

Podcasting for Business

March 2019



Junto Media



INTRODUCTION

A question often raised by communicators these days is, “should we have a podcast?” The answer depends, of course, on the enterprise's communication goals. But the discussion is often bogged down by more fundamental questions about what an audio podcast is and who listens to them.

This report addresses those essentials. We provide a brief overview of podcasts and podcast audiences to help teams get beyond the “what” so they can focus on the “why” of podcasting as a communication tool.

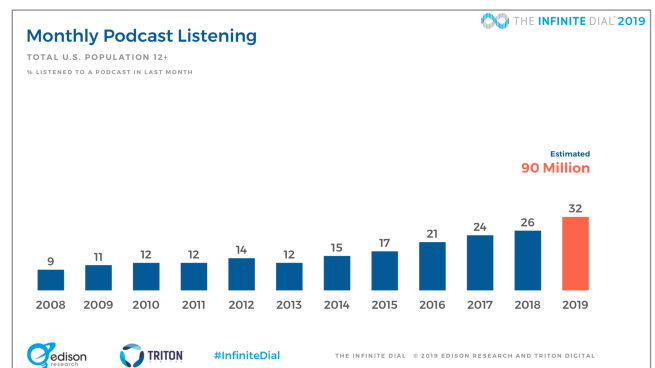




A podcast is an episodic audio series, like a radio show, that people can download and listen to. Podcasts differ from other digital content like text or video because they can be syndicated for direct delivery to a listener's device. In other words, when a listener subscribes to a podcast, each episode is delivered directly to their smartphone or smart speaker. They don't need to go to a website or social media platform to get it; they simply push "play" on their phone or ask Alexa. Audio podcasts have several attributes that can be extremely advantageous to any enterprise with important communication goals.

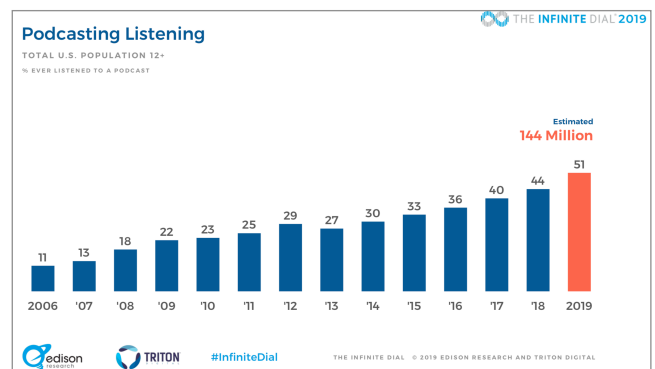
The podcast audience is growing rapidly

More than half of all Americans over the age of 12 have listened to a podcast, up from just over a third in 2016. An estimated 90 million Americans listen to a podcast monthly. These audiences have increased substantially over the past few years and are expected to continue growing for the foreseeable future.



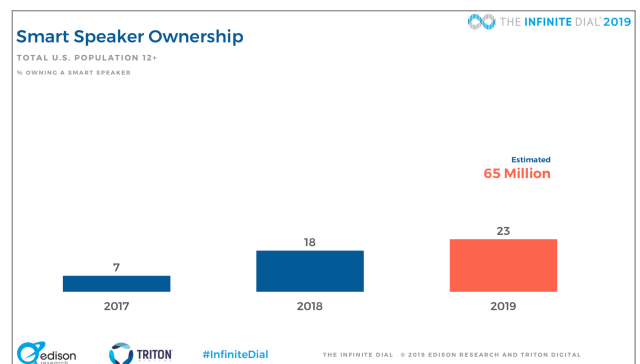
The podcast are persistent

You can listen to a new episode when it comes out, or you can wait until a few months' worth or a season is out and then binge it. It's always there for you, and with over 650,000 podcasts available, there's always something new to discover.



The podcast are extremely convenient

Audio is the most accessible form of content available. Whether music, audiobooks, or podcasts, only audio can be consumed in just about any environment while doing almost anything. People listen to podcasts while commuting, jogging, working in their yards, cooking, and many other hands-on activities that aren't conducive to any other form of content. More people are welcoming smart speakers like the Amazon Echo and Google Home into their households, allowing audiences to listen to their favorite podcasts without even touching a device.





