

# AdAge

## **AUDIO ADS OUTPERFORM VIDEO FOR ATTENTION AND BRAND RECALL, DENTSU STUDY FINDS**

Amazon, Audacy, Cumulus, iHeartMedia, Spotify and SXM Media participated in agency-led research

By [Jack Neff](#). Published on August 01, 2023.

# Lumen: Radio and podcasts attentiveness study

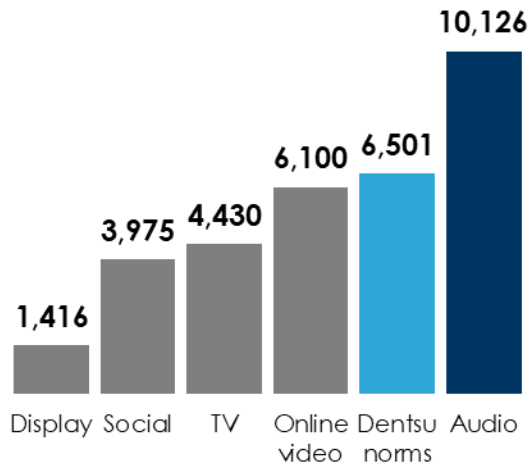
Dentsu Attention Economy



# Dentsu: Audio attention and brand equity outperform visual media; Audio is the most cost efficient

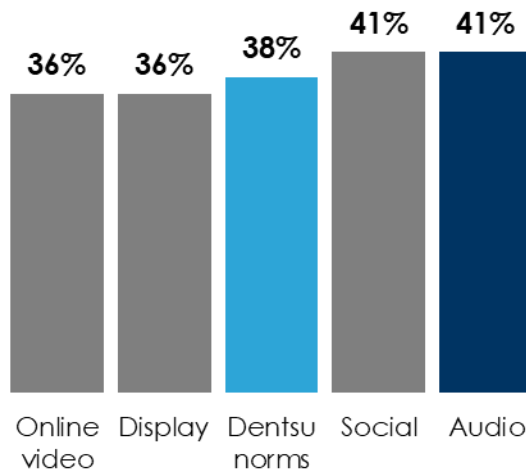
Audio has +56% greater attentiveness scores versus Dentsu norms

Average attentive seconds per (000) - APM



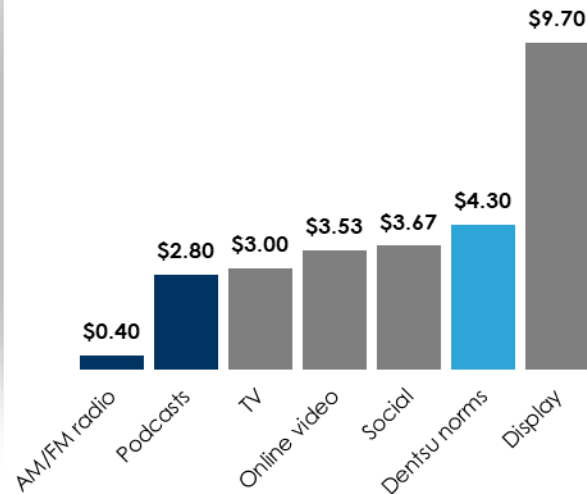
Audio generates +8% greater brand recall versus Dentsu norms

Brand recall



AM/FM radio and podcasts are more cost efficient than TV and Dentsu norms

Attention CPM (aCPM)



Source: Dentsu/Lumen Attention Economy Study 2023: Combined audio attention result highlights, TV not available for brand recall

# Association of National Advertisers: Attention Pathway



*The three stages of The Attention Pathway. The impact of media decreases while the impact of creative increases along the path.*

# ANA: Three stages of the attention pathway

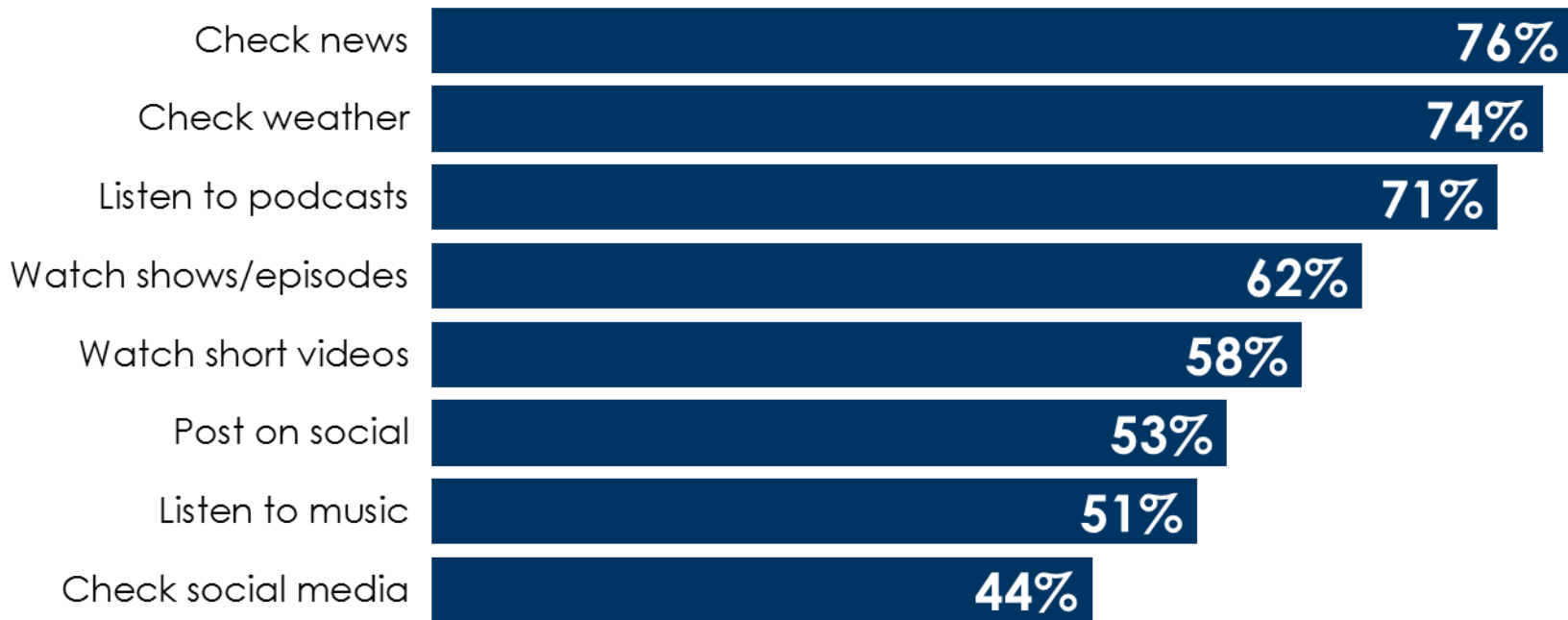
1. **“Get Noticed** – advertising requires an environment that fosters attention. This is the job of a media placement. How well it gets that job done is a good indicator of its quality: the best quality placements create the greatest potential for attracting attention.
2. **Hold Attention** – it’s vital to keep the viewer focused on the ad. In some circumstances, this can be measured using duration. This requires a stable media placement and interesting creative.
3. **Impact Memory** – with attention now assured, the creative must deliver a brand message that affects the short- or long-term memory of the person paying attention to the ad.”

