

OMNICON MEDIA ×  iHeartMedia

Turning Volume into Value

What New Audio Innovations
Mean For Advertisers



Audio isn't background noise – it's a ritual



One-third of daily media
consumption is audio

Our Goal

Create a guidebook for advertisers
on the latest and greatest in audio
ad innovations

How we did it

AD EFFECTIVENESS

What

Controlled testing using experimental design to measure the impact of new and traditional audio ad formats across brand KPIs

How

- ✦ Randomization used to assign each listener into control or exposed groups
- ✦ Everyone listened to content of their choice, with appropriate ads served, followed by brand lift surveys

Who

Nationally representative online panel



Ages	18+
Streams audio	Weekly or more
Total	n= 3,521

3 VERTICALS

CPG



Beauty



Insurance



What we tested

Standard Audio Ads



Audio ads with traditional voiceover talent

Ad Length:
:30 sec ads

:30 Sec Host Read Ads



Short audio ads read by radio DJ/hosts

Ad Length:
:30 sec ads

Long-form Host Read Ads



Long audio ads read by radio DJ/hosts

Ad Length:
:120 sec ads

Motion Activated Units (MAU)



Interactive audio ads that prompt users to shake their phone to unlock unique experiences or information about a brand

Ad Length:
:30 sec ads

Dynamic Ads



Personalized audio ads that are catered to reach listeners in the right context, dynamically delivered with a single tag based on real-time listener and location data

Ad Length:
:30 sec ads

MARKETING GOAL

#01

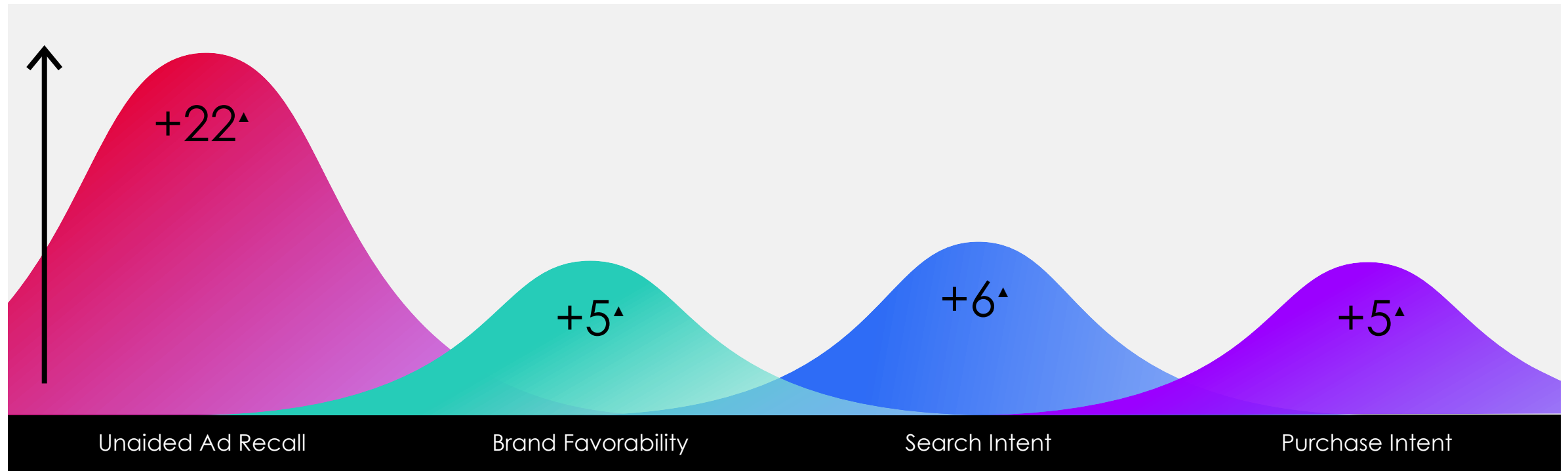
Amplify Your Existing Media Mix

Audio ads drive strong brand lift across KPIs

Standard Audio Ads

Impact on Brand KPIs, Among Listeners Likely to Purchase Category Soon

+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)





The audio multiplier effect

With audio holding 1/3 of daily media consumption and significant boosts in ad recall, audio is primed to amplify all other channels

+83%

SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

Audio delivers attention, recall, and intent. When consumers hear your message first, they're more likely to notice and trust it when it shows up on social

+109%

DIGITAL & SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

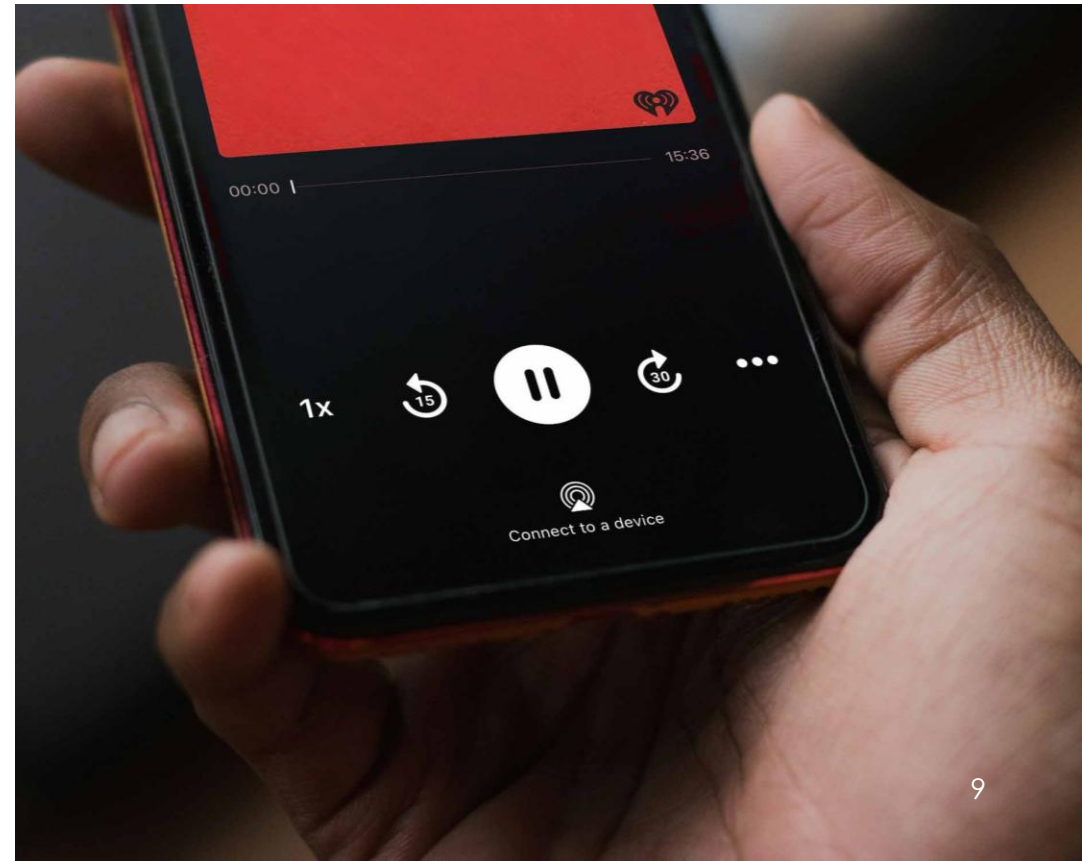
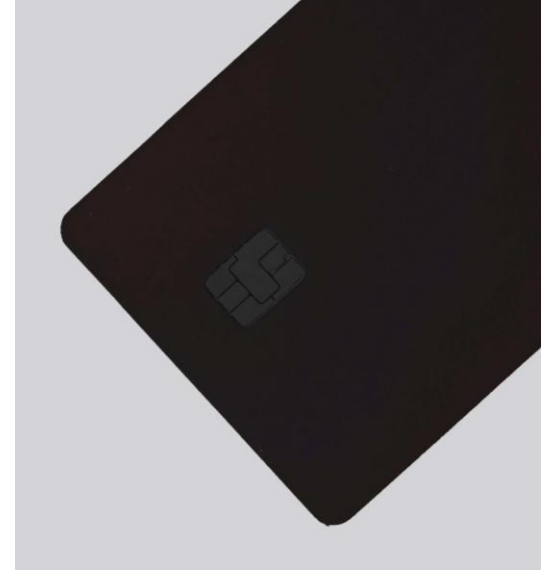
Audio gives social campaigns the momentum they need to drive results

+47%

BRANDED SEARCH ACTIVITY

What Should Marketers Do?

