

Bridge Ratings Industry Study: What Drives Listener Choice?

For Immediate Release

Wednesday June 27, 2007

Depends on the Medium

In a study commissioned by a monthly technology magazine, Bridge Ratings examined several media and listener/consumer motives for using that medium.

3255 persons 13+ were interviewed during May and June 2007. Media covered in this study included:

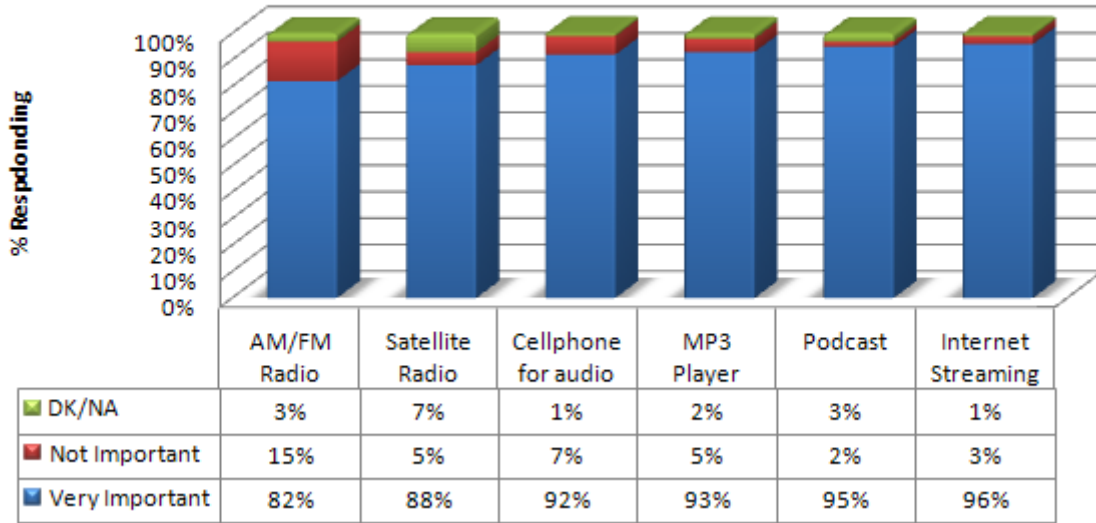
- Terrestrial AM/FM Radio
- Satellite Radio
- Internet Radio
- Cellphones for Audio Content
- MP3 Players
- Podcasts

Members of the sample were asked how important specific factors were in their decision to listen or use a specific medium.

I. Audience Driver: Content

For example, the sample was asked how important the type of content (music, talk, etc) was in their decision to use the above media. This chart displays each medium and the responses:

"How Important is *Content* in Choice of Media?"

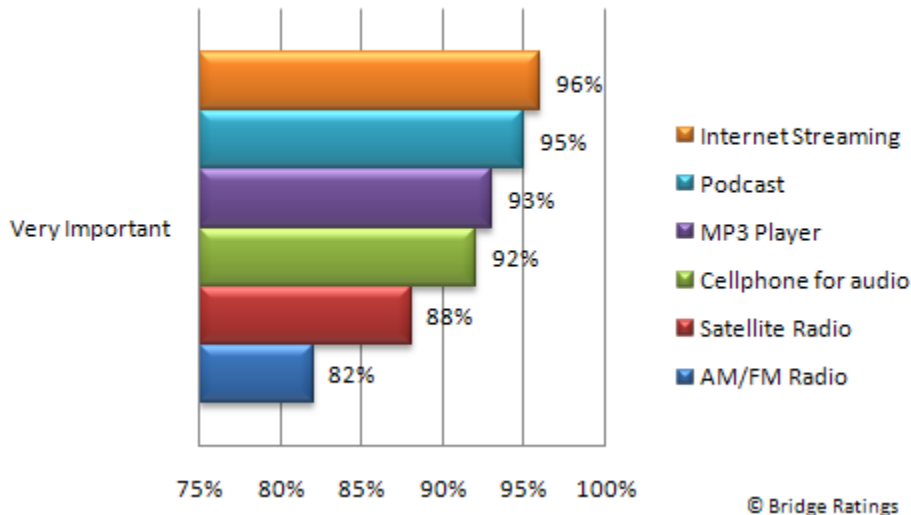


With each of these media, content clearly is a strong motivating force. 82% of AM/FM radio listeners consider content to be a very important reason for turning it on. However, the content is a much more important factor among Internet Radio Listeners (those who listen at least one hour per week). 96% of Internet Radio listeners said that the content is a very important reason for listening.