**Five years of studies on  
attentiveness from the IAB,  
MARU/Matchbox, Signal Hill  
Insights, and ABX**

# According to an IAB consumer study, news, weather, and podcasts have strongest consumer concentration; Social media ranks last

% reporting high levels of concentration

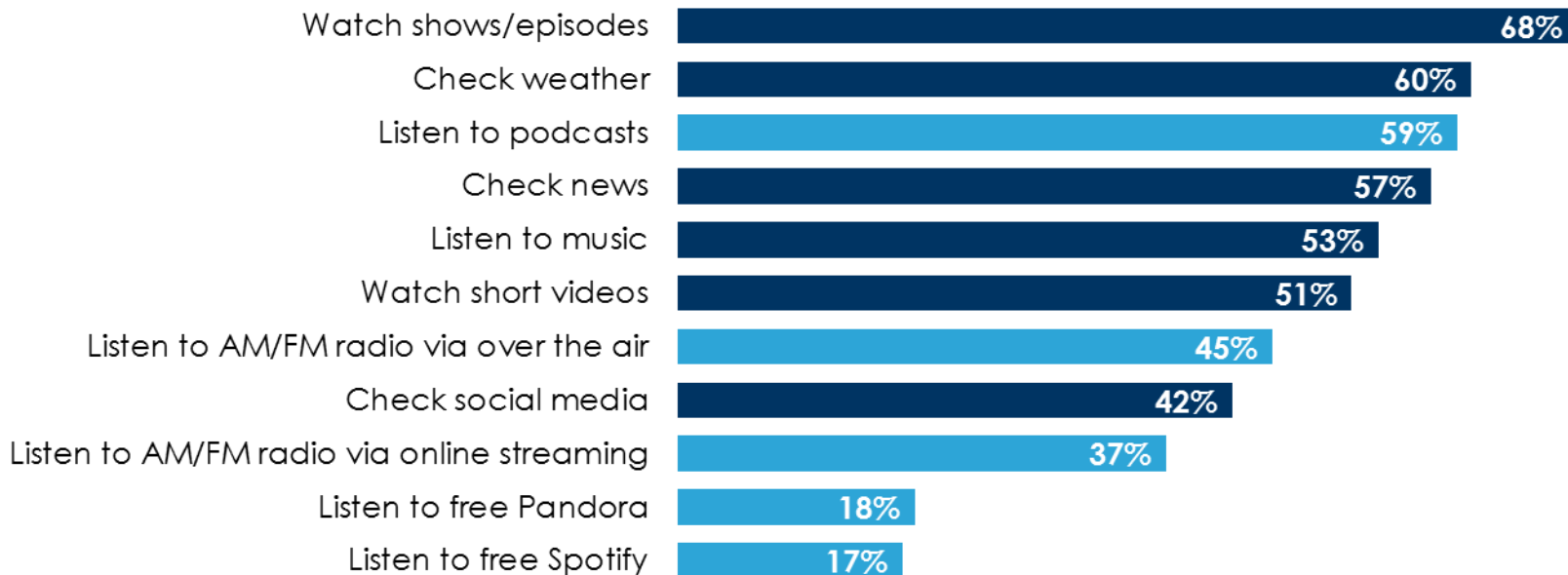
(4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = not concentrating a lot and 5 = concentrating a lot)



# MARU/Matchbox consumer study: Among audio platforms, podcasts exhibit the highest concentration levels; AM/FM radio attentiveness is 2X Pandora/Spotify

Q: Thinking about those times when you do each of the following, how closely are you concentrating on that activity when you are doing it? Please rate the activities on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “Not concentrating a lot” and 5 is “Concentrating a lot.” If you don’t participate in this activity, please select “I don’t do this activity.”

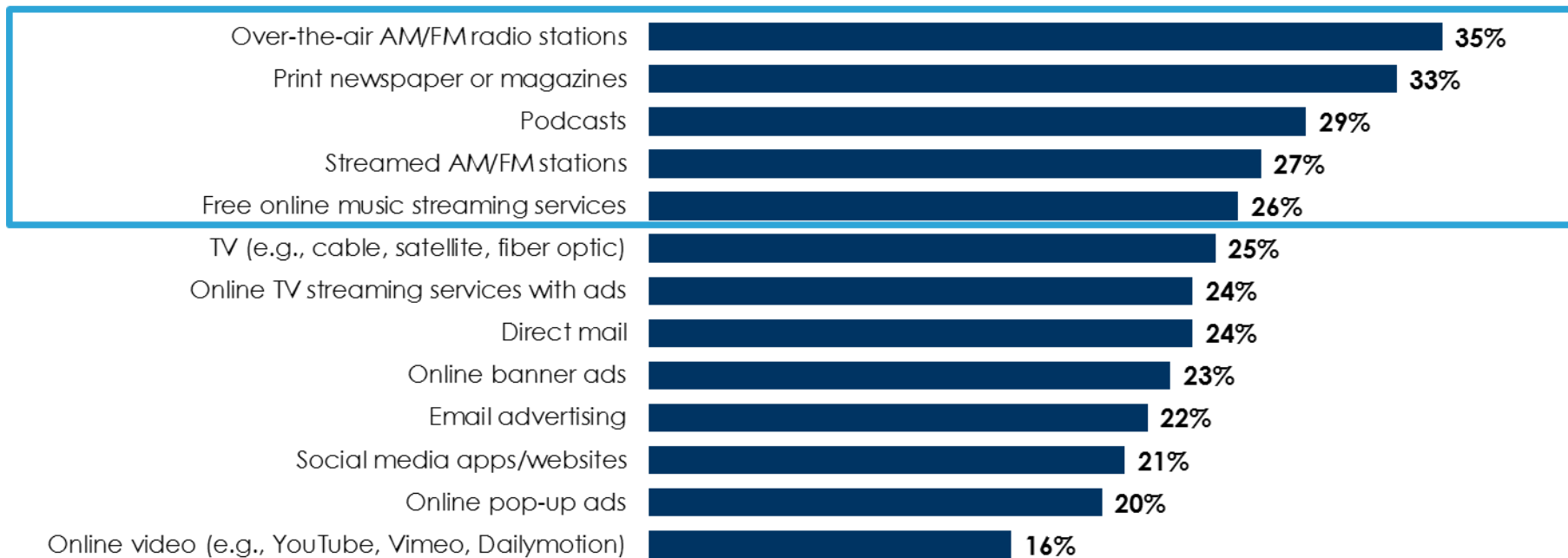
% who said 4 or 5, concentrating a lot





# Skip the least: AM/FM radio, print, and podcast ads lead in attentiveness

**Q: When you come across ads in each of the following places, how often do you actively avoid those ads by skipping, blocking, tuning out, turning away, throwing away, walking away, or otherwise avoiding the ad?  
% who said never or less than half the time**



Source: U.S. Media Attention Study, MARU/Matchbox National Survey, Persons 13+, 1,520 total respondents, September 28, 2021-October 14, 2021; Free online music streaming services = Free online music streaming services (e.g., Spotify with ads, Pandora with ads, AccuRadio)

