

Time Spent with Podcasts Will Dip amid the Pandemic, but It Should Rebound by 2022

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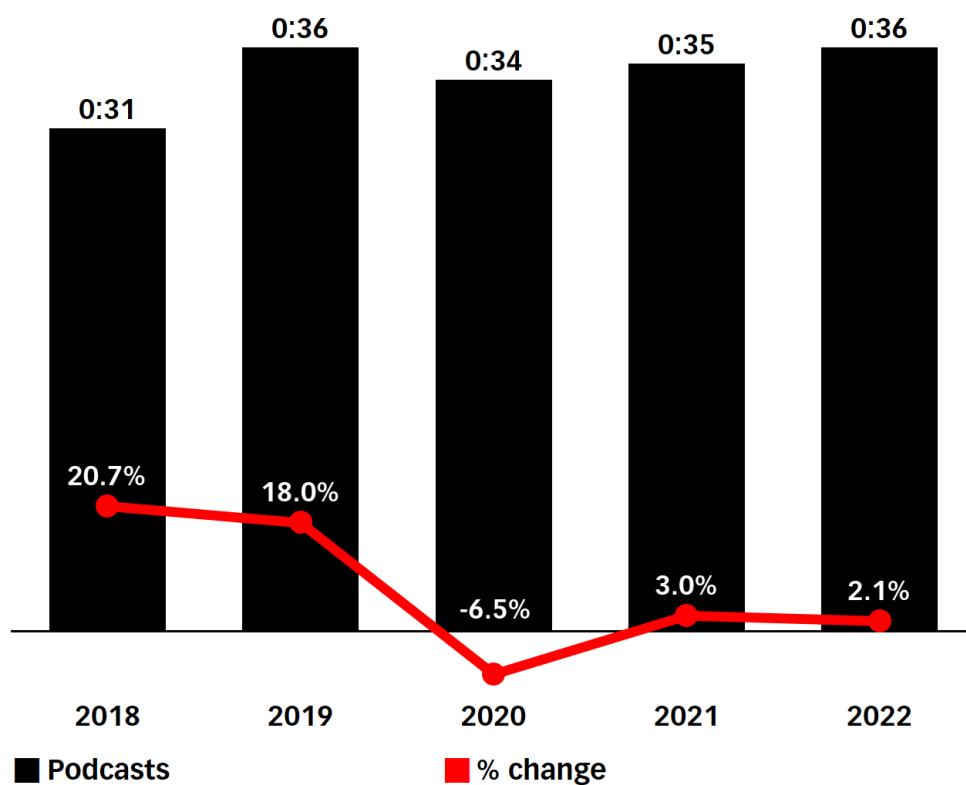
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US adult listeners will spend an average of about 34 minutes a day on podcasts, according to our latest estimates. Time spent is 2 minutes less than last year due to the pandemic's impact on listening behavior, but it should return to pre-contraction levels by 2022.

In the weeks following shelter-in-place orders, the dip in listening was most severe, though listens and downloads have rebounded a bit since then. This will be the first recorded contraction since we began tracking US podcast listener time in 2015.

Podcasts: Average Time Spent by Listeners in the US, 2018-2022

hrs:mins per day and % change



Note: individuals ages 18+ who listen to podcasts at least once per month; includes all time spent listening to podcasts, regardless of multitasking and device; includes streamed or downloaded podcasts

Source: eMarketer, April 2020

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www.eMarketer.com

Despite the dip this year, time spent will return to steady growth in the coming years, verging on one-fifth of total time spent with digital audio. Streaming platforms continue to invest in podcasts while publishers diversify content offerings, which will increase engagement among podcast listeners. For example, Spotify **announced** it now has more than 1 million shows in its podcast catalog and hopes to expand its audience by **experimenting** with new formats, like video podcasts featuring YouTube creators.

Through podcasts, brands can reach a highly engaged audience of digital audio listeners. We estimate that podcast listening time will

make up 17.0% of total time spent with digital audio in the US this year and 18.9% by the end of our forecast period in 2022.

While a large portion of digital audio listeners subscribe to ad-free platforms like Apple Music and Spotify Premium, podcasts often include host-read ads, which has an added value given the influence many hosts have with their audience. Podcast listeners often consume a high volume of content, which opens up more audio advertising to listeners on ad-supported platforms. A survey conducted by Westwood One in October 2019 — cited by eMarketer — found that 36% of podcast listeners consumed 6 or more hours of podcast content per week.