

# Google's rumored affordable earbuds could capitalize on a growing hearables market

Article

Google appears to have leaked an image of its new Pixel Buds hearables on Twitter, just two weeks ahead of its 2021 I/O **conference**, **according to** Gizmodo. The since-deleted tweet was

posted by the official Android Twitter account and appears to show a device with the title, “Pixel Buds A-Series.” The new image supports an earlier **report** from 9to5Google, which claimed Google was working on a more affordable version of its 2020 Pixel Buds (\$179) using the same “A” signifier Google used to differentiate its more **affordable** Pixel phones.

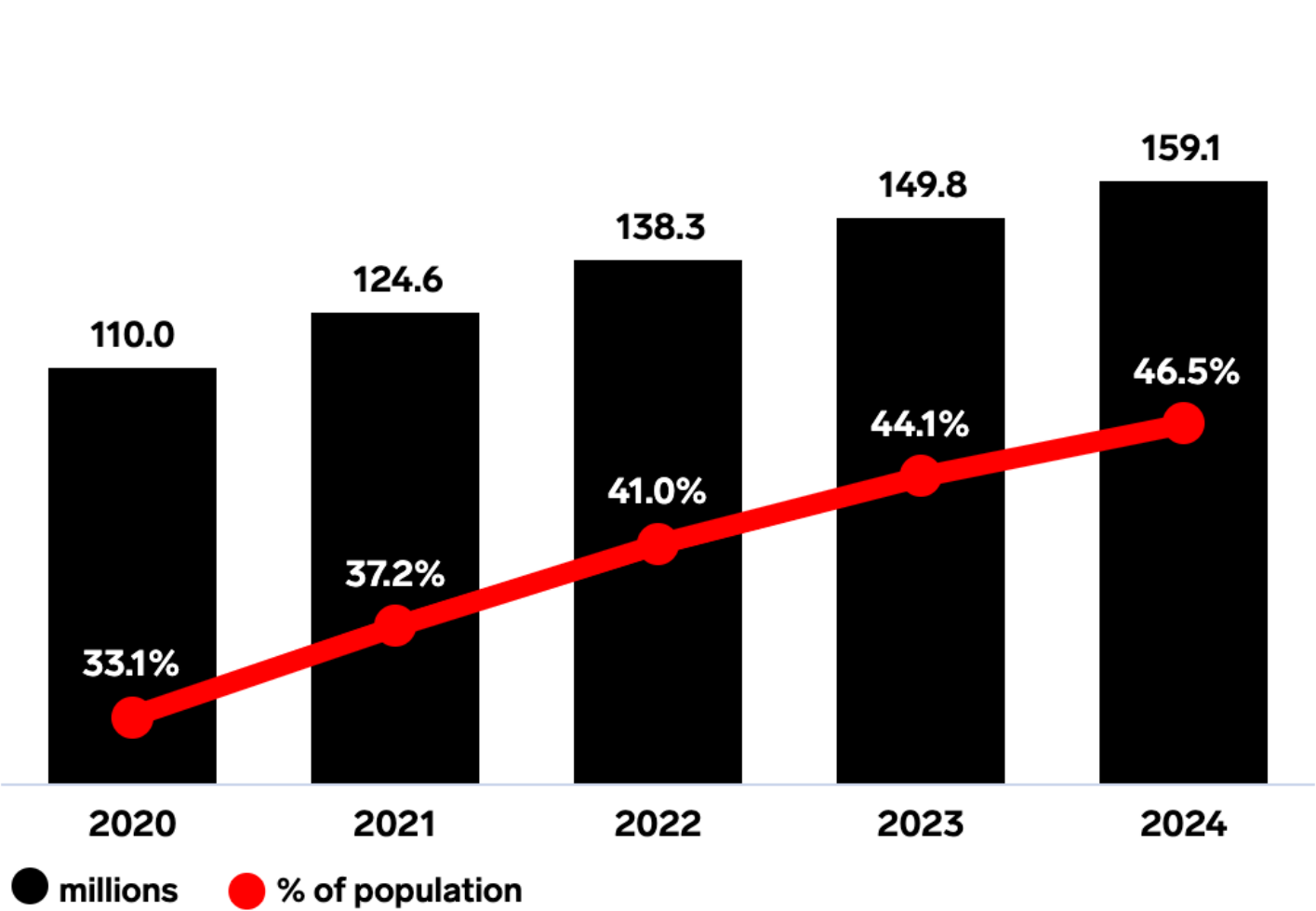
**A more affordable Google hearable offering would follow a year of massive growth in the hearables market, especially among mid- and low-priced devices.** The wireless hearables market grew a striking 78% year over year (YoY) in 2020, **per** a recent Counterpoint report. According to the report, that growth was driven in large part by the strong performance of mid- and low-priced wearable options **under** \$100. IDC's Wearables Team research director Ramon T. Llamas recently **emphasized** that point, saying: “2020 was the year that hearables became the must-have device.” For context, Apple’s AirPods Pro (\$250) are considered on the higher end of the price spectrum.

**The recent surge in hearables market growth was largely influenced by changing spending habits related to the pandemic.** Consumers turned to hearables—especially more affordable options—to improve their remote work and study experiences during the pandemic, per Counterpoint. Counterpoint claims hearables were well-suited to weather demand disruptions during the pandemic since a higher portion of the segment’s sales come through online channels relative to other consumer tech.

**The wireless audio market is expected to continue growing this year, leaving room for a new Google offering or other affordable competitors to snag market share.** Counterpoint expects the hearables market will continue growing, reaching 33% YoY by the end of 2021, a decline from the standout 2020 year but healthy growth nonetheless. These projections are largely in line with eMarketer’s **forecast** of the US hearables market, which expects an increase from 124.6 million hearables users in 2021 to 159.1 million by 2024. Counterpoint predicts higher-end hearables will start regaining market share, but not until at least Q3 2021. That leaves ample opportunity for Google and its competitors to cater to the growing low- to mid-priced device market.

# Hearable Users

US, 2020-2024



Source: eMarketer, September 2020

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