In fact, the following chart ranks media by the "Very Important" response. Listeners to Internet Radio consider the content more important than any of the other media examined.

Responses based on other motivating factors reveal interesting differences among media.

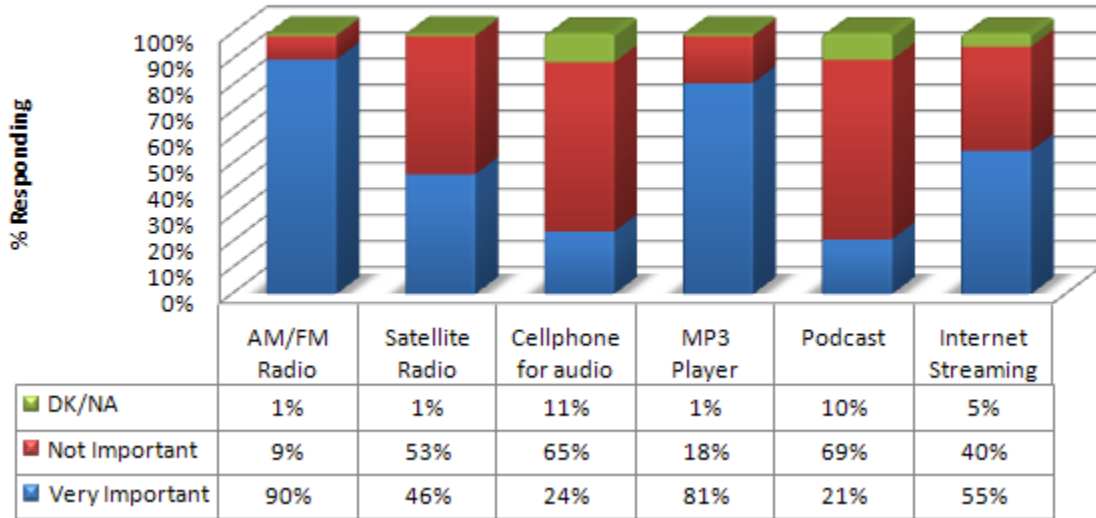
"How Important is *Content* in Choice of Media?"



II. Audience Driver: Ease of Use

How important ease of use is in driving consumers and listeners to a specific medium becomes much more clear in the next set of charts.

"How Important Is Ease of Use in Choice of Media?"



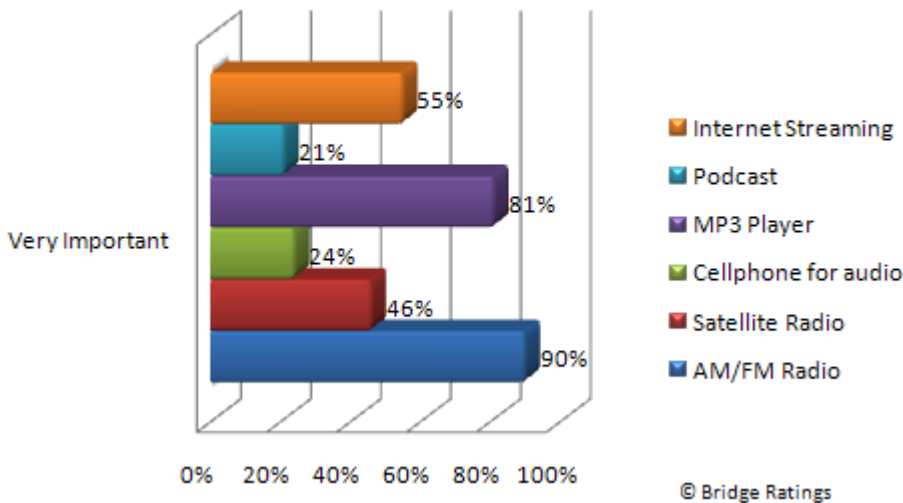
One of terrestrial radio's significant unique consumer appeals is its 'ease of use', or how simple and comfortable it is to use. 90% of the sample indicated that 'ease of use' was a very important reason for listening to AM or FM radio.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, ease of use is not a significant driver for listening to audio on cellphones where only 24% sited 'ease of use' as a primary driver.

