

Radio sees increase in listening via mobile phones and smart speakers



15 February 2021

The commercial radio industry has reported a strong year on year increase in the number of Australians listening to radio on their mobile phones.

Nearly 2.5 million people, or 17% of the population in the five metro markets, listened to live and local radio via their phones at some point each week in the December quarter, industry body Commercial Radio Australia said.

The number of listeners tuning in via mobile was up 25% compared to the same period a year ago. There were also increases in listeners tuning in via PCs and tablets (up 27% to 1.2 million) and smart speakers (up 58% to 1.04 million).

“The data is good news for the industry as it means more Australians are discovering that they can enjoy radio at any time of the day wherever they are across a range of devices and platforms from traditional broadcast to radio apps on smart phones,” said Joan Warner, chief executive officer of CRA.

The data was derived from an average of the last three GfK radio audience measurement surveys conducted in 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. The research found that while broadcast radio continued to be the most common way to access radio, with 83% of people tuning in via AM/FM and 27% via DAB+ digital radio, mobile phones are the third most popular device used to listen to radio.

Some 9% of listeners tuned in via a PC or tablet, and 7% used a smart speaker. The strong growth of 58% in the number of Australians listening via smart speakers was off a smaller base of 662,000 people in 2019.

“Broadcast radio remains the core and most important platform for the foreseeable future, but we are seeing some exciting growth in digital and streaming audiences as a result of investments and partnerships in these areas to make radio even more accessible across multiple devices,” she said.

Source: GfK Radio Ratings, SMBAP, S6-8 2019 v S6-8 2020, total radio, cumulative audience (000) & time spent listening (h:mm), Mon-Sun 12mn-12mn, All People 10+, unless stated otherwise.

Media contact: Judy Shaw – judy.shaw@commercialradio.com.au / 0418 415 965.

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