The Power of Brands in Podcasts

A Podcast Landscape Report
The Power of Brands in Podcasts
The Power of Brands in Podcasts - Highlights

• More than 40% of Americans 18+ say they would be likely to listen to a podcast about a **favorite brand**

• These **Brand Fans** are also more likely to be positive about a company’s involvement with a podcast

• **Brand Fans** are natural evangelists – both for the brands they love and podcasting in general

• **Brand Fans** are more likely to listen to podcasts with other people - increasing reach

• A visual strategy for YouTube and other visually-driven platforms is a key driver for courting **Brand Fans**

• Adding **video components** to a brand podcast can also attract current non-listeners to the medium
Methodology:

• In May/June 2023, Sounds Profitable partnered with Signal Hill Insights to field an online study of 2400 Americans ages 18+ called The Podcast Landscape.

• Of those, 974 respondents indicated they were “Very” or “Somewhat” likely to listen to a podcast about a favorite brand or product, and were labeled as “Brand Fans”.

• The sample was weighted to the most recent census data to be representative of the US population.

• Respondents were asked a variety of questions about their podcast consumption, perceptions of the medium, and their attitudes about brand involvement.
For each type of podcast, how likely would you be to listen?

% “Very” or “Somewhat” likely

- A podcast about a favorite TV show or movie: 52%
- A podcast produced by a favorite TV show or movie: 48%
- A podcast hosted by a favorite celebrity or creator from another medium: 46%
- A podcast about a favorite brand or product: 41%
Likelihood to listen to a podcast about a favorite brand or product

- Very Likely, 15%
- Somewhat Likely, 26%
- Neutral/Not Likely, 59%

Approximately 106 Million Americans 18+
Brand Fans = 41%
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?

Base: Ever listened to a podcast
Think about podcasts as a medium. Which words or phrases below would you use to describe podcasts, in general?

Total 18+

- Entertaining: 44%
- Interesting: 44%
- Informative: 44%
- Educational: 35%
- A good pastime: 28%
- Easy to use: 28%
- Free: 26%
- Funny: 25%
- Innovative: 20%
- Exciting: 18%
- Not for people like me: 14%
- Too many choices: 11%

(cont’d)… less than 10%:

- Boring: 8%
- A waste of time: 7%
- Amateurish: 6%
- Offensive: 4%
- Risky: 4%
- Hard to find: 4%
- Expensive: 3%
- Difficult to use: 2%
- None/ nothing: 7%
Think about podcasts as a medium. Which words or phrases below would you use to describe podcasts, in general?

**Brand Fans**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funny</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exciting</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not for people like me</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many choices</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Less than 10%:**

- Boring: 3%
- A waste of time: 3%
- Amateurish: 6%
- Offensive: 5%
- Risky: 4%
- Hard to find: 5%
- Expensive: 4%
- Difficult to use: 2%
- None/ nothing: 2%
The Power of Brands in Podcasts

Who Are Brand Fans?
Age Profile: Past Month Listeners

US Population:
- 18-34: 29%
- 35-54: 32%
- 55+: 38%

Brand Fans:
- 18-34: 36%
- 35-54: 38%
- 55+: 27%
Gender Profile: Past Month Listeners

US Population
- Female: 50%
- Male: 49%
- Non-Binary: 1%

Brand Fans
- Female: 48%
- Male: 51%
- Non-Binary: 1%
Age Profile: Brand Fans

Ever listened to podcasts
- 55+ 24%
- 18-34 38%
- 35-54 38%

Never listened to podcasts
- 18-34 21%
- 55+ 45%
- 35-54 34%
Gender Profile: Brand Fans

Ever listened to podcasts
- Male: 52%
- Female: 47%
- Non-Binary: 1%

Never listened to podcasts
- Male: 31%
- Female: 69%
- Non-Binary: 1%
Black Respondents: Brand Podcast Interest

US Population
- Black/African-Americans: 12%

Brand Fans
- Black/African-Americans: 16%
Hispanic Respondents: Brand Podcast Interest

US Population
- Hispanics 17%

Brand Fans
- Hispanics 20%
The Power of Brands in Podcasts

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

Total 18+

- In past week, 37%
- In past 30 days, 18%
- In past 12 months, 11%
- >12 months ago, 7%
- Never listened to a podcast, 28%
When was the last time, if ever, you listened to a podcast?

