



State of Branded Podcasts

2022 Report



CoHost |||

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Introduction

More and more, brands are catching on to the incredible power podcasts wield in today's digital and mobile-first media landscape. Podcasts are wildly popular, and they're only continuing to gain traction.

According to Edison Research's latest Infinite Dial 2022 report, in 2021, **41%** of the U.S. population had listened to a podcast on a monthly basis, up from 37% in 2020. In 2019, BBC conducted its Audio Activated study on branded podcasts and it found that branded podcasts can help lift awareness by **89%**, brand consideration by **57%**, brand favorability by **24%**, and purchase intent by **14%**.

With stats like these, it's becoming difficult to ignore the massive impact of podcasting today. Getting involved in on-demand audio is the next non-negotiable for companies of every industry, similar to the way blogs or videos took the content marketing world by storm in previous years.

In order to capitalize on the branded podcast boom, it's important for brands to have a good sense of the landscape and what the competition is doing.

To help brands get a clearer picture of the current landscape, **the CoHost team has reviewed over 400 branded podcasts** that have been launched by small, medium, and large B2B and B2C brands.

Through this research, we uncovered impactful insights to help steer your brand in the right direction for podcast success.

Methodology

The CoHost team analyzed over 400 branded podcasts for this report. Branded podcasts are identified as a podcast series owned or brought to listeners by a company with the purpose to benefit the brand. The podcasts were found via a number of resources including podcast agency websites, branded podcast lists, and company websites.

HOW DO WE CALCULATE “TOP-RATED”?

To determine a branded podcast’s rating relative to other podcasts, it is important to consider the volume of listener reviews, not just the show’s average rating. For each podcast, we multiplied the average Apple Rating by the average number of Apple Reviews, and ranked podcasts accordingly.

POINTS SCORED DEFINITION

We looked at Points Scored for some categories to show the overall rating or points the show or category received after multiplying the average Apple Rating by the average number of Apple Reviews.

NOTES ABOUT REPORT DATA

In a few instances, we removed outliers that skewed the data, specifically in the following sections: *Top-Rated Branded Podcast Format* and *Podcast Rating by Length* analysis.

TOP-RATED BRANDED PODCAST CATEGORIES

Since branded podcasts can select more than one category, over **30%** of shows appear in multiple categories. In order to track the top-rated branded podcast categories, categories must have a minimum of five shows within them to ensure that there weren’t only one podcast skewing results.

ACTIVE PODCASTS

To take into account seasonal breaks, any branded podcast that had released an episode within the past three months (one quarter) was considered active.

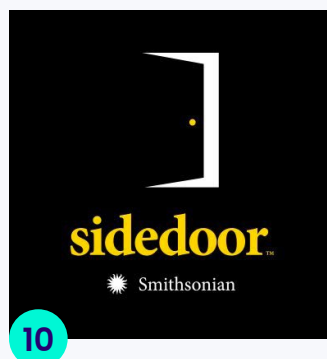
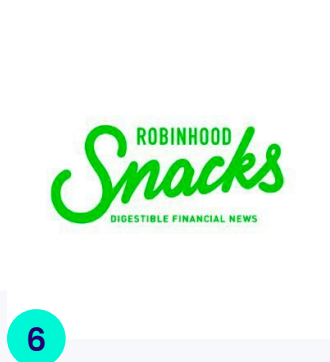
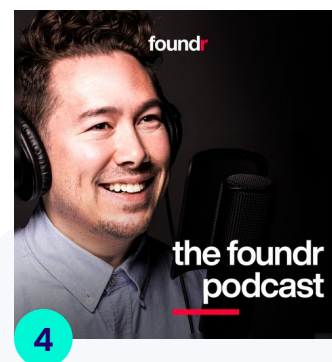
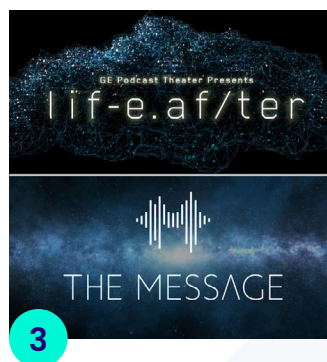
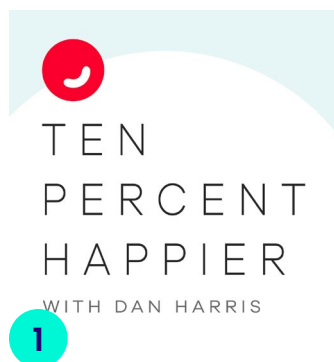
TOP-RATED BRANDED PODCASTS

B2C Branded Podcasts Are the Top-Rated Shows

But that doesn't mean B2B shows don't perform well

While ratings and reviews are only one metric for gauging the performance of a podcast, this feedback and engagement data is publicly available, so we analyzed Apple Podcasts data for over 400 branded podcasts to identify the Top-Rated Branded Podcasts.

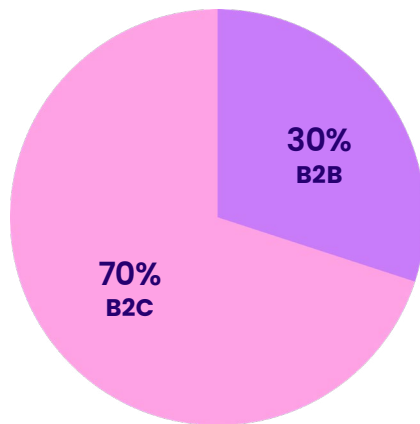
Top-Rated Branded Podcasts



Top-Rated Branded Podcasts: B2C vs. B2B

Seven of the top ten branded podcasts were B2C (business-to-consumer) brands.

