



Sound Creative

How to
build winning
Audio ads

What makes radio and podcast ads so resoundingly effective? And how can you create an Audio ad that truly resonates with your target audience?

Audio ads have a unique advantage over visual media as they enter our ears, travel to our brains, and immediately enhance recall, preference, and purchase intent.

But not all ads are created equal. While the original Fab Four advised us that “All You Need is Love,” we would add you also need these “Fab Four” creative elements to come together and build Audio ads that drive results.

Introducing

The Fab Four

People think about what they see, but they feel what they hear.

As today's most trusted and immersive medium, Audio opens a golden opportunity for advertisers. Brands can tailor the music, sound signature, tagline, and other features to appeal to their target audiences and extend their identity with sound. And let's be honest – it's fun to play around with all those creative elements. But which ones are proven to most powerfully maximize intent to purchase, recall, and brand favorability?

With a little help from your friends at Audacy and Veritonic, check out these Fab Four elements for creating legendary Audio ads.

1

Sonic branding

Audio cues can be extremely effective mnemonic devices. And spoiler alert—sonic branding is the single most effective way for marketers to improve brand recognition and purchase.

2

Music

Whether it's selecting simple melodies or curating custom compositions, tune in to music that aligns with your brand's core values and personality. Music reinforces what your brand stands for, captures attention, and connects with your target audiences.

3

Voice

With the explosive growth of Audio-first platforms such as podcasts, music streaming, and voice assistants, brand voices are everywhere. But whose voice? How many voices? What will break through the noise and result in meaningful brand impact?

4

Message

Of course, at the heart of it all is the script. We know the basics—how many times you hear the brand name matters, how many times you're exposed to an ad campaign matters. But remember the power of surprise, too, and find ways to catch your audience off-guard and help spark brand success.

pt. 1

Sonic branding

Sonic branding is central to how we feel about and identify with brands. A consistent sound logo can reinforce a visual and verbal brand identity and enhance brand recall. But it's more than that. Those sticky auditory stimuli affect not only how we feel, but also how we make decisions. There are several "sonic touchpoints" that can help you create a winning sonic identity.

Sonic branding shapes the customer journey

Audio logo:

When done right, this brand signature, or identifier, becomes a powerful mnemonic device complementing the visual logo. Even without the jingle's famous words, "Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there," you'd recognize its iconic Audio logo.



DNA brand anthem:

Also called "sonic DNA", this Audio asset directly connects with the brand's target audience on an emotional level to share its values and mission. You may not even realize it's playing in the background of the ads, but listen to this energetic theme song, and you just might feel the urge to run to Home Depot to start a major home reno.



Tagline:

Bring it all together with a simple, memorable brand description. Whatever your age, you know that Chuck E. Cheese is "Where a kid can be a kid."

CHUCK E. CHEESE

Playing in the key of "buy me!"

Consistent sonic branding reinforces verbal brand identity and dramatically enhances brand recall and purchase intent.

The power of sonic branding

INCREASES AD RECALL IN...

Radio ads by +17%
Podcast ads by +14%

BOOSTS PURCHASE INTENT IN...

Radio ads by +6%
Podcast ads by +2%

BRAND PERCEPTION

Radio ads with sonic branding are heard as:

+7%

more trustworthy

+6%

more likeable

+5%

more empowering

+4%

more relevant

Source: Audacy Creative Insights, Veritonic, 113 radio and podcast ads content analyzed, and national survey of n=330, P18+, July-October, 2022. Sonic branding encompasses Audio logos, brand anthems, etc. Comparisons are between ads with and without sonic branding.

Sonic in action: dip into sonic branding with Tostitos

Sound logos can live across a wide variety of channels and applications. And these brand ambassadors evolve. Today's brands are expanding beyond the melodic jingles of McDonald's and State Farm with shorter, still-hummable anthems.

Take Tostitos. The brand stands for togetherness, so its sonic identity needed to bring people together – reaching every consumer on an emotional level, while still capturing the fun of its unique range of products.