Podcasting scored the lowest in this category with only 21% indicating 'ease of use' was a key driver. Bridge Ratings has reported on podcasting's hurdles for growth and this study spotlights the key reason for podcasting's slow growth....it's just not that easy to use for most consumers.

Comparing all six media in the "Very Important" score, this is one area where terrestrial radio sits atop the stack.

"How Important is *Ease of Use* in Choice of Media?"



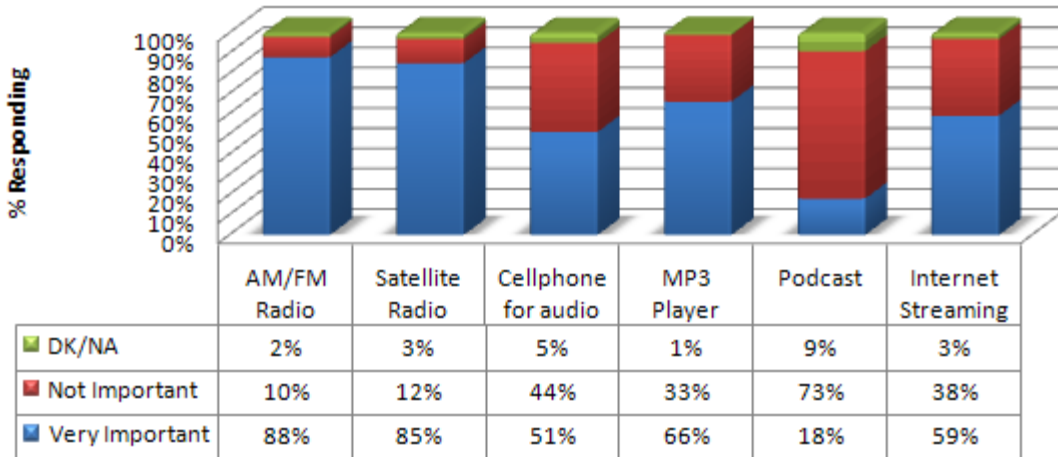
IV. Audience Driver: Convenience

What about convenience? Does pervasive availability of a medium motivate consumers to use that

medium?

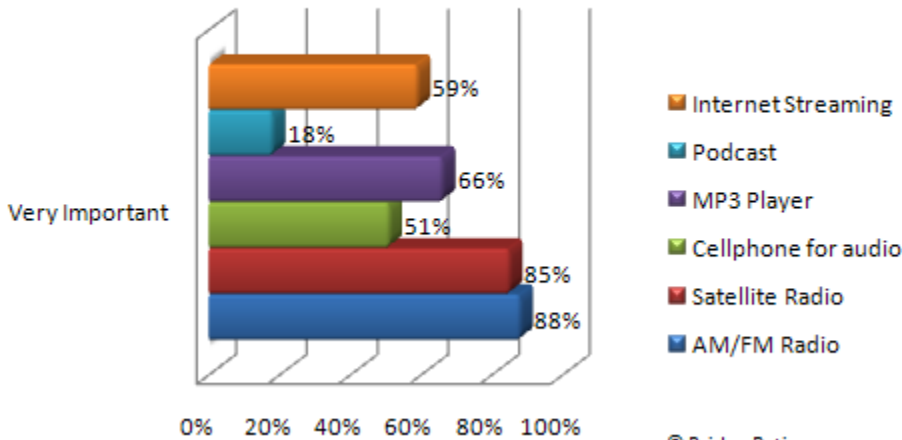
© Bridge Ratings

"How Important is Convenience in Choice of Media?"



