

COMMERCIAL
RADIO
**BEYOND
THE BUBBLE**





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Overview

Each week commercial radio stations reach 36 million listeners – 2.5 million more than the total number of listeners to BBC radio services. These stations provide an important public service role for this huge audience. This report examines new research on these listeners and their views about news.

In *Beyond the Bubble* four groups of news consumers are identified: **Super-seekers, Enthusiasts, Outsiders and Avoiders**. Commercial radio's broad reach and impact is unrivalled, connecting well with all groups. However, our sector is uniquely strong in its ability to reach Outsiders who are less likely than the other groups to seek out news.

Outsiders make up around a third of the commercial radio audience – around 12 million listeners – and have come to rely on bulletins from commercial broadcasters for their news updates. Yet this group is often overlooked by those in the traditional political bubble. This may be a missed opportunity, as Outsiders are significantly more likely to vote than average.

During the Covid-19 pandemic commercial radio has provided an essential role, with listeners finding the regular updates a reliable source of information. As news fatigue inevitably set in, commercial radio was the source least likely to be avoided by all audiences, ensuring that vital government messages still cut through.

Put simply, commercial radio connects with parts of the population that other media cannot reach in the same way. As a result, commercial radio audiences should not be underestimated and public figures should seek to harness the opportunities it provides to connect with Outsiders beyond the bubble.





KEY TAKE OUTS

Audiences Beyond the Bubble

With 36 million listeners each week, commercial radio is one of the biggest providers of broadcast news in the UK

Its news reaches four distinct audience types: Super-seekers, Enthusiasts, Outsiders and Avoiders

The 12 million overlooked Outsider news consumers value commercial radio news especially highly

Outsiders are less engaged in political news but significantly more likely to vote than average

Commercial radio's unique role

Outsiders are more likely than other groups to rely on commercial radio in the morning, for regular updates and during emergencies

Outsiders are twice as likely to rely on commercial radio over the BBC for regular news updates

Outsiders are least likely to avoid commercial radio news, but most likely to avoid news on TV or social media

Radio is the most trusted source of news among all audience groups, with 77% saying they trust radio

Radio news during Covid-19

Eight out of 10 listeners (80%) found radio a reliable source for regular updates

Seven out of 10 (72%) realised how they relied on radio to provide news relevant about the area they live in

Three quarters (74%) relied on radio to provide vital national news

By contrast, half (50%) avoided social media as its information was seen as inaccurate or misleading



We all have a natural tendency to form groups and it is good sometimes to take a fresh look at how we operate in our own bubbles and, just as importantly, what happens beyond those bubbles.

Beyond the Bubble seeks to highlight two key issues in the broadcasting world during this time of pandemic.

The valuable role commercial radio news plays for audiences beyond the bubble and the relationship of trust which exists between radio brands and their audiences.

It is interesting for political stakeholders to consider the unique role played by our sector which continues to command huge audiences. As this report uncovers, commercial stations connect strongly with a particular type of news consumer we are calling Outsiders.

This group like to stay informed about the news but, unlike the other groups, will not usually go out of their way to seek regular news updates. Commercial radio, in a way that other media cannot match, uniquely connects with 12 million people in this category.

The full scale of the economic impact of the pandemic is far from clear but we know that Government and parliamentarians are well aware of the public service content delivered every day to millions of radio listeners. This report helps to illustrate the important role commercial radio plays.

Siobhan Kenny
Radiocentre CEO



Commercial radio continues to entertain the nation and provides an essential public service to huge audiences each week. These audiences rightly trust radio and its high-quality content.

The Government greatly values the important contribution played by UK broadcasters, particularly in times of emergency. This interesting new research underscores the value of news bulletins on commercial radio, as well as their role in reaching audiences that do not always proactively seek out news.

We will continue to work closely with the sector to help sustain it through these difficult times as well as on the broader road to recovery.

The Rt Hon John Whittingdale OBE MP
Minister for Media & Data



The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Commercial Radio is an important forum to champion and support the value and power of this enduring medium.

Commercial radio has a unique ability to connect with listeners and provide essential up-to-the-minute updates. Understandably, this role has been more important than ever this year.

