



# AUDIO-PODCASTS: HERE TO STAY!

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# AUDIO PODCASTS: HERE TO STAY!

January 2025

## Summary

- › The use of audio podcasts continues to grow – unmatched by any other medium in Germany.
- › Listeners consciously choose to engage with podcasts as an audio-focused medium.
- › RSS feeds allow unrestricted, platform-independent distribution and monetization of audio podcasts.
- › Audio podcasts are perceived as uniquely authentic, honest, and natural.
- › Podcasts have established themselves as a long-form medium, achieving up to 150% more stable Listen Through Rates (LTR).
- › Many podcasts continue to experience strong organic growth, mirrored by the thriving podcast advertising market.
- › Audio podcasts are exceptionally efficient to produce.
- › They enable monetization up to 12 times higher via "host-read ads" compared to standard video ads.

## The rapid growth of audio podcasts continues.

Audio podcasts not only captivate younger generations but are becoming increasingly more popular among older audiences. They entertain, inform, create a sense of community, and foster long-term listener loyalty.

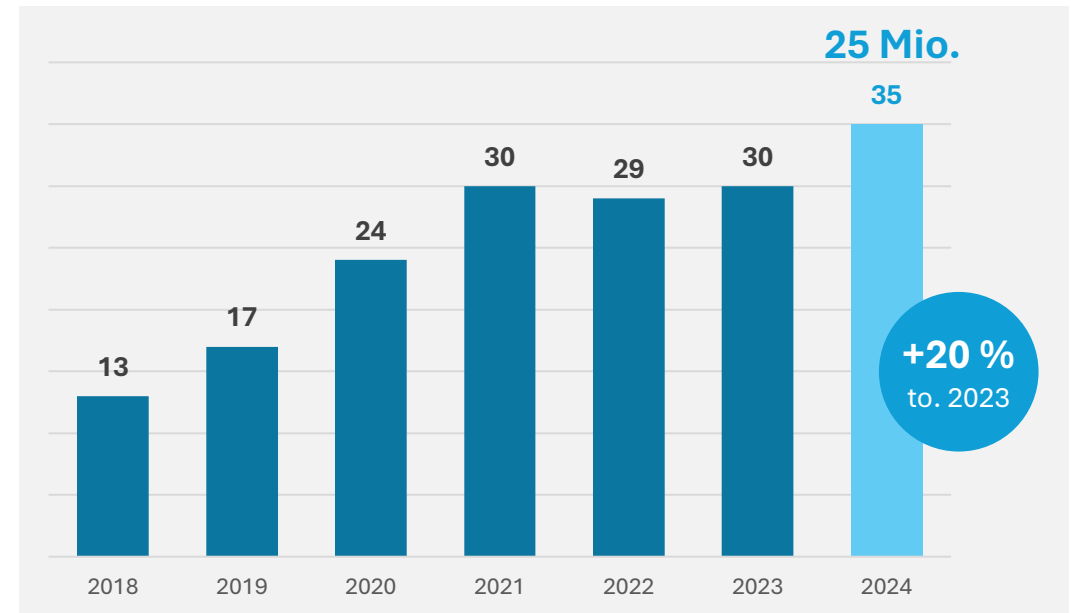
According to the Online Audio Monitor, podcast usage grew by 20% in 2024. The Media Activity Guide also highlights that podcasts were the only medium to see an increase in average consumption time in 2024. Around one-third of the German population now listens to podcasts regularly, a figure set to increase in the future. The BVDW further anticipates a **14% growth** in the German podcast advertising market in 2024.

These consistent growth figures underline the relevance and uniqueness of podcasts. Here, we analyze the reasons for his rapid growth – from flexible usage and efficient distribution to versatile monetization opportunities and cost-effective production.

### Podcasts on the rise

#### Usage of Podcasts and Radio Shows On-Demand

**Data:** Percentage/Millions, Population aged 14+



Date: 2024; 70,800 Mio. Percentage/Millions, Population aged 14+(n=5.759)

Source: Online Audio Monitor 2024

## Podcasts are consumed in multitasking situations.

Research shows that podcasts are primarily listened to during multitasking activities. Whether traveling by car, bicycle, or on foot, while exercising, or doing household chores, listeners remain engaged with podcasts.

