AnalyticsIQ

RESEARCH REPORT

Podcast Listening Behaviors

Introduction

- Podcasts, or episodes of digital audio content, have steadily increased in popularity since the early 2000's according to research by Pew[1].
  - More recently, research suggests that around half of US adults listen to podcasts[2] and more than 100 million US consumers listen to a podcast each week[3].
- The increased popularity of podcasts presents an opportunity for marketers to promote products and services on these podcast platforms through advertisements and sponsorships.
  - Recent research found that ad revenue for podcasts has steadily increased since 2015, with total revenue of over 1.9 billion in 2023[4].
- Considering the increasing popularity of podcasts as an entertainment platform and the potential opportunity for advertisement, the Cognitive Sciences team at AnalyticsIQ collected data from a large, random, representative sample of the US population to assess current behavior around podcasts and purchasing.
- These data were collected via a voluntary online survey, and all participants were compensated for their time. Survey respondents were first provided with an informed consent explaining the purpose of the study. Then they were asked to provide demographic information (e.g., age, race, gender, education)[5] followed by a series of questions regarding their podcast listening behavior, including the genres, frequency, and format of podcasts, as well as podcast purchasing behavior.

[1] Pew Research Center. (2021). *Trends and Facts on Audio and Podcasts: State of the News Media*. Pew Research Center's Journalism Project. https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/fact-sheet/audio-and-podcasting/

[2] Atske, S. (2023). *Podcasts as a Source of News and Information*. Pew Research Center's Journalism Project. https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2023/04/18/podcasts-as-a-source-of-news-and-information/

[3] Adgate, B. (2024). *Over 100 Million Americans Listen To A Podcast Each Week, Survey Shows*. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/bradadgate/2024/04/02/over-100-million-americans-listen-to-a-podcast-each-week/

[4] Bruderle, C., Moscoso, M., Bangah, C., Birtwhistle, T., & Krasnow, S. (2024). U.S. Podcast Advertising Revenue Study. *iab*. https://www.iab.com/wp content/uploads/2024/05/IAB_US_Podcast_Advertising_Revenue_Study_FY2023_May_2024.pdf

[5] These survey takers included a representative sample of gender (50% female, 50% male), race (Black/African American 10%, AAPI 5%, White 72%, Latinx 9%, Native American 1%, Multi-racial 1%), and age (Gen Z 7%, Millennial 32%, Gen X 30%, Baby Boomer 31%) for US adults.
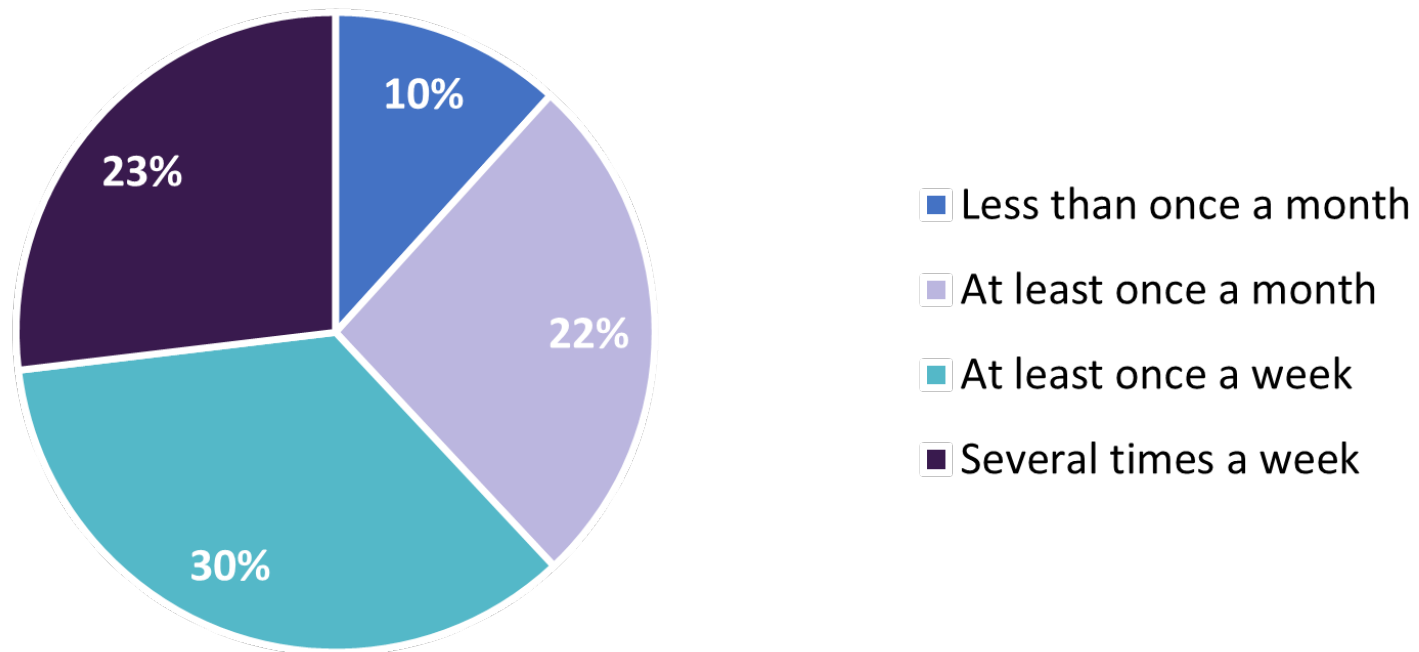
DID YOU KNOW?

