

COLUMNS

Giving audio advertising a shot

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Whether it is streaming music, listening to the radio, or tuning into new podcasts, consumers are connecting with digital audio at an increasing rate. It is time for advertisers to take note.

Streaming radio and pure-play music services present some of the biggest opportunities for advertisers, and podcasts are also preferred for direct-to-consumer advertising.

Benefits on different platforms

The **IAB reports** digital audio advertising drives remarkable consumer engagement.

Audio ads allow you to have one-on-one conversations with the consumer. There is no competition when listening to audio ads. Your message is consumed in isolation and has the full attention of the consumer to drive engagement.

Digital audio ads are not skippable and can be highly personalized, thus increasing the likelihood that the message will break through to the consumer for greater impact.

There is a plethora of data on audio listeners that can be used to gain more insight into audience demographics, with data about user bases, log-in data, listening profiles and daily activity available.

Types of media formats

There are several platforms that allow the consumer to listen to audio content.

One of the most popular is the car, where there are a number of available integrated dashboards, such as Apple's CarPlay and Google's Android Auto, that further prompt the adoption of connected listening experiences while on the go.

Podcast listeners account for just 26 percent of the United States Internet population, but this audience is growing the most rapidly.

Podcasts have become the go-to channel for many direct-to-consumer brands.

Listeners are typically more receptive to ads with the high level of concentration that podcasts require.

While podcasts are consumed by streaming or downloading, music streaming through Spotify and Pandora is consumed entirely through the streaming services. In fact, they are the biggest outlets for brand advertisers.

Listeners can tailor their listening experiences to certain moods or interests, giving marketers the ability to reach listeners who are more likely to connect with the ads.

These types of in-stream audio advertising and programmatic ads put brands in front of listeners right at the moment of engagement.

The digital ad industry has seen a pivot to programmatic buying and selling. In-stream and programmatic ads are set to become a **standard in marketing** across many industries.

As the proliferation of connected devices increases, we are also seeing the rise of smart speakers.

Amazon's Alexa has a special feature called "Flash Briefings," which is a short-format audio report with clips lasting about 10 minutes or less. This feature is being used to reach the audience in a whole new way due to the powerful targeted message opportunities, so marketers are incorporating this platform into their strategies.

MANY DISTRIBUTION platforms have emerged to provide online streaming services and audio applications. This includes **publisher-owned and -operated desktop and mobile apps** such as music services, AM/FM simulcasts, audio content aggregators, and on-demand and time-shifted content including podcasts.

Some of these audio ad distribution platforms include YouTube, Pandora, Spotify, Google Play, SoundCloud and TuneIn.

Other audio streaming platforms great for audio ads are iHeartRadio, Amazon Music, Shazam and SiriusXM.

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