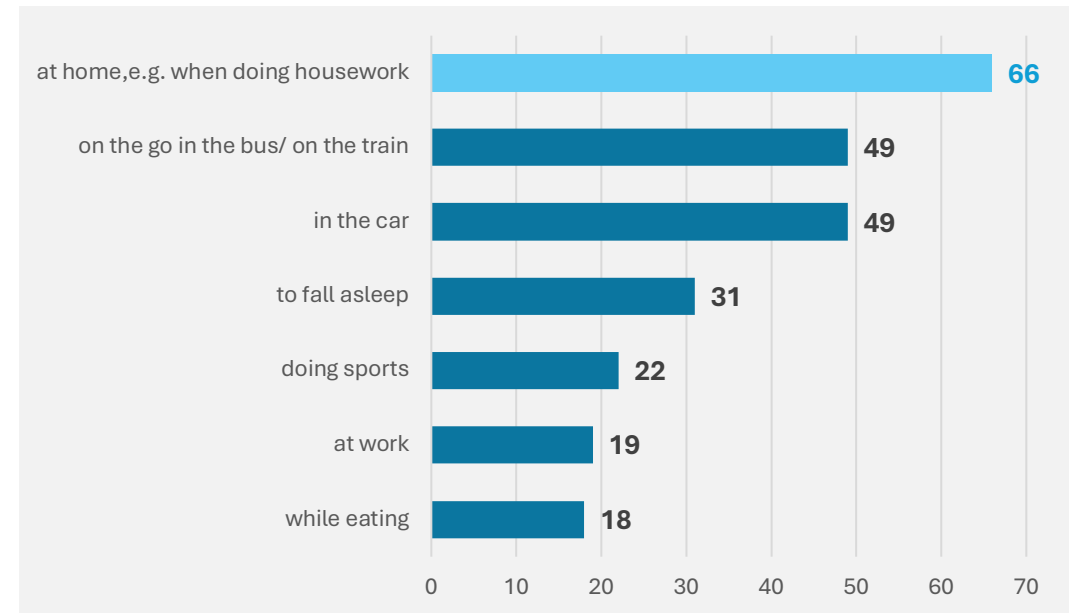
Unlike videos, text, or films, podcasts are designed for "hands-free" consumption, allowing users to stay fully immersed while keeping their hands and visual attention free. Listening to podcasts often reflects an intentional choice to focus solely on audio.

Studies, including the *Online Audio Monitor* and reports by *Seven.One Audio*, *OMR*, and *IQ Digital*, reveal that over 60% of podcast consumption occurs during household activities or while commuting.