TOP BRANDED PODCASTS: B2C COMPARED TO B2B

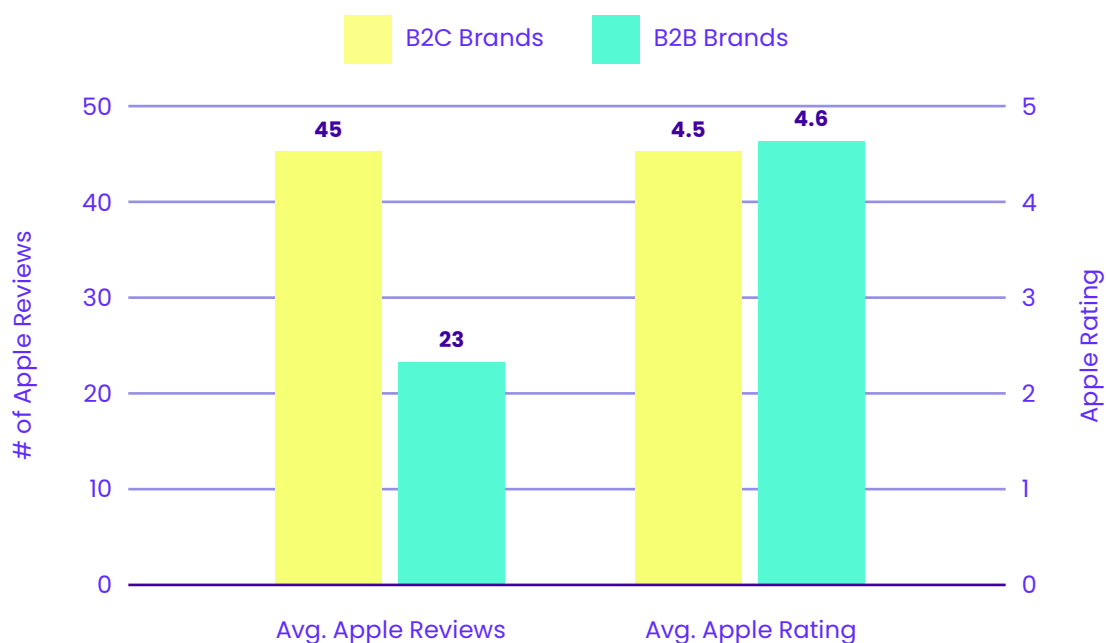


It's common that B2C podcasts will attempt to reach larger consumer audiences whereas B2B audiences seek out more niche, targeted audiences. Because of this, it's unsurprising that the B2C branded podcasts collected a larger number of reviews, resulting in a higher rating.

We analyzed the average Apple Rating and number of Apple Reviews to test this assumption for all B2B and B2C branded podcasts. We found that B2C brands had a **95%** higher average number of Apple Reviews than B2B brands.

But B2B brands had a slightly higher average Apple Rating (**4.6**) compared to B2C brands (**4.5**).

AVERAGE APPLE REVIEWS & RATINGS FOR B2B & B2C BRANDS



Insights from Top Brand Marketers

While ratings and reviews can be important metrics to track popularity and engagement, sophisticated podcast marketers use a wide variety of analytics and data to measure their show's success.

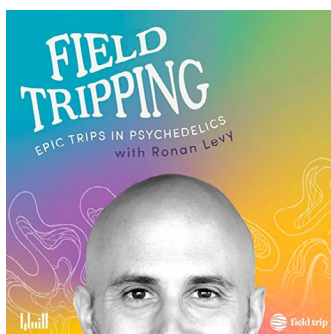
ON MEASURING B2B ENGAGEMENT:



"We're trying to reach busy executives who typically don't have the time to leave feedback or rate our podcast. We measure success based on our Average Consumption Rate, this tells us how much of our audience is engaging with our content."

—**Randy Frisch**, Host of *The Marketer's Journey* by Uberflip

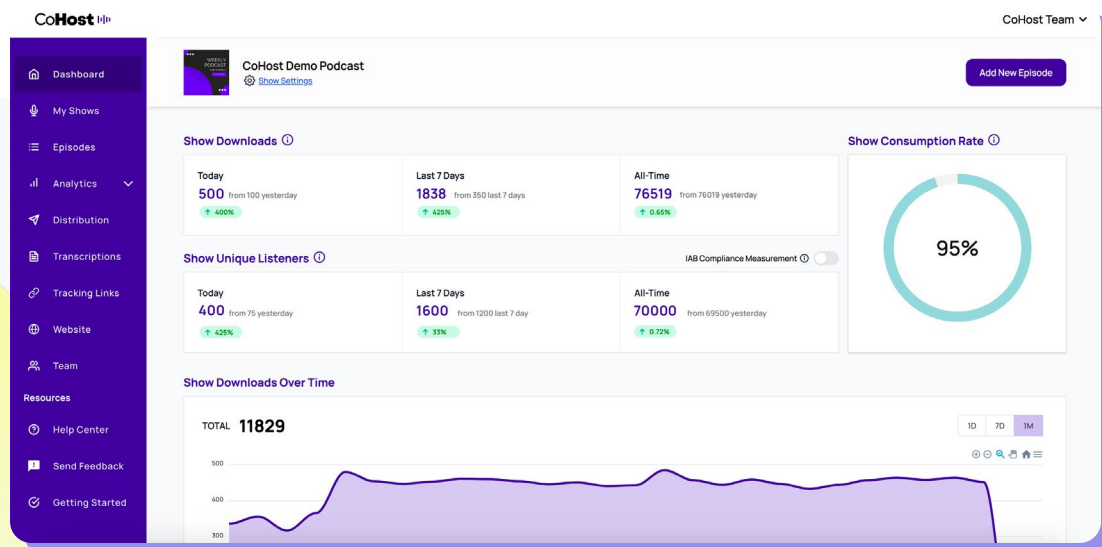
ON GROWING AN ENGAGED AUDIENCE:



"Our podcast is targeting a niche audience exploring psychedelics and mental health. We launched with an expectation of not receiving much external feedback via ratings & reviews and relied on word-of-mouth for growth. Although a niche audience, interest is expanding every day, and we can tell through our analytics that our listeners are highly engaged. Our podcast has become a trusted resource in the psychedelics space."