When it comes to daily or consistent use of a medium, convenience indeed is a factor. With terrestrial radio and satellite radio at arm's reach in cars, these two media generated high scores for convenience. Compare this to Podcasting where only 18% who responded said that convenience was important. The process of listening to a podcast is far more complicated and those who enjoy listening to podcasts on their PC's or portable digital devices, do so despite its inconvenience.

"How Important is Convenience in Choice of Media?"



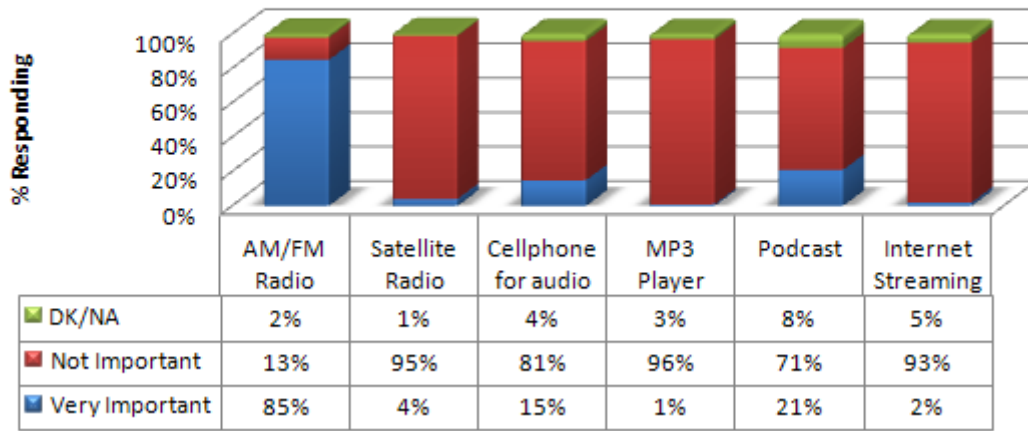
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V. Audience Driver: Commercial Content

The quantity of commercial content has been a subject much discussed in many ad-driven media and this study examined how important this component is in driving consumers to a particular medium. Once again, terrestrial radio scores the highest in this area with podcasts coming in a distant second. The amount of commercial content is a much bigger area of concern for terrestrial radio than it is for any of the other media included in this study.

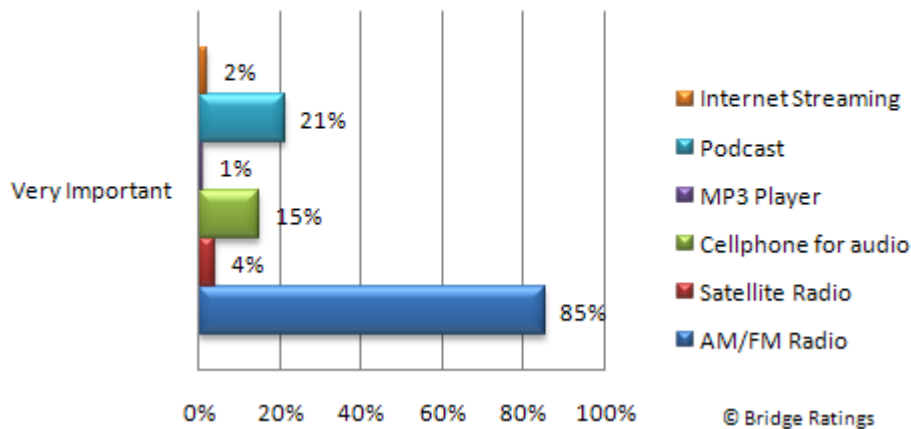
"How Important is Quantity of Commercial Messages in Choice of Media?"