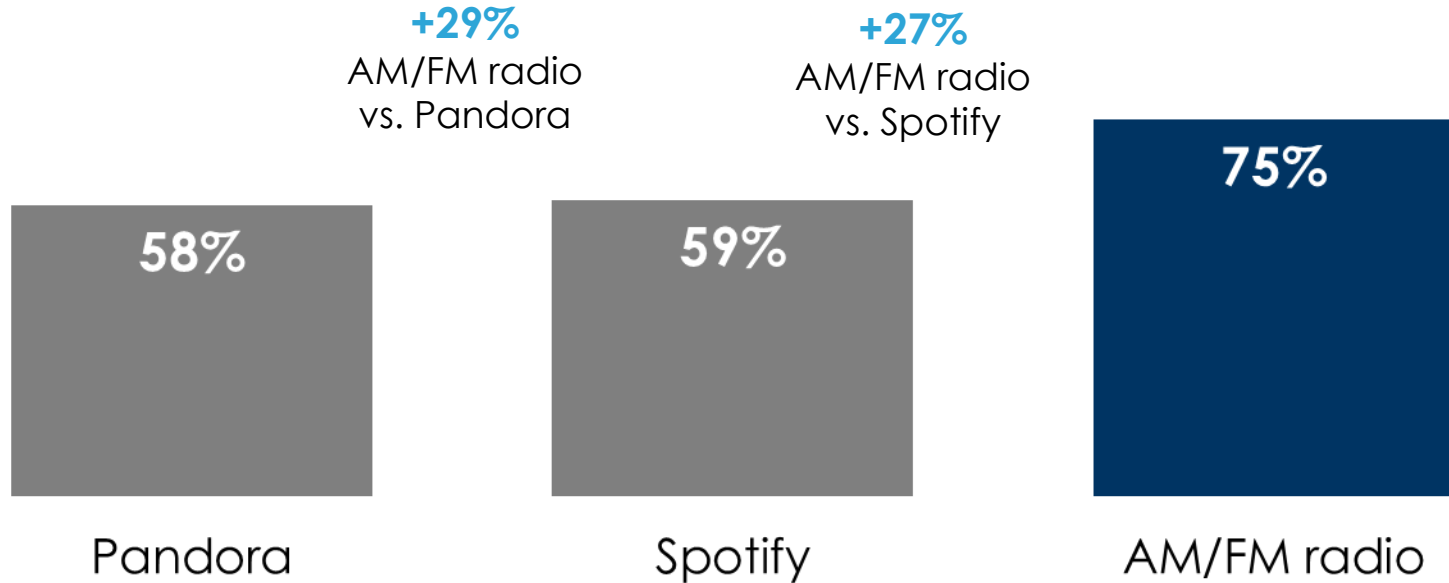
# Canada: The top seven need states for each type of audio

AM/FM radio stations	Music streaming services	Owned music (downloaded songs, CDs, vinyl)	Podcasts
To get information	To be entertained	To lift my mood	To learn something new
To feel connected	To relax	To relax	To be entertained
To be entertained	To lift my mood	To be entertained	To pass the time
To pass the time	To amplify/celebrate the moment	To have 'me' time	To get information
To learn something new	To pass the time	To escape	To have 'me' time
For company when I'm alone	To escape	To get motivated	For company when I'm alone
To relax	To get motivated	To amplify/celebrate the moment	To be inspired

Source: Signal Hill Insights, Canada Need States for Audio Study, June 2021. Q: And what kind of audio, if any, do you listen to for each of the following reasons? Base: Canadians age 18+, Weekly listeners to AM/FM radio (n=1,061), Music streaming services (n=940), Podcasts (n=433), Personal music (n=803)

# Audibility: Listeners pay more attention to AM/FM radio than Pandora and Spotify

Q: How much attention do you pay while listening to following...  
% who said "I can hear what people are talking about when I'm listening to [media type] at home"





CUMULUS  
MEDIA

Westwood One

**AUDIO ACTIVE**  
G R O U P

**ABX** Advertising  
Benchmark Index

**Massive ABX study of TV and AM/FM radio ads reveals  
“sight, sound, and motion” superiority is a myth**

**Marketers often dismiss audio advertising by noting solemnly, “We need sight, sound, and motion”**

The implication: video ads generate substantially greater creative effectiveness, increased brand equity lift, and larger sales effect than an audio ad.

“I need to show my car” auto brands say. QSR marketers require their ads show succulent food shots. Haircare and skincare advertisers want ads showing silky hair and smooth skin.

**ABX conducted a comprehensive analysis of 40,000 ads over a two year period**

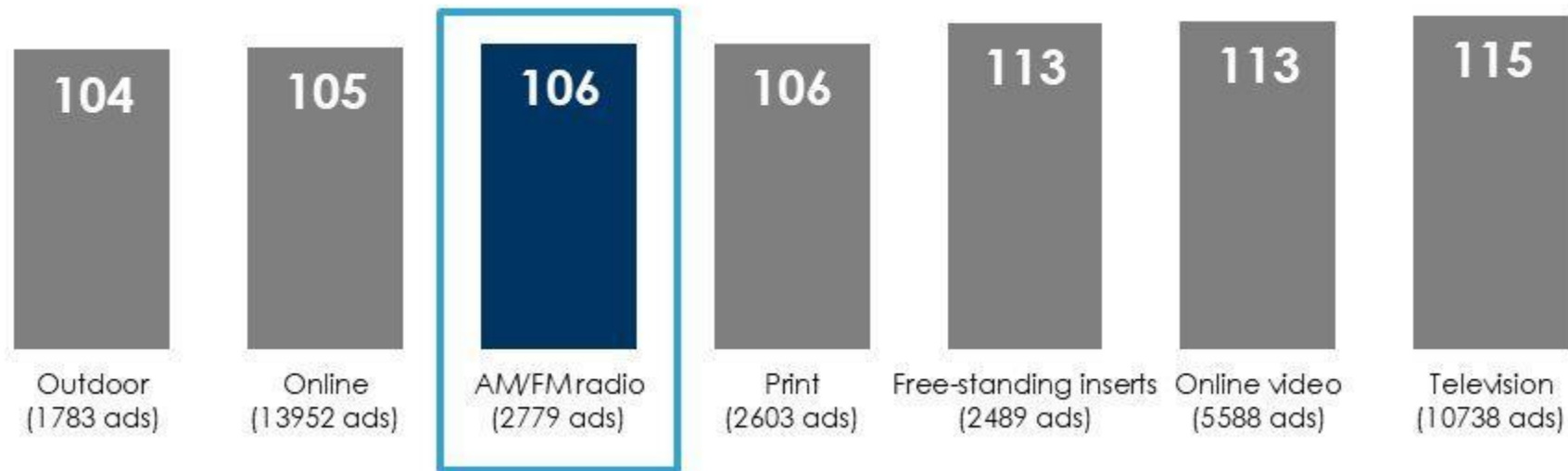
**Largest head-to-head examination of TV and AM/FM radio ads**

Study included:

- 10,738 TV ads
- 2,779 AM/FM radio ads

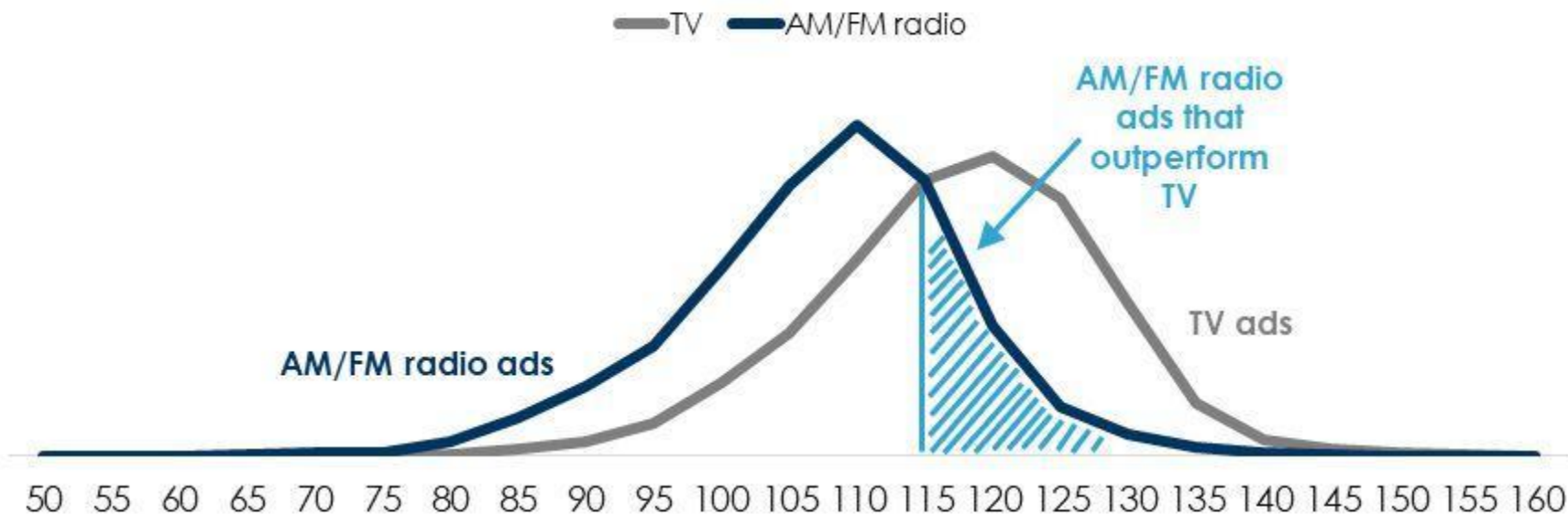
Of 40,000 recently ads tested, AM/FM radio is 92% as effective as TV at one-fourth the CPM and is comparable to print, online display, and outdoor

Creative effectiveness by media type tested April 2020 – April 2022  
ABX Index



# Best testing AM/FM radio ads outperform 48% of all TV ads even without sight/motion

## ABX Index: Creative effectiveness by media type





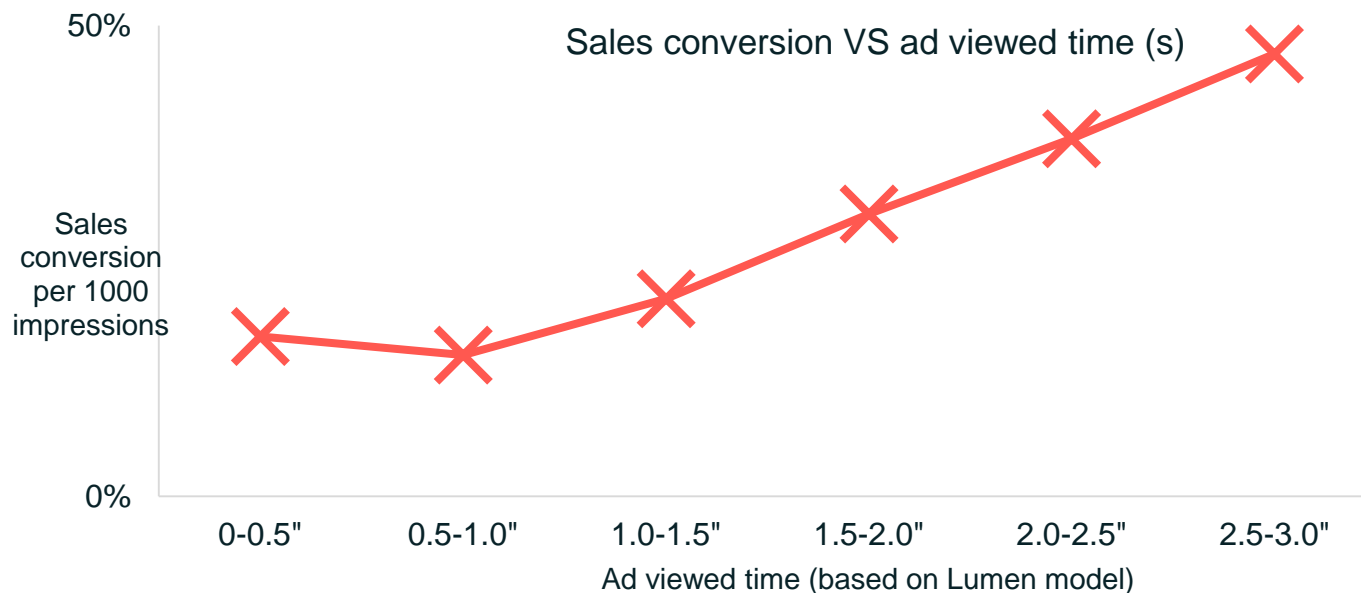
# Radio and podcasts

Dentsu Attention Economy



# Attention is important as it is directly correlated with outcomes such as sales conversion

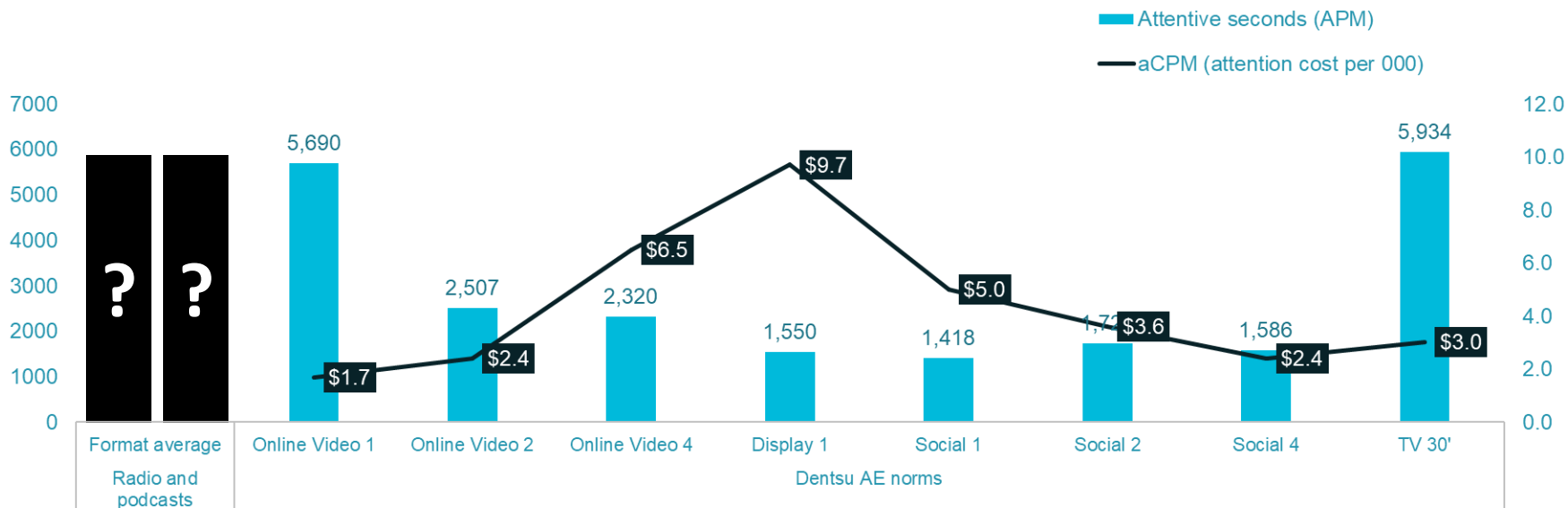
Lumen looked at the relationship between the ads that we predict get lots of attention and the ads that actually generated lots of real-world sales. It should be noted that these predictions don't take into account creative or targeting. The basic model assumes averagely attention-grabbing creative served to averagely well-targeted consumers, though it is possible to add these factors into client-specific models.