The majority (65%) of US adults have listened to a podcast in the last 3 months.
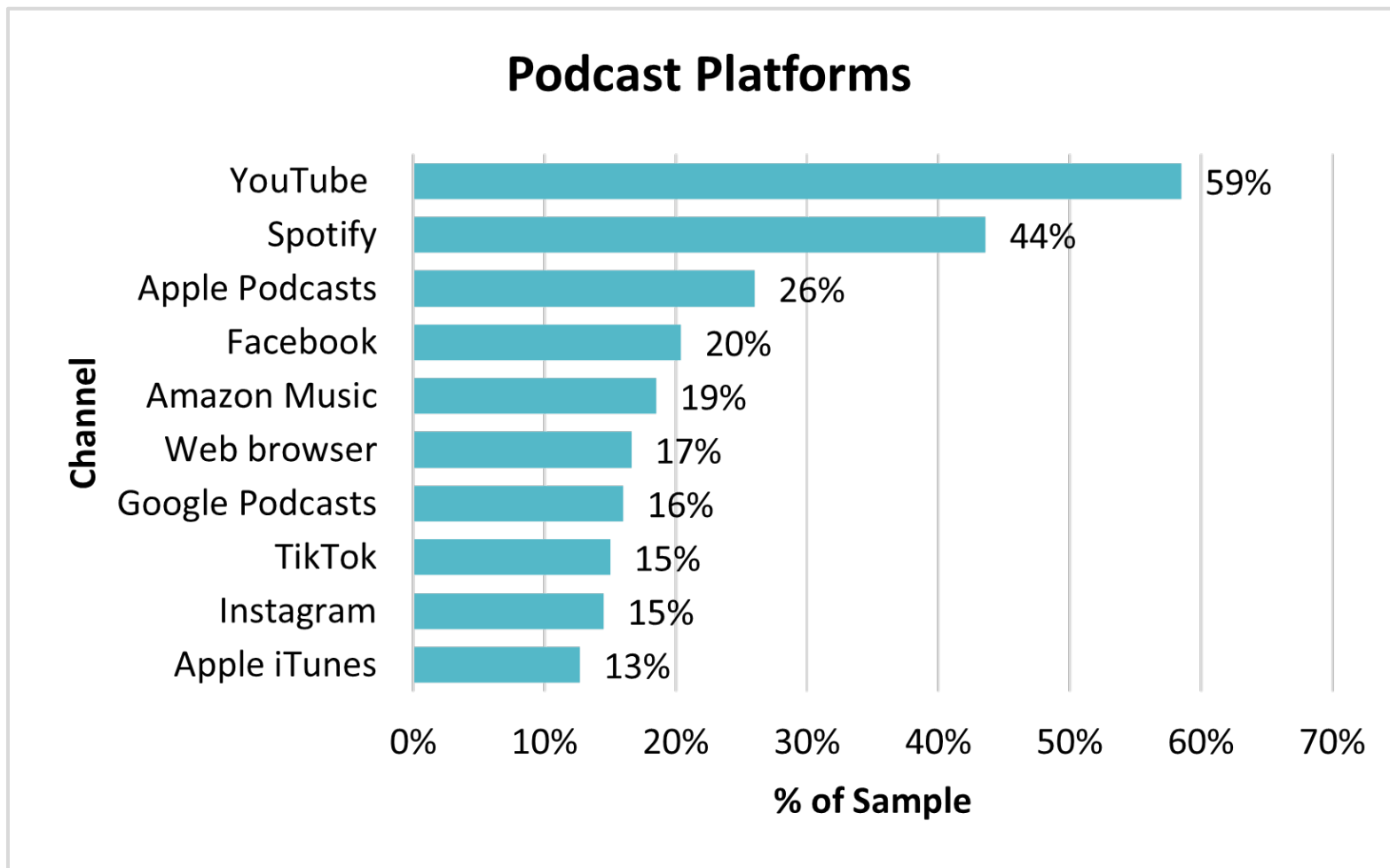
Podcast Listener Demographic Differences
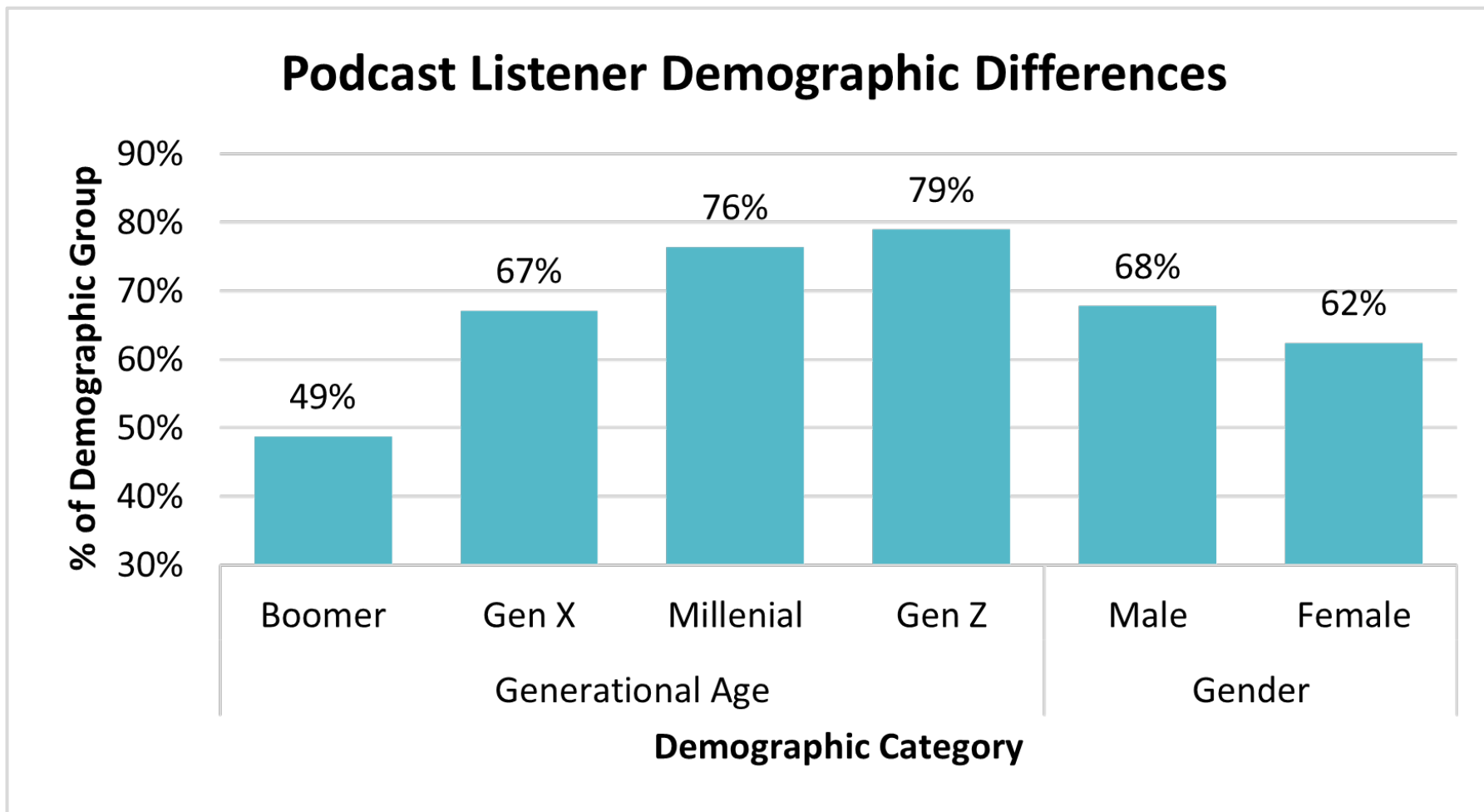
Graph 1. Survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months. Percentages in the graph reflect the proportion of people who listened to podcasts by demographics. Those in the Baby Boomer age generation category were significantly less likely to have listened to a podcast than all other groups (X^2 = 460.83, $p < .001$, *McFadden R^2* = 4.72%). Additionally, men are significantly more likely to have listened to podcasts than women (X^2 = 24.30, $p < .001$, *McFadden R^2* = 0.24%).