- 1 Evaluate media mix – is audio getting adequate share relative to time spent?
- 2 Ensure enough weight to drive reach and impact



Earn Credibility & Trust

A man wearing a dark cap and glasses is sitting in the driver's seat of a car. He is holding a smartphone in his left hand and looking at the screen. His right hand is on the steering wheel. The background is blurred, showing the interior of the car and some lights outside. A purple wavy line graphic is at the bottom of the slide.



00:00 00:30



Credible Voices, Credible Brands

:30 Sec Host Read Ads

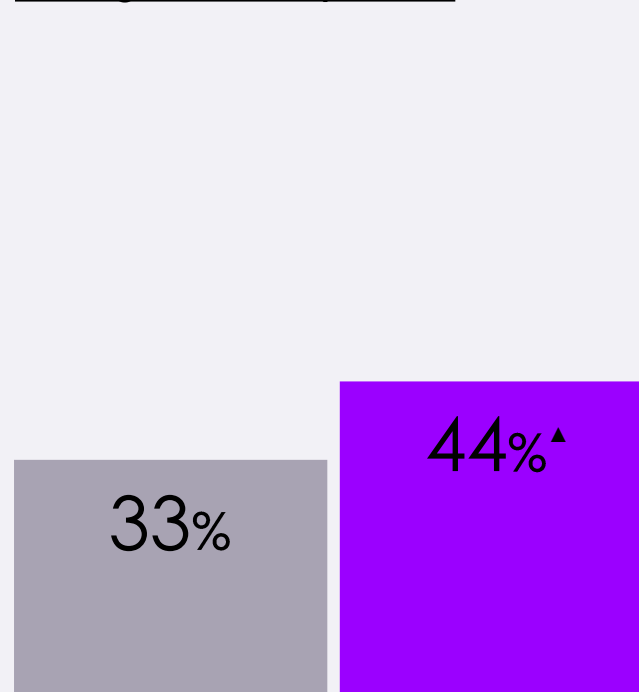
Narrator voices deepen emotional connection with the brand

Impact of Narrator -- % Agree/ Strongly Agree

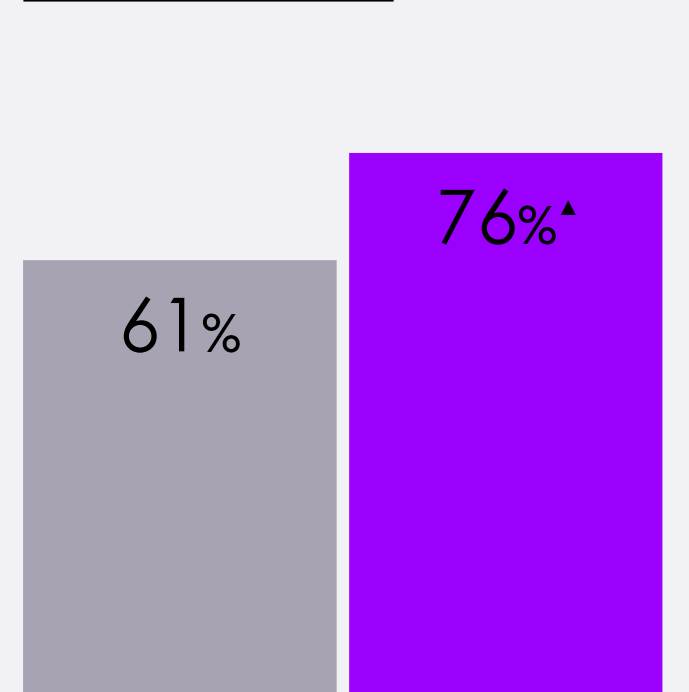
● Standard Audio Ads ● :30 Sec Host Read Ads

The narrator...

Made the brand's
message feel more personal



Made me feel more emotionally
connected to the brand



Standard Audio Ads n= 302, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 132
Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the narrator? The narrator...

▲ = significant difference between two groups at >=90% confidence

Ads featuring credible voices create a halo effect for brands

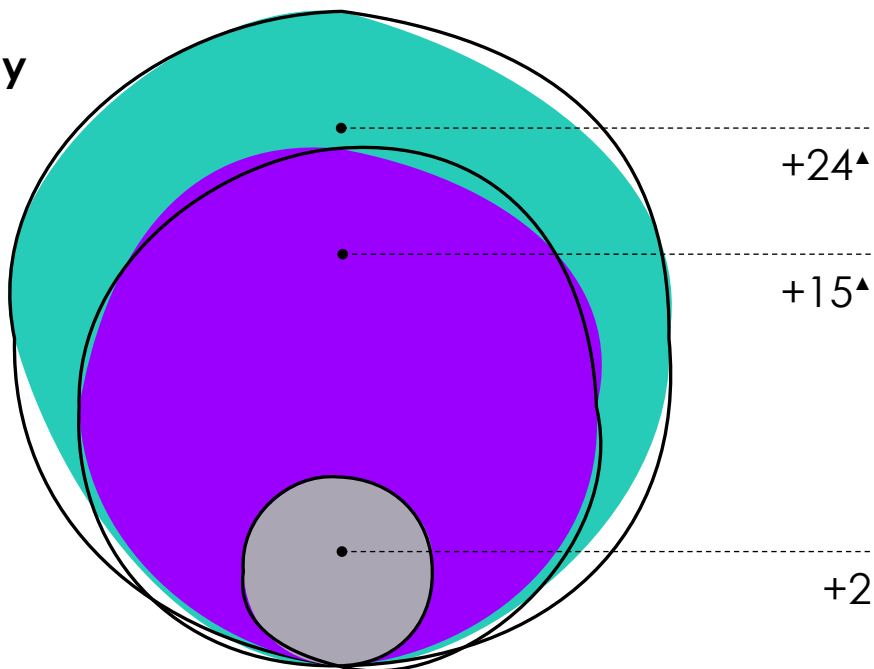
Host-read ads deliver stronger results - and trusted voices amplify that impact even further

Impact on Brand Perceptions

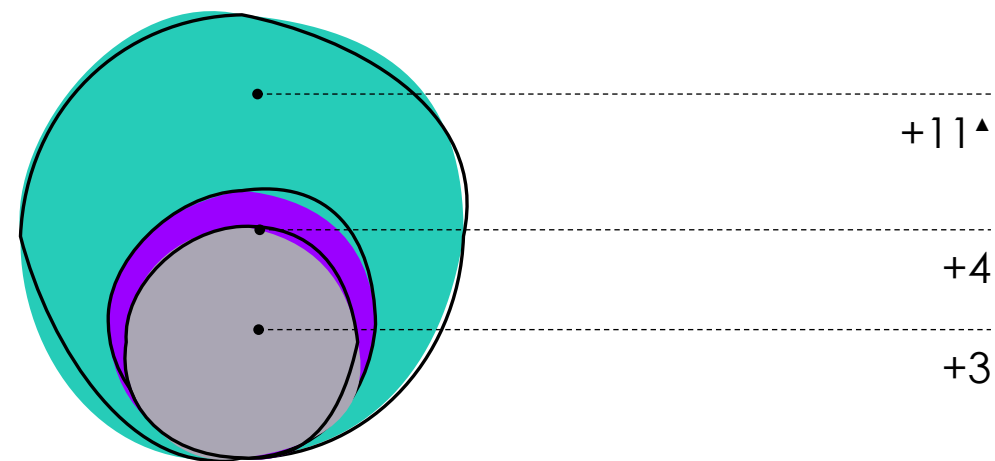
+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)

● Standard Audio Ads ● Host (:30s Read Ad) ● Trusted Host (:30s Read Ad)

Is a brand
“I feel strongly
about”



Is a brand
“I trust”



Control n= 301; Exposed, Standard Audio Ads n= 302, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 132, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Trusted Host) n= 102.
Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about [brand]? [Brand] is a brand T2B Standard Ads n=604, New Formats n= 876
▲= significant difference between control and exposed at >=90% confidence