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Another way of viewing this is by comparing the sample's "very important" responses

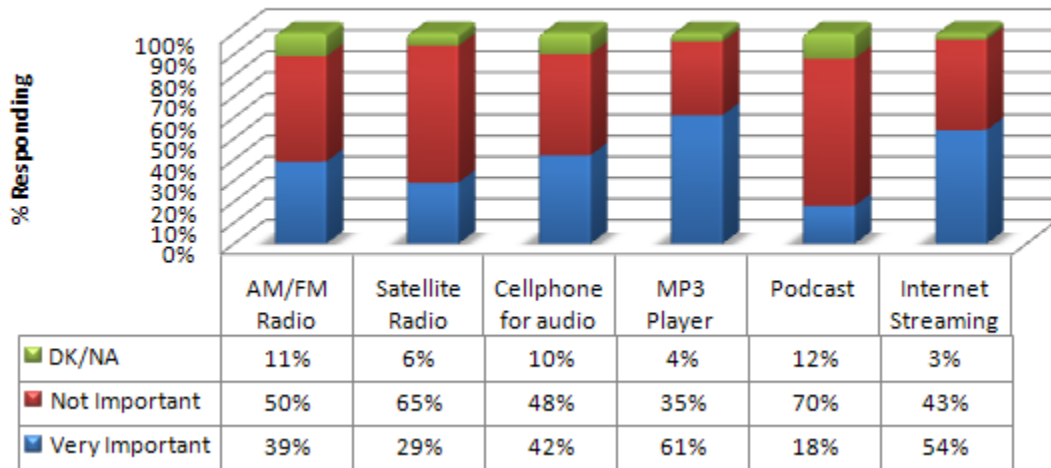
"How Important is Quantity of Commercial Messages in Choice of Media?"



VI. Audience Driver: Peer Influence

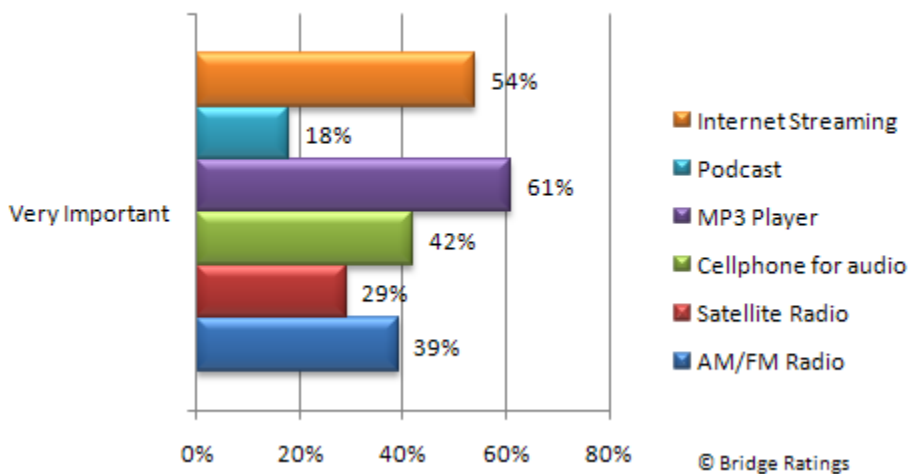
Peer influence has a greater impact on the under 21 year olds in this study, but interestingly, it still exists in older demographics. How important is peer influence in driving consumers to competitive media? MP3 players lead the pack here followed by Internet Streaming. In fact, word-of-mouth is a very effective marketing tool for Internet Streaming stations seeking to expand their audience base. Internet Radio stations with brand strength tend to get talked about among peers and this can deliver a significant benefit for growth.

"How Important is Peer Influence in Choice of Media?"



Stacking the "Very Important" responses against each other provides a clearer picture.

"How Important is Peer Influence in Choice of Media?"



