



# The Q4 Podcast Playbook for Media Planners

Six Steps to Integrate Podcasts into Client Q4 Media Plans  
for Exceptional Results



## Hello Media Planners!

I'm Suzi, your personal guide to podcast advertising in Q4!

You play a crucial role in your clients' success, and this playbook is here to help you achieve that - because **good results are good, but great results are better!**

With this 6-step playbook, you'll have the knowledge to effectively harness podcasts to **achieve outstanding outcomes during the Q4 rush.**

You'll be adding **innovation** to your clients' media plans, ensuring they **stand out** in a crowded market, and ticking the box for **cutting-edge strategies**.

**Let's go! Time to transform your client campaigns from good to great with the power of podcasts, and make this Q4 the most successful yet!**

### SIX STEP PLAYBOOK

- 1 Onboarding your client
- 2 Targeting valuable Q4 audiences
- 3 Adding podcasts into the media mix
- 4 Addressing brand safety & suitability
- 5 Help craft a compelling audio ad
- 6 Campaign optimisation & measurement

# 1. Onboard Your Clients to Podcast Advertising

You can't create a winning campaign without the enthusiasm of your client. So here's the powerful insights you need to get them on board with using podcasts in their Q4 plans.



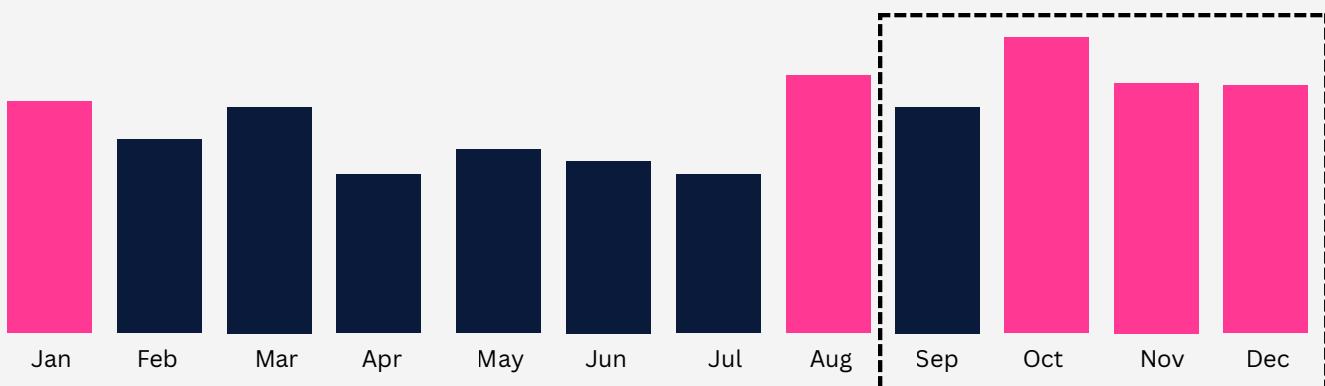
## Q4 Listener Insights

Podcasts are part of everyday life, especially during screen-free times like driving, walking, cleaning, and cooking.

Data shows that listeners discover and start new podcasts year-round, but with **a significant listening peak in October**. Continued higher listening levels remain for November and December.

**This makes Q4 a potent time for podcast advertising.**

DOWNLOADS BY MONTH FOR TOP PODCAST PUBLISHERS



Source: Podtrac's measurement data for the top 100 podcasts,

## Q4 Advertiser Insights

Let's look at what advertisers were up to in Q4 last year (2024).

Magellan AI analysed over 130,000 podcast episodes to reveal behaviours and trends in Q4, which showed...