Frequency of Podcast Listening

- Less than once a month — 10%
- At least once a month — 22%
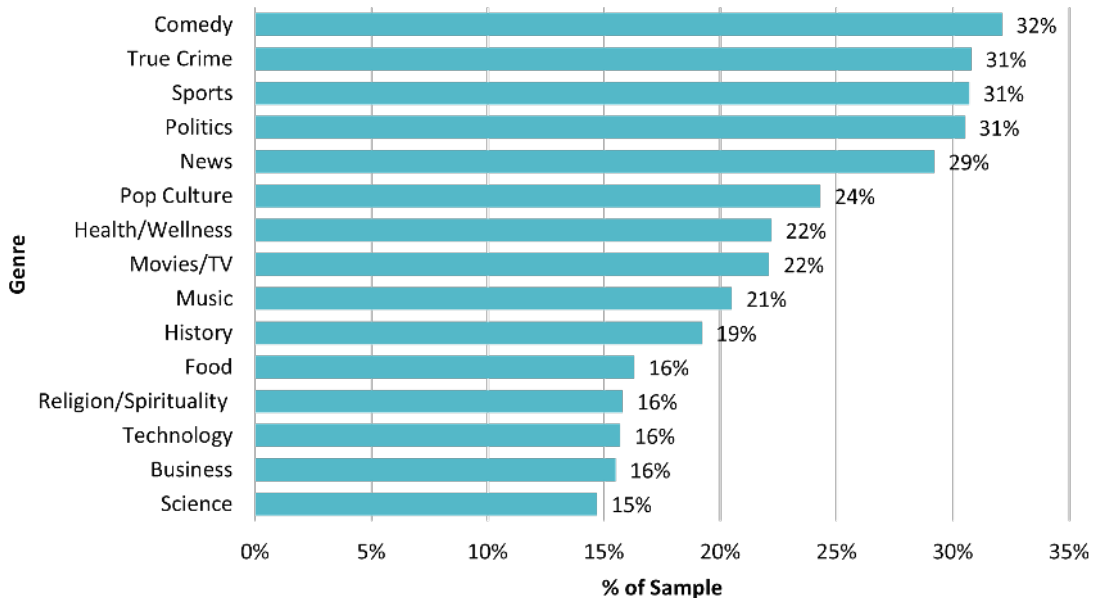- At least once a week — 30%
- Several times a week — 23%

Graph 2. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months, they were then asked how frequently they had listened to podcasts. Percentages in the graph reflect the proportion of people who affirmed each response option.
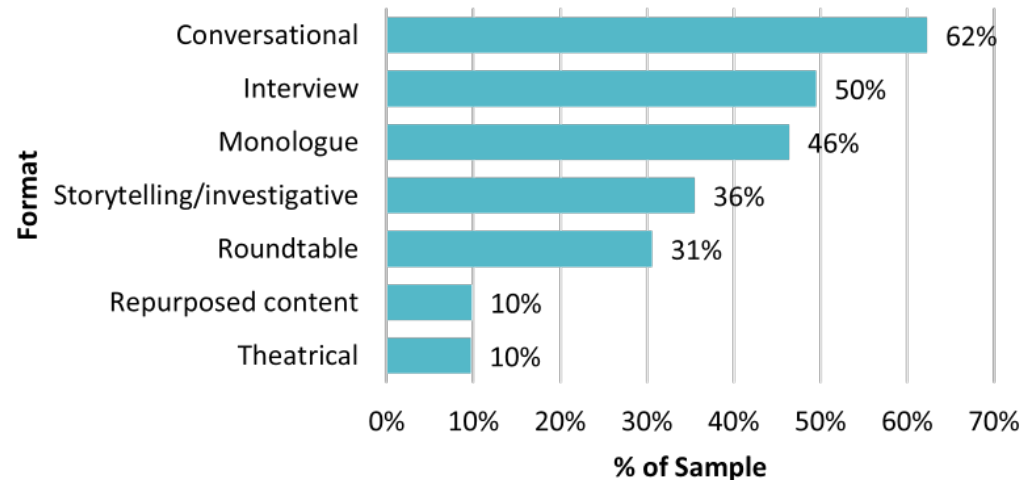
Podcast Platforms

Channel	% of Sample
YouTube	59%
Spotify	44%
Apple Podcasts	26%
Facebook	20%
Amazon Music	19%
Web browser	17%
Google Podcasts	16%
TikTok	15%
Instagram	15%
Apple iTunes	13%

Graph 3. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months, they were then asked where they had listened to the podcast. Percentages in the graph reflect the proportion of people who affirmed each response option. The most popular podcast platforms were YouTube (59%), Spotify (44%), and Apple Podcasts (26%).

![AnalyticsIQ]

Genre of Podcasts

Genre	%
Comedy	32%
True Crime	31%
Sports	31%
Politics	31%
News	29%
Pop Culture	24%
Health/Wellness	22%
Movies/TV	22%
Music	21%
History	19%
Food	16%
Religion/Spirituality	16%
Technology	16%
Business	16%
Science	15%

Graph 4a. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months, they were then asked what genre(s) of podcasts they listened to. Percentages in the graph reflect the proportion of people who affirmed each response option. The most popular podcast genres were Comedy (32%), True Crime (31%), and Sports (31%).