Any business that prioritizes communications or marketing should consider podcasting. Given its low costs, ease of production, and ease of access for audiences, podcasting should be embraced by any enterprise that wants to reach or inform prospects, customers, or stakeholders. In addition, successful podcasts often have a level of authenticity that few other media can match. A simple, down-to-earth conversation between two people can make audiences feel as though they're in the room, even when those people happen to be CEOs, elected officials, or even celebrities.

Podcasts provide regular content available any time

Podcasting allows businesses to provide insights and information to clients, customers, members, and employees on a regular basis. Consider this: If an organization sends out a regular newsletter, it's counting on people to take the time during their day to read that content. A podcast can serve the same purpose while presenting the information in the form of a discussion or conversation they can listen to while driving to work or making dinner, offering a more convenient, personal, and entertaining experience.

Podcasting can be extremely affordable

Compared to the costs of producing video and text, podcasting can be a very efficient way to communicate. For most, a year's worth of high-quality half-hour podcast episodes will cost about the same as one professionally produced 10-minute video. The production costs for audio content are far lower than for video for a number of reasons, but an important one is that it's simply easier to make something sound good than to look good. Costs can certainly rise with more bells and whistles, but podcast audiences appreciate a no-frills listening experience. Podcasts can truly let your content shine.

Podcasts allow for very flexible production

It's counterintuitive, but releasing a new podcast episode every week or two doesn't actually require a significant investment of internal resources. A 30-minute episode can be broken into three 10-minute segments, for example, so different departments or employees can be involved by providing just one or two short pieces a month. Another approach is to spend a few weeks or months preparing episodes, then releasing those episodes incrementally while preparing the next batch, which makes it easier to plan around times when other business priorities must take precedence. If a business is already publishing newsletters or blog posts, they can even be the source of the podcast content. It's just another media for reaching your audience.

Did you know?

In 2005, the founders of a podcast directory company called Odeo realized their business was in jeopardy after Apple added podcasts to iTunes. Following a day-long brainstorming session to find a new business model, they developed a simple SMS one-to-many messaging system. They called it Twitter.

CASE STUDY: Hospitals In Focus



Junto Media began working with the Federation of American Hospitals (FAH) in 2018 to create [Hospitals In Focus](#). In it, FAH CEO Chip Kahn interviews leaders of the hospital industry, from the people responsible for emergency preparedness to CEOs of member companies like HCA Healthcare. Most episodes are 30 to 45 minutes long and are released about every other week.

The podcast has given FAH a platform to showcase their membership's stories, groundbreaking ideas, and advances in patient care. At the same time, it allows the Federation to engage directly with their members on important political and policy issues. FAH considers the podcast to be a new way to reach their target advocacy audiences from key influencers to staffers on Capitol Hill.

Sean Brown, vice president of communications at FAH, says, "We were complete podcasting novices, coming to the table with nothing more than some interesting episode ideas. With Junto Media's skilled guidance, we have been able to turn those topics into a successful podcast series. They have been an incredible partner on this project. From providing performance tips to outstanding production skills to offering promotional ideas, Junto Media has helped us navigate the podcasting process from start to finish."

The podcast has allowed FAH to create branded evergreen content. The podcast, in the form of quotes and short videos (audiograms), drives social media conversations around issues important to their members. The Federation's member companies are excited to be guests on the podcast because it allows them to reach their employees in another medium and to share what they are doing with anyone interested in health care policy. They have shared the podcast with their employees through their newsletters and internal websites.

FAH expects to release at least 20 new episodes this year.



"We were complete podcasting novices, coming to the table with nothing more than some interesting episode ideas. With Junto Media's skilled guidance, we have been able to turn those topics into a successful podcast series."

SEAN BROWN

Vice President of Communications,
Federation of American Hospitals



CONCLUSION

Podcast listenership is growing at an accelerating rate. Audiences find them easy to access and convenient to consume. Businesses and organizations should seriously consider podcasts as an affordable, efficient, and consistent way to engage their key audiences.



To learn more about podcasts and discuss whether they are right for your enterprise, contact Richard Fawal at 202-285-7912 or rfawal@juntomedia.co.