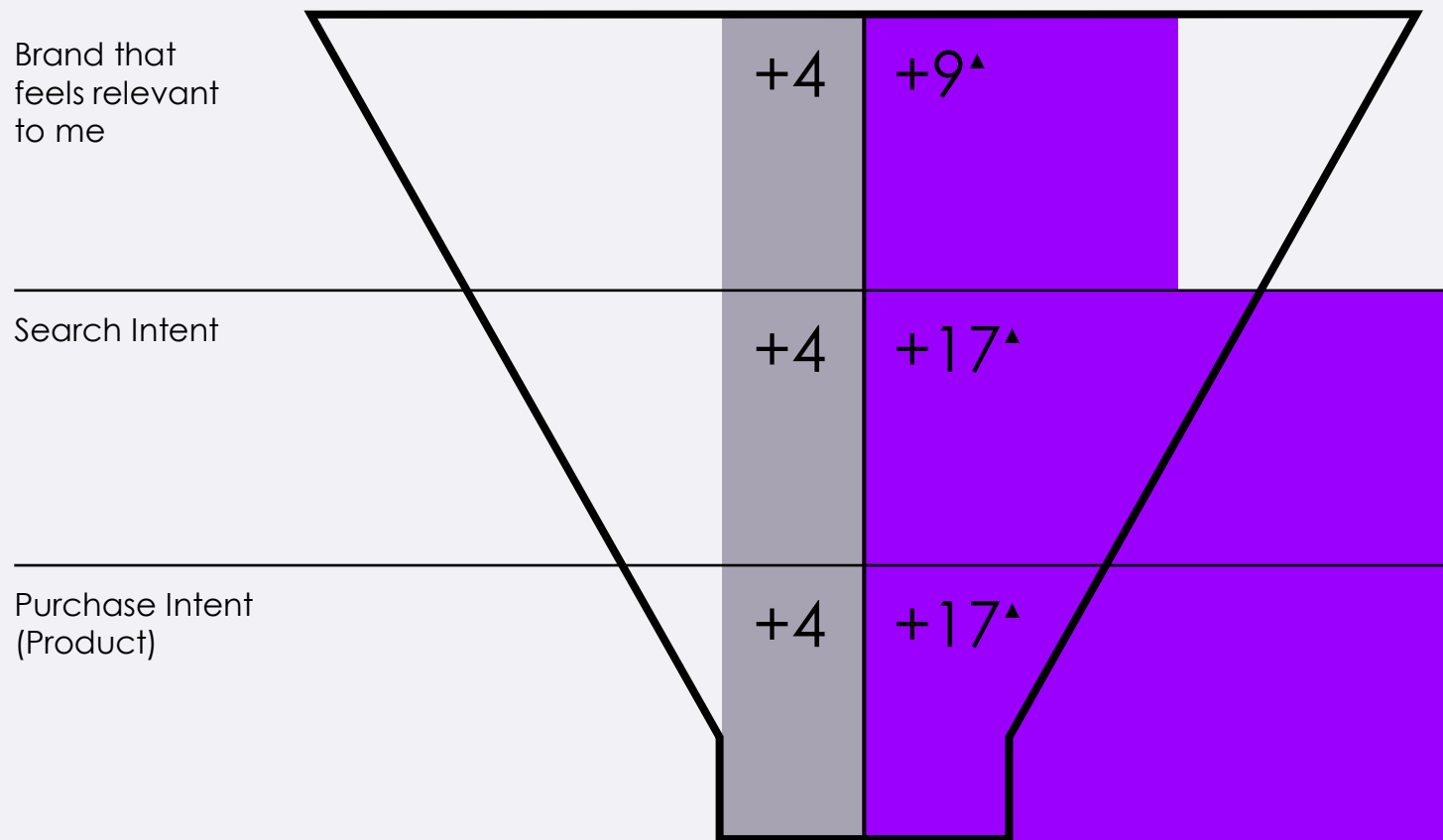
Relevance generated by hosts drive bottom funnel impact

The resonance of host read ads has a knock-on effect down the funnel

Impact on Brand KPIs

+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)

● Standard Audio Ads ● :30 Sec Host Read Ads



Control n= 301; Exposed, Standard Audio Ads n= 302, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 132

Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about __?

Q: How likely are you to search for information about the following?

Q: The next time you're shopping for __, how likely are you to buy the following brands (any product)?

▲= significant difference between control and exposed at >=90% confidence

What We Know



Hosts on radio and podcasts are true influencers - **80% of listeners trust audio hosts and consider them a friend***

Host-read ads build credibility and emotional connection, driving relevance, trust and intent

What Should Marketers Do?



Incorporate host-read spots into audio strategy when KPIs focus on building brand trust, as well as lower funnel metrics

Position host-read ads as both a brand equity driver and performance tactic - ideal for storytelling campaigns, product launches, and trust-building initiatives

Best Practices:

- Keep scripts simple and natural - let hosts speak in their own words
- Adapt for audio; avoid repurposing visual copy
- Bundle host reads across podcasts, broadcasts, and live experiences for multi-touch impact

Measure ROI: Implement brand lift studies focused on emotional connection and purchase intent

MARKETING GOAL:

#03

Drive Intent & Decision- Making Velocity

Working with trusted hosts doesn't just influence purchases – it *accelerates*

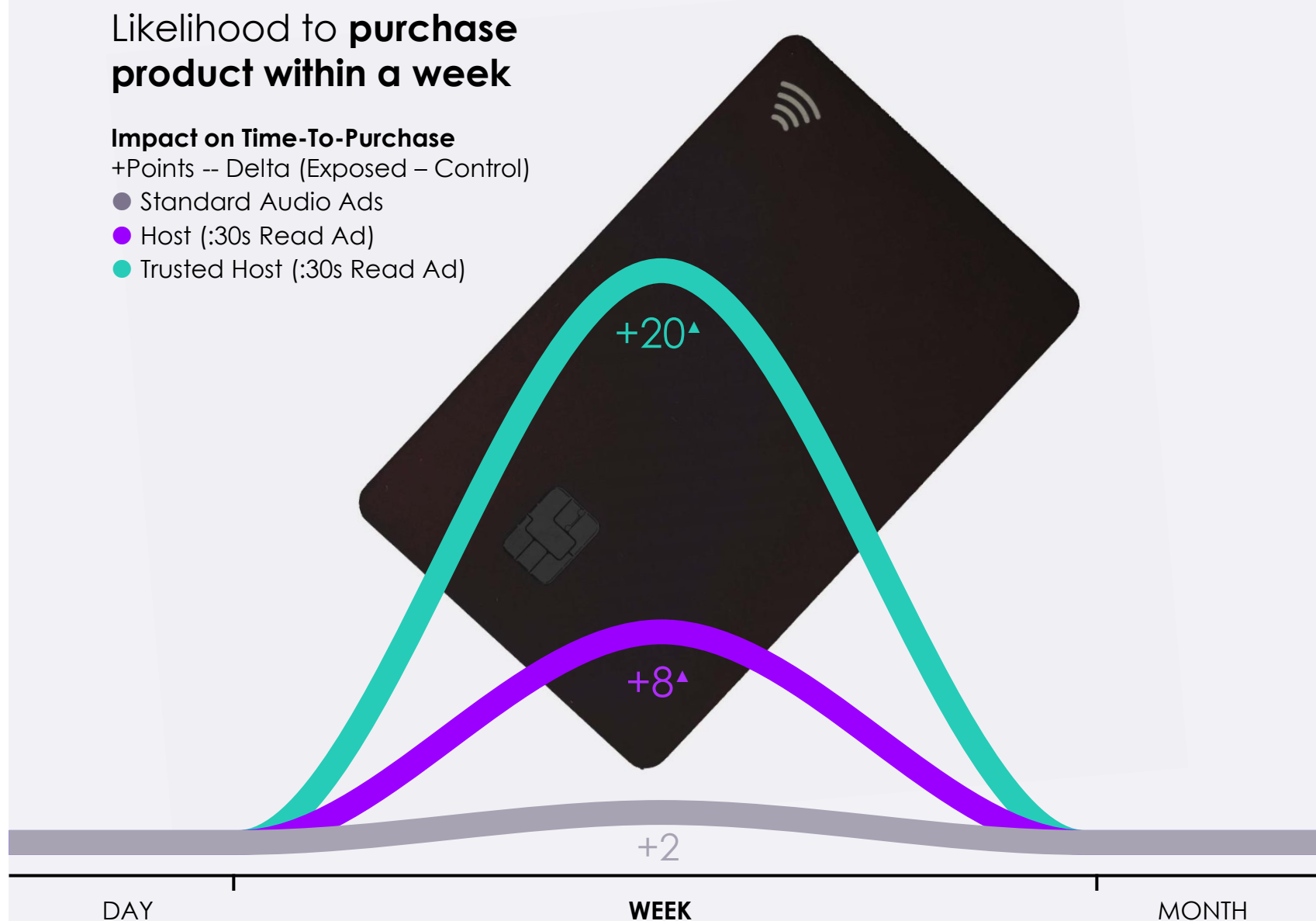
When listeners trust the host, intent turns to action faster – speeding up the purchase journey

Likelihood to purchase product within a week

Impact on Time-To-Purchase

+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)

- Standard Audio Ads
- Host (:30s Read Ad)
- Trusted Host (:30s Read Ad)



Among listeners likely to purchase product within a week; Control n= 188; Exposed, Standard Audio Ads n= 201, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 105, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Trusted Host) n= 80
Q: You mentioned you were likely to buy [product], when are you likely to do so?
▲= significant difference between control and exposed at >=90% confidence