Podcast Format

| Format	%
Conversational	62%
Interview	50%
Monologue	46%
Storytelling/investigative	36%
Roundtable	31%
Repurposed content	10%
Theatrical	10%

Graph 4b. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months, they were then asked what was the format of podcast(s) they listened to. Percentages in the graph reflect the proportion of people who affirmed each response option. The most popular podcast formats were Conversational (62%), Interview (50%), and Monologue podcasts (46%).
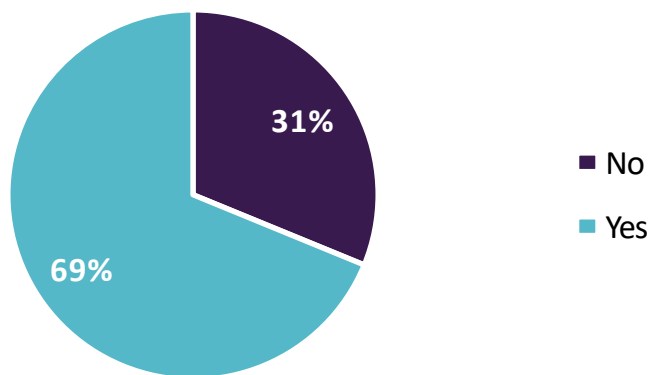
DID YOU KNOW?

Of podcast listeners, almost half (46%) learned about a new brand of product through a podcast and an additional 23% made a purchase because of a podcast advertisement or sponsorship.

Purchases from Podcasts
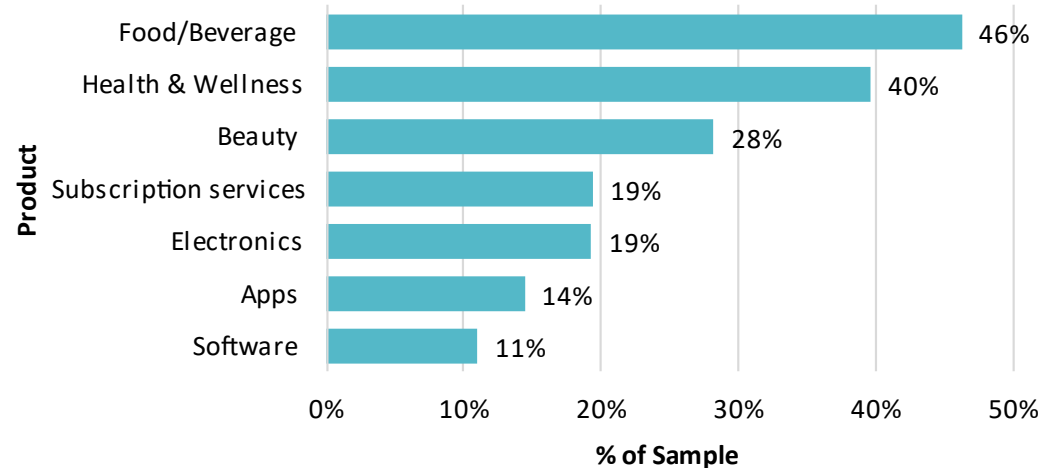
- No
- Yes
- Not sure

70%

23%

7%
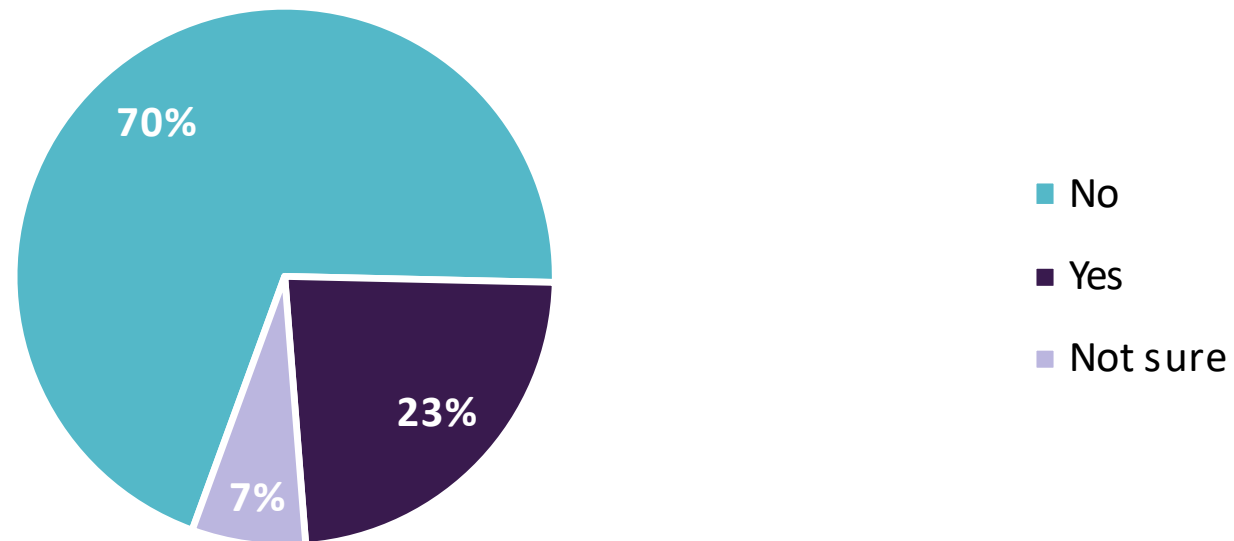
Graph 5. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months, they were then asked if they had purchased a product because of a podcast advertisement or sponsorship. Of survey takers that reported listening to podcasts, 23% had made a purchase.

