



Audio Publishers Association

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***ANOTHER BANNER YEAR OF ROBUST GROWTH FOR THE AUDIOBOOK INDUSTRY***

***Results from the Audio Publishers Association's latest sales and consumer surveys show a **22.7% increase in audiobook revenue in 2017*****

*June 12, 2018, New York, NY --* The Audio Publishers Association released the results from their annual sales survey, conducted by the independent research firm Management Practice, as well as the latest consumer study conducted by Edison Research, which revealed that the strong growth the audiobook industry has seen in recent years continues. Based on information from responding publishers, the APA estimates that audiobook sales in 2017 totaled more than \$2.5 billion, up 22.7% over 2016, and with a corresponding 21.5% increase in units. This continues the six-year audiobook trend of double-digit growth year over year.

Edison Research's national survey of American audiobook listeners features new data on audiobook consumption patterns, purchasing behavior, podcast listening, and audiobook content. In addition to measuring the size of the listening audience, the study also revealed:

### ***Who listens to audiobooks?***

- 54% of audiobook listeners are under the age of 45.
- Audiobook listeners consume books in all formats with 83% of frequent listeners having read a hardcover or paperback in the last 12 months and 79% having read an ebook.
- Audiobook listeners read or listened to an average of 15 books in the last year, and 57% of listeners agreed or strongly agreed that "audiobooks help you finish more books."

### ***How and where are they listening?***

- Smartphone usage continues to grow with 73% of listeners using these devices and an increase in the percentage of listeners using this device most often: 47% in 2018 vs. 29% in 2017 and 22% in 2015.
- Smart speakers are increasingly impacting the audiobook world with 24% of listeners saying they have listened on a smart speaker and 5% saying they listen most often on a smart speaker.
- 53% of listeners say they most often listen at home and 36% say their car is where they listen most often.

- The top three activities while listening to audiobooks are: driving (65%), relaxing before going to sleep (52%), and doing housework/chores (45%).
- 73% of audiobook consumers agree that listening to audiobooks is relaxing.
- 55% agreed or strongly agreed that they chose to listen to an audiobook “when they want some time to themselves.”

### **Additional Key Findings**

- Of the over 46,000 titles produced on audio in 2017, the most popular genres purchased were Mysteries/Thrillers/Suspense, Science Fiction, and Romance.
- The top three reasons why people enjoy listening to audiobooks are: 1) They can do other things while listening (81%); 2) They can listen wherever they are (80%); and 3) Audiobooks are portable (75%).
- Libraries remain major access channels for audiobooks and important drivers of audiobook discovery. 52% of people said borrowing from a library/library website was important or very important for discovering new audiobooks. 43% of listeners said they downloaded an audiobook from a library and 14% said that most often use the library for their digital listening.

According to Tom Webster, Senior Vice President of Edison Research, “This year’s study confirmed that not only are audiobooks widely perceived as a way to bring more books into people’s days, but they also have a strong association as a means to relax and unwind that is distinct to other forms of spoken word audio.”

“There is a lot of great news coming out of these surveys,” says Chris Lynch, Co-Chair of the APA’s Research Committee and President & Publisher at Simon & Schuster Audio. “In addition to the continued stellar sales growth, the results show that our customers are finding more opportunities to listen. Our heaviest users are book lovers in all formats, and their increased use of audiobooks is allowing them to get through more books, more quickly.”

### **How The Edison Research Consumer Study Was Conducted**

The study is a national survey of Americans ages 18 years and older who have ever listened to a complete audiobook. Edison Research conducted a number of focus groups and then completed 1009 online interviews in April 2018. The data was weighted to the audiobook market, as measured by The Infinite Dial, a nationally representative survey of the American media landscape conducted by Edison Research and Triton Digital.

### **How The Management Research Sales Survey Was Conducted**

This survey was conducted by Management Research in the spring of 2018 on behalf of the Audio Publishers Association. The purpose of the survey was to gather industry sales data, including gross sales, sales by various formats, and channel discounts. This is a national survey of Audio Publishers Association members who publish audiobooks.

For more information about the Management Research sales survey and the Edison Research consumer study, please contact Jennifer Richards at Over the River Public Relations: 201-242-9637, [press@audiopub.org](mailto:press@audiopub.org).

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### **About The Audio Publishers Association**

Formed in 1987, the Audio Publishers Association (APA) is a not-for-profit trade association that advocates the common, collective business interests of audio publishers. The APA consists of audio publishing companies and allied suppliers, distributors, and retailers of spoken word products and allied fields related to the production, distribution and sale of audiobooks. The APA serves as a networking, educational and information forum for its members; delivers programs, services and awards that serve the common business interests for its members; and promotes policies and activities that accelerate audiobook awareness and industry growth. APA and its members work to bring all audio publishers together to create increased public awareness for the audiobook industry through joint publicity efforts, national consumer surveys, trade show exhibits, an association newsletter and the annual APA conference, APAC. Please visit [www.audiopub.org](http://www.audiopub.org) for more information.

### **About Edison Research**

Edison Research conducts survey research and provides strategic information to a broad array of clients, including Activision, AMC Theatres, Disney, Dolby Laboratories, Google, NPR, Oracle, the U.S. International Broadcasting Bureau, Pandora, Samsung, Siemens, Sony, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, The Gates Foundation, and Univision. Edison Research works with many of the largest American radio ownership groups, including Bonneville, Emmis, Entercom, CBS Radio and Radio One. Another specialty for Edison is its work for media companies throughout the world, conducting research in North America, South America, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe. Edison Research is the sole provider of election exit poll data for the National Election Pool comprised of ABC, CBS, CNN, FOX, NBC and the Associated Press. Edison is also the leading provider of consumer exit polling and has conducted face-to-face research in almost every imaginable venue.

### **About Management Practice Inc.**

Management Practice Inc. (MPI) is a management consultancy and data provider, helping businesses and institutions with their decision making needs. MPI has provided specialized market and analytical expertise to the publishing industry for over 35 years. MPI acts as a trusted third party, aggregating and managing confidential/sensitive information from public and private sources.