The new data from *Beyond the Bubble* is compelling. My parliamentary colleagues would be wise to reassess the value of engaging with commercial radio news as it connects with large and important demographics that do not necessarily get news from elsewhere. I will continue to ensure the Government recognises the value of the commercial radio sector and push for relevant support in future.

Andy Carter MP
Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Commercial Radio



WHAT WE SET OUT TO DO

Background

Commercial radio delivers an important public service by providing news and information to listeners across the country. We knew from previous research¹ that radio retains its enduring popularity partly because of its ability to inform, entertain and address multiple 'need states' for listeners. Radio provides everything from the personal and emotional to broader social and information needs.

In 2017 we published *Breaking News*² which explored specifically how listeners valued commercial radio's news provision. *Breaking News* recognised the multiplatform world in which we live, but underscored certain strengths of radio, such as high levels of trust and its value in providing regular news updates delivered at convenient points throughout the day.

Not all news consumers are created equal. People have different needs and requirements and so we wanted to understand more about the different types of news consumers who listen to radio. This new report seeks to build on our understanding of our audiences with **three key objectives**:

- **Assess the value of commercial radio news and information for audiences beyond the highly-engaged metropolitan bubble** – and its role with those who don't necessarily seek out news in an active and consistent way
- **Explore how this influences attitudes to trust, fake news, the role of radio** especially during emergencies and at peak listening times (for different listening groups and overall)
- **Understand more about how that has played out in practice**, particularly in terms of attitudes and use of radio during the coronavirus pandemic

¹<https://www.radiocentre.org/audionow/>

²<https://www.radiocentre.org/policy/breaking-news/>

Methodology

We asked Differentology, a leading market research company, to conduct a comprehensive survey³ of over 2,000 radio listeners, made up of a nationally representative sample.

The survey sought to understand more about different listeners groups and how they value commercial radio news, including during the pandemic.

Distinct listener groups

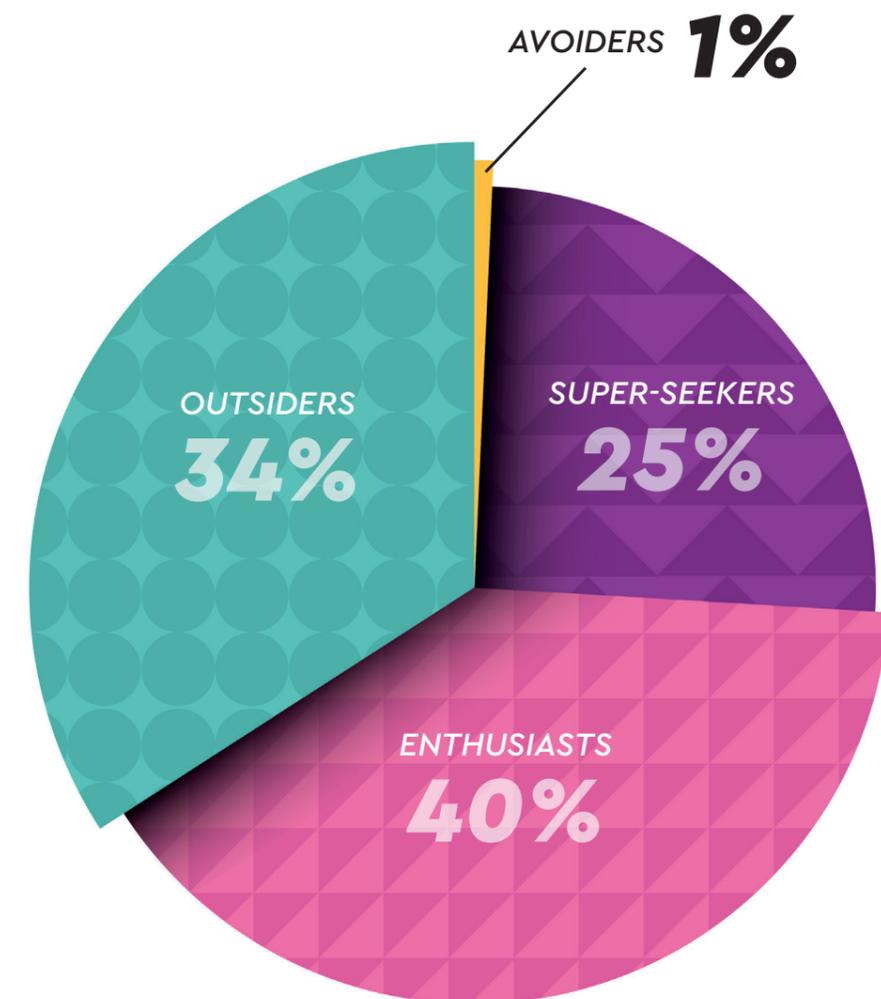
Through the course of the research we were able to identify four distinct listener groups based on their preferences for news consumption, including a very small group (around 1%) that actively avoids news. These groups are broadly categorised as Super-seekers, Enthusiasts, Outsiders and Avoiders. All have very different attitudes and behaviours when it comes to consuming news.