—**Conrad Page**, Producer of *Field Tripping* by Field Trip Health

EXPLORE COHOST'S SHOW CONSUMPTION RATE TO BETTER MEASURE PERFORMANCE



Interview/Discussion Formats Are the Most Common Branded Podcast Style

Brands enjoy being able to connect with notable guests in a casual format

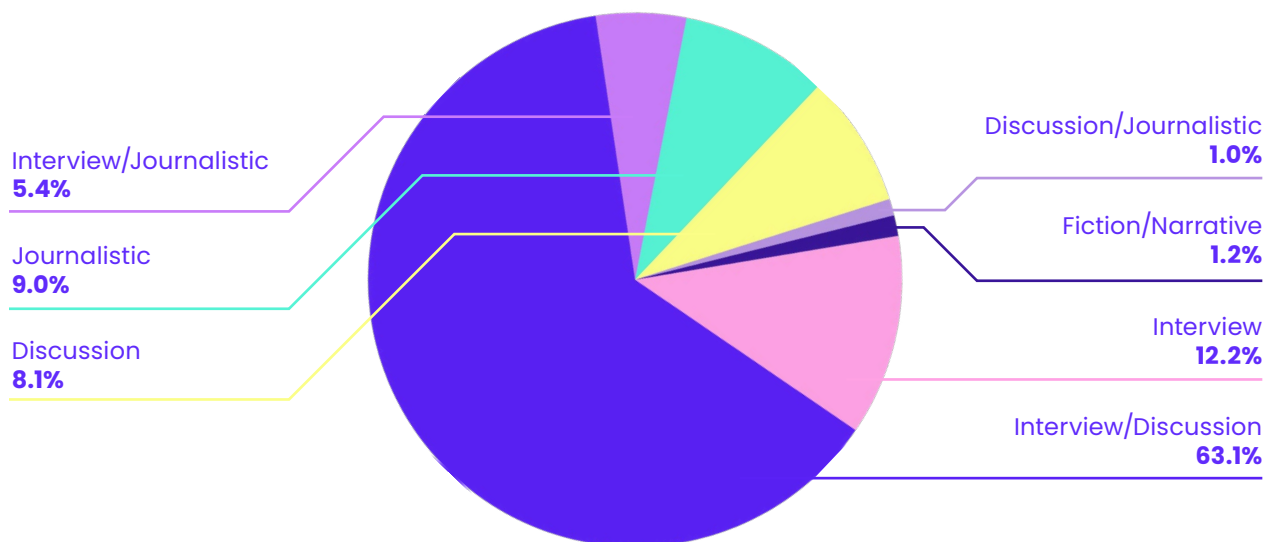
Brands tend to lean towards formats that allow them to engage with guests while also positioning the brand in a credible and positive way. There are endless creative ways brands can elevate a standard format to add a unique twist or element.

Most Popular Branded Podcast Format

The *Interview/Discussion* hybrid format was chosen most often over all other branded podcast formats. **63%** of branded podcasts use an *Interview/Discussion* format.

The least popular format was *Discussion/Journalistic* with only **1%** of branded podcasts opting for this style of show.

THE MOST POPULAR BRANDED PODCAST FORMATS



CoHost Tip: Before starting your branded podcast, have everyone on your team think about some of their favorite shows and why they like the format. This is a great exercise to define the format you want to work off of. From there, you can begin adding those unique, creative components to make it original for your brand.

Top-Rated Branded Podcast Format

The *Interview/Discussion* format is the top-rated branded podcast style with an average Apple Rating of **4.8** and **85** average Apple Reviews per show. This aligns with *Interview/Discussion* being the most popular branded podcast format.

The *Journalistic* format was the lowest rated, with an average Apple Rating of **4.6** and **17** average Apple Reviews per podcast.

BREAKDOWN: BRANDED PODCAST FORMATS BY AVERAGE RATINGS AND REVIEWS

Format	Avg. Apple Rating	Avg. Apple Reviews	Points Scored
Interview/Discussion	4.8	85	408
Interview/Journalistic	4.7	45	212
Discussion	4.7	33	155
Interview	4.2	27	113
Discussion/Journalistic	4.5	19	86
Journalistic	4.6	17	78
Fiction/Narrative	4.7	5	24

Insights From Podcast Industry Leaders



“We’ve found that a hybrid of an interview and discussion format performs best for our podcast’s goals. It gives us the opportunity to bring on notable thought leaders and interview them in a more casual, authentic way that also showcases our team’s expertise.”

—**Claudette McGowan**, Host of *C Suite*
by TD

“Selecting a format is critical. Audiences appreciate consistency—so it’s important that brands understand the landscape of possible audio storytelling formats, make an informed choice for their particular audience based on competitive analysis, and basically stick with it long enough to study the show’s analytics and determine whether the approach is working for their audience. If it is, great. Keep going. If it’s not, then look at ways to vary the format to meet the audience’s expectations. If your audience is continually dropping off right after the midpoint rebrand—what can you do to reinvigorate that segment of the podcast?”

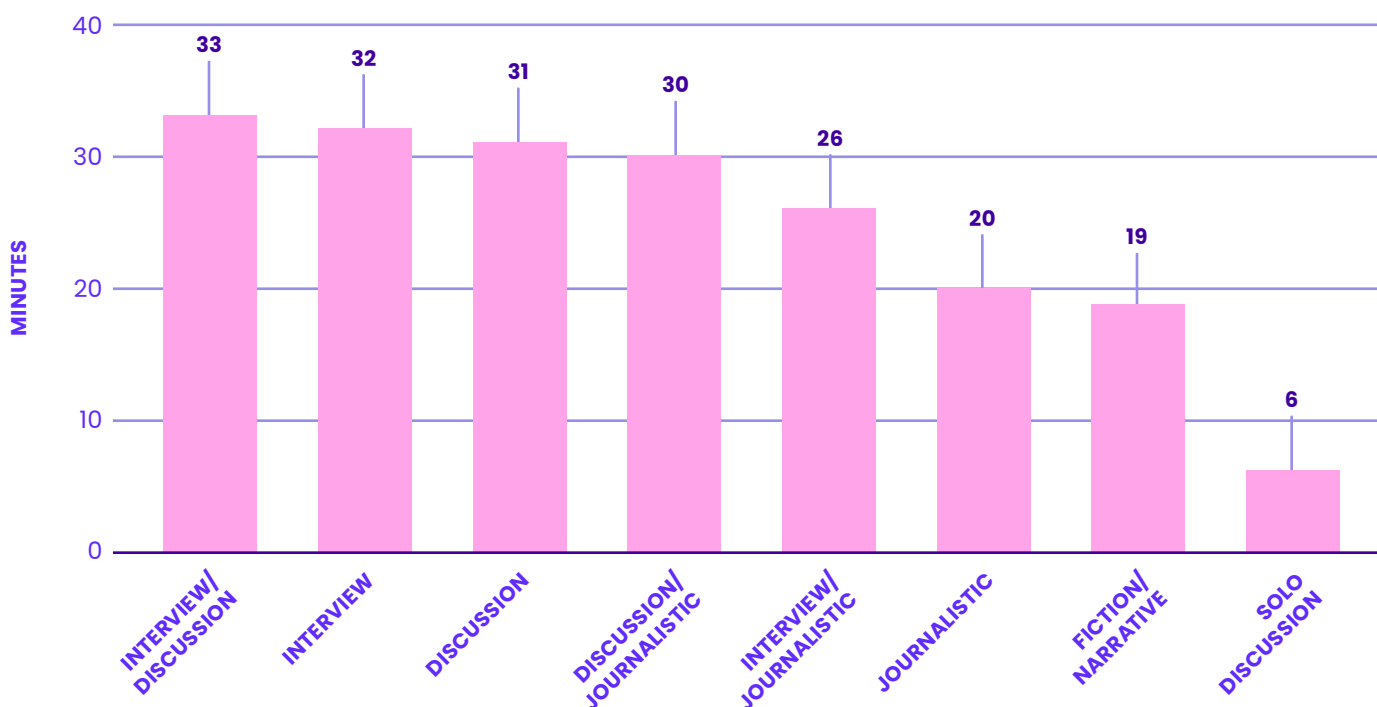
—**Jen Moss**, Chief Creative Officer at
JAR Audio

Average Podcast Length by Format

Interview/Discussion formats all clock in at ~30 minutes in length (excluding *Solo Discussions*), while *Journalistic* and *Fiction* formats are shorter, coming in around 20 minutes and under. We can hypothesize that podcasts that rely on journalism or fictional storytelling require more time and resources to produce, and brands are therefore opting for shorter episode lengths.