The challenge:

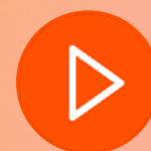
Frito-Lay understood that a sonic element was key to consumer engagement and brand success. And a little bit of surprise wouldn't hurt. So the brand set out to develop an iconic and ownable sound – composed entirely of Tostitos products.

The solution:

Quick and memorable, the newly-launched sonic logo is a bite-sized sound lasting just 1.5 seconds. The flexible design makes it workable for every medium with sound, whether video or Audio-only.

The results:

Since Tostitos launched its first-ever sonic logo it has beaten consumer packaged goods norms for **ad recall by 20% and brand appeal by 13%**, as measured by Audio analytics and research platform Veritonic.



Tostitos

pt. 2

Master the music

Incorporating music into ads – whether on radio or podcasts – helps ads stay top of mind and propels intent to purchase. Simply put, ads with music are more memorable than those without.

PURCHASE
INTENT

+5%

RECALL

+4%

ENERGETIC
EMOTION

+3%

We like the sound of that. So did United Artists, which teased its House of Gucci film with a riveting voice backed by the Eurythmics' "Sweet Dreams," still a haunting melody nearly 40 years after its radio debut.



HOUSE OF
GUCCI

"The question on everyone's mind is no longer 'Should I be using Audio?' but 'What should my Audio sound like?' Creative testing is an indispensable tool for answering that question, enabling brands to invest in the powerful medium including sonic logos, music, streaming and podcast ads, etc. with confidence, knowing that their Audio accurately represents their brand while achieving their efficacy goals and resulting in a high ROI."