## Podcast usage in different contexts

### Situational usage in percentages

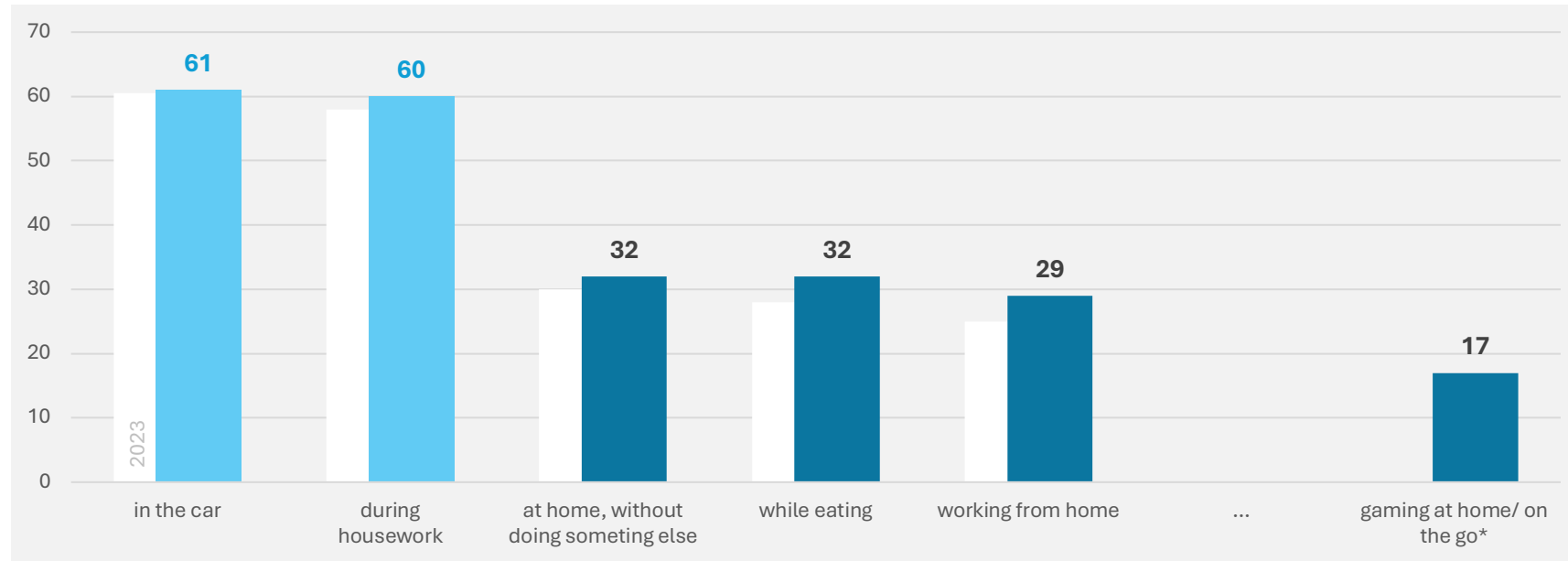
Podcast usage in different contexts



Source: Podcast 2024 - Seven.One Audio, Base: Adults aged 18-49 who listen to podcasts at least monthly, n=795

## Online Audio Usage

Data: Home vs. Out-of-Home usage, percentages, regular users



Source: Online Audio Monitor 2024, Base: 70.8 million individuals aged 14+ in Germany (n=5,759)

## Platform-independent distribution of audio is unique and offers freedom.

Unlike closed platforms ("walled gardens") like *YouTube* or *TikTok*, RSS feeds allow decentralized and **platform-independent** distribution. This **openness** enables podcasters and publishers to reach broad audiences without being constrained by economic conditions, algorithmic restrictions, or technical specifications of major platforms.

The open RSS feed standard provides both podcasters and listeners with full control over availability and monetization, free from the business models or algorithm changes of large platforms. Video elements, however, can challenge these benefits by binding podcasters to specific platforms.

## Audio podcasts create a uniquely authentic and intimate atmosphere.

Podcasts foster an intimate environment. The absence of cameras or elaborate setups allows participants to express themselves naturally, enhancing authenticity and trust. This unscripted communication feels approachable and familiar, often cited as a key driver of podcast success.

*"When public figures increasingly choose podcasts as their preferred medium for authentic communication, it's a powerful testament to the closeness, authenticity, and freedom that audio formats like podcasts can offer."*

Konstantin Seidenstücker, Managing Director, Studio Bummens, on Jürgen Klopp's decision to only comment on his career change on the podcast and not in other media forms



*My guests know they can reach a different audience through podcasts—those who don't watch evening news. The intimate atmosphere and extended time available allow for entirely different conversations compared to talk shows or traditional news formats."*

*Paul Ronzheimer discussing his news podcast "Ronzheimer," Which is among the fastest-growing podcasts in 2024. (Source agma).*

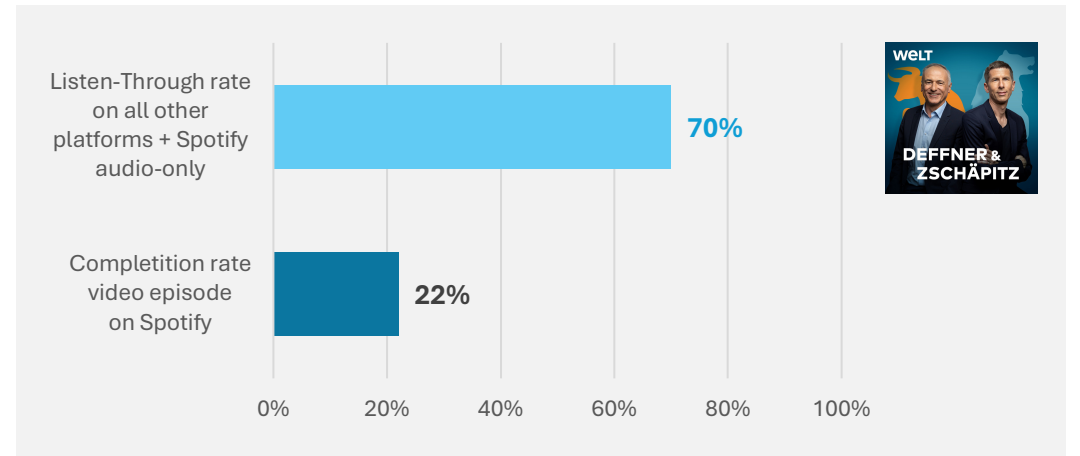
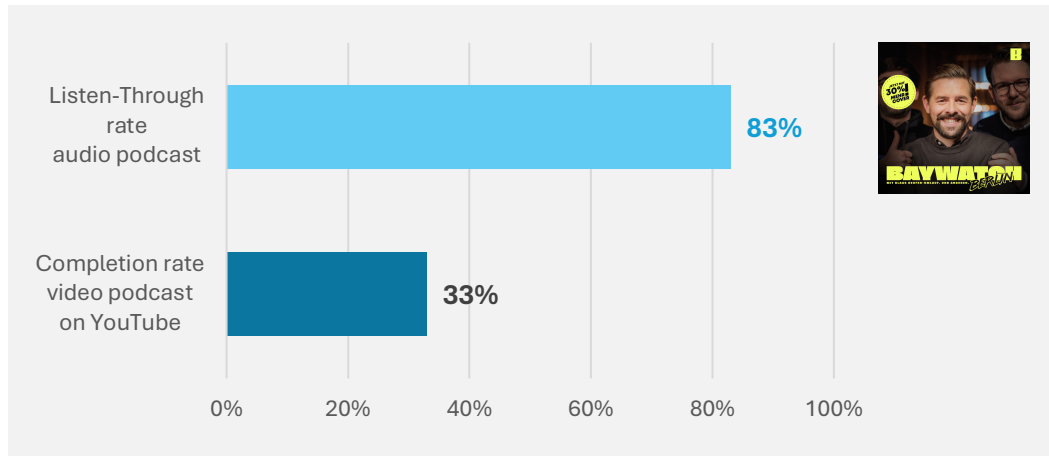
## Podcasts have become a long-form medium with exceptionally high completion rates.