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Discount Code Offered for Podcast Purchase

- No
- Yes

31%

69%

Products Purchased from Podcasts

Food/Beverage — 46%
Health & Wellness — 40%
Beauty — 28%
Subscription services — 19%
Electronics — 19%
Apps — 14%
Software — 11%

Product

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%
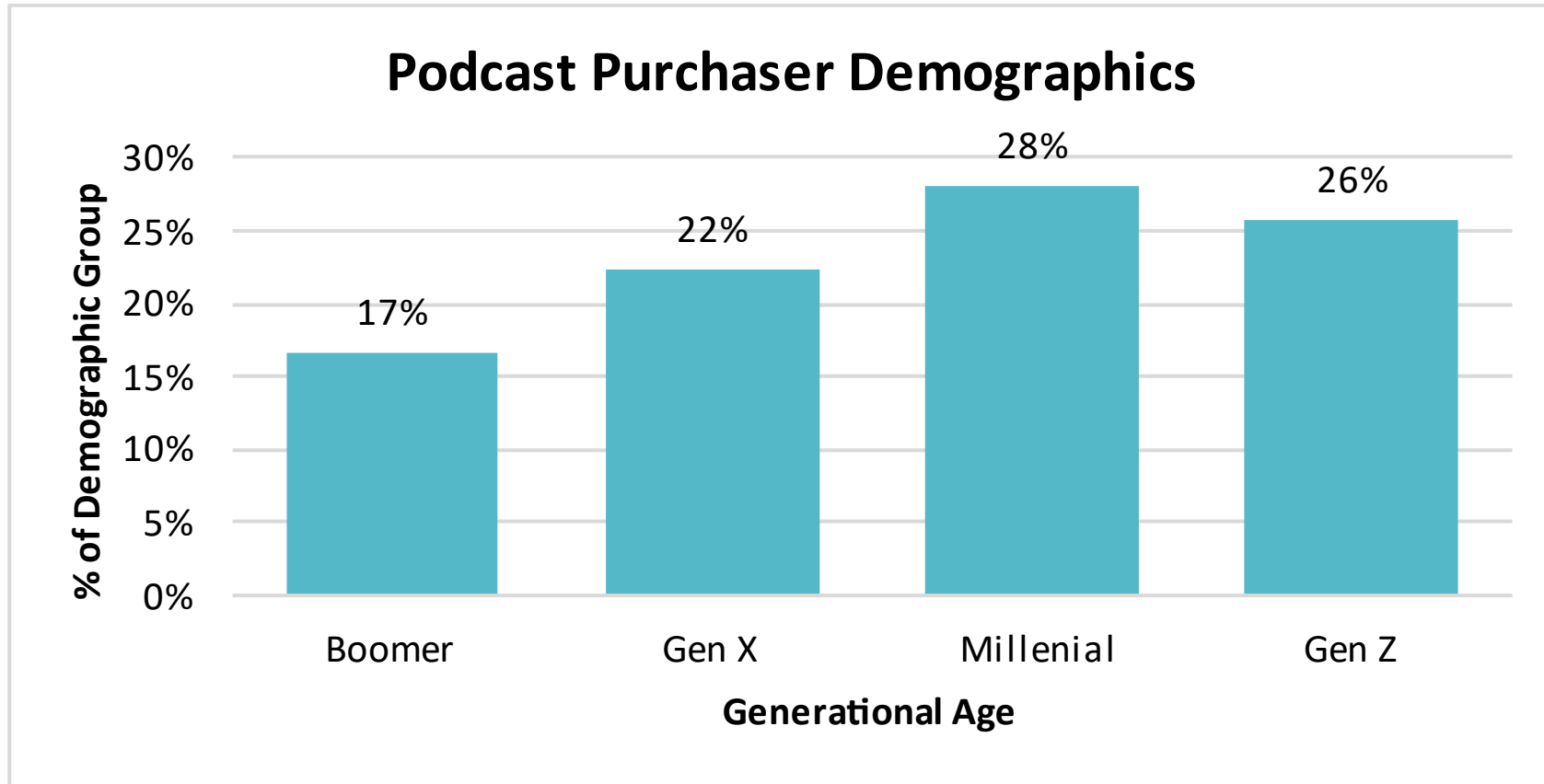
% of Sample

Graph 5a. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months and that they made a purchase, they were then asked if they were offered a discount code from the podcast. Of this subset of survey takers, 69% were offered a discount code through the podcast.