Shake
me



Jazz Requiem
Teddy Martin



The Interactive Edge

Motion-Activated Units (MAU Ads)

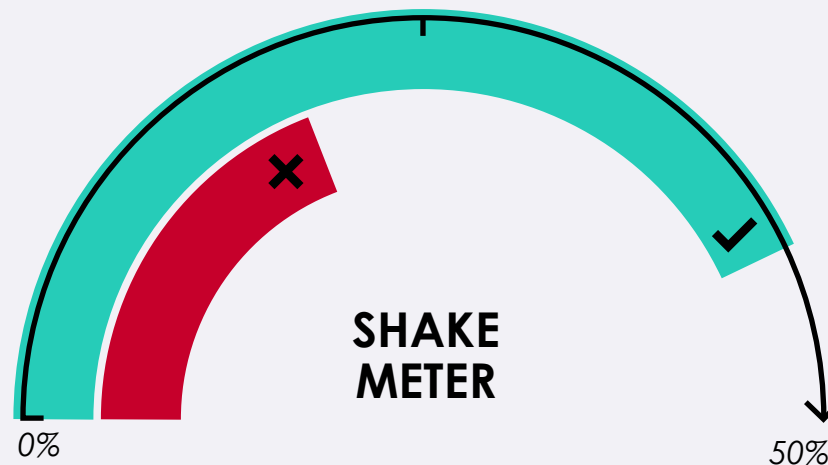
Interactivity clicks with the most relevant audiences

Engagement peaks among Gen Z, Millennials, and those likely to purchase the category

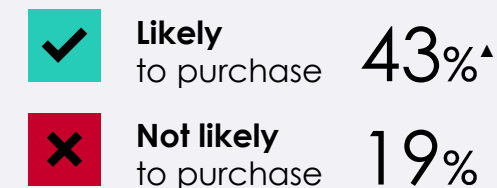
Q: During the message you were asked to "shake to learn more." Did you shake your phone when prompted? There is no right or wrong answer. Among listener's likely to make a category purchase soon MAU Ads n= 300 By generation; Gen Z n= 75, Millennial n=83, Gen X n= 75, Boomer n= 67
▲= significant difference between listeners likely to shake soon vs. not, and between generations at >=90% confidence

Listeners who interacted

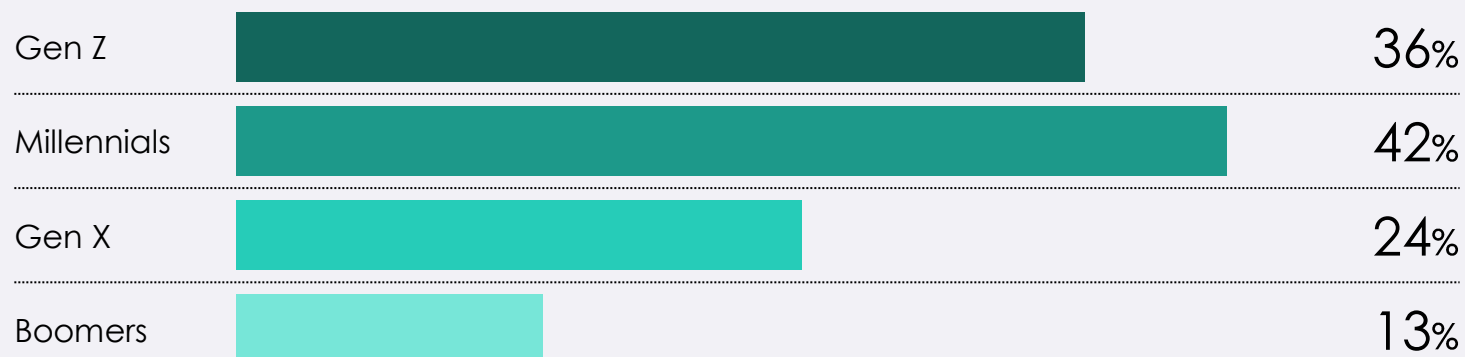
% That shook



Listeners' intent to make a category purchase soon



Generation

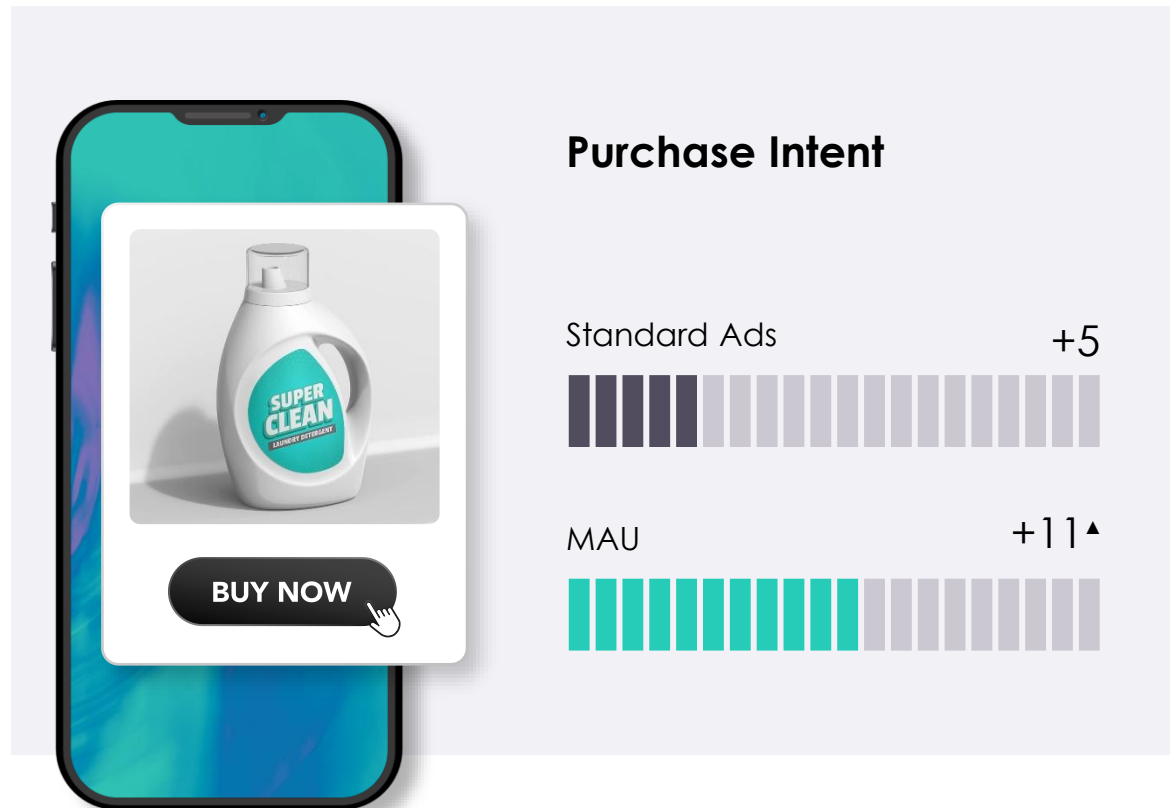
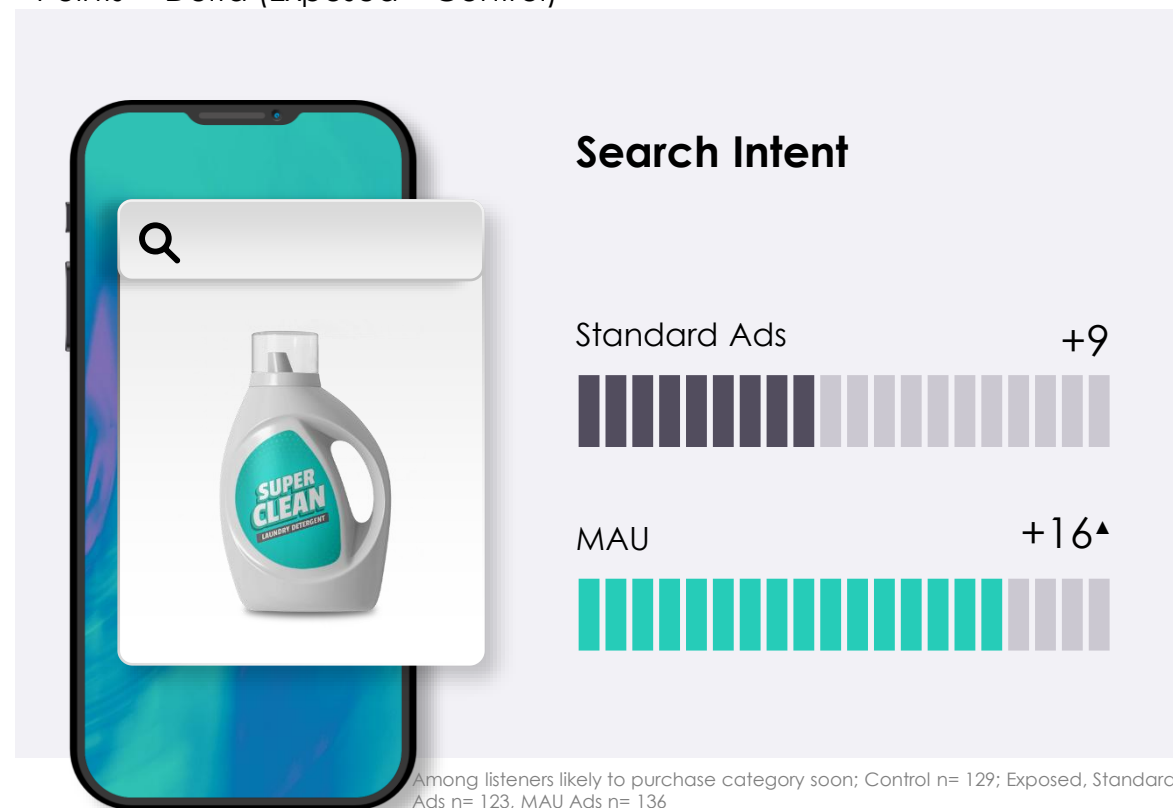