For this ranking, *Discussion* and *Solo Discussion* formats were separated to most accurately measure average length without skewing the format category. *Solo Discussion* came in at the shortest episode length, 6 minutes.

AVERAGE PODCAST LENGTH BY FORMAT



Definition of Formats:

1. INTERVIEW

A formal Q&A style podcast where the host asks the guest a set of interview questions.

2. DISCUSSION

The host either has more casual conversations with co-hosts or guests on the podcast. Alternatively, the host might do a solo discussion where it's just them speaking to the audience without any guests or co-hosts.

3. JOURNALISTIC

The host of the podcast is investigating a specific topic for the entirety of the episode. Typically, this will look like a solo podcast with clips from sources if it ties back to the episode topic.

4. FICTION/NARRATIVE

The podcast takes on a more story-like format. This is usually a scripted podcast.

5. INTERVIEW/JOURNALISTIC

A mix of the investigative-style format but with interviews added throughout the episode.

6. INTERVIEW/DISCUSSION

The podcast conducts an interview with the guest but also adds more casual conversation.

7. DISCUSSION/JOURNALISTIC

Merging the discussion and journalistic formats, the podcast investigates a certain topic with a mix of guest or co-host discussions throughout the episode.

PODCAST LENGTH

Mid-Length Podcasts Are the Top-Rated Among Branded Podcasts

Podcast ratings gradually increase and peak at 21-30 minutes

Podcast length is a common discussion topic within the industry. Deciding on a podcast's length is an important decision that comes down to the resources you have access to, the format, and what your audience prefers.

At the end of the day, we always say your podcast's content decisions should come down to your audience.

It's best practice for brands to research similar podcasts that their target audience listens to and take note of the length of these shows. This can be your baseline for how long your podcast should be.

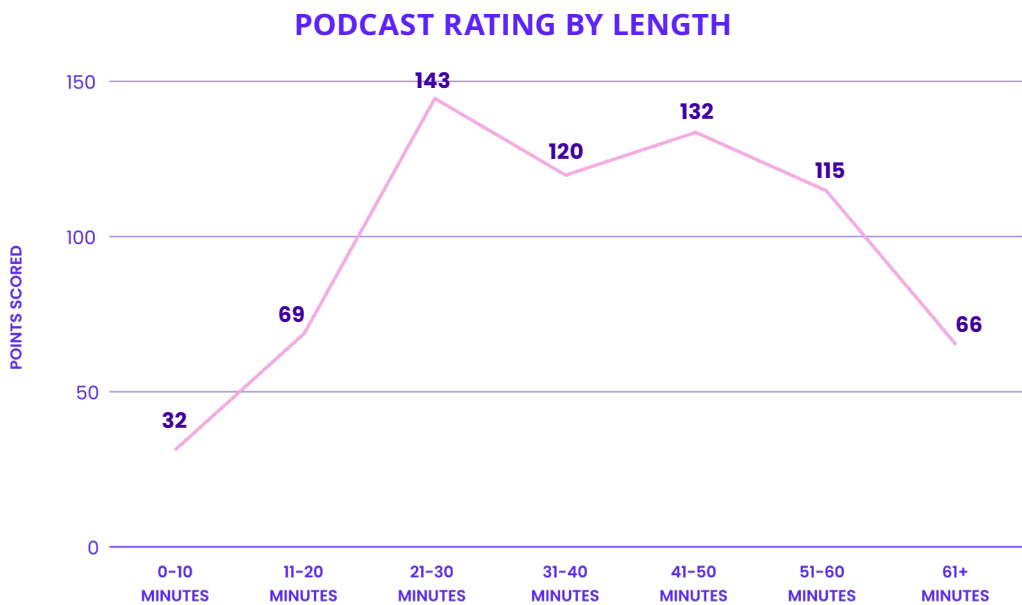
From there, think about your listener profile. Who are they? What're their hobbies? What's their job title, role, etc? When would they typically be listening to podcasts? This data can be gathered through surveys, interviews, and desk research. Your goal is to understand when your audience is listening to podcasts and how much time they likely have to listen.

Finally, test different episode lengths and compare that to Average Consumption Rates to have a better understanding of what your audience prefers length-wise. If you released an episode that's 60 minutes and received a 50% avg. consumption rate but released a 30 minute episode with nearly a 100% avg. consumption rate, this is a great tell that your audience prefers episodes in the 30 minute realm.

Podcast Rating by Length

Mid-length podcasts at the **21-30 minute** mark are the top-rated among branded shows. Podcast ratings gradually increased and spiked at 21-30 minutes long. After 31 minutes, podcast ratings slowly decreased, increased slightly at 41-50 minutes, and then decreases again until 61+ minutes.

Podcasts between 0-10 minutes had the lowest ratings.



PODCAST RATING BY LENGTH

Format	Avg. Apple Rating	Avg. Apple Reviews	Points Scored
0-10 minutes	4.5	7	32
11-20 minutes	4.3	16	69
21-30 minutes	4.6	31	143
31-40 minutes	4.6	26	120
41-50 minutes	4.4	30	132
51-60 minutes	4.6	25	115
61+ minutes	4.7	14	66

Average Branded Podcast Episode Length

The overall average branded podcast episode length is 31 minutes. This length closely aligns with the top-rated length which is 21-30 minutes and *Interview/Discussion*-style podcast formats which were all around the 30-minute mark.

30-minutes is a very common podcast length for brands and a common recommendation from agencies depending on the goal, topic, format, and audience for the show.