Graph 5b. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months and that they had made a purchase, they were then asked what kind of product they purchased. Percentages in the graph reflect the proportion of people who affirmed each response option. The most popular products purchased from podcast advertisements were Food/Beverage (46%), Health & Wellness (40%), and Beauty products (26%).

Podcast Purchaser Demographics

Graph 5c. If survey takers indicated that they had listened to a podcast in the last 3 months, they were then asked if they had purchased a product because of a podcast advertisement or sponsorship. Percentages in the graph reflect the proportion of people who listened to podcasts by demographics. Those in the Baby Boomer age generation category were significantly less likely to have made a purchase because of a podcast advertisement than all others ($X2 = 58.04$, $p < .001$, McFadden $R2 = 1.13\%$).

Summary & Conclusions

- The majority (65%) of US adults have listened to a podcast in the last 3 months.
    - Generally, younger generations and men are more likely to listen to podcasts. See Graph 1.
- The majority (52%) of podcast listeners listen weekly, with 23% listening to several podcasts per week. See Graph 2.
- The most popular platforms to listen to podcasts were YouTube (59%), Spotify (44%), and Apple Podcasts (26%). See Graph 3.
- The most popular podcast genres were Comedy (32%), True Crime (31%), and Sports (31%). See Graph 4a.
- The most popular podcast formats were Conversational (62%), Interview (50%), and Monologue podcasts (46%). See Graph 4b.
- Almost half (46%) of podcast listeners learned about a new brand or product through a podcast, and 23% made a purchase because of a podcast advertisement or sponsorship.
    - The majority of purchasers (69%) were offered a discount code from the podcast. See Graph 5a.
    - The most popular products purchased from podcast advertisements were Food/Beverage (46%), Health & Wellness (40%), and Beauty products (26%). See Graph 5b.
    - Generally, younger generations are more likely to make a purchase because of a podcast advertisement. See Graph 5c.
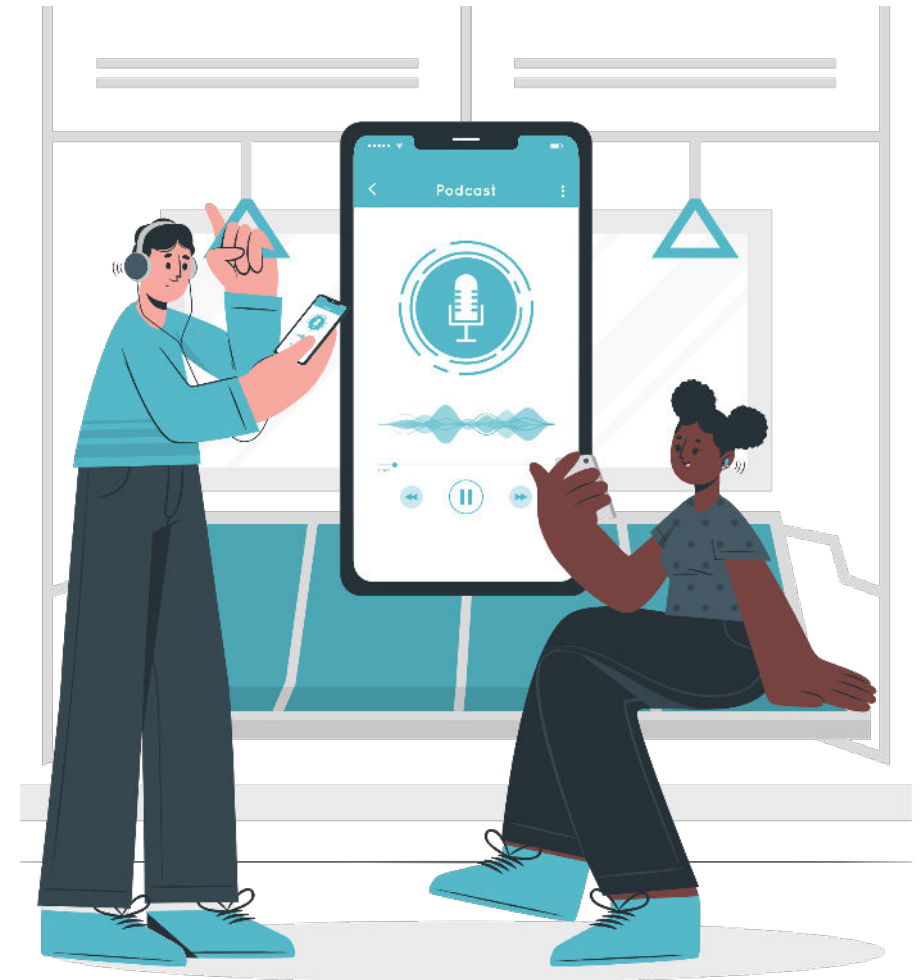
Implications & Future Direction

