users have spent listening per active session (for sessions over one minute).

Bounce Rate (Audio)
Percentage of streaming sessions that have lasted less than 60 seconds.

Bitrate
The amount of data processed over a given amount of time, affecting the quality and size of the audio file. Higher bitrates lead to better audio quality.

Companion Banner
A display banner that appears on the app at the same time as the audio ad for the same advertiser. This will only occur if the user has the app open whilst listening to the ad.

Completion Rate
The percentage of an ad that a customer engages with.

Cookie
Cookies are files left by websites on a web browser (safari, chrome, internet explorer etc.) to keep track of user behaviour. Originally designed to improve the user experience by determining if a user had been to a website to show them a "welcome" message or "welcome back".

Cost Per Click (CPC)
The cost per click is averaged out across a digital campaign by looking at the total advertising spend divided by the total number of clicks on the digital ad. The advertiser pays a rate once the ad is clicked.

Cost Per Lead (CPL)

Advertisers pay rate once a business lead is acquired (e.g. an online form is completed or similar).

Cost Per Mille (Thousand) (CPM)

Pricing for ad inventory based on the cost for every 1000 ad impressions. The commonly used industry 'shorthand' for this metric is CPM.

Daily Active Listeners (DAL)

A measure of listeners who consume that stream daily

Device ID (DID)

Unique user IDs for apps which don't store information. The ID's can be matched with existing user data e.g. age or gender without identifying individuals and are primarily used for advertising purposes. Apple iOS refers to IDFA – ID for Advertising. Google Android refers to AAID – Android Advertising ID.

Digital Audio

Any online audio listening streamed or downloaded on any device connected to the internet. The technical distinctions between streaming and downloading are virtually invisible to the listener but can impact the way that advertising campaigns are planned, bought and measured.

Download (DL)

Unique file requests that are downloaded. This includes complete file downloads and partial progressive downloads in accordance with the IAB Tech Lab's Podcast Technical Measurement Guidelines v2. Downloading takes longer than streaming but allows access without an internet connection.

Dynamic Ad Insertion (DAI)

Streaming: The process of intercepting the traditional radio broadcast streams and dynamically inserting audio ads into the ad breaks to provide more effective and targeted digital advertising.

Podcasts: The delivery of digital ads inserted into podcasts at the time of download so they're as relevant as possible to the duration of the campaign. DAI is another way of saying 'adserving'.

Dynamic Audio Creative (DCO Audio)

Data-driven, hyper-personalised audio ads that can change script parts based on real-time data feeds like time, day, weather, location and other data.

Episode

An individual installment of a podcast series, similar to a TV show episode. Episodes can vary in length, frequency, and structure depending on the show.
Episode Notes/Show Notes

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Episode Notes/Show Notes

A written summary of the episode's content, including links to resources, guest information, and important timestamps.

Feed/RSS Feed

A web feed that allows users to automatically receive updates to a podcast series. Podcast apps use RSS feeds to download the latest episodes.

Identifier for Advertising (IDFA)

Apple's (iOS) device ID.

Impression

The number of times an ad has been counted. In podcasts they are served in the Pre, Mid or Post roll. For example in a podcast episode, if the same ad is played in all three of those ad slots, this will count as 3x impressions. When given costs by publishers and networks this is what the CPM is calculated on.

Listen Through Rate (LTR)

The percentage of an audio ad that a customer engages with.

Listener

Podcasts: Each 'Listener' is a single person or user who listens to content for either immediate or delayed consumption.

Streaming: A single user or person who streams a live radio streams or music channels.

Monthly Active User (MAU)

The average number of users who open the app at least once a month

Plays

A user presses play on content and listens for more than one second

Podcast

A piece of audio on demand content that is longer than 10 minutes and can be downloaded and listened to via the internet. Podcasts are typically offered in a subscription format, with new episodes automatically delivered to subscribers.

Pre-Roll/ Mid-Roll/ Post-Roll Ad

These are advertising spots placed at different points during an episode—before it starts, in the middle, or after it ends.

Progressive Download

Many Podcast apps have a "Play it now" function which gives the users a "stream-like" experience. From an ad technology perspective, the ad is still delivered via progressive download, meaning the content is downloaded while the user listens.

Reach

Broadly, reach refers to the total number of people who interact with content. For streaming, this is measured by the number of unique sessions defined as the number of unique IP addresses who listened to a station for a minimum of one minute within a day.

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Session Starts (SS)
A user presses play on content and listens for more than one second (see also 'plays').

Shake Me Ads
Audio ads that have a call to action written into the script designed to encourage mobile listeners to take action by shaking their phone to open a website URL, make a phone call or download an app.

Subscription
The process by which a listener opts into automatically receiving new podcast episodes in their preferred podcast app.

Streaming
Listening to audio content in real-time over the internet without downloading the file. Streaming allows for instant play of episodes.

Time spent listening (TSL)
See Average Time Spent Listening (ATSL).

Total Listening Hours (TLH)
Total number of listening hours of all users

Unique Listeners
Number of unique active devices listening. This is determined by a combination of IP addresses and user agents (devices).

Unreserved Fixed Price (UFR)
Programmatic deal type where the buyer & seller agree to a fixed price without a guaranteed volume of inventory.

Voice Activate Ads
Audio ads that allow users to respond with their voice to complete a specific call to action, like having information emailed or text messaged to the user or opening a specific website. Voice-activated ads require the listener to have a microphone connected to the playback device (e.g. mobile phone).

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about the iab australia

This document was developed by the IAB Australia Audio Council an expert membership base from which to leverage competency and experience, with the following primary goals:

>   Education of and for the digital audio marketplace
>   To develop relevant business models to direct the future of the sector
>   To increase the value of the online audio advertising
>   To establish standards and guidelines for audio to define the future of the market.

Click here to find out more about IAB Australia Audio Council

additional resources

IAB Australia foundations of digital audio advertising

IAB Australia Audio Advertising State of the Nation Wave 9 2025

IAB Australia Internet Advertising Revenue Report FY24

Spotify Advertising Research Podcasts and the Attention Sweet Spot

Acast Sounds Smart Report 2022

Spotify's Culture Next 2024

Edison Research The Infinite Dial 2024 (Online Audio= Listening to AM/FM/DAB+ radio stations online and/or listening to audio content available on the internet including podcasts and streaming services).

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