# Background

## Research in context

Dentsu has sponsored the world's largest eye tracking study and revealed substantial differences in attention levels across digital media. **Now there is an opportunity to expand the scope of the research, adding data for radio and podcasts, not covered by the previous phases of the research.**



# Radio methodology

## Research environment

Lumen created a **radio station player for desktop and mobile** in which respondents could listen to 1 radio station of their choice from a variety of 7.

During each radio station there were:

- I. Three ~120 second ad breaks with each ad break comprised of 5 advertisers. The ad breaks were made up of either 15s or 30s ads.
- II. Participants were able to increase or decrease the volume (until muted).

Ads served were from **several advertisers across different verticals**; Charmin, Hilton, Heineken, Crest, Ashley Homestore, Jack in the Box, Dawn, JCPenney.



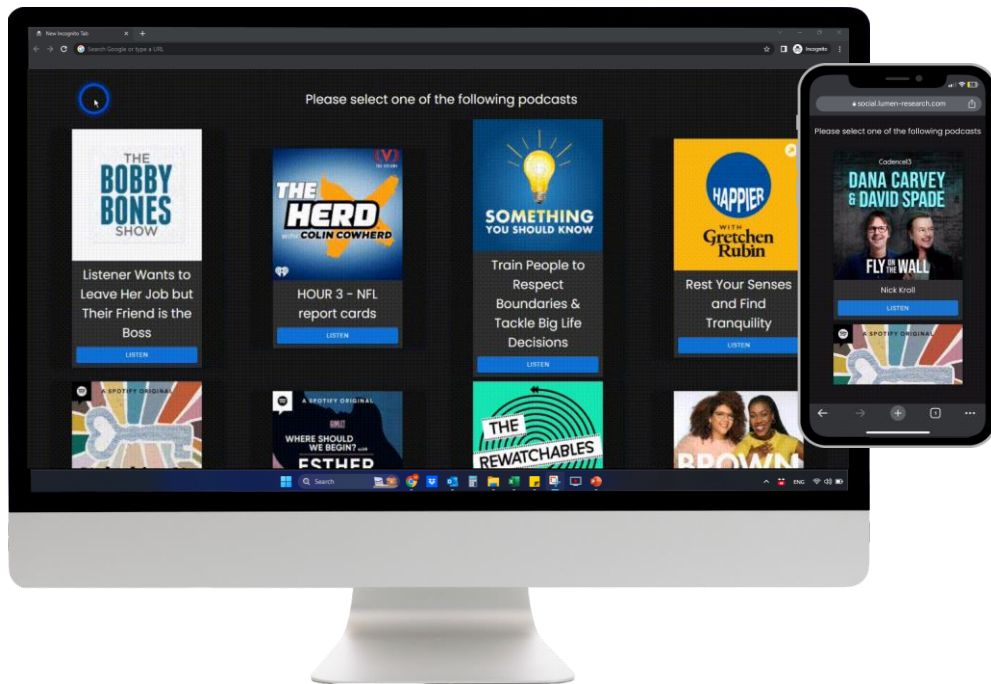
# Podcast methodology

## Research environment

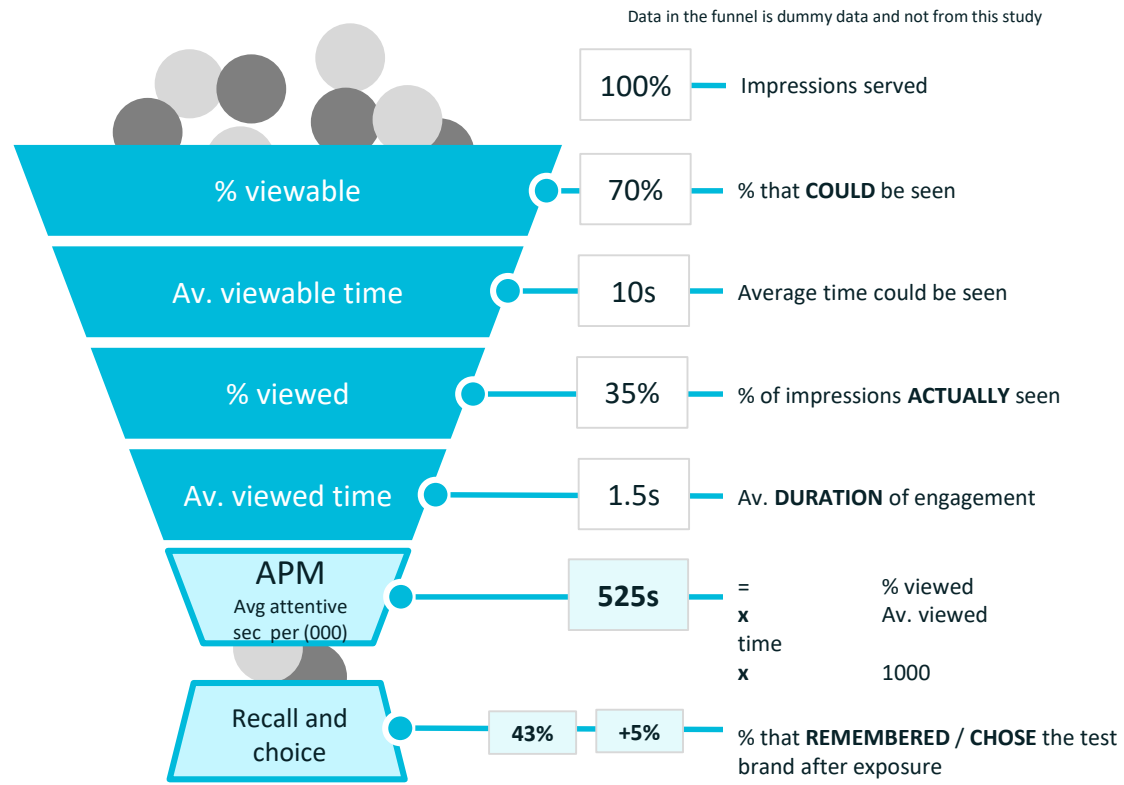
Lumen created a **podcast player for desktop and mobile** in which respondents could listen to 1 podcast of their choice from a library of 20; representing a range of genres.