That engagement drives “immediate response” among listeners closest to purchase

Focus MAU ads on advanced audiences that are most likely to engage to drive conversions

Impact on Brand KPIs, Among Listeners Likely to Purchase Category Soon

+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)



Among listeners likely to purchase category soon; Control n= 129; Exposed, Standard Ads n= 123, MAU Ads n= 136

Q: How likely are you to search for information about the following?

Q: The next time you're shopping for __, how likely are you to buy __?

▲= significant difference between control and exposed at >=90% confidence

Interactive MAU ads stand out amongst the noise

MAU ads breakthrough with a sense of uniqueness

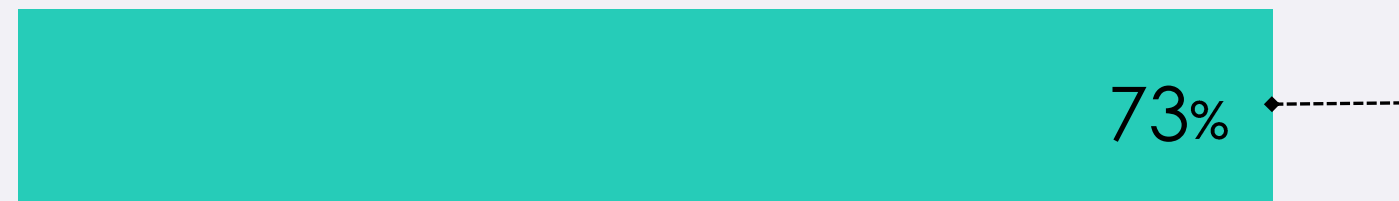
The message “Felt Unique”

Perception of Ad -- % Agree/Strongly Agree

Standard Audio Ads



MAU Ads



Standard Ads n= 300, MAU Ads n= 303
 Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the message? The message...
 ▲= significant difference between standard audio ads and MAU ads at >=90% confidence

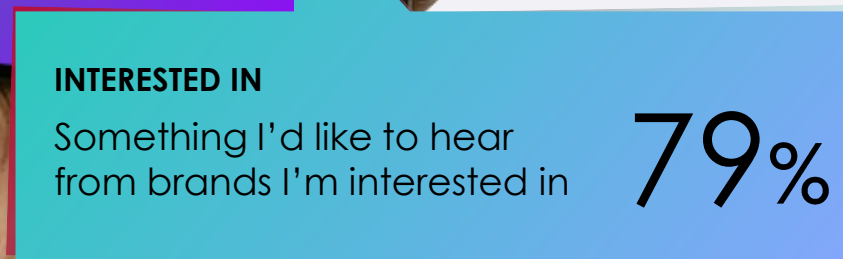
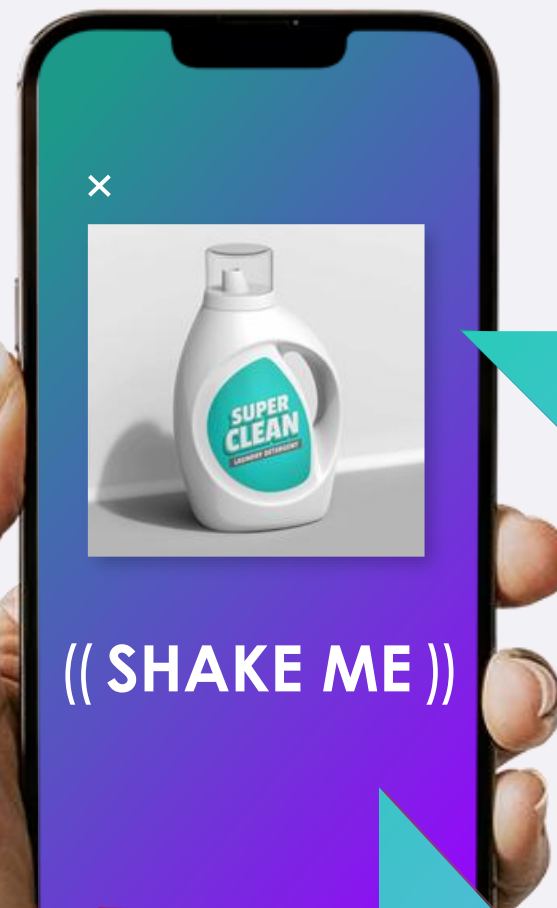
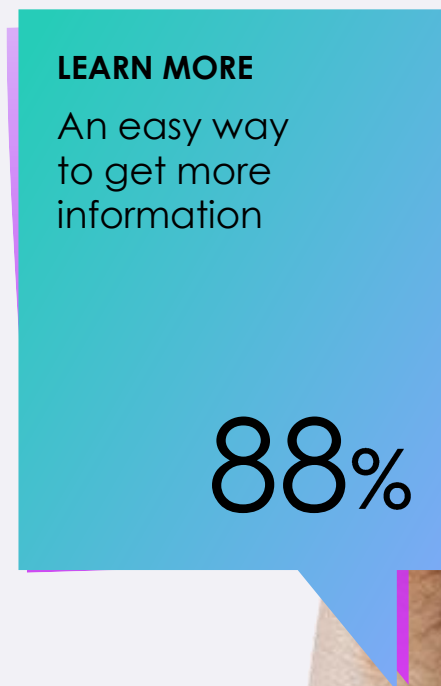
Beyond novelty, listeners see utility

Listeners see value in these experiences, suggesting long-term potential beyond the “wow” factor

Perception of MAU Ads, Among Listeners Likely to Purchase Soon

% Agree/Strongly Agree

Among listeners likely to make a purchase soon; MAU Ads n= 136
Q: Whether or not you shook your phone to learn more, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



There is more potential to unlock with MAU ads

Clarity on what to expect when they shake – and validation that it won't disrupt their listening – can increase engagement among listeners

Top 3 Reasons Why Listeners Didn't Shake When Prompted:

I wasn't sure what would happen

32%

I didn't want to disrupt my listening

24%

I didn't hear the prompt

22%

What We Know



Interactivity accelerates engagement and conversion. Motion-activated ads turn passive listening into active participation, especially among younger and in-market audiences

Novelty + utility drives impact. These formats deliver value by making it easy and fun for listeners to learn more, creating a positive brand experience

Best for high-intent audiences. When paired with precise targeting, interactive ads amplify purchase intent and shorten the path to conversion, making them a powerful performance lever

What Should Marketers Do?



Test MAU ads for performance-driven campaigns where engagement and conversion are key goals

Target advanced audiences (Gen Z, Millennials, and in-market consumers) to maximize interaction and ROI

Pair interactivity with clear prompts and utility: make the experience simple, rewarding, and aligned with the brand message

Integrate MAU ads into sequential strategies: start with awareness formats (host reads, dynamic ads), then layer interactive units to drive action

Build Emotional Connection

A woman with voluminous curly hair is shown from the chest up, looking down at a smartphone in her right hand. She has white earbuds in her ears, and her left hand is near her ear. The background is a bright, slightly hazy city skyline with a prominent skyscraper. A vibrant pink and purple wavy graphic element is positioned at the bottom of the frame, partially overlapping the text and the woman's torso.