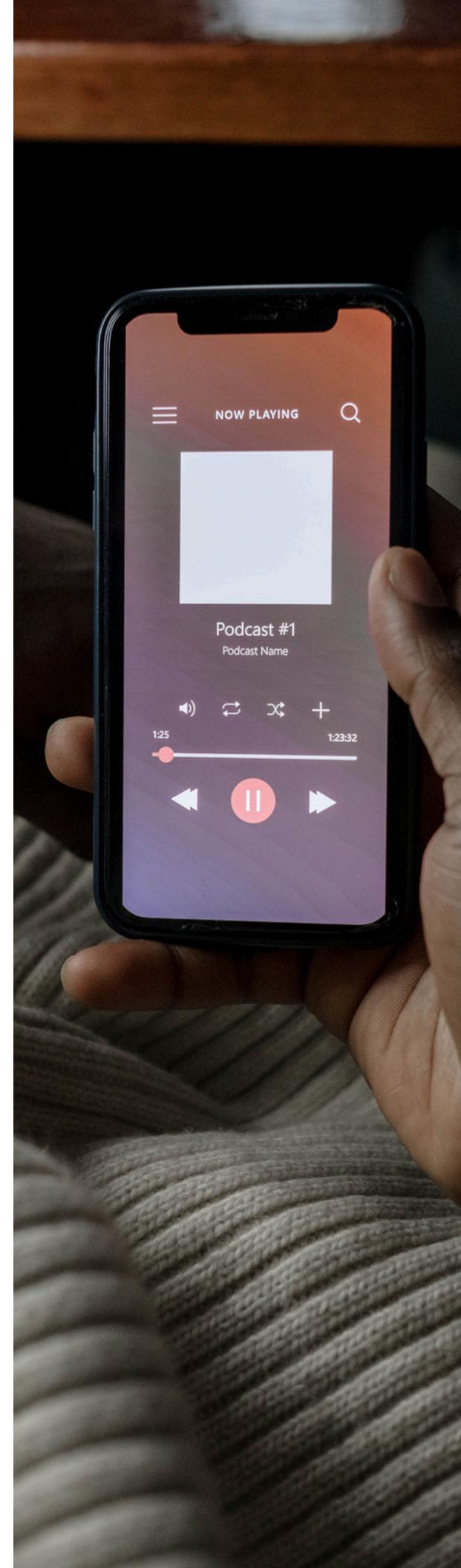
- Podcast **ad spending** accelerated in Q4, **increasing 14% compared to the previous quarter.**
- **1,584 new brands** advertised on podcasts for the first time in Q4
- Advertisers spent an average of **\$270k per Q4 month** on podcasts that rank in the top 500

### Which industries turned to podcasts in Q4?

Q4 2024 saw major growth in podcast ad spend from consumer-driven categories, as brands leaned into audio to influence holiday shopping decisions.

Footwear brands led the way with a +145% jump in spend versus Q3, followed by sharp increases from Oral Hygiene (+99%), Jewellery (+75%), and Investing brands (+74%) looking to build trust and visibility.

Even Consumer Electronics, a classic Q4 performer, saw a +49% boost, signalling strong confidence in podcasting's ability to drive results during peak retail season.



## Why Podcast Advertising?

Podcasts can address weaknesses found in other mediums, giving the campaign plan super strength. These include:

- **Advertise During Screen-Free Times:** Reach audiences when they are not on their screens.
- **Diverse Targeting Options:** Access to targeted demographics unavailable with traditional radio ads.
- **Low Ad Skip Rates:** Compared to video ads, listeners are less likely to skip audio ads.
- **Cost-Effective Production:** Producing audio ads is more affordable compared to video ads.
- **Ad Perception:** Customers are generally less frustrated by audio ads than by video ads.
- **Trust and Authenticity:** Higher trust and authenticity compared to social media ads.



*People are listening as much as watching these days, and to discount audio is to discount a massive portion of your audience.*

*Podcasts can be one of the strongest channels on your plan. It'll help businesses reach the widest audience in an effective meaningful way, increasing conversion opportunity.*

## 2.

# Identifying and Targeting Valuable Q4 Audiences

During the critical Q4 period, competition is fierce and audience attention is at a premium. So let's review the options available to zero in on valuable targeted audiences.



## Audience Targeting Options

A dynamically inserted campaign can target audiences by:

- **Gender:** male or female
- **Age:** 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65+
- **Contextual:** Multiple different genre categories
- **Language:** Choose from many different options
- **Device:** mobile, tablets, PCs/laptops, smart speakers
- **Format:** podcasts, digital radio, music streaming
- **Location:** Country, state, city

*All these options are available using [AdManager.FM](#)*

## Other Targeting Options

With more advanced campaigns Next Broadcast Media offers additional targeting options including:

- Baked-In ads
- Sponsorships
- Dynamic Creative Optimisation
- Host Reads

## EXPERT ADVICE ON TARGETING

We do not recommend micro-targeting in programmatic campaigns, as it limits reach, therefore impacting your ROI.

Instead, start with contextual/genre and location/language targeting.

If you do need to be hyper-narrow consider pinpointing specific podcast shows and doing sponsorships or host reads. Contact us to learn more about that!

### 3.

# Adding Podcasts to the Media Mix

**Adding podcasts to your media mix enhances the effectiveness of the entire campaign, by giving you access to customers at all moments in their day. Here are our top suggestions to best layer podcasts into your plan:**

For most campaigns, start with a dynamically inserted strategy. This way, you can maximise reach, utilise detailed targeting, and access real-time analytics for optimisation. Plus you won't need to boost spend too much, and you can use the same targeting strategy as your other channels.