SCOTT SIMONELLI, CEO, VERITONIC

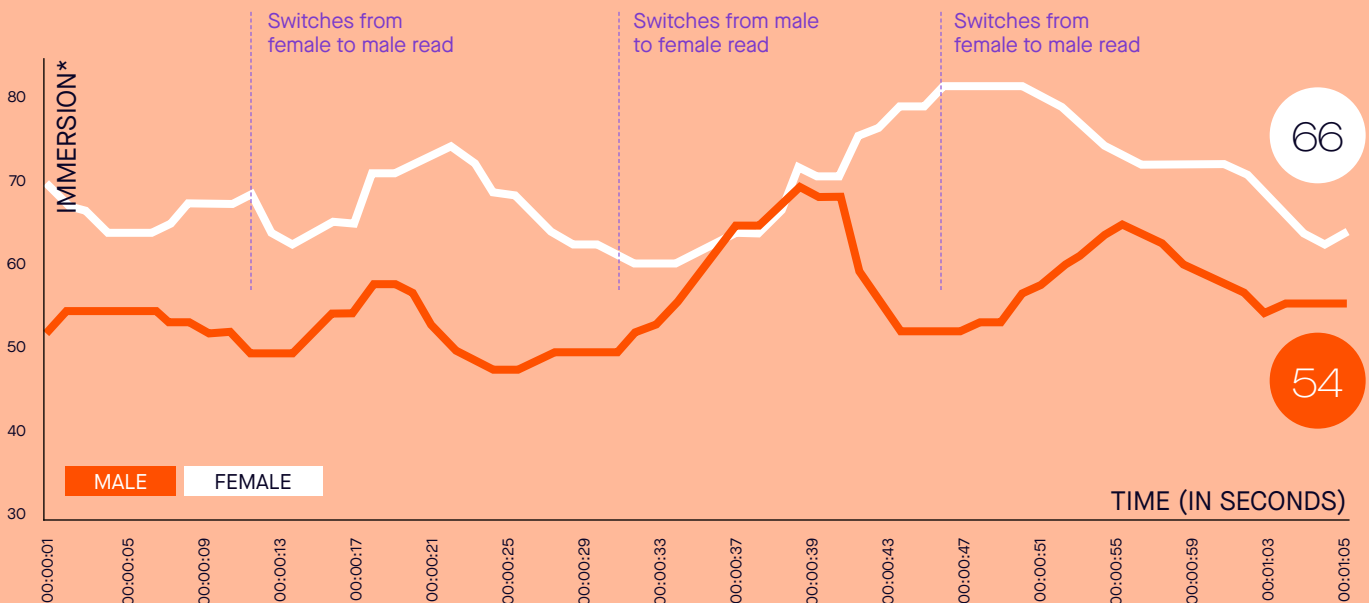
pt. 3 Find your voice

Male or female? Young or mature? Energetic or authoritative? The list goes on when trying to pick the voice of your awesome Audio ad. And you definitely want to be sure your ad voice matches your brand identity, personality, and audience. But the most significant, consistent driver for ad success is having more than one voice, especially in back-and-forth dialogue.

Ads with multiple voices increase recall by 10%



Hyundai's 2022 Ioniq campaign paints a clear example of how two voices are often better than one. This podcast ad shows engagement and immersion* spiking each time the voice switches.



*Immersion is a measure of attention and emotional connection. Immersion is a scale of 0 to 100. The higher the score, the more immersive the content. Learn more about immersion [here](#).

pt. 4

Script tips

Here are four tips to remember when writing your Audio ad.

Mention your brand. A lot.

Brand mentions drive purchase intent. When ads contain four or more brand mentions, purchase intent rises by 4 percent.

Claim your disclaimers.

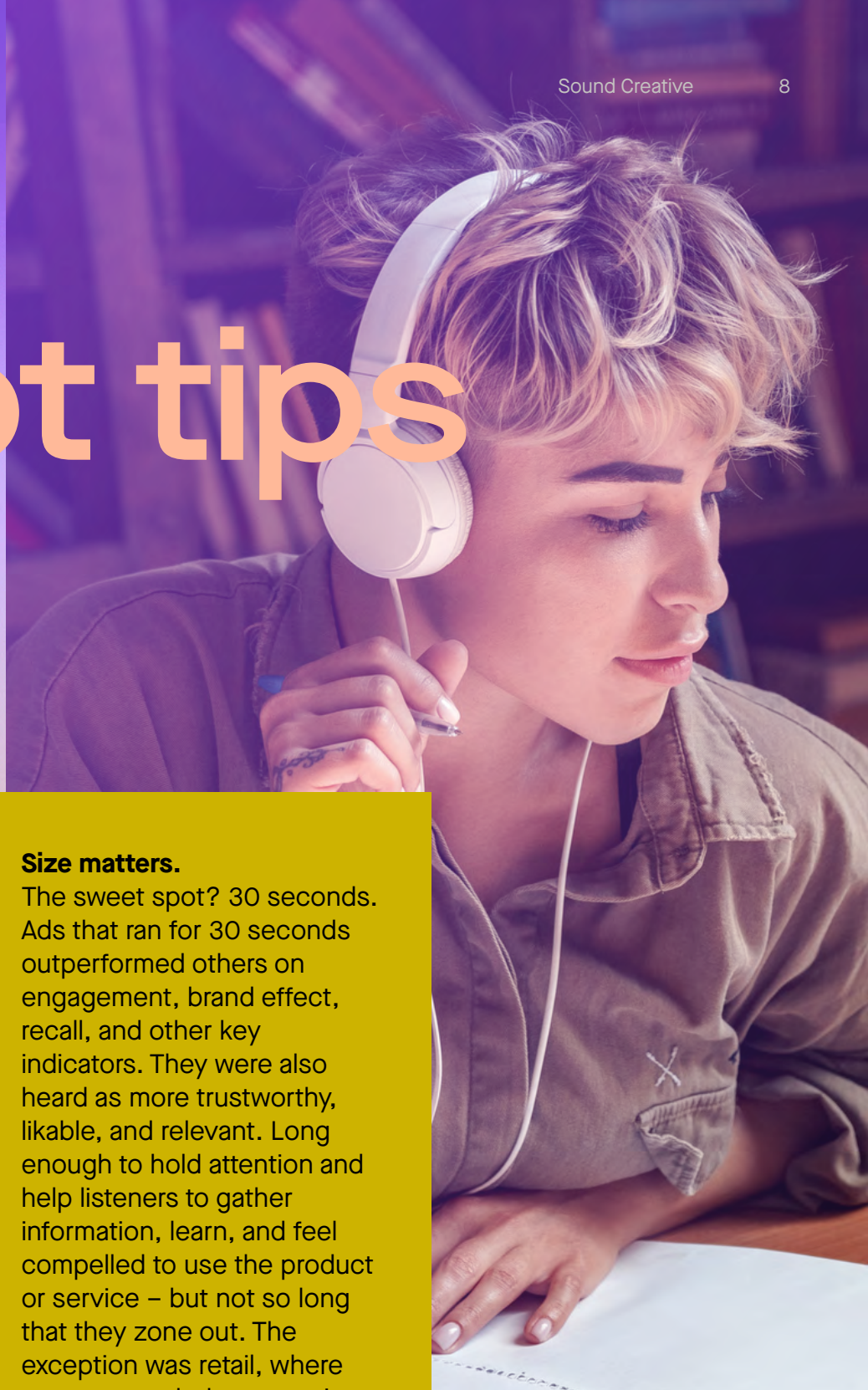
You thought those boring disclaimers ruin an ad? Think again. Disclaimers can actually improve purchase intent. If the front of your ad is engaging, those additional brand mentions in the disclaimer can be the icing on the cake.