Insights From Branded Podcast Agencies



"I think optimal episode length depends on the podcast and who the brand is targeting. Overall, we've seen podcasts with more of a structured interview or discussion format perform best around the 20-30 minute mark for brands. But at the end of the day, episode length comes down to the brand, their audience, and their goals with audio."

—**Fatima Zaidi**, Co-Founder & CEO of Quill & CoHost

"When it comes to a brand's mindset with length, what's important is that you decide as a team what the purpose of each individual episode is before you dive in. Don't just create podcasts for the sake of creating them. Utilize each episode as an opportunity to create an asset that will benefit your organization."

—Jake Jorgovan, Founder of Content Allies



Business-Related Genres Have the Most Top-Rated Categories

Business News is the highest rated category for branded podcasts

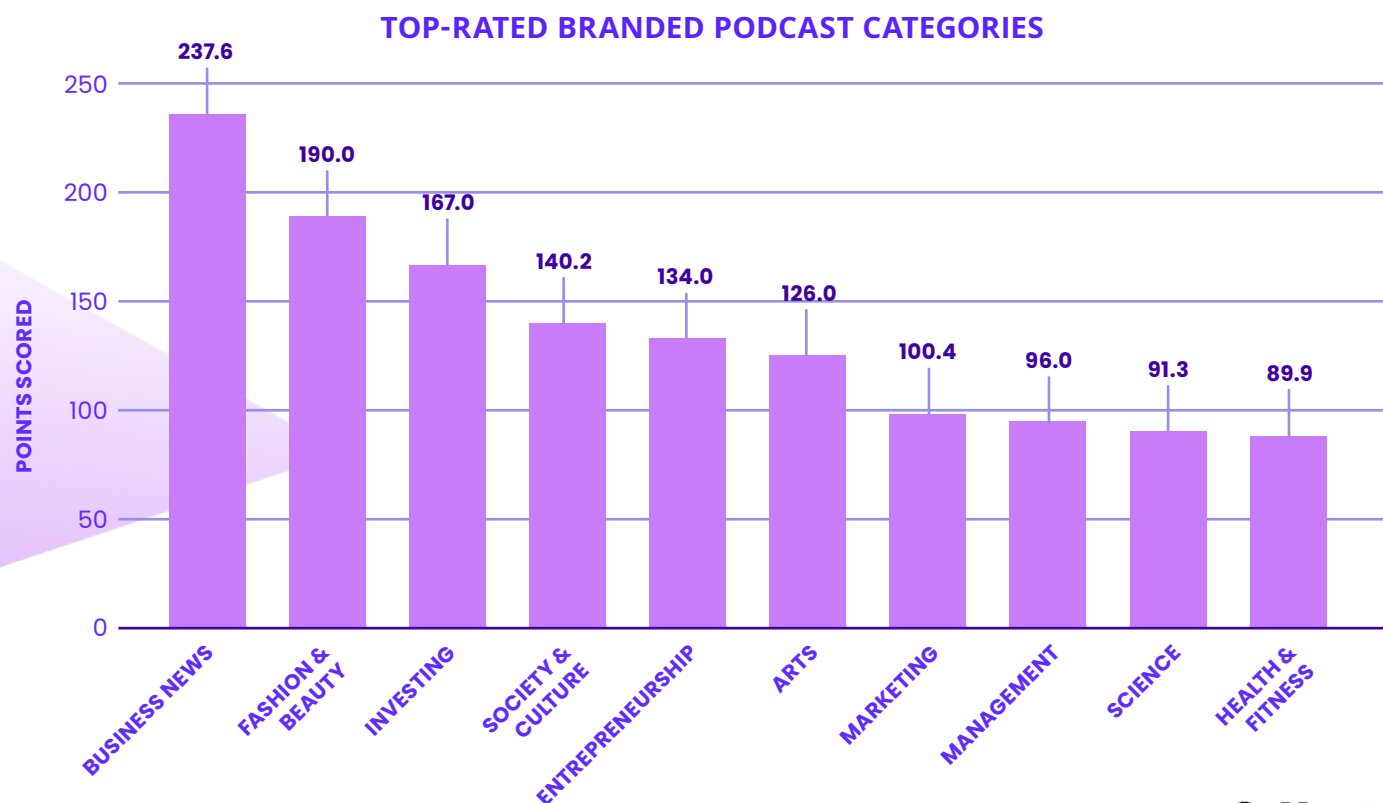
Apple uses over 100 categories and subcategories for classifying podcasts. Categories help consumers browse for shows in a genre they prefer and also power Apple's show recommendations.

When selecting a podcast category for your branded show, think about what your audience is likely searching for and what type of show you want your podcast to appear with.

Top-Rated Branded Podcast Categories

We analyzed over 50 branded podcast categories. Overall, Business News is the top-rated branded podcast category, followed by Fashion & Beauty and Investing categories.

