# SOUNDS HE BUSINESS OF DOCASTING DEPENDENT OF

U.S. 2024

# The Podcast Landscape

EZ

WONDERY betterhelp





#### August 2024

# The Podcast Landscape

**Core Podcast Metrics** 

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## Methodology



In June 2024, Sounds Profitable partnered with Signal Hill Insights to field an online study of **5071** Americans ages 18+ - the largest public study of podcasting in America



The sample was weighted to the most recent census data to be representative of the US population, using a single source, conducted identically to the 2023 study

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Respondents were asked a variety of questions about podcasting, including whether they listen, how often, and why they do or do not listen to podcasts



Topics also included churn, what leads to decreases in listening over time, and general perceptions of the medium and its creators







SignalHıl

#### The Podcast Landscape 2024

Highlights

1

Podcasts are now consumed by the majority of Americans every month – the first time we are reporting this

5

A big part of that new growth is YouTube, which is nearly tied with recommendations as leading source for discovery 2

Podcasting continues to index highly with Men, 18-54s, LGBTQ+, and multicultural audiences

#### 3

...Which means that 55+ and women present the clearest opportunities for growth While Rogan remains #1, podcasting is creating new hits, and fans are listening more

4

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When listeners lose interest in a topic or show, they aren't always being "caught" by another podcast 7

Our biggest opportunity to combat churn is reminding people about what only podcasts give them For non-listeners, we can frame podcasts as a way to combat boredom, mindless scrolling, and watching too many videos



The Podcast Landscape

# Poccast Consumption









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 O AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA®
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# Are you familiar with the term, 'podcast'?







# Podcasting is fully mainstream

 $\bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet$ 

This year, 53% of Americans 18+ now say they consume podcasts at least monthly – the first time we are reporting this as a majority behavior

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When was the last time, if ever, you consumed a podcast, either audio or video?



>12 months ago 8%





#### **Age Profile:** Past Month Listeners



55+ 39%



#### **Gender Profile:** Past Month Listeners



Female 51%

#### **US** Population





#### Past Month Podcast Listeners



Male 56%



### SOUNDSPROFITABLE **Age Profile:** Ever vs. Never listened



55+ 32% 35-54 34%





### SOUNDSPROFITABLE **Gender Profile:** Ever vs. Never listened



Non-Binary

Female

47%

1%





# Podcasting is fully mainstream

This year, 53% of Americans 18+ now say
they consume podcasts at least monthly
– the first time we are reporting this as a
majority behavior

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In fact, podcast consumption with some multicultural groups is nearing twothirds of the 18+ population



Podcasting: Monthly Listeners by Race/Ethnicity



**53%** 

Total Monthly Listening





#### **Podcasting:** LGBTQ+ Listeners (Monthly)



**US** Population



#### Monthly Listeners 53%

#### LGBTQ+ Population



Monthly Listeners 57%



### Podcasting is fully mainstream

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This year, 53% of Americans 18+ now say they consume podcasts at least monthly – the first time we are reporting this as a majority behavior

In fact, podcast consumption with some multicultural groups is nearing twothirds of the 18+ population

However, there are some signs that growth is slowing, and conversion from trial to regular usage lags some other media



#### SOUNDSPHOFTABL

When was the last time, if ever, you listened to a podcast?



>12 months ago 7%







When was the last time, if ever, you consumed a podcast, either audio or video?



>12 months ago 8%





#### <u>Soundsproftable</u>

Looking at the following benefits associated with podcasts, how important is each benefit to you?



Listen to discussions on topics of interest Audio to keep me company Have audio to accompany household chores Get news or political analysis Learn about new hobbies Get business news and information Hear radio programs on demand Listen to audio dramas Hear from celebrities

Something to listen to in the car or while traveling Something to listen to while walking or exercising Voices and conversation to keep me company when I'm alone Hear programs that accompany TV series or movies

2023

#### % "Very" or "Somewhat" important



Base: ever listened to a podcast





Looking at the following benefits associated with podcasts, how important is each benefit to you?