**“It’s
morning,
already?”**



Personal, By Design

Dynamic Ads

Dynamic ads: more relevant, more you

Personalized ads naturally feel
more relevant to listeners

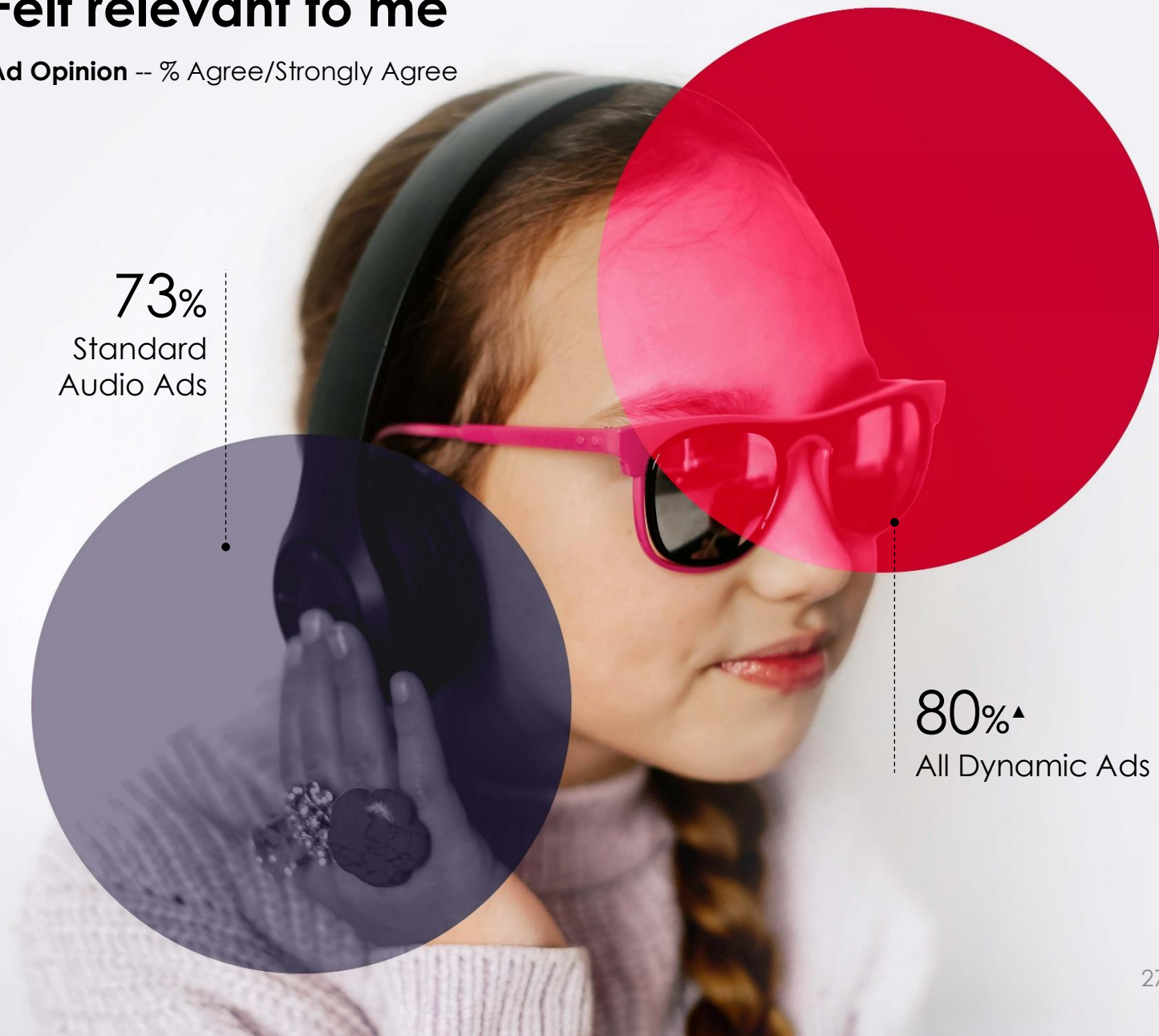
Felt relevant to me

Ad Opinion -- % Agree/Strongly Agree

73%
Standard
Audio Ads

80%[▲]
All Dynamic Ads

Standard Audio Ads n= 301, Dynamic Ads n= 302
Q How much do you agree or disagree with the following
statements about the message? (T2B) Standard Ads n= 1,173
▲= significant difference between standard audio ads and
dynamic ads at >=90% confidence



Ads that reflect knowledge of the listener strengthen emotional connection

Tailoring your ad to the listener's time-of-day can deepen emotional resonance

“Made me feel more emotionally connected to the brand”

Impact on Emotional Connection to Brand (Brand #2)

% Agree/Strongly Agree

Standard Audio Ads

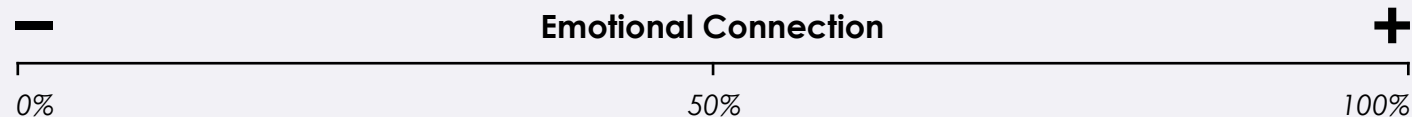


Dynamic Time-of-Day Ads



[open-ended response]

“I think it was great way for people to feel connected to the product...”



Brand #2 Standard Audio Ads n= 100 Brand #2 Dynamic TOD n= 101
Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the narrator? The narrator...
▲ = significant difference between standard audio ads and dynamic time-of-day ads at >=90% confidence

Customized context can also drive transactional next steps

The in-the-moment resonance of dynamic time-of-day ads motivate action

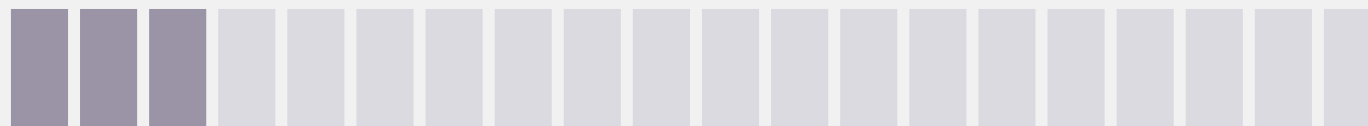
Likelihood to search for brand

Impact on Search Intent (Brand #1)

+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)

Standard Audio Ads

+3



Dynamic Time-of-Day Ads

+11[▲]



Brand #1 Standard Audio Ads n= 101 Brand #1 Dynamic TOD n= 100
Q: How likely are you to search for information about the following?
▲ : Significant difference at 90% confidence between exposed and control

What We Know



Dynamic audio **boosts relevance and emotional connection** (80% feel ads are more relevant; +11pts lift in search intent)

Personalization by **time-of-day and context** drives stronger mid-funnel impact

Scalable modular scripts make personalization **fast and efficient**

What Should Marketers Do?



Use dynamic creative when personalization matters and for campaigns with narrow targeting: ideal for campaigns focused on relevance, emotional connection, and mid-funnel intent

Keep it simple: Limit to 2–3 smart variables (e.g., location, daypart, offer)

Write modular scripts: One template powers many versions

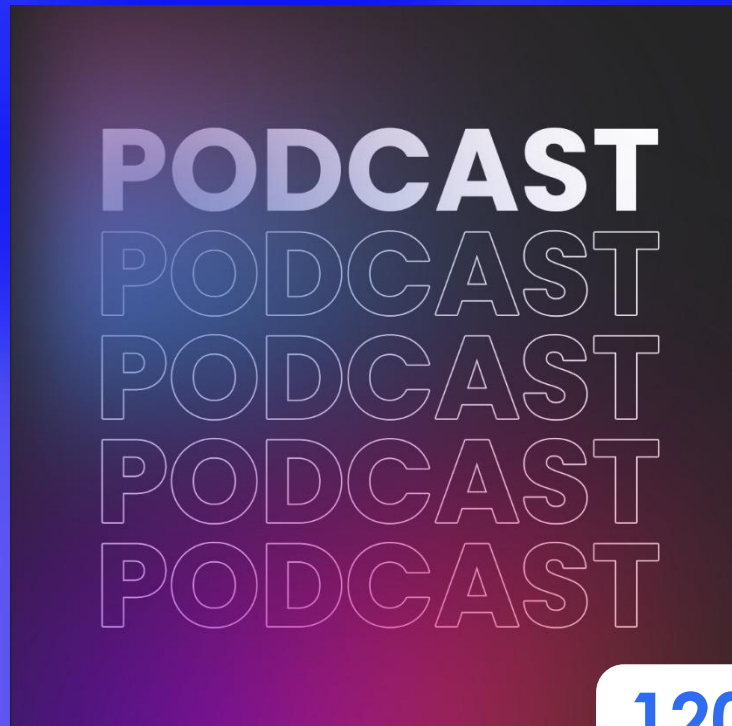
Target moments that matter: Prioritize time-of-day/context for resonance