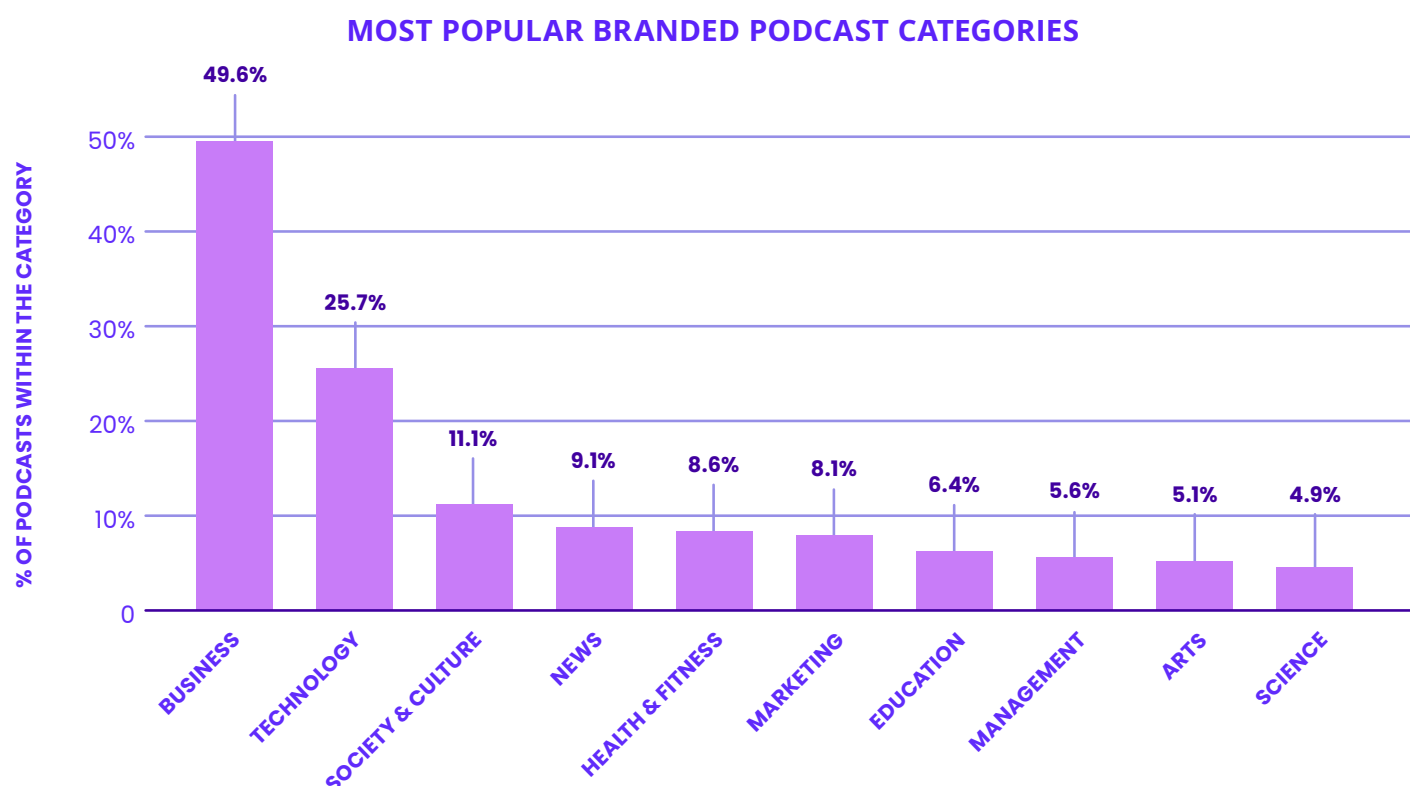
40% of the top 10 top-rated podcast categories are in the Business category (Investing, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, and Management). **20%** are in the News category (Business News and News). Another **20%** are in the Arts category (Fashion & Beauty and Arts).



Most Popular Branded Podcast Categories

The Business category is the most popular branded podcast category with almost **50%** of shows using it. After Business, the top categories were Technology (**26%**) and Society & Culture (**11%**).

This shows us that although popular, these categories aren't overcrowded with podcasts since brands are still finding success with them.



Insights From Podcast Industry Leaders

"We often encourage clients to target niche audiences with branded podcasts. The reason for this is the quality of listeners you'll get from more targeted audiences can be much more valuable than the quantity of listeners you may have with more broad audiences. This applies to podcast categories as well. We typically recommend setting a subcategory as your primary category (if applicable) to get more specific about who your show is relevant to. This will make it easier to stand out, rank on charts, and have targeted listeners discover your show."

—**Alison Osborne**, Director of Growth
Marketing at [Quill](#) & [CoHost](#)

ADDITIONAL REPORT FINDINGS

Branded Podcasts Are Enduring, with 69% Still Active

This suggests the investments that brands are making in their shows must bring a return

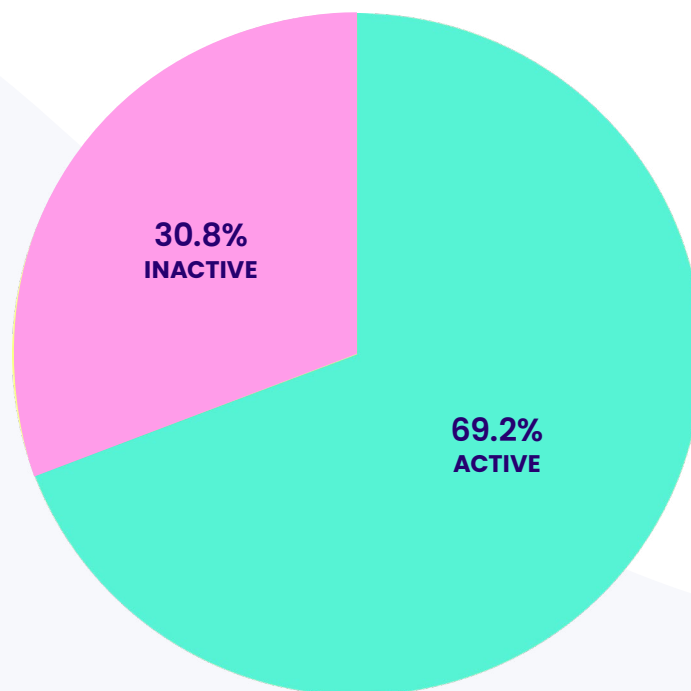
Podcasts are proving to be a successful marketing medium for brands with over **69%** of branded podcasts analyzed still active. Active podcasts have been, on average, producing podcast content for the past 3.5 years.



Podcasts come down to not only great content but also consistency.

We often say that podcasting is a marathon, not a sprint. Many of the brands currently producing podcasts seem to share this understanding.