Super-seekers – Love staying up-to-date on news and are constantly checking for the latest updates on different media.

Enthusiasts – Have a keen interest in news and check for updates regularly.

Outsiders – Like to stay informed, but do not usually go out of their way to stay up-to-date. They will listen to or watch when news comes on the radio and TV, but do not usually seek it out.

Avoiders – No interest in news and avoid it if they can.



Key groups of news consumers

³Field work conducted from 18th August to 2nd September 2020

Question: Which of the following best describes you when it comes to keeping up to date with news?



AUDIENCES BEYOND THE BUBBLE

Commercial radio broadcasters provide useful regular updates throughout the day to their listeners. However, the requirements of listeners are not homogenous, with preferences and behaviours varying, sometimes significantly, between the different audience groups that we have identified.

All of these listener groups are an important part of our audience. Yet, commercial radio has a unique role to play with Outsiders, who represent a significant proportion of commercial radio listeners (34% or 12 million people each week). This group is also often overlooked and hard to reach for other media.

Outsiders – the overlooked news consumers

Through the research questions we were able to build up a picture of the different audience groups. Some of their key characteristics of Outsiders are listed below.

- Outsiders are more likely to be female, with women representing 59% of this group. In contrast, Enthusiasts are split evenly by gender and the majority of Super-seekers are male.
- The majority of Outsiders (53%) are from the C2DE socio-economic group. This is not the case in the other audience groups, where the majority are ABC1.
- Outsiders are less likely to be from London or the South East of England. Super-seekers are twice as likely as Outsiders to live in Greater London.
- Politically, Outsiders are less likely than other groups to say that they are aligned to the traditional view of left or right. This may suggest they are floating voters.

For political stakeholders, there is a significant opportunity to use commercial radio to connect with this large section of the population that is often overlooked. As this research highlights, Outsiders are much less likely to watch or listen to in-depth political news programmes like Newsnight or the Today programme.

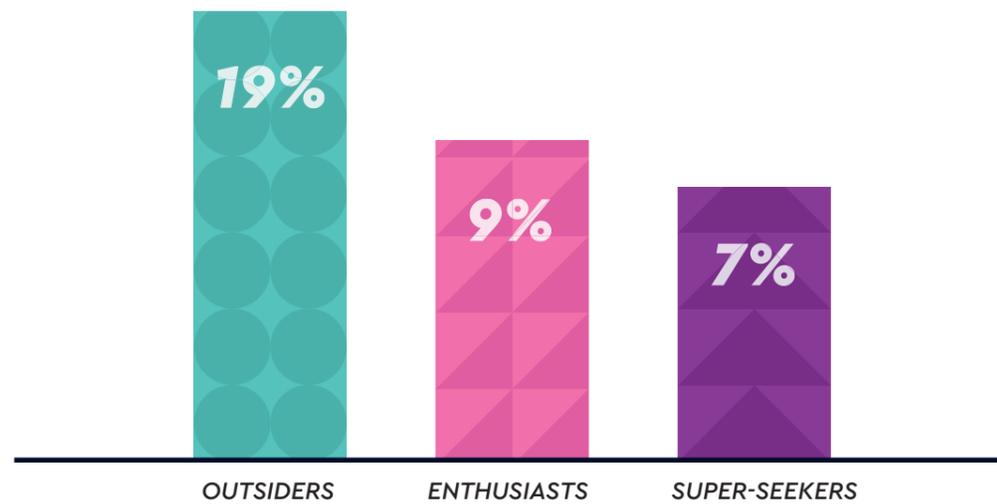
Instead they are more likely to get their news from commercial radio bulletins that are short and to the point. Outsiders are also more than twice as likely as other groups to say they never read a newspaper at all – and significantly more likely to say they never use social media.