Podcast listeners are characterized by a high level of loyalty and an above-average length of stay. Listen-through rates of over 80% are common across the industry and across all genres. This even applies to longer formats with episodes lasting over an hour.

The following figure shows a classic listen through rate (LTR) for the audio podcast Baywatch Berlin. 83% listen to the podcast until the end.

With other media forms, such as online videos, the completion rates are significantly lower, especially in the area of long formats. A classic view through rate (VTR) for video podcasts of a comparable length on YouTube is around 33% - Again based on the example of Baywatch Berlin, also available on YouTube.

## Completion rates in comparison



Source: spotify for Creators, apple for Podcaster, amazon music and YouTube

**In this example, the completion rate of the audio podcast is around 150% higher than that of the corresponding video version.** Similar comparative figures can also be observed for smaller podcasts or in different podcast genres.

In addition to audio-only episodes, the WELT podcast *Deffner & Zschäpitz* also publishes occasional video episodes. The LTR of the audio episodes across all platforms is **three times as high** as the view-through rate (VTR) of the video episodes.



## Organic growth of audio podcasts remains high across all target groups.

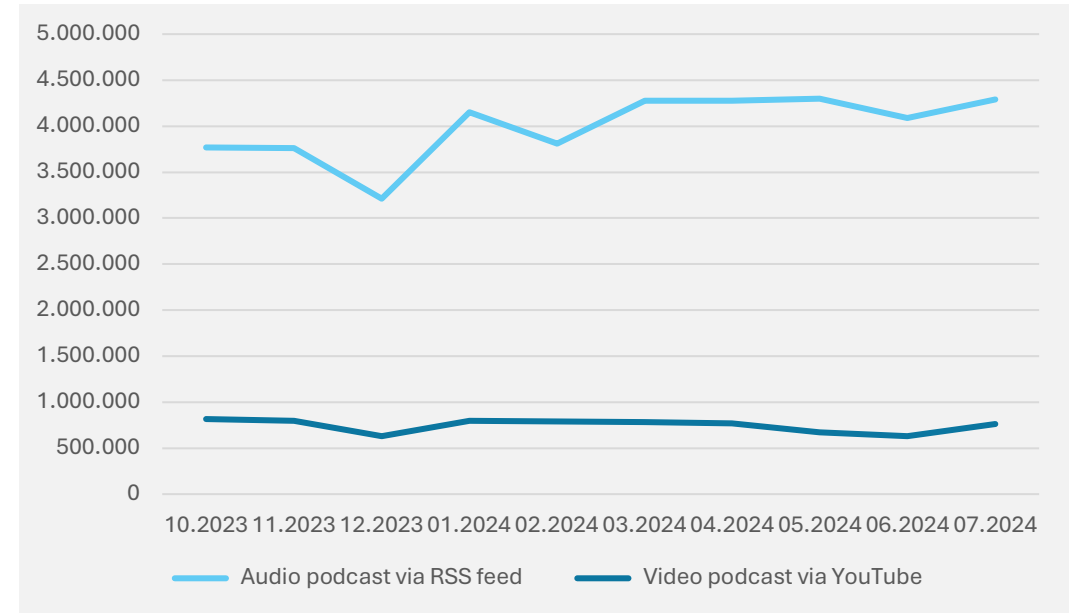
The podcast medium is characterized by **strong growth**. According to the Media Activity Guide, podcasts are the only form of media that grew in 2024, while all other media - such as social media and YouTube - showed stable or declining usage rates.

