

Podcasts - UK - 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the podcast market.
- The number of different podcasts people listen to and how frequently they listen.
- The most popular podcast genres.
- Consumer willingness to pay for podcasts and the potential of subscription options.
- Attitudes towards podcast advertising, including interactive advertising.

The podcast advertising market continues to evolve and grow more sophisticated. Mintel's research indicates the potential of interactive advertising, with nearly half (47%) of podcast listeners preferring a podcast to have interactive adverts rather than standard ones, rising to 56% of those with a household income of £50,000 or more. Interactive adverts in podcasts have the potential to be far more engaging than standard adverts that many either skip or ignore.

Initially the pandemic had a mixed impact on the podcast market as people dealt with the shock of the situation and change to their daily lives, leading to changes in people's podcast listening habits. Subsequently many people, especially younger people, have increased their time listening to podcasts, while people's increased time at home has presented opportunities for podcasts, such as greater interactivity.

Mintel's research highlights the current dissatisfaction many have with podcast advertising, including the view that the adverts in podcasts are overly repetitive, which is an issue that can turn people away from titles or even the entire format. Furthermore, as podcasts overall gain greater attention there is more controversy being generated about comments made within a podcast, potentially leading to reputational damage for platforms tied closely to an individual podcaster.



"Podcasts are poised to become more interactive, with features such as polls and responsive advertising."

– **Rebecca McGrath,**
Associate Director Media and Technology

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Video podcasts and subscriptions are areas of great potential for podcasters, with Mintel's research showing high interest in video podcasts and a willingness to pay for podcast content. The subscription options for titles being introduced in 2021 by Spotify and Apple Podcasts are likely to be particularly effective for smaller, niche podcasts that have an engaged and loyal listenership.

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