Between two and four creatives will work best.

Don't rely on one silver bullet, no matter how on target it is. Develop multiple creatives within a campaign to match the needs of your multiple audience segments.

Size matters.

The sweet spot? 30 seconds. Ads that ran for 30 seconds outperformed others on engagement, brand effect, recall, and other key indicators. They were also heard as more trustworthy, likable, and relevant. Long enough to hold attention and help listeners to gather information, learn, and feel compelled to use the product or service – but not so long that they zone out. The exception was retail, where success tended to come in at just 15 seconds. So you might want to create a longer ad when explaining a new product, and shift to shorter ads when you're well-known and want to gain frequency.



Insider secrets

Our needs and expectations from different Audio platforms vary, so it's no surprise that these Fab Four creative elements can be personalized for each one. Here are some ways to customize your Audio ads for your Audio platform.

Grab attention on the radio

For radio, attention-grabbing sound elements such as sonic branding and music work well. They increase ad recall and purchase, and make ads seem more trustworthy, relevant, likable, and unique.

Audio logos drive recall on radio **+16%** higher than ads without any sonic branding.

Music is music to listeners' ears on radio, where ads with music drive **+5%** higher results in both recall and purchase.

Blend in on podcasts

Podcast audiences prefer ads that seamlessly blend in with the stories and hosts they love. They find conversational ads more engaging, which is one of the reasons host reads are primo when it comes to pods. And branding doesn't hurt here either - brand anthems and taglines make a memorable impact.

Brand anthems drive **+12%** recall compared to ads without any sonic branding.

Taglines also generate a **+12%** bump in driving listeners' intent to purchase

How an ad sounds matters

Advertising on the #1 reach media – Audio – will get you the most ears. But to keep them, our studies show that you need to invest in specific creative drivers – the Fab Four of sonic branding, music, voice, and message. Because how an ad sounds has a big impact – on our mood, emotion, memory, and, yes, our thoughts and actions related to a brand. For the marketer, sound becomes a powerful tool to spark emotions and create a state of feeling in the listener that can evoke brand recognition – and purchase.

Methology

We partnered with Veritonic from July to October 2022 in search of the ideal Audio ad – one that maximized intent to purchase, recall, and brand favorability.

Our search consisted of two parts: a content analysis on ads from radio and podcast platforms and a custom survey of consumers to gauge opinion on the ads, brands, and recall.

113

radio and podcast ads analyzed, sourced across entertainment, auto, CPG, and financial categories.

20

attributes explored including voice over, gender, sonic branding type, and ad tone.

330

consumers surveyed, randomly recruited online from a national panel.

Source: Audacy Creative Insights, Veritonic, 113 radio and podcast ads content analyzed, and national survey of n=330, P18+, July-October 2022