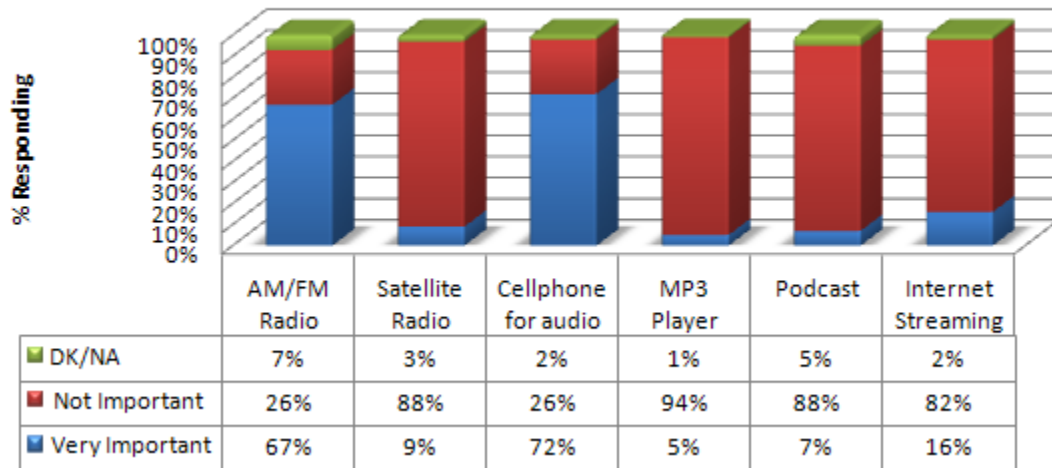
VII. Audience Driver: Cost

Terrestrial radio's free and this is one of the strongest reasons for consumers to continue to listen. Along with convenience and ease-of-use, AM/FM radio is hard to beat.

67% of the sample said that radio's free price tag was a "very important" reason for using it, but this number has actually slipped in the three years since the original study was done in 2004. At that time, 86% of those sampled said it was "very important".

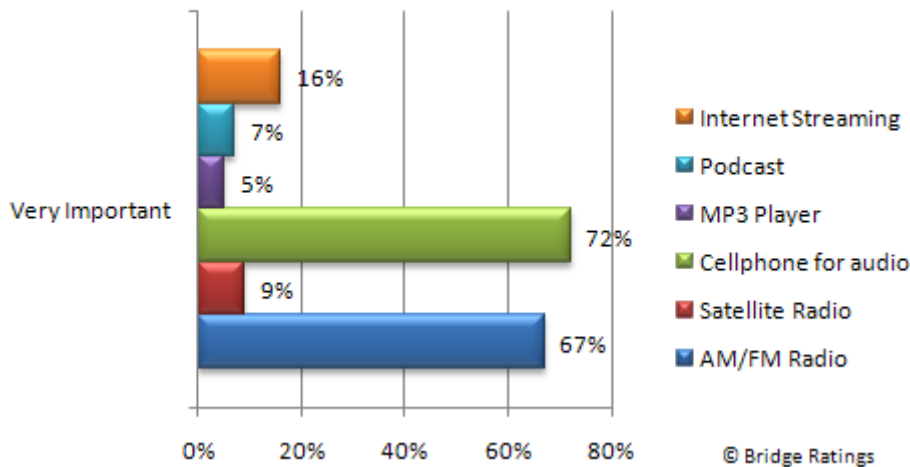
At the same time, users of MP3 digital players don't have a problem with the cost factor involved with having this device because of the freedom, control and customization it provides.

"How Important is Cost in Choice of Media?"



It may be obvious, but satellite radio subscribers - the ones that continue to subscribe and don't let their subscriptions expire - also feel that the benefit of satellite radio outweighs its cost.

"How Important is Cost in Choice of Media?"



*Sample size: 3255

Bridge Ratings is a ratings and research company based in Glendale, California. We are dedicated to providing on-going, immediate, reliable, useable and affordable audience measurement services for the radio industry. Our methodology is based on sound consumer research principles. We are in the business of tracking listeners - not listening.

For further information or questions, contact Dave Van Dyke at 818.291.6420 or by clicking [here](#).

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