

MARKETING

Podcasts cannot be overlooked by advertisers: Ipsos

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Podcasts have high audience engagement rates. Image credit: Shutterstock

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Affluents continue to engage with media at high rates, even as the landscape becomes increasingly complex.

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According to a "[Media Still Matters](#)" [webinar](#) hosted by market researcher Ipsos, affluent consumers spend more than 46 hours a week engaging with media brands including through social media, audio, television and print. About half of this time involves various forms of television consumption, but the medium may not be the sure bet it once was for marketers.

"Affluents have really found new ways to engage with those favorite publication brands," said Tony Incalcaterra, U.S. senior vice president of audience measurement at [Ipsos](#).

Ipsos' findings were based on annual and quarterly surveys of U.S. consumers. Participants with annual household incomes of at least \$125,000 were categorized as affluent.

Finding affluent audiences

Affluent consumers are engaged with multiple forms of media, including several at once, throughout an average day. For instance, social media is used consistently during the day but television viewership peaks in the evening hours after work.

Younger affluents also show higher rates of engagement, particularly with social media. Their use tends to start later in the day and run later into the evening hours than the general affluent population.

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The Washington Post is one traditional print publication that has embraced social media, including TikTok

Lifestyle changes during the COVID-19 pandemic namely, more time at home have also led to a change in media consumption habits. Engagement with online streaming platforms and podcasts increased, while live television viewership and radio declined.

According to Mr. Incalcaterra, however, as consumers resume their office commutes, streaming growth has leveled off while radio audiences have rebounded.

Print readership also fell during the pandemic, but loyal audiences followed their favorite publications to other channels.

About four in 10 affluents follow a publication on social media, such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Twenty-one percent listen to podcast produced by a traditional print publication and this channel is quickly becoming a major point of consumption.

Podcast listening had steadily grown for several years but was one of many trends that was further accelerated during the pandemic. This has been fueled by women and millennial and Gen Z consumers, but older demographics are also showing growth.

With engaged and loyal audiences, podcasting can be appealing to marketers.

More than 90 percent of affluents will listen to mostly the entirety of a podcast episode, and two-thirds will listen to almost most episodes of a favorite show. Most podcasts are heard within the first week of being released, so timeliness is another important factor.

While podcast listening does not happen in a vacuum many listeners are working on other tasks, such as chores around the house or driving audiences remain highly engaged and are less distracted by other forms of media.



Este Lauder has sponsored branded audio segments airing on the New York Times' Modern Love podcast. Image courtesy of Este Lauder

Television, however, is facing challenges with engagement levels. More than half of television audiences will have it playing in the background but will be focused on something else.

"Television is still the dominant media force through its many forms: live TV, streaming, on demand, etc.," Mr. Incalcaterra said. "It's the device really, and I emphasize the word device, through which affluents or staying informed and entertained, but there are some warning signs for television that need to be addressed."

Luxury applications

Luxury brands have to reassess how they reach affluent audiences in the United States as new data show the pandemic has dramatically accelerated the shift to streaming.

According to Resonate's "2021 State of OTT Report," streaming now accounts for a quarter of all television viewed, with 80 million U.S. consumers increasing their viewership during the pandemic. Cord-cutting has become so popular that 41 percent of those surveyed now watch television solely through Netflix, HBO Now, Prime Video, Hulu and Disney+ ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, many luxury brands have recognized the benefits of audio.

Across sectors, luxury marketers have delved into the podcast world to create a wide range of series, from historical to whimsical and beyond ([see story](#)).

In addition to brand-owned podcasts, LVMH-owned jeweler Tiffany & Co. ([see story](#)) and U.S. beauty brand Este Lauder ([see story](#)) have both entered advertisement agreements with the *New York Times'* content studio T Brand

for branded audio segments airing on the Modern Love podcast.

"Podcasts are pulling affluence in and gauging them to a great degree," Mr. Incalcaterra said.

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