

PRESS RELEASE

Genuine engagement rather than fleeting consumption: Seven.One Audio's new podcast report shows why podcasts are particularly effective at reaching Gen Z

Unterföhring, September 28, 2026. Podcasts continue to grow in relevance: usage time is increasing, the advertising market is expanding, and the medium is becoming an established part of everyday life, particularly amongst young audiences. This is demonstrated by the **new Seven.One Audio Podcast Report 2026**. The ProSiebenSat.1 podcast unit has analysed current developments in the German podcast market and, for the first time, comprehensively examined the special role podcasts play for Generation Z (aged 18 to 29).

The result: young people are now using podcasts more intensively than ever before. In a media landscape full of short clips, endless feeds and constant sensory overload, podcasts create something that is becoming increasingly rare: genuine attention. For many, programmes such as "The Annoying Ones" (Die Nervigen), "Without hobbies" (Hobbylos), "The people love it" (DIE LEUTE LIEBEN DAS) or "SHZ We need to talk" (SHZ Wir müssen reden) have long been more than just entertainment. As authentic voices and role models, their hosts shape the lives of young people and achieve a wide reach with their content, including on social media. This creates a special sense of connection and helps ensure that Gen Z consumes podcasts consciously and engages more deeply with the topics. For brands, this creates an environment characterised by high credibility, intensive usage and comparatively low advertising density.

Alexander Krawczyk, Senior Vice President at Seven.One Audio: "In an increasingly fragmented media landscape, genuine attention and trust are becoming the most important currencies. This is precisely where podcasts demonstrate their particular strength. They reach young target audiences in a meaningful and credible way, within an environment that still offers huge potential for brands."

Key findings on the podcast market at a glance:

1. Podcasts are being used more and more intensively! Daily usage time across the total target group of 18- to 69-year-olds, including non-listeners, has increased from 9 to 13 minutes (+44% year-on-year). Active podcast listeners spend an average of 75 minutes per day with the medium, whilst Gen Z listeners spend as much as 78 minutes. At the same time, the proportion of those who listen to podcasts daily is growing from 12% (2025) to 14% (2026). Podcasts are therefore not only reaching more and more people, but are also becoming increasingly relevant. (*forsa & Media Activity Guide (=MAG) 2026*)

2. Podcasts remain primarily an audio medium! The hype surrounding video podcasts has so far had little impact on listening behaviour: around nine in ten listeners continue to consume podcasts as audio content. Video or hybrid formats continue to play only a minor role, accounting for just 9 to 11%. (*MAG & forsa 2026*)

3. The German podcast advertising market still has plenty of growth potential – and is growing dynamically at the same time! With the lowest average advertising volume in podcasts at 3.51%, Germany still lags behind pioneers such as the US (7.8%). However, the trend is clearly upwards: The number of podcast episodes featuring advertising increased to 33,490 in the first half of 2026 (+29%), with new advertisers up by around 67% and active advertisers by 34%. This opens up a high-quality advertising environment for brands, with comparatively low advertising density and scope for further growth. (*Magellan AI/The Podcast Show 2026; Podcast Advertising Market Trends; Allcasts*)

Focus on “Gen Z”: Why podcasts are becoming increasingly important for young people and brands

1. Podcasts have become an integral part of Gen Z's everyday lives! With a reach of 73% and daily use of podcasts having more than tripled since 2019, podcasts are an integral part of Gen Z's daily lives. They strike a chord with a generation that decides for itself when, how and where to consume content. Rather than fleeting consumption of short videos, many young people value podcasts as a deliberate break from scrolling and an opportunity to engage more deeply with topics. (*MAG 2026; forsa; Horizoom/Seven.One Media*)

2. Podcasts are reaching tomorrow's target audience with high purchasing power today!

Gen Z podcast listeners are better educated than average: just under a third hold a degree from a university of applied sciences or a university. Furthermore, the majority are already well into adult life: almost one in two is in employment, and 55% run their own household. Podcasts therefore reach a young audience with a high level of education, growing purchasing power and great future potential. This offers brands the opportunity to reach this audience at an early stage and to build relevance and trust whilst they are still in a crucial phase of their lives. (*MAG 2026; forsa; Horizoom/Seven.One Media*)

3. Podcast hosts are more credible to Gen Z than social media creators! Podcast adverts delivered by the host achieve a credibility rating of 52% among 18- to 29-year-olds, putting them well ahead of creator recommendations on YouTube (37%), Instagram (35%) and TikTok (32%). This credibility pays off: 85% of Gen Z podcast listeners take action following a podcast recommendation. Podcasts thus combine credibility with demonstrable impact. (*Horizoom/Seven.One Media*)

4. Podcasts deliver strong incremental reach amongst Gen Z! Podcasts tap into young target audiences who are difficult or impossible to reach via other channels. 26% of 18- to 29-year-olds who, for example, cannot be reached via TV, can be engaged through podcasts. The figure for radio is 25%. Podcasts therefore complement the media mix by providing relevant reach within a young target audience that would otherwise often remain unreached. (*MAG 2026; forsa*)

5. Brands targeting young audiences, in particular, are not yet making the most of the potential of podcast advertising! Whilst sectors such as finance, food and retail are already well represented, fashion, beauty, gaming and entertainment brands have so far played a minor role, accounting for just 1.9%. For these sectors, podcast advertising therefore offers an environment with comparatively little competition and plenty of potential for visibility. (*Allcasts*)



Further insights, market data and illustrative graphics on the development of the podcast market, Gen Z's usage behaviour and the advertising impact of podcasts are provided in the new report from Seven.One Audio, which [is now available here](#).

Press Contact:

Kristina Schreiber
Senior PR Manager Business Communications
Seven.One Entertainment Group
phone: +49 (0) 89 95 07 – 2410
email: Kristina.Schreiber@seven.one
Medienallee 7 • 85774 Unterföhring
www.seven.one

Seven.One Audio

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