Brand Fans

- In past week, 48%
- In past 30 days, 23%
- In past 12 months, 12%
- >12 months ago, 6%
- Never listened to a podcast, 11%
Looking at the following benefits associated with podcasts, how important is each benefit to you?

% “Very” or “Somewhat” important

- Listen to discussions on topics of interest: 85%
- Something to listen to in the car or while traveling: 65%
- Something to listen to while walking or exercising: 61%
- Audio to keep me company: 60%
- Have audio to accompany household chores: 58%
- Get news or political analysis: 54%
- Learn about new hobbies: 54%
- Voices and conversation to keep me company when I’m alone: 52%
- Get business news and information: 52%
- Hear radio programs on demand: 40%
- Hear programs that accompany TV series or movies: 40%
- Listen to audio dramas: 37%
- Hear from celebrities: 29%

Base: ever listened to a podcast
Looking at the following benefits associated with podcasts, how important is each benefit to you?

% “Very” or “Somewhat” important, Brand Fans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>% Very or Somewhat Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen to discussions on topics of interest</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something to listen to in the car or while traveling</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something to listen to while walking or exercising</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio to keep me company</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have audio to accompany household chores</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get news or political analysis</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about new hobbies</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voices and conversation to keep me company when I’m alone</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get business news and information</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear radio programs on demand</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear programs that accompany TV series or movies</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to audio dramas</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear from celebrities</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: ever listened to a podcast
### Do you currently listen to any of the following podcast types?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>All Listeners</th>
<th>Brand Fans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A podcast that publishes a new episode regularly (e.g. every day, week or month)</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A podcast that releases episodes occasionally, but not on a fixed schedule</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A limited series podcast with a fixed number of episodes</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Listened to a podcast in the last year
When you finish a limited series, do you look for another podcast to listen to?

- **Podcast Listeners**
  - Yes, 83%
  - No, 17%

- **Brand Fans**
  - Yes, 88%
  - No, 12%

Base: Listened to a limited series podcast in the last year
The Power of Brands in Podcasts

Evangelism
How often do you listen to podcasts with other people?

Podcast Listeners
- Rarely/Never: 65%
- Occasionally: 23%
- Always/Most of the Time: 12%

Brand Fans
- Rarely/Never: 55%
- Occasionally: 29%
- Always/Most of the Time: 16%
When you listen with others, on average, how many people listen to podcasts with you?

Brand Fans who have ever listened to podcasts

- 1 person, 61%
- 2 people, 27%
- 3+ people, 12%
Do you ever recommend podcasts to people in your social circle?

- Ever listened to podcasts:
  - No, 46%
  - Yes, 54%

- Brand Fans:
  - No, 37%
  - Yes, 63%
Do any of the following people in your social circle listen to podcasts?

- Friends: 58% (Total), 72% (Brand Fans)
- Family members: 53% (Total), 63% (Brand Fans)
- Co-workers: 32% (Total), 43% (Brand Fans)
- Acquaintances (includes neighbor, health care provider, stylist/barber, bartender/server, etc.): 34% (Total), 42% (Brand Fans)
How likely are you to listen to a podcast recommended by someone in your social circle?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Somewhat likely</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Somewhat unlikely</th>
<th>Very unlikely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listeners</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand Fans</strong></td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aside from personal recommendations, which of the following are ways you find your podcasts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching on the Internet</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation from another podcast host</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Spotify</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browsing my podcast app</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TikTok</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mention on a website</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mention on radio or television</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A trailer or ad on a podcast</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A radio commercial</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Base: Ever listened to a podcast
Aside from personal recommendations, which of the following are ways you find your podcasts?