Plan for scale: Launch quickly, version centrally, measure mid-funnel KPIs

MARKETING GOAL:

#05

Tell Your Brand's Story



120s



00:00

01:20



Extended Formats, Extended Impact

Long-Form Host Read Ads

Long-form builds depth and memory

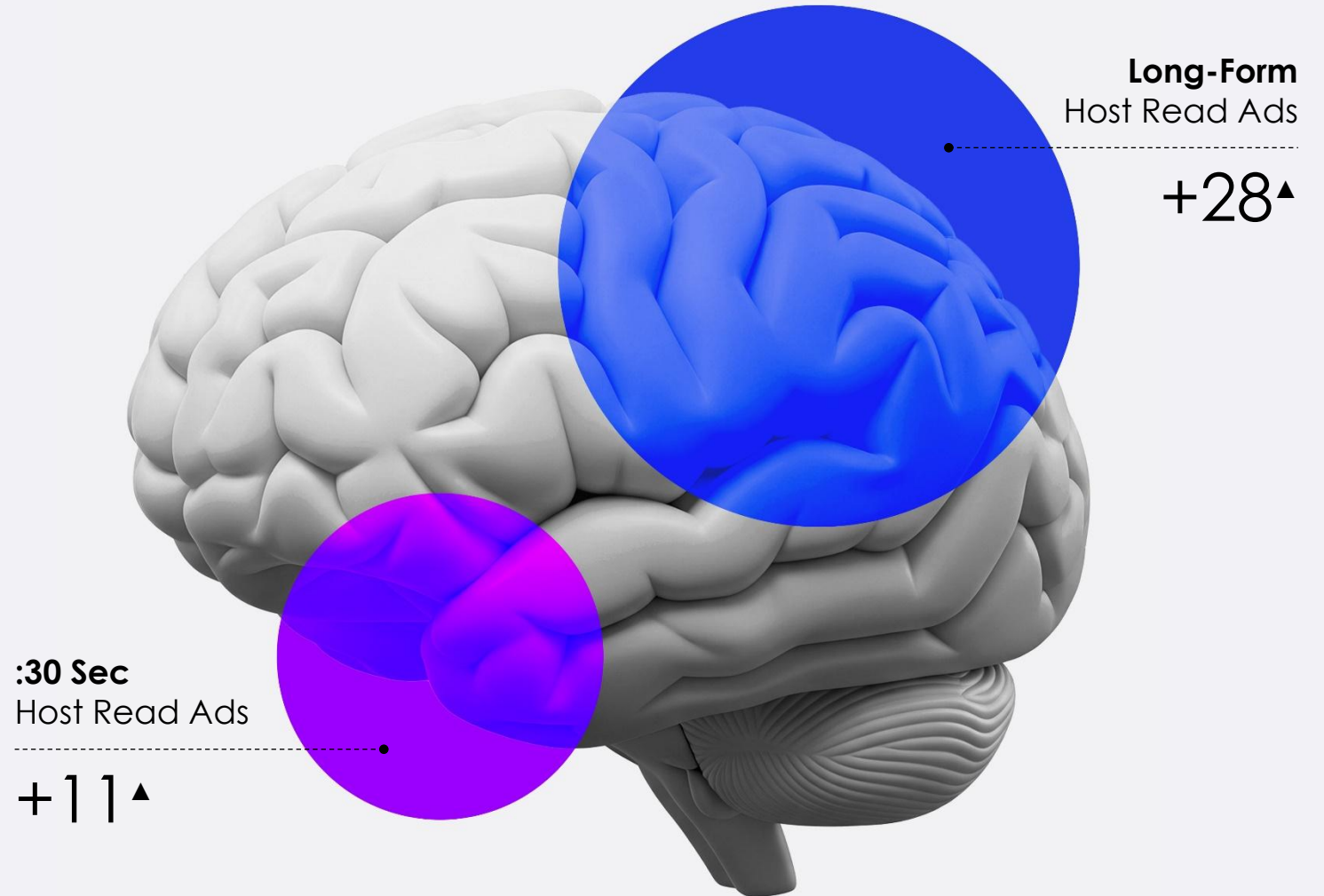
Longer formats provide more time to share information and tell a good story, ultimately leading to 2X stronger recall

Control, :30 Sec Control n= 301, Long-Form Control n= 272; Exposed, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 132, Long-Form Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 142
Q: If you can recall any brands being mentioned while listening, please write each brand on a separate line below. If you are unsure, you may guess or leave it blank. (Any Mention) ▲= significant difference between control and exposed at >=90% confidence

Unaided Ad Recall

Impact on Awareness

+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)



Trusted voices + more time = more impact

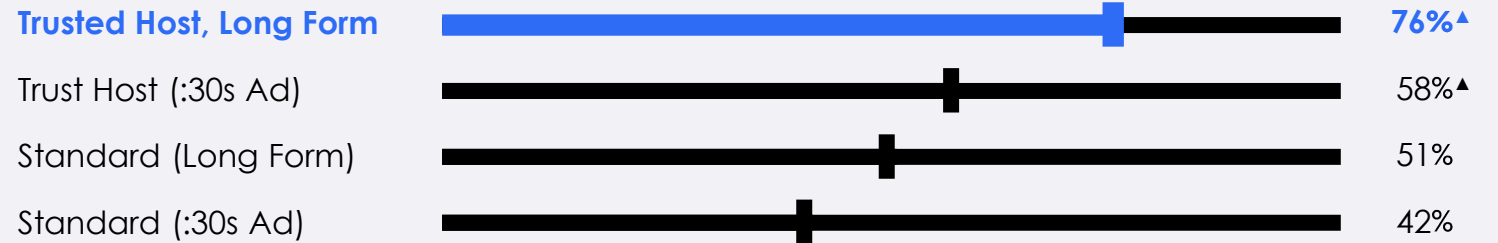
Trusted voices build brand value, especially through extended formats

30 Sec Standard Audio Ads n= 302, 30 Sec Host Read Ads (Trusted Host) n= 102, Long-Form Standard Ads n= 267, Long-Form Host Read Ads (Trusted Host)= 97
Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the message? The message...
▲= significant difference between standard (long form), standard (30s), and trust host (:30s) at >=90% confidence

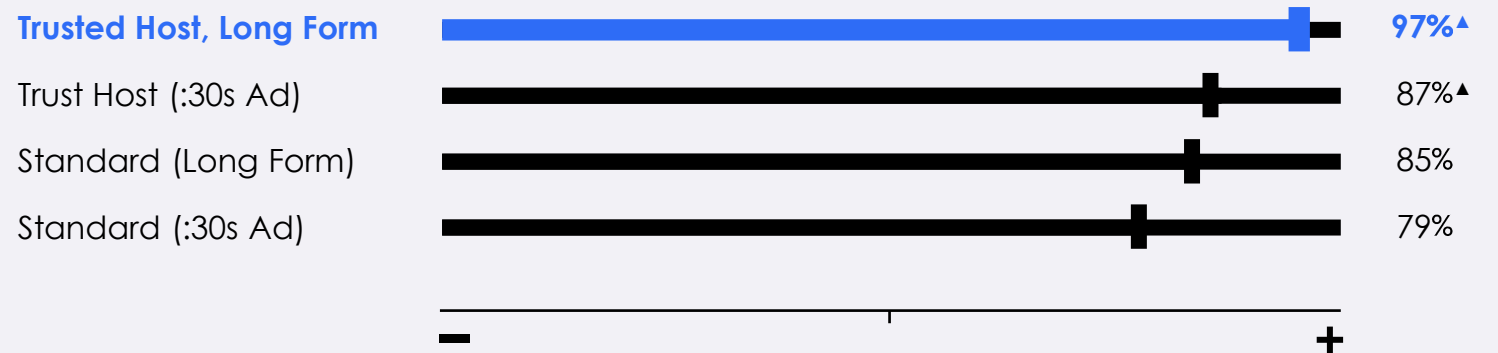
Ad Opinions

% Strongly Agree¹ // % Agree/ Strongly Agree²

Clearly communicated the brand's benefit¹



Enabled me to more easily learn about the brand²



With extended formats comes accelerated action

The added depth and duration of long form host read ads pay off with more same-week purchases