Listen to discussions on topics of interest Something to listen to while walking or exercising Audio to keep me company Have audio to accompany household chores Get news or political analysis Learn about new hobbies Get business news and information Hear radio programs on demand Listen to audio dramas Hear from celebrities

Something to listen to in the car or while traveling Voices and conversation to keep me company when I'm alone Hear programs that accompany TV series or movies

#### % "Very" or "Somewhat" important



Base: ever listened to a podcast





Soundsproffing Podcasting:

# Awareness, Trial and Usage



94%

Familiar With

# Conversion from trial to weekly usage: 50%





#### The Podcast Landscape

# Churn















### Audience retention is as important as audience growth



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The great news – podcast consumers are listening for more time, and to more podcasts, than they did last year



Thinking of the past week, how much time would you say you spent listening to podcasts?



Base: Listened to a podcast in the last week





#### SOUNDSPHOFTABL

Thinking back to one year ago, do you spend more or less time listening to podcasts today than you did then?



Base: Listened to a podcast in the last month





Thinking about the podcasts that you follow, how many different titles do you listen to regularly?





Base: Listened to a podcast in the last month





### Audience retention is as important as audience growth



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The great news – podcast consumers are listening for more time, and to more podcasts, than they did last year

#### Ŷ

When audience remains the same, every new listener means a listener lost - that's the very definition of churn



#### SOUNDSPHOFTABL

How long have you been listening to podcasts, in general?





Base: Ever listened to a podcast



More than 5 years 3 - 5 years 1 - 2 years 6 to 11 months Past 6 mths



Think of a podcast that used to be part of your regular listening routine, but you stopped listening. Why did you stop listening?



| 1 | 25% |
|---|-----|
|   | 22% |
| - | 20% |
| - | 15% |
|   | 15% |
|   | 13% |
|   | 11% |
| ) | 10% |
| 5 | 10% |
| - | 8%  |
| - | 8%  |
| - | 6%  |
|   | 6%  |
| 5 | 4%  |
|   | 4%  |
|   | 4%  |

Lost interest in the show Lost interest in the topic I've never stopped listening to a podcast Repetitive or stale content Too many ads, in general No longer available for free Found a better podcast on the same topic Too many ads for products I'm not interested in Show stopped publishing Change in host or talent Other Changed format Inconsistent publishing schedule Audio quality issues Changed length Changed publishing schedule

Base: Ever listened to a podcast



#### Why haven't you listened to podcasts recently?



I no longer



The pod

| .6%  | Not enough free time                            | 41% |
|--|---|-----|
|  | Not enough time alone                           | 24% |
|  | I got tired of podcasts                         | 21% |
|  | I cannot find new podcasts I like               | 16% |
|  | Family changes (e.g. caring for family members) | 11% |
| do the activity where I listened (e.g. commuting, walking) |   | 10% |
|  | Employment changes                              | 8%  |
|  | I do not enjoy spoken word content              | 8%  |
|  | Listening to podcasts uses too much mobile data | 6%  |
|  | My internet access changed                      | 5%  |
| dcast(s) I followed have ended or are no longer publishing |   | 4%  |
|  | I don't have a device to play podcasts          | 1%  |
|  | Other   | 9%  |
|  |   | I   |

Base: Last listened to podcasts more than a month ago



What reasons would cause you to listen to podcasts again?



Get a new dev

| ne            | 35% |            |
|---------------|-----|------------|
| ng            | 23% | 2023 – 18% |
| ast           | 22% |            |
| ne            | 21% |            |
| ge <b>1</b>   | 4%  |            |
| on <b>1</b> 2 | 2%  |            |
| ain <b>7%</b> |     |            |
| on 6%         |     |            |
| ute <b>5%</b> |     |            |
| ge <b>5%</b>  |     |            |
| et) <b>4%</b> |     |            |
| net <b>3%</b> |     |            |
| an <b>3%</b>  |     |            |
| ner <b>4%</b> |     |            |
|               |     |            |

Base: Ever listened to podcasts and don't know or will never listen again





### Audience retention is as important as audience growth



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The great news – podcast consumers are listening for more time, and to more podcasts, than they did last year

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When audience remains the same, every new listener means a listener lost - that's the very definition of churn

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Podcasters at every level need to remind people that the *medium itself* is unique and essential



When do you think you will listen to podcasts again?



