

# Demo Scorecard: Which Formats Attract Youngest And Oldest Audiences?

Oct 5, 2021

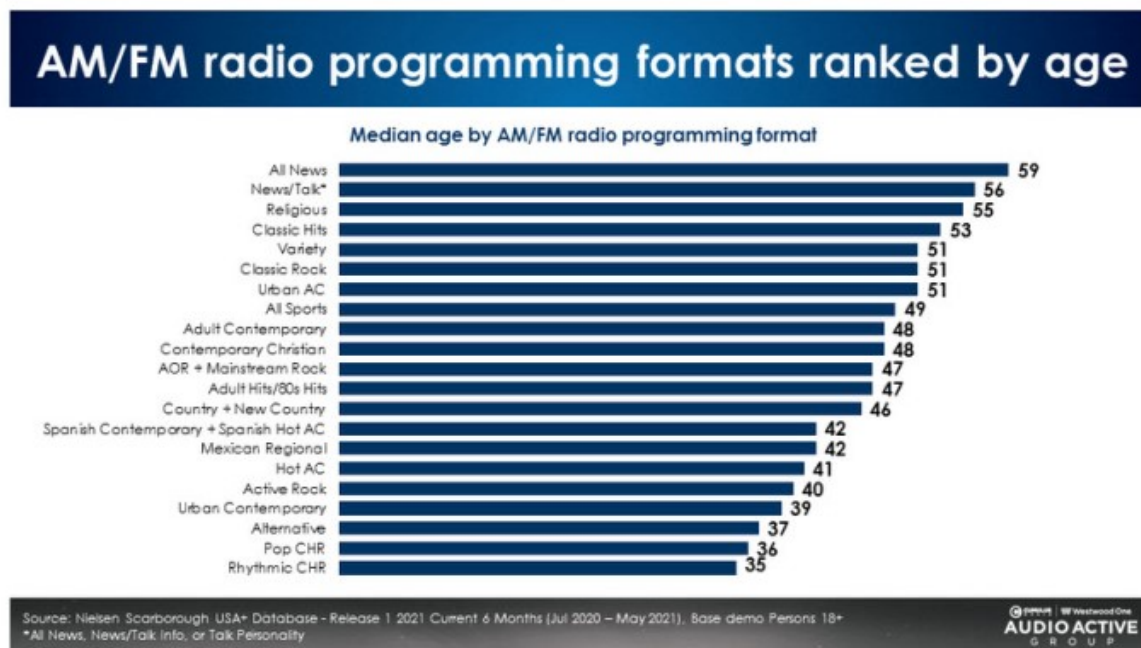


All News and News/Talk attract the radio audiences with the highest median age while Pop CHR and Rhythmic CHR deliver the youngest listeners. All News clocks in with a median age of 59, 56 for News/Talk, while Rhythmic CHR (median age 35) and Pop CHR 36) are at the opposite end of the scale.

Put another way, half of Pop CHR listeners are older than 36 and half are younger. Median age is different from average age, which divides the total number of ages by the number of people in the group.

The numbers were derived by Cumulus Media from the Nielsen Scarborough USA+ database, Release 1, 2021 and reflect the period from July 2020 through May 2021.

Two of the music formats with the highest median age are classic hits (53) and classic rock (51). It's why many programmers have, in recent years, introduced more 80s titles into those formats to keep them top performers in the 25-54 and 35-64 demos.



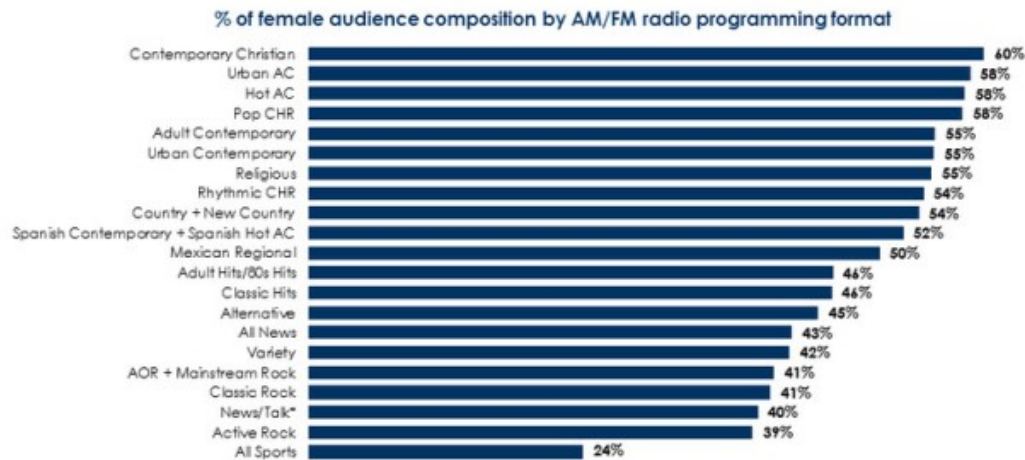
Of 21 formats listed on the chart, 15 have a median age below 50, of which four are below 40. Apart from Adult Hits/80s Hits (median age 47), all of those under 50 and under 40 formats program some degree of current music, with formats with the highest percentage of current music delivering the youngest median ages. In addition to Pop CHR and Rhythmic CHR, that includes Alternative (median age 37), Urban Contemporary (39), and Active Rock (40).