Among listeners likely to purchase product within a week; Control; :30 Sec Control n= 188, Long-Form Control n= 200; Exposed, :30 Sec Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 105, Long-Form Host Read Ads (Familiar with Host) n= 108
Q: You mentioned you were likely to buy [product], when are you likely to do so?
▲ = significant difference between control and exposed at >=90% confidence

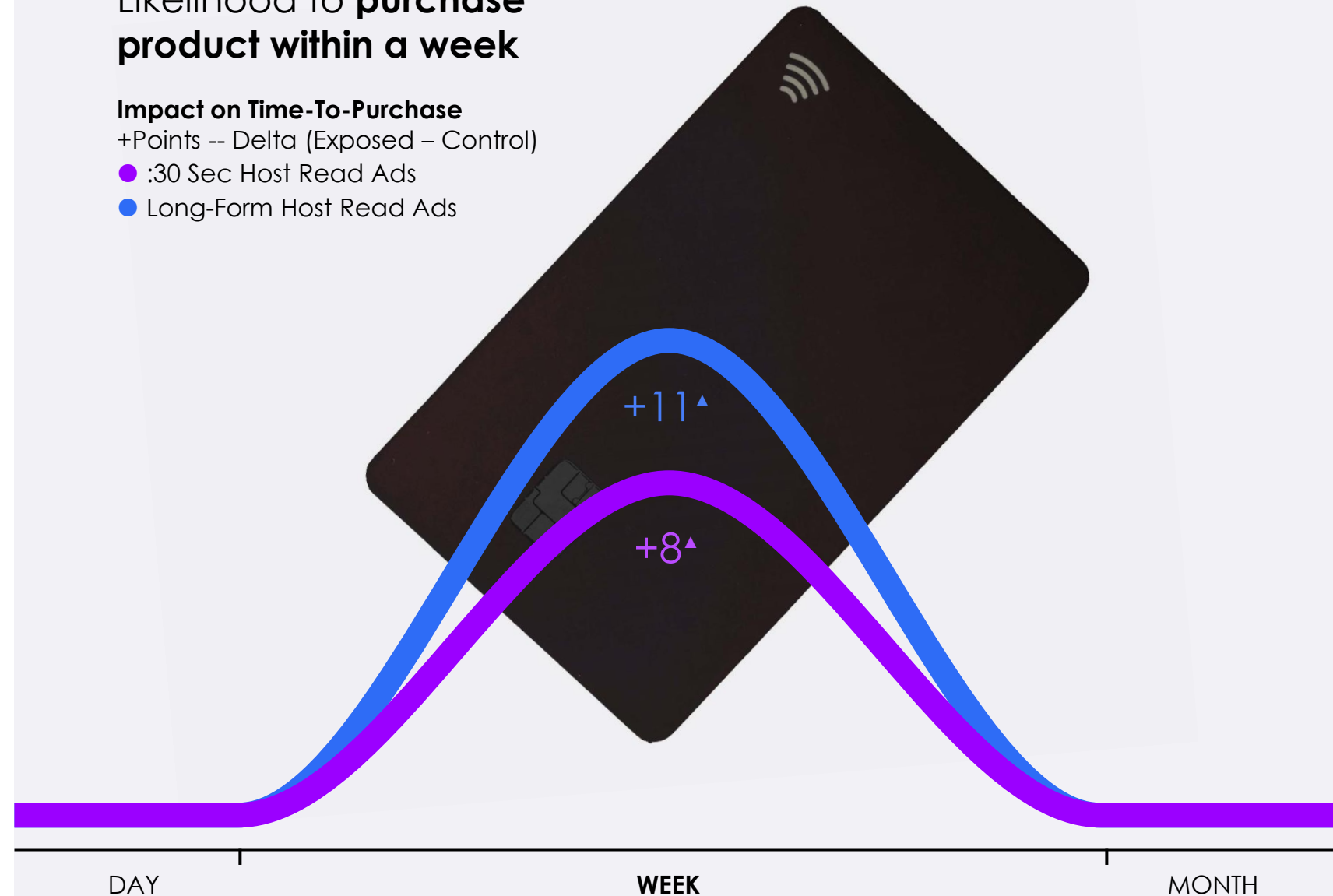
Likelihood to **purchase product within a week**

Impact on Time-To-Purchase

+Points -- Delta (Exposed – Control)

● :30 Sec Host Read Ads

● Long-Form Host Read Ads



What We Know



Long-form host read ads **double recall** and accelerate purchase intent

Trusted voices + extended time deepen emotional connection and brand understanding

Sequential strategies combining formats deliver **maximum impact across the funnel**

What Should Marketers Do?



Start with Trust: Use credible hosts to build awareness and emotional connection

Plan Sequentially: Awareness → Consideration → Conversion

Combine Formats for Impact: Layer dynamic and interactive ads after long-form to reinforce messaging and drive action

Go Deep for Consideration: Deploy long-form host reads to explain benefits and strengthen recall

Measure Beyond Recall: Track brand lift and time-to-purchase to prove ROI

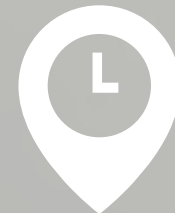


Implications

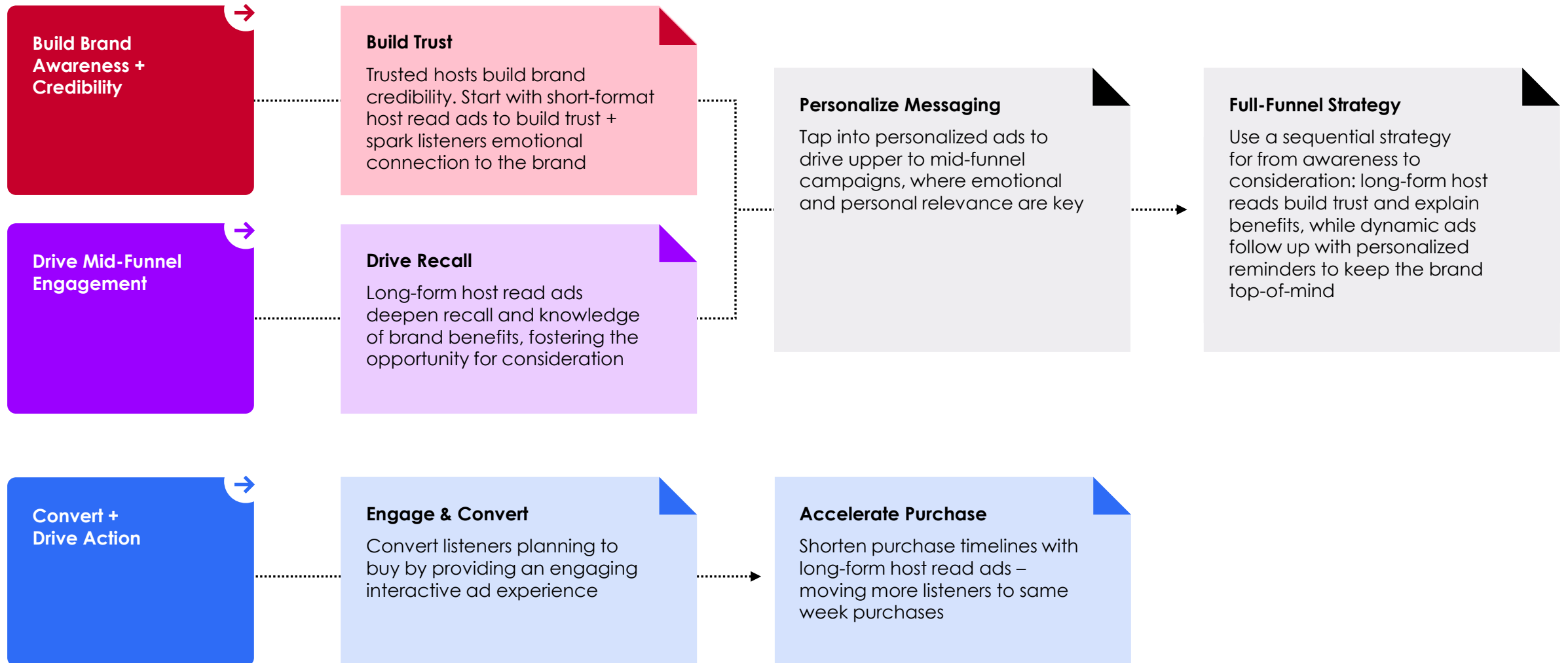
THE IMPLICATION

Innovation Matters

Innovative formats have the power to turn passive listening into active engagement—work with your media planner to choose the right formats for your goals



Media Planning by Objective





Thank You

OMNICOM MEDIA ×  iHeartMedia