### **53%** 26% in the next year 27% in the next month In the next year

Base: Last listened to podcasts more than a month ago





The Podcast Landscape

# Content

















### Podcasting content is as mass-appeal as it has ever been



Podcasting's top genres are wonderfully diverse, and the medium is generating new hits

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Which of the following podcast genres have you consumed in the last 30 days?



Base: Have listened to a podcast in the last month

| Comedy               | 35% |
|----------------------|-----|
| News                 | 31% |
| Sports               | 30% |
| Political Talk       | 29% |
| True Crime           | 29% |
| History              | 22% |
| Celebrity Interviews | 22% |
| Self-Improvement     | 22% |
| Pop Culture          | 21% |
| Health & Fitness     | 21% |
| TV & Film            | 18% |
| Technology           | 18% |
| Drama or Fiction     | 17% |
| Science              | 16% |
| Business             | 15% |
| Spirituality         | 15% |
| Education            | 14% |
| Video Gaming         | 14% |
| Religion             | 13% |


### Sounds From E Top 20 'Favorite' Podcasts



The Joe

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Stuff

Base: Ever listened to a podcast. Orange = new entrant. NOTE: 'Favorite' does not reflect total audience

| Rogan Experience   | 13% | Club Shay Shay       | 1% |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|----|
| Crime Junkie       | 2%  | Pod Save America     | 1% |
| The Daily          | 2%  | Conan O'Brien        | 1% |
| ew Heights/Kelces  | 2%  | The Ramsey Show      | 1% |
| Dateline NBC       | 1%  | Office Ladies        | 1% |
| Call Her Daddy     | 1%  | The Dan Bongino Show | 1% |
| SmartLess          | 1%  | Tucker Carlson       | 1% |
| f You Should Know  | 1%  | Rachel Maddow        | 1% |
| Ben Shapiro        | 1%  | Theo Von             | 1% |
| This American Life | 1%  | Dumb Blonde          | 1% |





### Podcasting content is as mass-appeal as it has ever been



Podcasting's top genres are wonderfully diverse, and the medium is generating new hits

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Notably, as the audience continues to be more mainstream, there is increased interest in podcasts about TV, Film, and even brands



### SOUNDSPROFTABLE

For each type of podcast, how likely would you be to listen?



**53%** 

A podcast about a A podcast produced A podcast hosted by A podcast about a favorite TV show or by a favorite TV a favorite celebrity favorite brand or movie show or movie or creator from product another medium





### SOUNDSPROFITABLE

Imagine you are interested in a podcast and you learn it is produced by a company that offers products/services to consumers or businesses. In general, does a company's involvement make you more or less likely to listen to it?



### Much less likely Somewhat more likely

Base: Ever listened to a podcast







### Podcasting content is as mass-appeal as it has ever been



Podcasting's top genres are wonderfully diverse, and the medium is generating new hits



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Notably, as the audience continues to be more mainstream, there is increased interest in podcasts about TV, Film, and even brands

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Ongoing shows continue to be the backbone of the medium – but we need to do more to trumpet the quality of limited series shows



### SQUNDSPROFITABLE

Do you currently listen to any of the following podcast types?



A podcast that publishes a new A podcast that releases episodes A limited series podcast with a episode regularly (e.g. every day, occasionally, but not on a fixed fixed number of episodes week or month) schedule

Base: Listened to a podcast in the last year





### SOUNDSPROFITABE

When you finish a limited series, do you look for another podcast to listen to?





Base: Listened to a limited series podcast in the last year



## Yes **74%**



The Podcast Landscape

# Discovery

















Recommending podcasting may be more important than recommending a podcast

 $\bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet$ 

As the character of this year's newest hits would indicate, YouTube has become even more important to discovery



### SQUNDSPROFTABLE

Aside from personal recommendations, which of the following are ways you find your podcasts?