During each podcast there were:

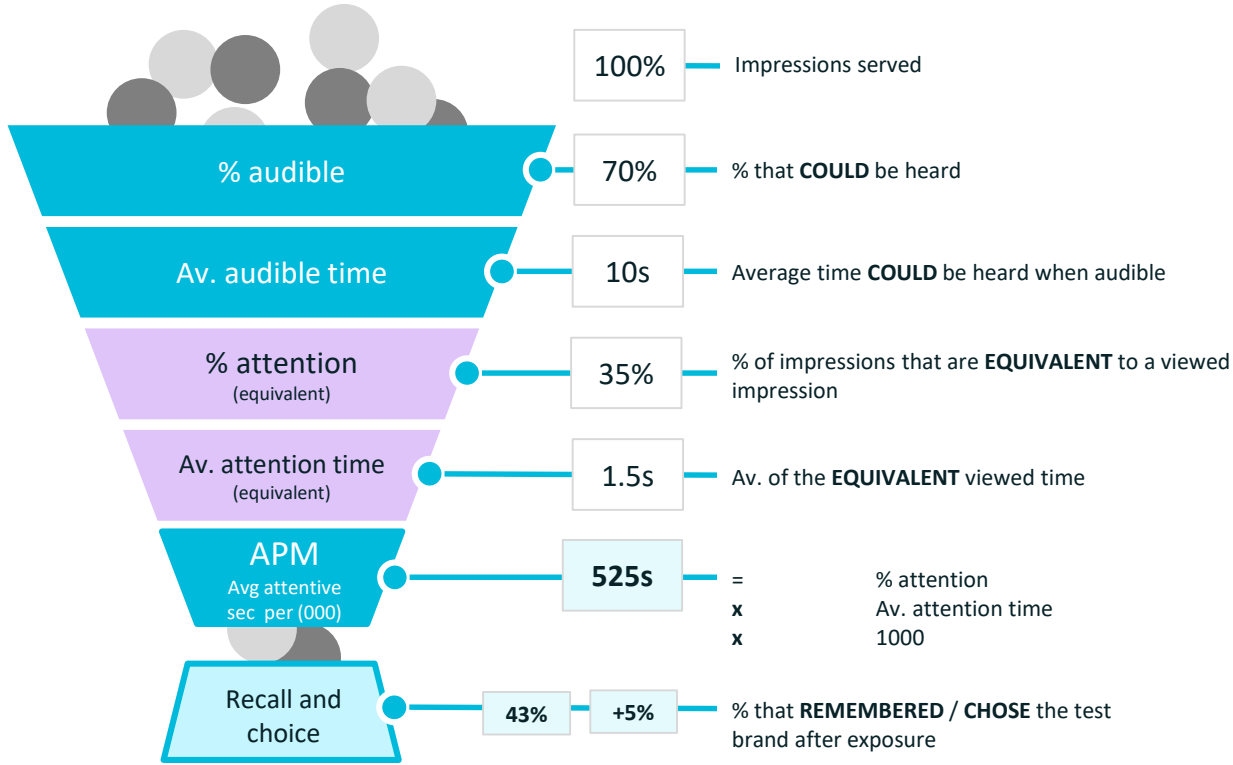
1. Three ~90 second ad breaks with each ad break comprised of 3-4 advertisers. The ad breaks were served as pre-roll, mid-roll, and post-roll.
1. Controls to fast forward 15-seconds and to increase or decrease the volume (until muted).



# To understand audio attention metrics we should start by looking at visual attention metrics



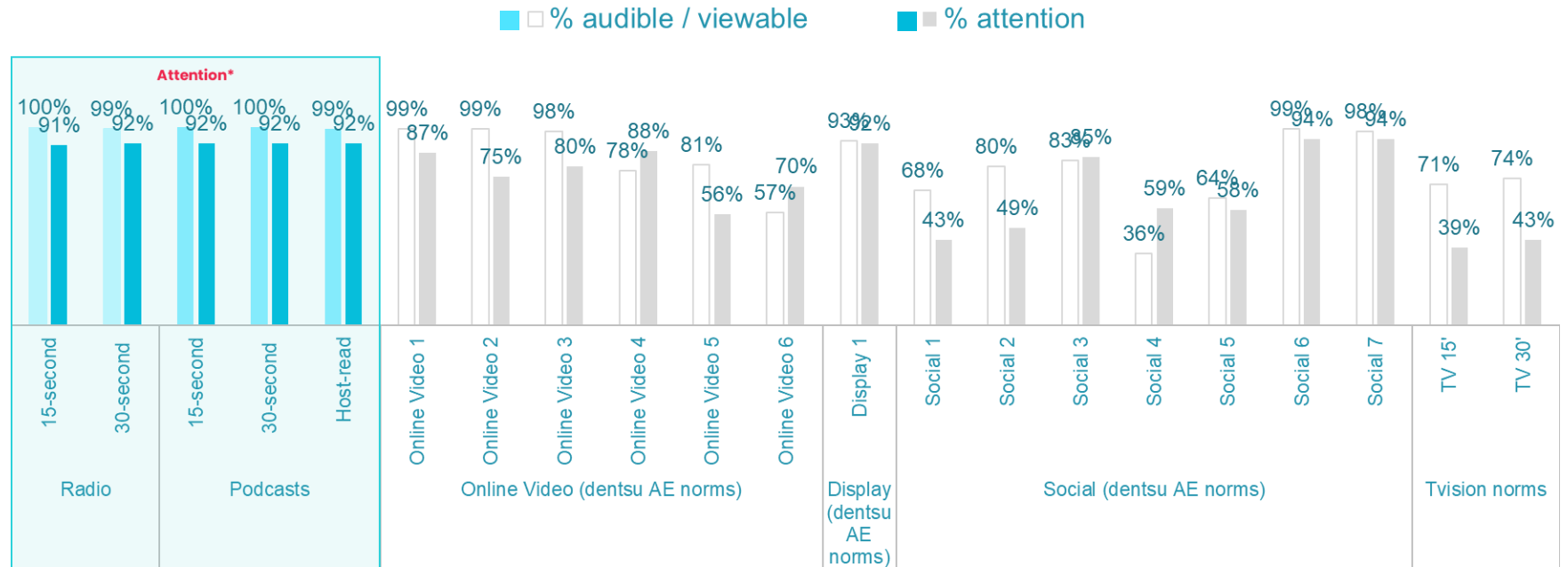
# Audio is measured using visual metric equivalents



Data in the funnel is dummy data and not from this study. You can read more on Lumen's audio methodology in the appendix of this report

# Radio and podcasts ads generate higher attention than most platforms

These results are more than double the amount of viewers that TV ads achieve where people often look away from the screen as the ads play out.



\*this is inferred audio attention based on visual attention using MICE methodology  
 Radio base; 30-second (n=1452), 15-second, (n=1438)  
 Podcast base; 30-second (n=1556), 15-second, (n=121), host-read (n=96)