- YouTube: 55%
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- Recommendation from another podcast host: 25%
- On Spotify: 27%
- Instagram: 28%
- Browsing my podcast app: 25%
- TikTok: 26%
- A mention on a website: 22%
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- A trailer or ad on a podcast: 16%
- Twitter: 15%
- A radio commercial: 14%
- Other: 3%

Base: Brand Fans
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Base: Brand Fans
The Power of Brands in Podcasts
Have you ever listened to a podcast that was available on a video streaming platform (e.g., Netflix, Paramount+, Max)?

- Ever listened to podcasts:
  - Yes, 22%
  - No, 78%

- Brand Fans:
  - Yes, 31%
  - No, 69%
Do you ever consume video content, such as YouTube or TikTok, with the tab in the background, video minimized or behind a lock screen, so you just get the audio?

Watched any video last month

- **Total**: Yes, 44%; No, 56%
- **Brand Fans**: Yes, 57%; No, 43%

Base: Watched any video last month
If podcasts were available on a video streaming platform, how likely is it that you would spend more time listening to podcasts?

Ever listened to podcasts/Have not listened on video streaming platform

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither more nor less likely
- Somewhat less likely
- Much less likely

Listeners

- 11% Very likely
- 34% Somewhat likely
- 45% Neither more nor less likely
- 6% Somewhat less likely
- 5% Much less likely

Brand Fans

- 18% Very likely
- 43% Somewhat likely
- 31% Neither more nor less likely
- 5% Somewhat less likely
- 3% Much less likely
Why haven’t you listened to a podcast?

Non-listeners

- My existing entertainment and information options give me what I need: 26%
- I prefer watching video over listening: 26%
- I prefer reading over listening: 25%
- I don’t understand the benefits of podcasts: 21%
- I can’t find a podcast that seems interesting: 18%
- Not enough free time: 16%
- I don’t know how to listen to podcasts: 15%
- I don’t like spoken audio: 14%
- Podcasts cost money: 9%
- I don’t have a device to play podcasts: 3%
- I tried to listen to a podcast but was not successful: 3%
- I don’t have enough mobile data: 3%
- My home internet is not good enough: 2%
- I don’t have mobile data: 2%
- I don’t have home internet: 1%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Non-listeners who are Brand Fans</th>
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SOUNDS PROFITABLE
THE BUSINESS OF PODCASTING
• Research Database
• Next Partner Event: Dec 5th (NYC)
• SXSW – Official Podcast Track (March 2024)
• Q4 Research Project – A Deeper Dive into Perceptions of Video
For Brand Fans, corporate involvement in a podcast is a welcome development – half say they are more likely to listen to such a podcast, compared with 4% who say they are less likely.

Official brand involvement might register as a “mark of quality” or endorsement of the content in a way that a fan-produced podcast may not.
Findings and Action Steps

**Brand Fans** are natural evangelists for both brands and for podcasting in general – they are significantly more likely to recommend podcasts to others, and far more receptive to recommendations themselves than the average podcast listener.

Brands should **court those listeners** with relevant incentives to spread the word.
Findings and Action Steps

A Brand Fan who listens to podcasts with other people (co-listening) brings at least an additional 1.5 people to that listening occasion.

Producers of branded podcasts should research co-listening with their own audiences to discover their true audience potential.
Findings and Action Steps

A video component likely improves a podcast’s ability to reach **Brand Fans**. Video for these listeners is a key driver for both discovery and usage.

Even **Brand Fans** who don’t listen to podcasts cite a preference for **video** as the number one reason they haven’t tried the medium.
Even Brand Fans who don’t currently listen to podcasts are very positive about the medium, and profile as potentially very persuadable about podcasts.

Three of the top five reasons non-listening Brand Fans provide for not trying podcasts are down to simple education, and not negative perceptions about the medium – which means the brand could be their introduction to podcasting.
The Power of Brands in Podcasts

A Podcast Landscape Report

October 2023

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SignalHill Insights
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