Radio formats ranked by age is part of the Audio Planning Guide developed by the Cumulus Media/Westwood One Audio Active Group, the media strategy and creative advisory team announced last week. The guide also includes data sourced from Edison Research's "Share of Ear" report, Nielsen's Nationwide, and the Scarborough Podcast Buying Power study.

Apart from showing AM/FM radio is the dominant ad-supported audio platform, the new guide also recommends GRP thresholds for light, medium, and heavy AM/FM radio campaigns determined via Nielsen Media Impact. And it reiterates the point that a reallocation of 20%-30% of the TV budget to AM/FM radio generates significant lift in incremental reach.

The guide also shows that AM/FM radio listening skews slightly male (53%) versus female (47%).

# AM/FM radio programming by female composition



Source: Nielsen Scarborough USA\* Database - Release 1 2021 Current 6 Months (Jul 2020 - May 2021). Base demo Persons 18+  
\*All News, News/Talk info, or Talk Personality

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Formats with the highest female audience concentration include Contemporary Christian (60%), Urban AC, Hot AC and Pop CHR (each are 58% female). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the least female formats are All Sports (24%), Active Rock (39%), News/Talk (40%) and Classic Rock and AOR + Mainstream Rock (41% each), although each includes a significant amount of female listeners.

Advertisers often seek to associate a brand-purpose campaign with audiences who support the cause. A table from GfK MRI provides indices by radio format for causes such as the environment, charitable giving, and social tolerance. For example, listeners to public radio stations index highest (179) for being volunteers for a charitable organization, listeners to Hispanic formats are most likely to use eco-friendly "green product,," Sports listeners are most apt to have voted in federal, state or local elections and Religion/Christian audiences indexed highest for participating in fund raising.

## Indices: Charitable causes and brand-purpose initiatives by AM/FM radio format

	Volunteers for a charitable organization	Member of a charitable organization	Uses eco-friendly "green products"	Agrees that global warming is a serious threat	Eco-friendly record of companies impacts purchase decisions	Contributes to social services	Fulfilling family, community, and country obligations is important	Holds religious faith and beliefs	Socially tolerant	Voted in federal, state, or local election	Engaged in fund raising	Desires equal opportunity	Believes following traditional gender roles isn't important
Any AM/FM radio listening	102	105	100	100	100	101	100	99	100	102	106	100	101
Adult Contemporary	107	108	100	100	99	106	101	98	102	105	118	100	107
Classic Hits	109	118	95	100	99	125	104	104	100	112	103	100	97
Top 40	82	65	95	106	105	84	97	94	101	86	108	100	109
News/Talk	154	167	103	93	101	157	106	100	101	150	129	101	100
Sports	115	94	95	96	95	101	103	98	99	135	118	97	90
Rock	101	82	91	98	97	100	98	92	99	106	111	97	108
Classical	175	256	110	107	121	180	108	93	104	145	145	105	136
Country	96	81	90	94	94	79	101	103	97	97	109	97	91
Religion/Christian	144	125	95	89	94	99	104	121	102	121	139	102	86
Hispanic	58	32	126	110	117	78	101	114	107	53	47	104	67
Urban	59	75	96	107	103	56	96	103	99	92	108	100	88
Public	179	253	118	109	123	188	100	79	106	156	152	104	149

Source: GfK MRI, based on data collected in September 2020. Base: All AM/FM radio listeners listening to AM/FM radio stations and Contemporary, Adult Contemporary, Urban Contemporary, Classic Hits, Top 40, News/Talk, Sports, Rock, Classical, Country, Religion/Christian, Hispanic, Urban, and Public. Indices are relative to the base of 100. Indices above 100 indicate a higher level of engagement with the cause than the base, while indices below 100 indicate a lower level of engagement. Indices are not weighted by audience size. Indices are rounded to the nearest integer. Indices are based on the following definitions: "Volunteers for a charitable organization" - Volunteered at least once in the last 12 months; "Member of a charitable organization" - Member of at least one charitable organization in the last 12 months; "Uses eco-friendly 'green products'" - Purchased at least one eco-friendly product in the last 12 months; "Agrees that global warming is a serious threat" - Agrees that global warming is a serious threat; "Eco-friendly record of companies impacts purchase decisions" - Considers the eco-friendliness of a company when making purchase decisions; "Contributes to social services" - Contributes to social services in the last 12 months; "Fulfilling family, community, and country obligations is important" - Considers fulfilling family, community, and country obligations important; "Holds religious faith and beliefs" - Holds religious faith and beliefs; "Socially tolerant" - Considers being tolerant of people from different backgrounds, races, and sexual orientations important; "Voted in federal, state, or local election" - Voted in a federal, state, or local election in the last 12 months; "Engaged in fund raising" - Engaged in fund raising in the last 12 months; "Desires equal opportunity" - Considers having equal opportunity for all people important; "Believes following traditional gender roles isn't important" - Considers following traditional gender roles not important.

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More of the key findings are highlighted in this week's Audio Active Group blog.