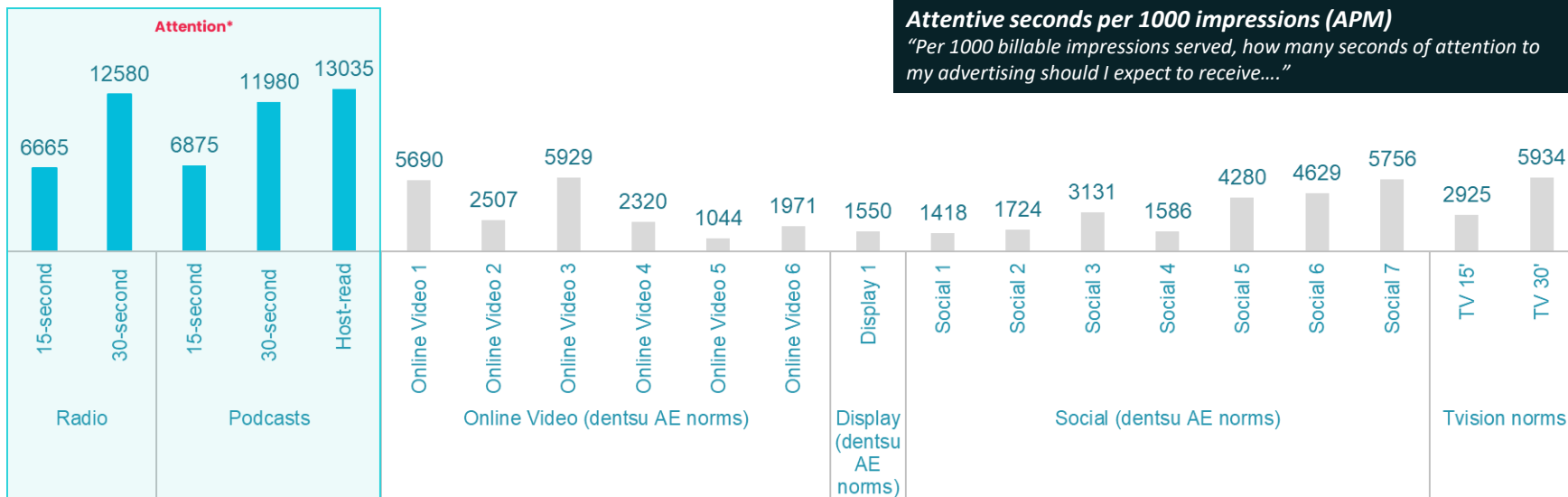
Audible / Viewable = % of impressions where the ad was audible for at least two seconds / that reach MRC standards of 50% on screen for 1 second if static and 2 seconds if video

Host read ad length: 20-70 seconds / av. length 36:40 seconds



# Attentive seconds per 1000 impressions (APM): Radio and podcast ads generate higher attention than digital, social and TV due to higher % attention and audible time

Attentive seconds per 1000 impressions (APM)



**Attentive seconds per 1000 impressions (APM)**  
*"Per 1000 billable impressions served, how many seconds of attention to my advertising should I expect to receive...."*

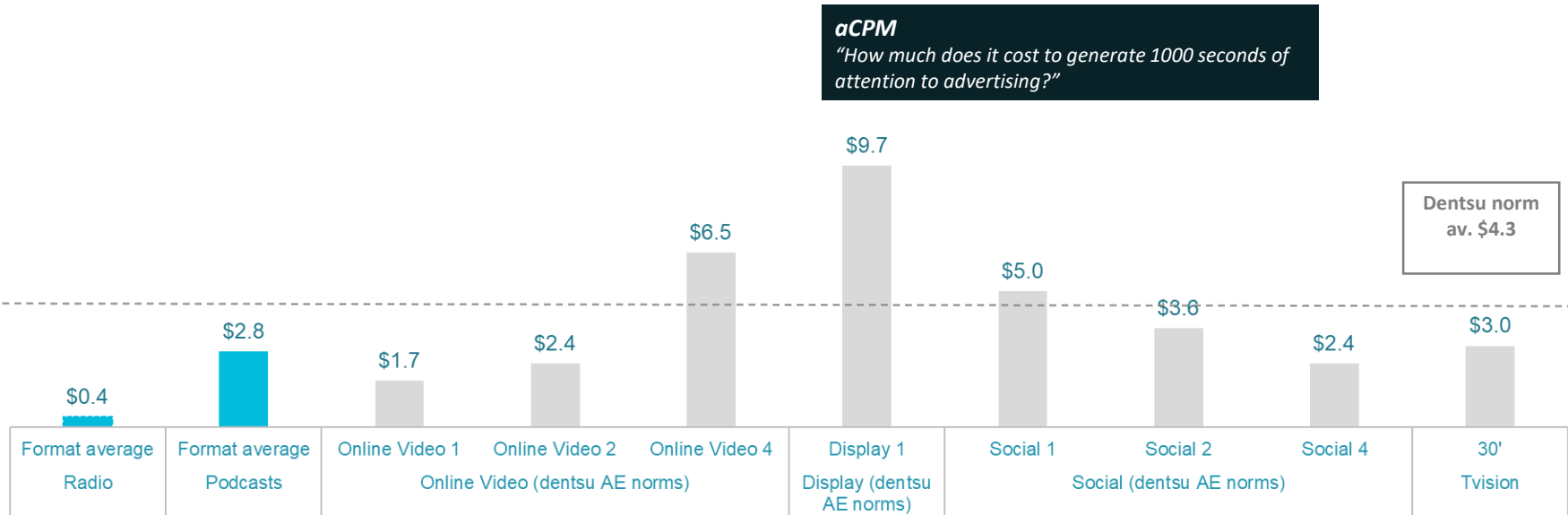
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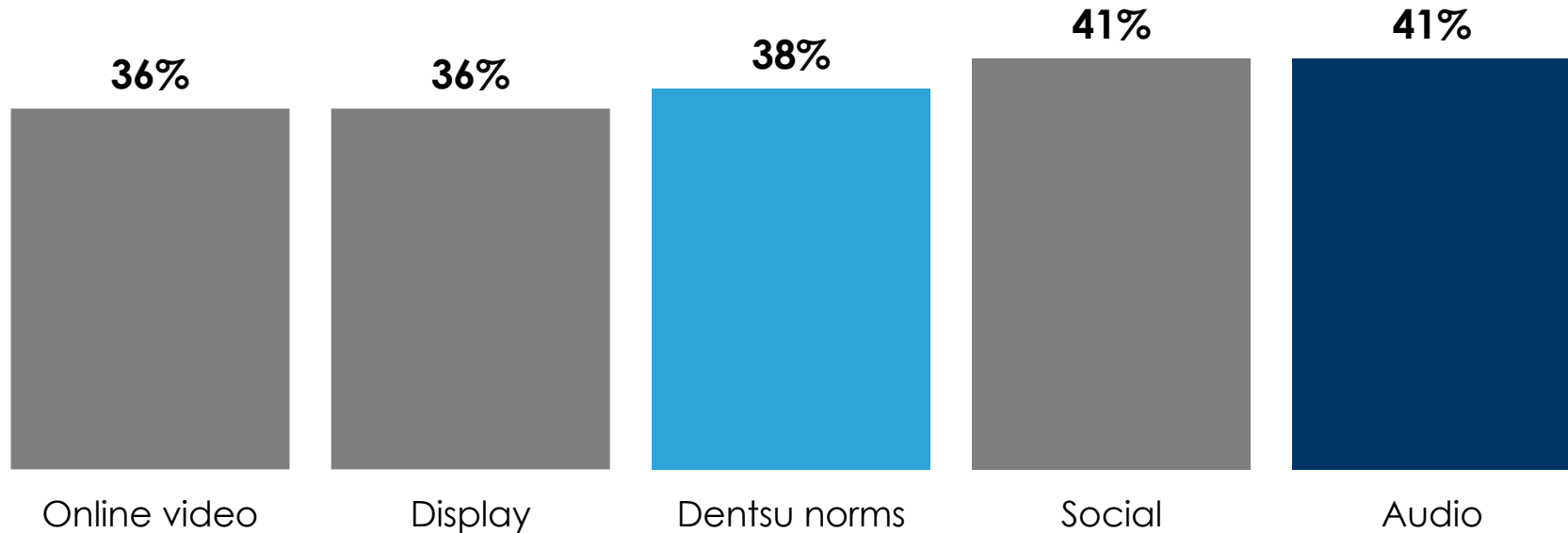
# On an attention CPM basis (aCPM), radio is by far the most cost effective medium; Podcasts are more efficient than TV and many digital platforms

The aCPM reveals radio to be a cost-effective media for generating attention to advertising.