Still politically engaged

The research provided a unique insight into the attitudes and behaviours of our listeners. As well as asking a series of questions on news consumption across media, we sought to understand the political views of listeners, both in terms of general allegiances but also in terms of political news consumption.

A significant proportion of Outsiders (19%) prefer not to say how they vote compared to just 7% of Super-seekers and 9% of Enthusiasts. Outsiders are therefore nearly three times more likely not to wish to disclose a party affiliation than Super-seekers.

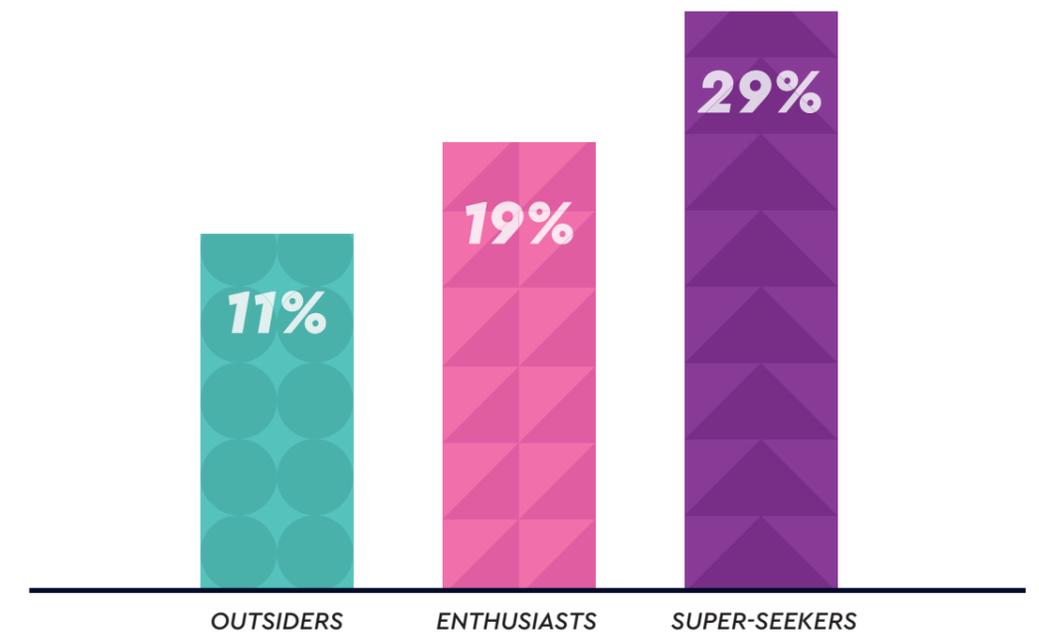
Outsiders less likely to be politically aligned, with 19% identifying as 'prefer not to say'



Question: Where would you place yourself on the political spectrum?

Only 11% of Outsiders prioritise news about politics when reading newspapers in print or online – compared to 29% of Super-seekers and 19% of Enthusiasts. This is a key result as it underscores the significantly lower likelihood of Outsiders to actively consume political news.