Recommen



Base: Ever listened to a pode

| 48% | YouTube                           |  |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--|
| 30% | Searching on the Internet         |  |
| 28% | Facebook                          |  |
| 25% | ndation from another podcast host |  |
| 24% | On Spotify                        |  |
| 23% | Instagram                         |  |
| 22% | Browsing my podcast app           |  |
| 21% | TikTok                            |  |
| 20% | A mention on a website            |  |
| 19% | A mention on radio or television  |  |
| 14% | A trailer or ad on a podcast      |  |
| 13% | Twitter                           |  |
| 11% | A radio commercial                |  |
| 5%  | lcast                             |  |
|     |                                   |  |



### SOUNDSPROFTABLE

Aside from personal recommendations, which of the following are ways you find your podcasts?





Base: Ever listened to a pode

| <b>52%</b> | YouTube                            |  |
|------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 27%        | Searching on the Internet          |  |
| 27%        | Facebook                           |  |
| 23%        | endation from another podcast host |  |
| 23%        | On Spotify                         |  |
| 23%        | Instagram                          |  |
| 20%        | TikTok                             |  |
| 19%        | Browsing my podcast app            |  |
| 19%        | A mention on a website             |  |
| 16%        | A mention on radio or television   |  |
| 15%        | A trailer or ad on a podcast       |  |
| 11%        | Twitter/X                          |  |
| 10%        | A radio commercial                 |  |
| 5%         | dcast                              |  |
|            |                                    |  |



### SOUNDSPROFITABLE

Types of social media posts that drive discovery



follow

Base: Learned about favorite podcast from Tiktok, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook







Recommending podcasting may be more important than recommending a podcast As the character of this year's newest hits would indicate, YouTube has become even more important to discovery

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 $\bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet$ 

Still, recommendations remain the leading way people discover new podcasts



### SOUNDSPROFITABLE

### Do people in your social circle ever recommend podcasts to you?



### Do you ever recommend podcasts to people in your social circle?



### SQUNDSPROFITABLE

Do any of the following people in your social circle listen to podcasts?



**57%** 

Friends



### Family members

**Co-workers** 

Acquaintances (includes neighbor, health care provider, stylist/barber, bartender/ server, etc.)



### SOUNDSPROFITABE

How likely are you to listen to a podcast recommended by someone in your social circle?









### SOUNDSPROFITABLE

Why would you listen to a podcast recommended by someone in your social circle?



Base: Likely to listen to a podcast recommended by social circle







Recommending podcasting may be more important than recommending a podcast As the character of this year's newest hits would indicate, YouTube has become even more important to discovery

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Still, recommendations remain the leading way people discover new podcasts

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The enemy of the recommendation? The *identity* of the non-listener



### SQUNDSPROFTABLE

Why are you unlikely to listen to a podcast recommended by someone in your social circle?



Base: Unlikely to listen to a podcast recommended by social circle





### The Podcast Landscape

## Non-Listener















### SOUNDSPROFTABLE

When was the last time, if ever, you listened to a podcast?



Never listened to a podcast 26%







The non-listener seems settled with their choices – but opportunities abound



It's tempting to point to "discovery" as the cause of all friction in podcasting, but the real sticking point is inertia

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### **SOUNDSPROFITABLE**

### Why haven't you listened to a podcast?



My existing options give me what I need I prefer watching video over listening I prefer reading over listening I don't understand the benefits of podcasts Not enough free time I don't know how to listen to podcasts I don't like spoken audio I can't find a podcast that seems interesting Podcasts cost money I don't have a device to play podcasts My home internet is not good enough I don't have enough mobile data I don't have mobile data I don't have home internet 2%

I tried to listen to a podcast but was not successful

Base: Have never listened to a podcast



### 2023 - 18%

34%



### **SOUNDSPROFITABLE**

### Why haven't you listened to a podcast?



My existing options give me what I need I prefer watching video over listening I prefer reading over listening I don't understand the benefits of podcasts Not enough free time I don't know how to listen to podcasts I don't like spoken audio I can't find a podcast that seems interesting Podcasts cost money I don't have a device to play podcasts My home internet is not good enough I don't have enough mobile data I don't have mobile data I don't have home internet 2%

I tried to listen to a podcast but was not successful

Base: Have never listened to a podcast



### 2023 – 26%





The non-listener seems settled with their choices – but opportunities abound



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It's tempting to point to "discovery" as the cause of all friction in podcasting, but the real sticking point is inertia

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In reality, the non-listener may not be as happy with their existing choices as they were a year ago



### <u>Soundsprofitable</u>

The following are benefits often associated with podcasts. How interesting is each benefit?