# Audio generates +8% greater brand recall than Denstsu norms

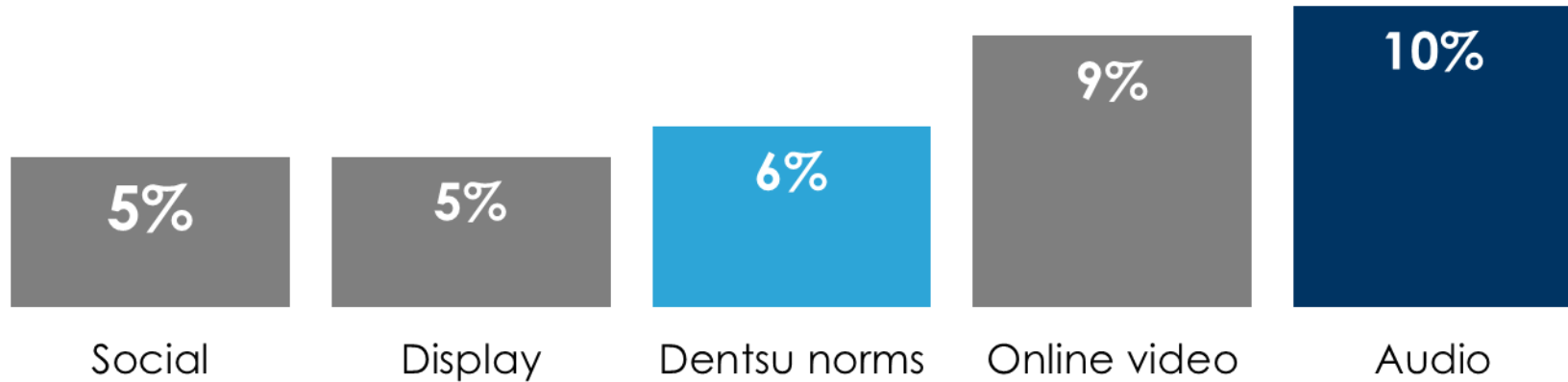
## Brand recall



Source: Dentsu/Lumen Attention Economy Study 2023: Combined audio attention result highlights, TV nor available for brand choice uplift and brand recall

# Audio generates +67% greater brand choice uplift than Dentsu norms

## Brand choice uplift



# Key findings

- Over the last five years, a series of studies from the IAB, MARU/Matchbox, Signal Hill Insights, and ABX reveal audio platforms and ad formats lead in consumer concentration with the lowest ad skipping.
- Massive ABX creative effectiveness study of TV and AM/FM radio ads reveals “sight, sound, and motion” superiority is a myth: AM/FM radio creative effectiveness is 92% of TV at one-fourth of the CPM.
- Lumen: Attention is important. The more time ads are seen or heard, the greater the sales conversion.

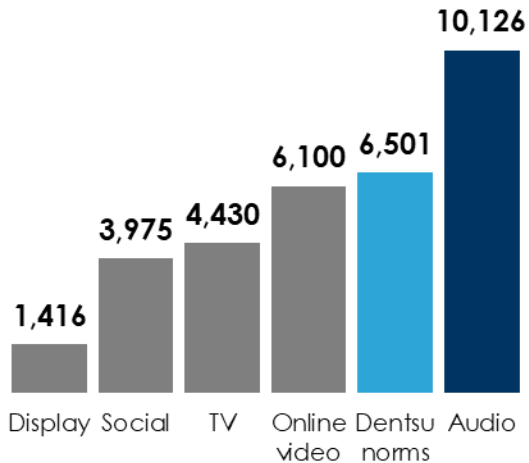
# Key findings

- **The Dentsu/Lumen study puts a stake through the heart of the myth that “sight, sound and motion” ads are somehow superior to audio ads:** The study proves that audio outperforms visual ads on the top jobs of advertising: creating memories, growing brand recall and increasing brand choice.
- **Podcasts, perceived to be “expensive,” are actually remarkably cost effective on an “attention CPM” basis:** Podcasts’ \$25 media CPM becomes a mere \$2.80 attention CPM, well below the Dentsu \$4.30 average. Display media, perceived as cost effective, actually has a very expensive attention CPM (\$9.70).
- **AM/FM radio should be in every media plan:** It outperforms visual media on the business outcomes of brand recall and brand choice while having a stunningly low attention CPM of 40 cents.

# Dentsu: Audio attention and brand equity outperform visual media; Audio is the most cost efficient

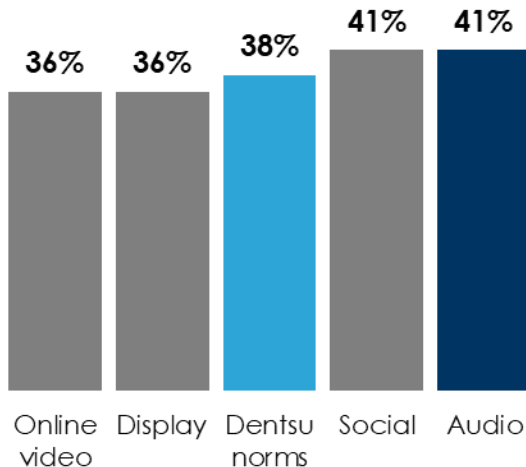
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Average attentive seconds per (000) - APM



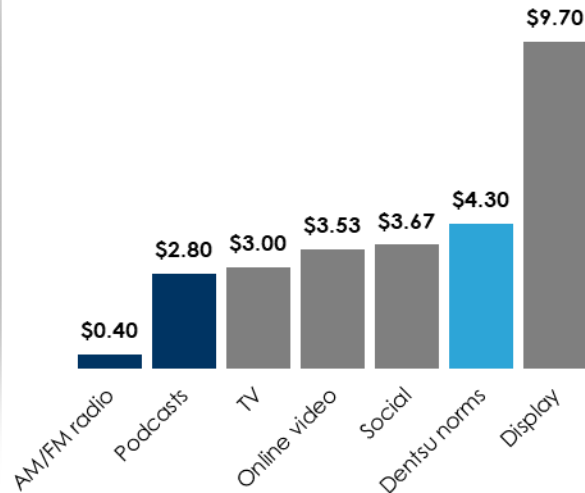
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Brand recall



AM/FM radio and podcasts are more cost efficient than TV and Dentsu norms

Attention CPM (αCPM)



Source: Dentsu/Lumen Attention Economy Study 2023: Combined audio attention result highlights, TV not available for brand recall



**Full-service advisory  
offering media planning  
recommendations,  
creative best practices,  
and measurement  
services**

The **Cumulus Media | Westwood One Audio Active Group®** is a true comprehensive marketing advisory that partners with clients to measure the impact of the **entire** audio campaign (not just the Cumulus Media | Westwood One investment), specializing in the following areas:

- **Audio creative best practices**
- **Media planning**
- **Strategic allocation within audio**
- **Measure the impact of the entire audio investment**



# For more, please visit the Cumulus Media | Westwood One Audio Active Group® blog

CumulusMedia.com



Click '**Blog**' at the bottom of the homepage

WestwoodOne.com/blog



Or click '**BLOG**' at the bottom of the homepage



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