Apart from promotional effects, marketing measures or so-called “platform pushes”, the **organic (non-marketing-driven) growth rates of audio podcasts are in general significantly higher than those of their video alternatives.**

An example: The top ten chart podcast *Die Nervigen* did not grow on the video platform YouTube with its video version last year (viewing period October 23 - July 24).

In contrast, the audio podcast version, which was available via RSS feed on all podcatchers across all platforms, recorded organic growth of 31% in the same period.

### Reach development of the podcast Die Nervigen



Source YouTube development of reach on Videopodcast; Podigee - development of reach over RSS

## Audio podcasts offer great advantages in cost-effective and efficient production.

Podcasts can be produced **inexpensively and from any location**. The power lies in the images that arise in the minds of the listeners that transport them mentally to a pulsating soccer stadium, a crime scene or the podcaster's kitchen table. This intimacy and creativity is not created by a well-lit studio and could never be realized visually at the same frequency and with similar resources.

In addition, challenges arise when it comes to clarifying copyright issues, especially for formats such as sports or true crime podcasts. Discoverability in the mass of YouTube and video formats also poses an additional challenge.

The successful podcast DRINNIES is produced and hosted by Giulia Becker and Chris Sommer. The comedy writers share humorous insights into their lives on their podcast. For them, their podcast remains “audio-only”:



*„ For us, the medium of audio primarily means the freedom to express ourselves creatively - on our own terms. Producing your own podcast is now possible from home with just a few resources. We can work independently and self-determined and are not limited in the process. This turns the medium into an infinitely large playground where we are constantly learning and developing - and above all having an incredible amount of fun.“*

Not every format is suitable as a video podcast. Classic interview podcasts are the easiest to implement as videos, whereas scripted storytelling formats cannot simply be produced as video podcasts.

## Audio podcasts can be monetized more independently and at a higher price via “Host Read Ads”.

If we look at the monetization of 1,000 views for a podcast (revenue per mille - RPM), the RPM from so-called “host read ads” (ads recorded by the hosts themselves) for audio is around EUR 112 (depending on the workload, CPM and advertising load).

For YouTube, this averages between €7 and €10, as only standard YouTube advertising is possible here.

“Host Read Ads” can only be implemented in video podcasts as “baked-in” (permanently integrated ads), which rules out scalability and external measurability of marketing. This scalability and the fulfillment of advertising standards are only possible via dynamic ads. **Monetization via dynamic “Host Read Ads” can achieve up to 12 times higher revenues than standard YouTube marketing.**

The general attractiveness of podcasts for the advertising market is also weakened by the “walled gardens”, as advertisers have to book different ads per platform and for the RSS feed instead of a single ad in order to occupy the full reach of a podcast.

## What advantages does the visual level offer in podcasting?

Despite the challenges mentioned above, there is certainly a need among podcast listeners to experience their hosts and especially interviews visually. There are certainly also podcasts for which a visual level brings added value in terms of content: for example, interview podcasts in a studio situation, as can be seen in US video podcasts such as The Joe Rogan Experience or Call her Daddy.

The video level can also be a very good marketing tool for all podcasts to generate attention for their podcasts on social media.

Short highlight clips can be shared across various platforms and act as “teasers” or “trailers” to generate interest and increase streams of the podcasts. These clips can be excerpts from the podcast, summaries or announcements by the podcasters.

In general, however, podcasters should carefully consider whether they really expect sufficient positive effects by switching from audio-only to video podcasts to offset the negative effects and challenges that come with such a switch.

Or, to conclude, in the words of **Olli Schulz and Jan Böhmermann**:

*"A podcast is a podcast is a podcast.*

*It's an audio format and who benefits if we turn on video?"*

Quote from “Fest und Flauschig” from the 1/18/2025.

**Acast**



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