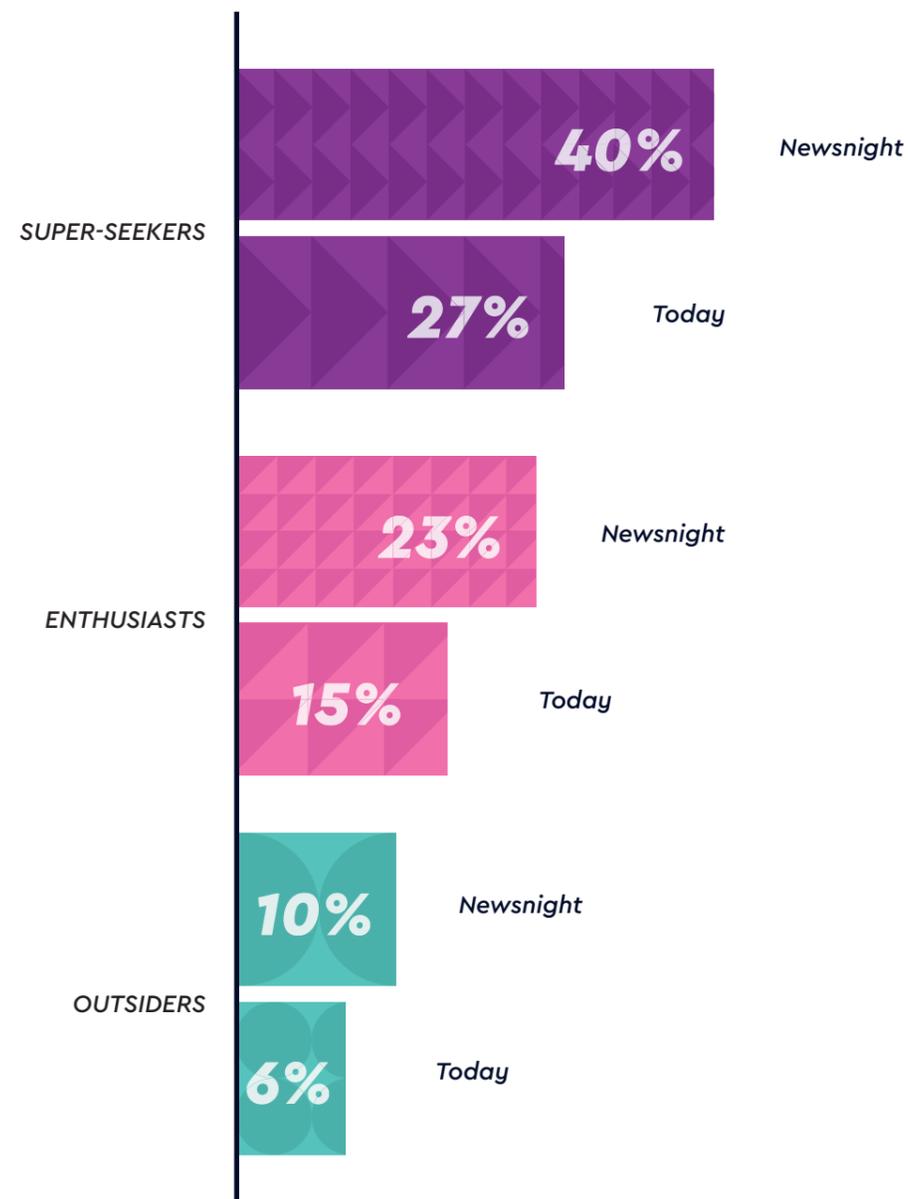
Outsiders less likely to consume political news



Question: When you read a newspaper (either in print or online), which of the following sections do you go to first most of the time?

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the relatively low engagement with news about politics, only 10% of Outsiders say they ever watch Newsnight and 6% ever listen to Today programme on Radio 4. This is much lower than the other listener groups.

Outsiders much less likely to watch or listen to political news programmes



Question: How often, if ever, do you watch or listen to the following programmes?

But when it comes to turning out to vote, eight out of 10 (77%) of Outsiders said that they voted in the last general election – significantly higher (a 15% uplift) than the total turnout (67%). Clearly this is a group that political stakeholders should seek to engage with and the next section of this report highlights how commercial radio plays a unique role in communicating with Outsiders.

Outsiders are highly likely to vote



Outsiders



Overall 2019 general election turnout

Question: Did you vote in the last general election?



It is clear that Outsiders are a large and important group of news consumers – representing around 12 million people. We know that this audience will get their news from other sources as well, but commercial radio plays a unique role with this group.

This section explores how commercial radio connects with Outsiders in ways that other media simply cannot match.