BRANDED PODCASTS THAT ARE PUBLISHING TO DATE

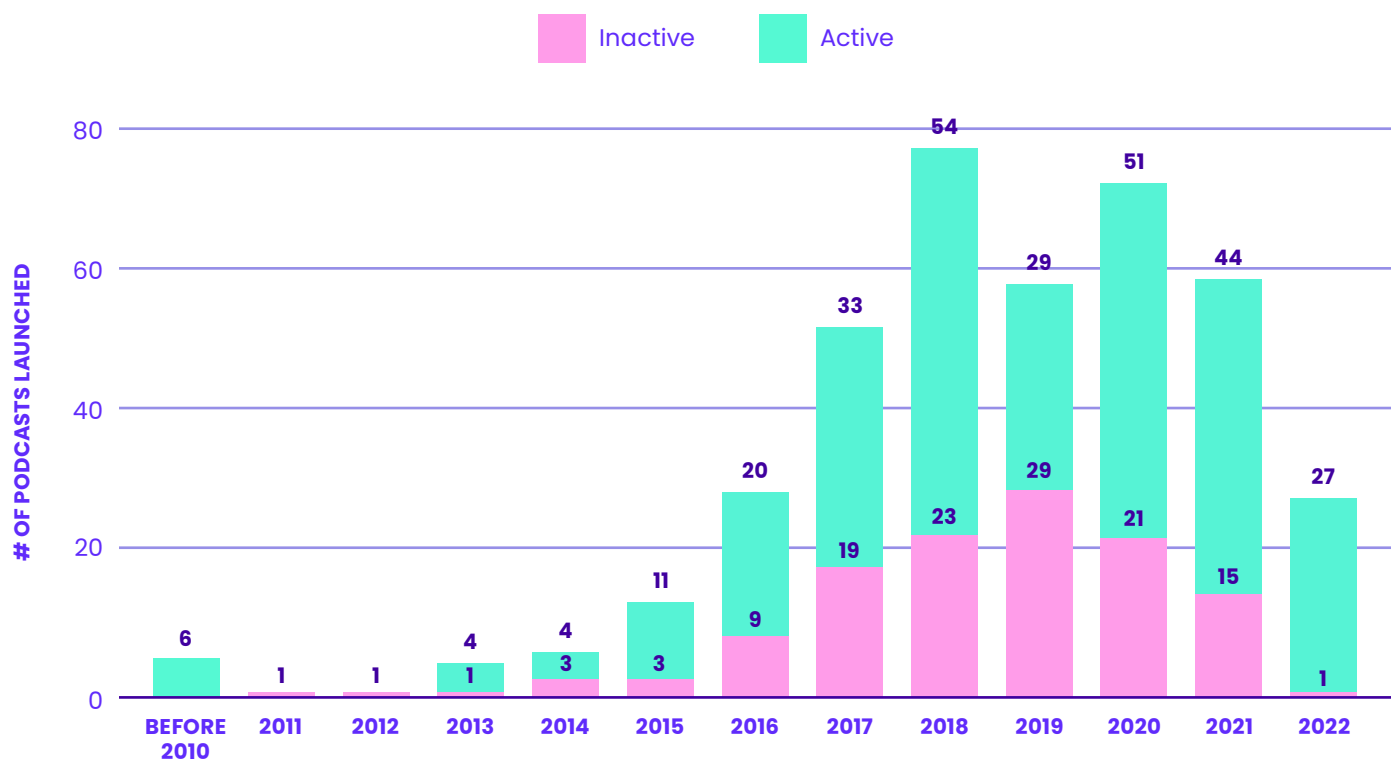


Branded Podcasts Began Catching On in 2018

Branded podcasts really began picking up momentum in 2018 when the number of branded podcasts launched that year grew by **48%**. 2018 was the year that many branded podcasts that are still popular to date were released including *Inside Trader Joe's* (also listed as one of the top-rated branded podcasts), Interac's *Earning Curve* with Gimlet Creative, Sephora's *#LIPSTORIES* with Girlboss Radio, Facebook's *Boost My Business*, and many more.

2018 also saw the most podcasts launched with **70%** of the shows still active to date. We see a slight drop in 2019 which grew again in 2020 and decreased in 2021 again.

YEARS BRANDED PODCASTS WERE LAUNCHED



Audiences Are Engaging With Branded Podcasts

On average, branded podcasts receive a **4.5** Apple Podcast Rating and **33** Apple Reviews. Apple's Ratings & Reviews gauge listener feedback from a single platform and segment of listeners. To accurately measure engagement and success, brands should look across all listening platforms and track where their audience tunes in the most.

Regardless, it's clear that brands are still receiving a healthy Apple Rating and a good number of Apple Reviews, which are a great indicator of engagement and feedback.



4.5

APPLE PODCAST RATING

33

APPLE REVIEWS

CoHost Tip: End your episode with a **call-to-action** asking listeners to rate and review the show on their favorite listening app.

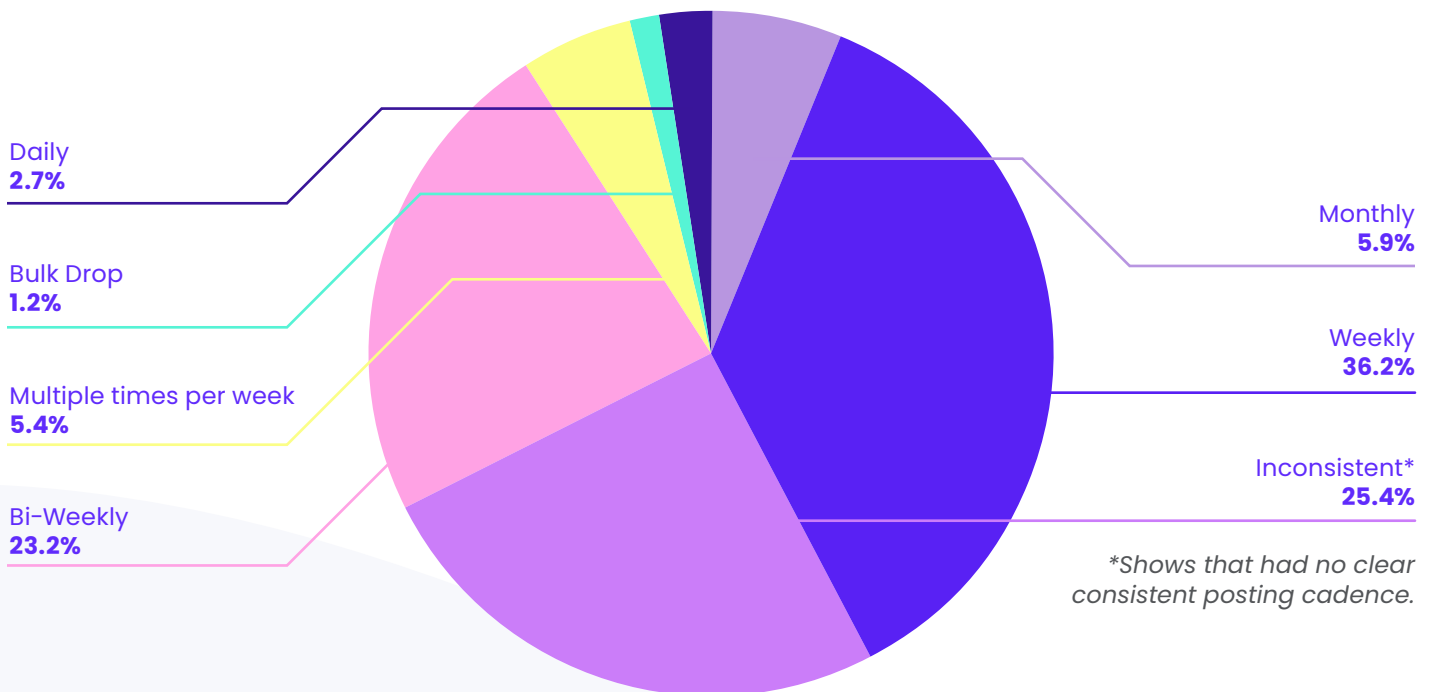
Branded Podcasts Are Posting Weekly

35% of branded podcasts are posting on a weekly basis with **23%** posting on a bi-weekly (every two weeks) basis. These are common posting cadences since it keeps listeners engaged but also gives the brand time to produce new content.