### 2023

Something to listen to in the car or while traveling Something to listen to while walking or exercising Listen to discussions on topics of interest Get news or political analysis Audio to keep me company Hear radio programs on demand Get business news and information Learn about new hobbies Hear programs that accompany TV series or movies Hear from celebrities Listen to audio dramas

Occupy or entertain me while doing mindless tasks or chores Voices and conversation to keep me company when I'm alone

Base: Have never listened to a podcast

### % "Very" or "Somewhat" Interesting





### <u>Soundsprofitable</u>

The following are benefits often associated with podcasts. How interesting is each benefit?



Listen to discussions on topics of interest Something to listen to in the car or while traveling Learn about new hobbies Something to listen to while walking or exercising Get news or political analysis Audio to keep me company Get business news and information Hear programs that accompany TV series or movies Hear radio programs on demand Hear from celebrities Listen to audio dramas

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### % "Very" or "Somewhat" Interesting





### SQUNDSPROFTABE

The following are benefits often associated with podcasts. How interesting is each benefit?



### Listen to discussion Learn about new he Hear programs that Get business news Voices and converse Listen to audio drai Something to listen Get news or politica Audio to keep me c Hear from celebriti Something to listen Hear radio program Occupy or entertain Base: Have never listened to a podcast

| Benefits of Podcasting                     | Percentage Point Gain<br>(2023) |
|--|---------------------------------|
| ns on topics of interest                   | +13                             |
| nobbies                                    | +12                             |
| at accompany TV series or movies           | +8                              |
| s and information                          | +7                              |
| sation to keep me company when I'm alone   | +7                              |
| amas                                       | +6                              |
| n to in the car while driving              | +5                              |
| cal analysis                               | +5                              |
| company                                    | +4                              |
| ties                                       | +4                              |
| n to while walking or exercising           | +2                              |
| ms on demand                               | +2                              |
| in me while doing mindless tasks or chores | +0                              |
|  |                                 |



# SOUNDSPROFTABLE

Coming Next from The Podcast Landscape!

Platforms, Audio and Video "The Persuadables" 2024 Enhanced studies by Race/Ethnicity LGBTQ+ Listeners Audience Analysis by Genre

### THE BUSINESS OF PODCASTING





Monthly consumption of podcast is now a mainstream activity for Americans 18+, and the top new shows reflect this new reality

It's incumbent on those shows to sing the song of podcasting, and not just their show, to keep this medium flourishing and important



2

The Podcast Landscape not only shows the strength of Black and Hispanic audiences but also previously underreported segments like Asian-Americans and the LGBTQ+ audience

Podcasts often self-select very targeted and diverse audiences that brands *must* pay attention to



3

The medium does continue to lag with women and persons 55+, though there are signs that the age composition of the audience is continuing to shift

The path to attaining mainstream consumption for podcasting has always been through <u>content</u> and being on the platforms those audiences are *already* using – this is particularly true here





4

YouTube has solidified and even expanded its importance as a platform for podcasting, particularly for discovery

Your podcast may not belong on YouTube – but YOU do, in some shape or form



5

Part of YouTube's impact? Driving new hits for the medium, from Theo Von to the Kelce Brothers

As noted before, we need these new stars to show up for podcasting – let's make this *literally* part of the deal



6

While time constraints and life changes are always a factor in churn, waning interest is just as relevant sometimes those who lose interest don't just leave the show, but the medium itself

Every podcaster reading this should devote a little bit of time to each episode to talk about what podcasts offer that nothing else can



Nearly half of lapsed listeners *don't know* when they will listen to their next podcast

We need to instill a sense of urgency about the medium so that when a listener "falls," they are caught by another podcast, not TikTok



8

While the perceptions and behaviors of existing podcast consumers were relatively static, the non-consumers changed in some dynamic and interesting ways—they might just be bored!

Want a way to attract a new audience? Don't just tell them how great podcasts are – ask them if they are tired of screens, mindless scrolling, and finding nothing new on TV – shift the ground beneath them





# Thank you!



