Reach the same customers by using the same customer profile data. Use contextual and demographic filters to narrow in on your key audience to improve relevance. We can help guide you on top genres and shows for your clients audience - so get in touch!

We suggest you run the campaign for six weeks or more. This allows for any download-to-listen lag, maximising your reach.

Create commonalities across all channels. When sound and visuals are aligned your ad message is better enforced and more effective. You can use the same catch-phrase, tag line, etc.



# 4. Addressing Brand Safety & Suitability

Both you and your client may worry about ads being placed alongside bad language and sensitive topics. These are, of course, legitimate and important concerns. So let's take a look.



## Naturally a Safer Environment

Podcasts are a self-selecting medium. Unlike social or video feeds, where we are slaves to algorithms, a person's podcast library is curated to their tastes and preferences. Listeners are deeply invested in that content, sometimes even fanatically. Take Joe Rogan and Ashley Flowers, for example. Both cover controversial topics (e.g., politics, conspiracy theories, and true crime) on their shows, but listeners are not turned off by this. The trust and connection listeners have with podcasts transcend to advertisers too.

**In AdManager, you can influence suitability with targeting tools. Selecting genres that align to your client brands you to control how and where ads appear.**

### For large campaigns

Next Broadcast Media is partnered with Barometer, the leading AI podcast brand safety and suitability tool. This is important because legacy tools not built for audio are ineffective as they cannot access the RSS feed podcasts are hosted on.

Barometer, on the other hand, is built for audio and can pick up on tone, context, and sentiment. Plus, we can verify podcast hosts, so their behaviour outside of the podcast doesn't reflect on your clients.

**barometer**

# 5. Help Your Client Craft a Compelling Audio Ad

As Media Planners, you may not be directly involved in the creative process, but understanding what makes audio ads effective allows you to guide your clients more efficiently. This knowledge helps deliver superior ROI and reduces needless back-and-forths.



## Creating An Experience

Audio doesn't have visuals, instead great ads tap into the listener's imagination and emotions; painting vivid pictures and sparking a genuine connection.

**EXAMPLE:** Imagine your client is a kitchenware brand targeting busy mums this Q4. Knowing this audience often feels the stress of preparing celebration dinners, you create a 3D ASMR effect ad to capture their attention. Using beach sounds, you get them to pause and take a breath, and then tell them they can keep this relaxation with the use of the kitchenware item you're selling.



## Grab Attention from the Start

Use current trends or start the ad with a compelling hook. Aim to pique curiosity, spark interest, or address a problem that resonates with your client's audience. See point one for a good example.

## 5. Help Your Client Craft a Compelling Audio Ad

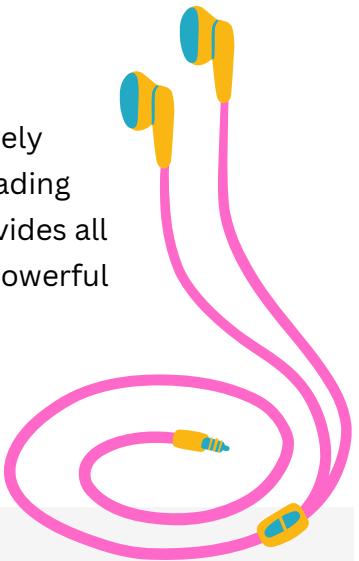
### Tell a Story

Storytelling can make ads memorable and relatable. Craft a narrative that draws listeners in, creates an emotional connection. Use characters, anecdotes, or relatable situations the audience can identify with.

#### EXAMPLE BY UBER:

Uber's ad uses minimal script but effectively visualises someone finishing work and heading out with friends. The finishing tagline provides all the necessary information and acts as a powerful CTA.

[Click Here to Listen](#)



### Keep it Clear & Concise

While storytelling is important, remember to keep your ad concise and to the point. After all, you have 15-30 seconds for a DAI ad. Avoid excessive information or lengthy explanations. Focus on a key benefit and a clear call-to-action.

### Brand Voice and Personality

Your client's brand voice and personality should shine through. Whether that's humour, authenticity, or authority. Don't shy away from standing out.

#### EXAMPLE BY LITTLE CEASER'S:

I love this. It uses humour which aligns perfectly with its brand. The true-crime style ad was contextually paired with mystery and true-crime podcast genres, making it even more effective.