Bulk drop and daily were the least common posting schedules. With a bulk drop cadence, the thought behind it is that listeners can binge-listen to the series, and typically brands aren't planning on consistently producing content.

For daily podcasts, it's difficult for brands to keep up with the posting cadence while maintaining quality content, especially when podcasting isn't their sole marketing tactic or business focus.

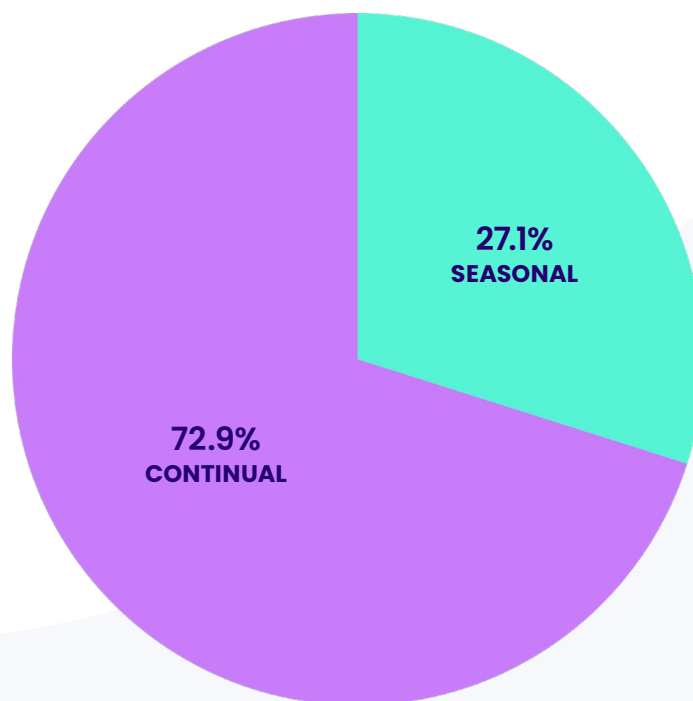
BRANDED PODCASTS POSTING CADENCE



Branded Podcasts Are Releasing Content Consistently Without Seasons

The majority of podcasts (**73%**) do not have seasonal breaks in their shows with the remaining **27%** adding seasons within their content.

SEASONAL VS. CONTINUAL BRANDED PODCASTS



Branded Podcasts Are Here to Stay

In conclusion, this report has confirmed that branded podcasts are still a strong sector in podcasting. Year after year, brands of all sizes are capitalizing on this popular marketing tactic to drive reach, revenue, and growth.

As effective storytelling continues to be a key focus for all brands, podcasts are one powerful medium to achieve it. Through their intimate, convenient, and authentic nature, podcasts have the ability to bring a human element back to brands and we only predict to see more brands adopt this medium in the future.

Whether you're a marketer or podcast agency, with the data provided we hope this report has:

Benchmarked your podcast among other branded shows

Helped to justify why your brand should begin podcasting

Provided answers to questions about strategy and podcast management

Given context to the branded podcast landscape

Key Takeaways From the State of Branded Podcasts 2022 Report



Branded podcasts are here to stay. Since launching, the majority of brands are still producing and releasing podcast content to date, with active branded podcasts releasing content for an average of **3.5 years**. This suggests that brands are finding success in the medium.



Formats that let brands bring on guests and connect on a more informal, casual platform are preferred and top-rated. For many brands, positioning themselves as a thought leader, growing awareness, and building key relationships are top goals that can all be achieved through this format.



Brands are, on average, producing content that's 31 minutes in length which is on par with the top-rated podcast length, 21-30 minutes. This also aligns well with the average podcast length for the most popular format, *Interview/Discussion*, which is 33 minutes. It's safe to say that creating episodes that run about 30 minutes in length is a good rule of thumb for most branded podcasts.



Brands are continuing to launch new podcasts year over year. Among the branded podcasts analyzed, 2018 was the year with the highest number of shows launched. Since then, the number of shows launched year over year has fluctuated, but new shows are consistently being launched every year.



Two to four podcast episodes per month is the sweet spot for branded podcast engagement and management. With weekly podcasts being the most popular posting cadence and bi-weekly coming in second, it seems clear that brands are finding efficient workflows with this schedule.

Branded podcasts are still a young medium. Through reports like the State of Branded Podcasts 2022, we're excited to be able to shed some light on the industry and how podcasts are impacting brands.

CoHost is a powerful podcast hosting & analytics platform built for brands & agencies

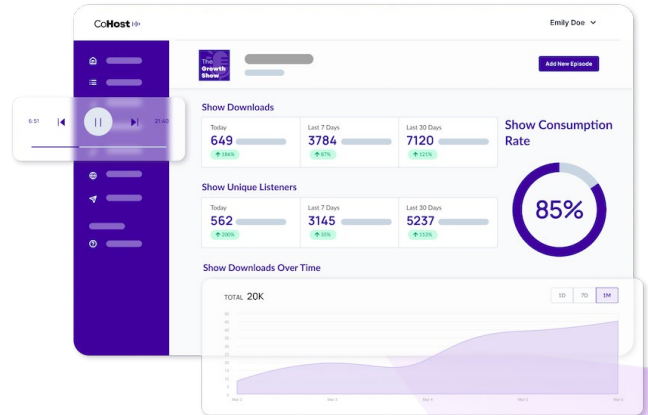
Empower your branded podcast with the insights needed to measure marketing impact and ROI.

All State of Branded Podcasts 2022 Report readers will receive **20% off their CoHost subscription for 12 months.**

Use the code:

BRANDEDPDS20

Offer valid until September 1st, 2023



About CoHost

CoHost is a powerful podcast hosting and analytics platform built for brands and agencies. The platform makes it easy to publish, measure, and grow a podcast by equipping brands with the tools they need to scale. Some of the key features include seamless publishing & hosting, robust analytics, podcast download attribution, automatic transcriptions & websites. Reach out to our team at [CoHost](#) or [book a demo with us](#).

About Quill Inc.

Quill is an award-winning podcast production agency that works with brands to produce high-quality audio content. They specialize in branded content and provide strategic marketing services. They help brands boost revenue and achieve their podcasting goals. Learn more about [Quill](#) or [reach out to our team](#).