- These findings provide valuable insights to understand current consumer behavior around podcast listening and purchasing behavior.
- The current results can help businesses understand who is listening to podcasts, and in turn their advertisements.
- These data can help businesses target podcast channels and formats for advertisement based on popularity of:
  - Platforms
  - Genres
  - Formats
- Lastly, these findings can help businesses understand who is currently purchasing products from podcast advertisements and what kinds of products they are purchasing.
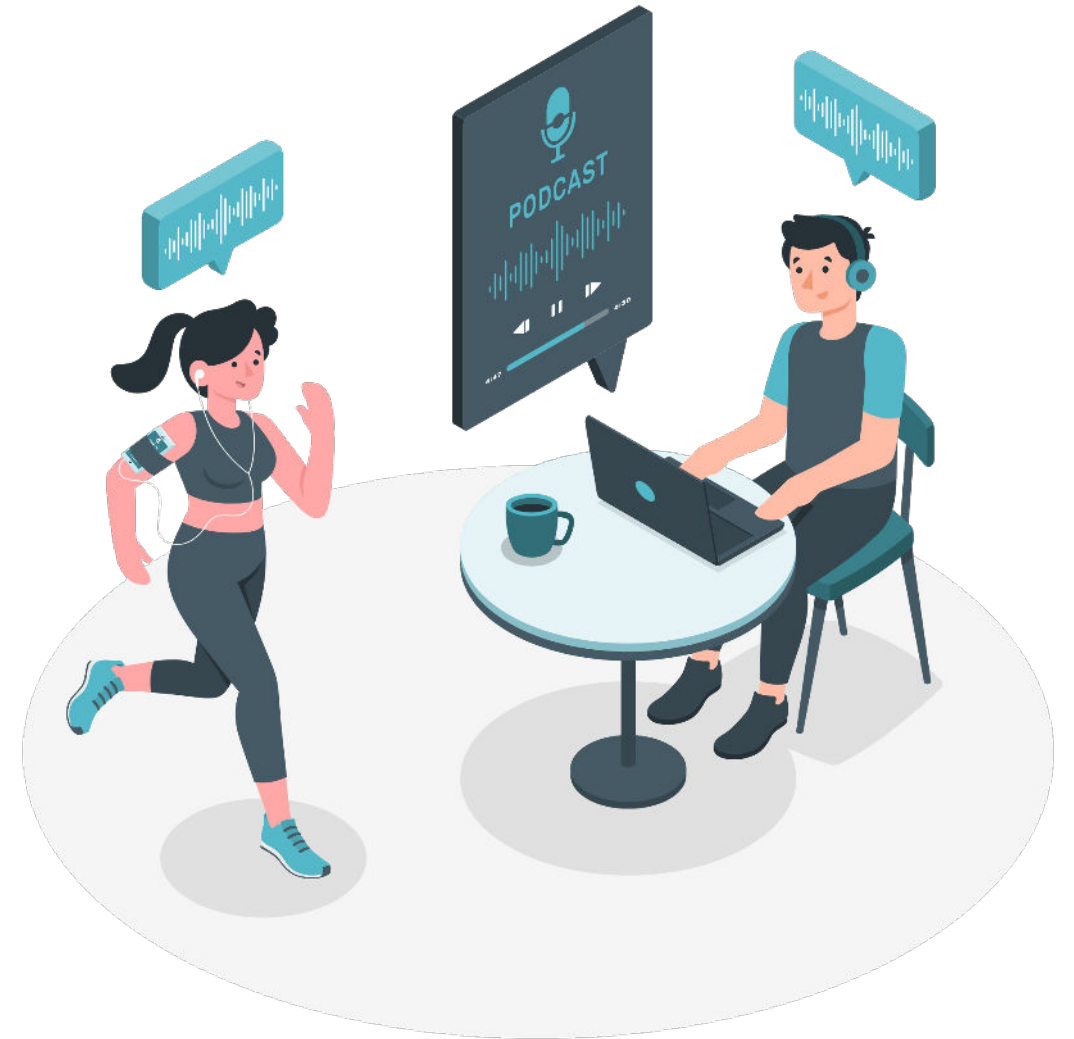
Take Action

- Curious about how our podcast research can inform your advertising and marketing strategy? See below for a list of available predictive digital datapoints.
- Reach out to sales@analyticsiq.com for more detailed information on pricing or about partnering to conduct custom research of your own.

Podcast Datapoints		
Podcast Fanatics	Podcast Advertised Brand Engagers	iHeartRadio Podcast Listeners
Podcast Advertised Product Purchasers	Apple Podcast Listeners	Spotify Podcast Listeners
Podcast Discount Code Users	Google Podcast Listeners	

About the Author

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Megan Capodanno is a research psychologist and a Senior Research Manager in the Cognitive Sciences department at AnalyticsIQ. She has spent ten years studying Cognitive Psychology and is primarily interested in decision making and applying statistical measurement techniques to human behavior. Follow her on LinkedIn.

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