[Click Here to Listen](#)



# 6. Campaign Optimisation and Measurement

To ensure exceptional results for your clients, campaign optimisation and measurement is essential. These are the key metrics to use in your reporting



## The Metrics

- **Reach:** the number of unique listeners who heard your ad.
- **Impressions:** the number of times your ad is heard in total.
- **Listen Through Rate:** The percentage of listeners that heard your audio ads, in full. Audio Listen Through Rate (LTR) is calculated by dividing impressions by the number of completions. By nature a high LTR is standard.
- **Completion Rate:** Also referred to as 100% completed metric. Used in the LTR calculation, this represents the number of times your ad was heard in its entirety.

## Benchmark of Success

LTR is the best measurement to quantify an **EFFECTIVE** reach.

This is because it means your ads are played right through. Heard by your customers (a few times too!). *Compare that to social ads that are quickly scrolled past, or display ads where they only need to be seen for 1 sec to count!*

We like to work with a benchmark of 80%+ LTR.

To achieve this you will need to ensure your ad creative has high-quality audio and your targeting isn't too broad.

**If your ad is underperforming change your creative or targeting.**

## Don't Forget...

Define specific audio goals upfront with your clients, such as brand awareness, lead generation, or driving website traffic. These objectives will guide your format, creative decisions, and optimisation efforts. Audio is especially powerful at driving awareness and recall.

# Summary

We've journeyed through the essential steps to mastering podcast advertising. Equipped with knowledge and strategies you can now excel during the critical Q4 period.



## The Steps for Success

- 1. Onboarding Your Client:** Start by building enthusiasm about podcast advertising. Highlight the significant Q4 listening peaks and advertising investments.
- 2. Target Valuable Q4 Audiences:** Employ AdManager.FM to define your audience by genre and location.
- 3. Synergise Podcasts with Other Media:** Use common customer profiles and align sound and visuals across all channels to reinforce your ad message.
- 4. Address Brand Safety and Suitability:** Reassure your clients about the safety and suitability of podcast advertising.
- 5. Help Craft Compelling Ads:** Guide clients in the creative process to limit delays and enhance effectiveness.
- 6. Campaign Measurement:** Track key metrics and continuously optimise your creative and targeting strategies to achieve high LTR.



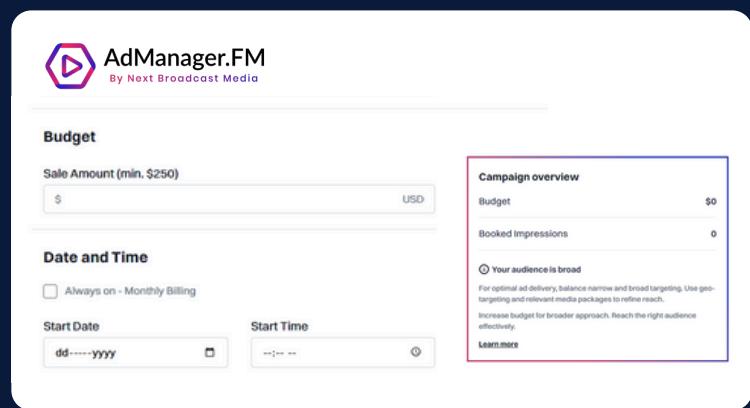
AdManager.FM, our AI-powered podcast advertising management tool, can help you action everything you've learned in this playbook. From targeting and optimisation to measurement, it's your go-to resource for executing successful podcast ad campaigns.

Launch your Q4 campaigns with....

# AdManager.FM

Your full powered self-serve audio advertising tool

- Podcast, streaming, web radio & gaming
- AI powered audio creative studio
- Launch from just **\$10 a day**
- Narrow **targeting** audience packages
- Go live in **4 steps & 4 minutes**
- Full control & transparent results



**Ads Placed Where People are Listening**



# The AdManager Solution

We're independent audio experts with the latest tech to help you tap into the most extensive, non-fragmented audio inventory across 50+ countries. AdManager.FM is the self service tech solution created by Next Broadcast Media.

Manage digital audio campaigns in-house. Ideal for small businesses, those new to audio advertising, or small budget campaigns. Get all the effectiveness of audio advertising at your finger tips!

- Self-serve ad manager
- Go live within minutes
- Campaign budget starting at \$10 a day
- AI script writer
- Free audio ad recording
- Programmatic, <30 second ads

[www.admanager.fm](http://www.admanager.fm)

## Next Broadcast Media is Trusted by Leading Brands



### CONTACT US

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By Next Broadcast Media



Thank you for reading.  
Here's to transforming good results  
into great ones and achieving  
exceptional outcomes this Q4.



**Sign up to admanager.fm today!**