



Audio Publishers Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Audiobooks Continues Double-Digit Growth

Results from the Audio Publishers Association's latest sales and consumer surveys show a *33.9% increase in audiobooks sold in 2016*

Listenership continues to expand; more than 67 million Americans listen to audiobooks each year

June 7, 2017, 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 2016 totaled more than \$2.1 billion, up 18.2% over 2015, and with a corresponding 33.9% increase in units. This is the third consecutive year that audiobook sales have expanded by nearly 20%.

The increase in sales is driven in large part by a listening audience that continues to grow. According to the new study from Edison Research, 24% of Americans (more than 67 million people) have completed at least one audiobook in the last year, a 22% increase over the 2015 survey.

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?

- Nearly half (48%) of frequent audiobook listeners are under 35.
- Audiobook listeners are often also podcast listeners. Respondents who consumed both podcasts and audiobooks listened to twice as many audiobooks in the past 12 months as non-podcast consumers.
- Avid readers are also listening. Audiobook listeners read or listened to an average of 15 books in the last year, and 77% of frequent listeners agreed or strongly agreed that "audiobooks help you finish more books."

How and where are they listening?

- Far more listeners are saying they use their smartphone most often to listen to audiobooks than ever before – 29% in 2017 vs. 22% in 2015.
- A majority of audiobook listening is done at home (57%), with the car being the second most frequently-cited location (32%).
- 68% of frequent listeners do housework while listening to audiobooks. Other multitasking activities among frequent listeners include baking (65%), exercise (56%) and crafting (36%).
- The 2017 survey asked about voice-enabled wireless speakers (such as Amazon Echo or Google Home) for the first time, with 19% of all listeners reporting using them to listen to an audiobook in the last year. Among frequent listeners, that rises to 30%.

Additional Key Findings

- Libraries remain major access channels and important drivers of audiobook discovery. 27% of people said borrowing from a library/library website was very important for discovering new audiobooks.
- Of the almost 43,000 titles produced on audio in 2016, the most popular genres were Mysteries/Thrillers/Suspense, Science Fiction/Fantasy and Romance.
- The top three reasons why people enjoy listening to audiobooks are: 1) They can do other things while listening; 2) Audiobooks are portable and people can listen wherever they are; and 3) They enjoy being read to.

According to Tom Webster, Vice President of Strategy for Edison Research, “The audiobook market continues to grow, with more people than ever before indicating that they have listened to the medium in the past year. That growth, combined with the growth of the podcast market and the strong relationship between the two, are all part of a renaissance for spoken word programming.”

“It’s another banner year for audiobooks,” says Anthony Goff, VP and Research Committee Chair for the APA, and SVP, Publisher at Hachette Audio. “It has been exhilarating for everyone involved in audio to see such healthy growth maintained, year in and year out. Learning more about audiobook listeners by digging deeper into the metrics of consumer behavior is one of the key ways we can help that growth continue.”

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. A total of 1,838 respondents were interviewed, with 1,638 interviews conducted online and 200 interviews conducted by telephone. The interviews were conducted from March 20 - April 8, 2017. 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 2017 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:
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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 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.