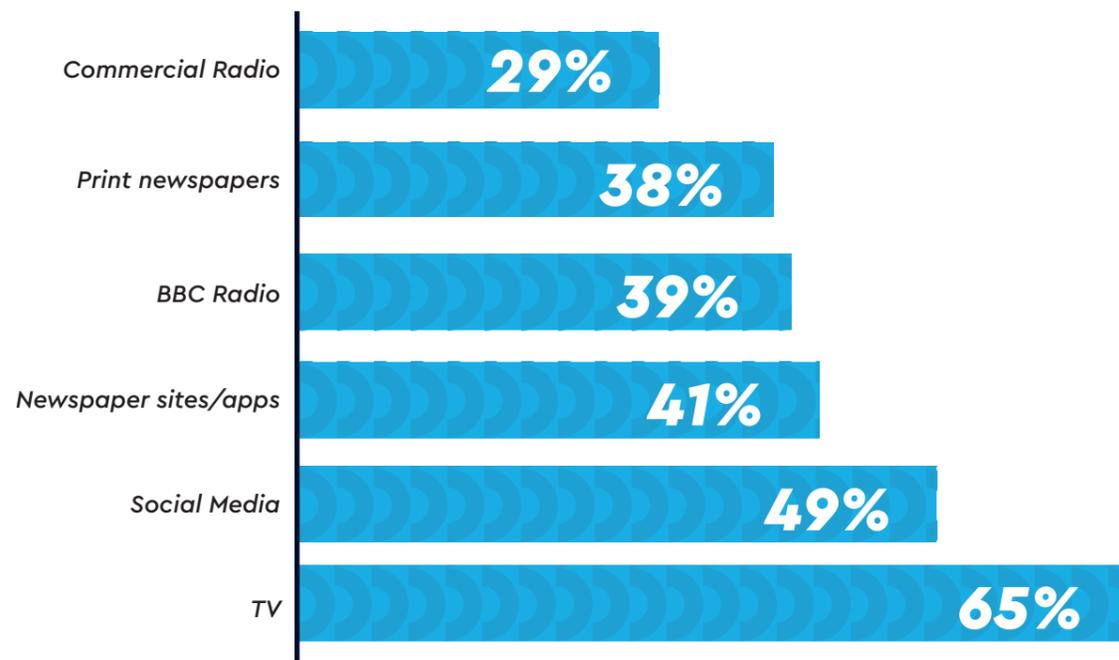
COMMERCIAL RADIO'S UNIQUE ROLE

Avoiding news yet still connecting with audiences

Outsiders are more likely to avoid news than average news consumers, but commercial radio is the source they avoid the least – and nearly four out of 10 (38%) Outsiders have heard radio news bulletins for most days in the last month.

TV was the most avoided news source – with Outsiders more than twice as likely to turn-off or avoid TV news, compared to commercial radio news.

Commercial radio was the news source that Outsiders were least likely to avoid



Question: Have you tried to avoid any of the following news sources in the last month?

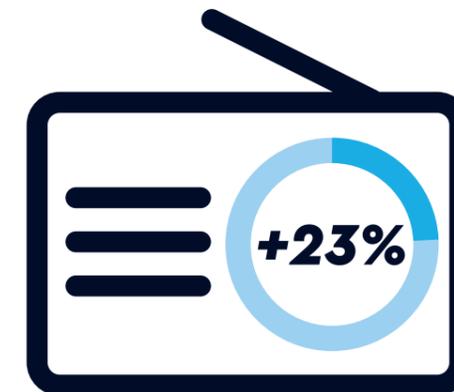
This highlights the strengths of commercial radio in connecting with a large group that actively avoids news at times and its role in ensuring that vital updates are heard by a broad cross-section of the population.

Radio's role in providing news and information is important at any time, but the Covid-19 pandemic has underlined how essential it is for all audiences to hear up-to-date information from the Government and other vital organisations, particularly with different tiers and regional approaches to dealing with outbreaks across the country.

Commercial radio already plays a key role in connecting with hard to reach demographics, but these findings suggest that it is possible to reach large audiences that are seeking to avoid news on other media.

The survey also indicated a marked increase in perceived usefulness of bulletins to Outsiders compared to all listeners, with a statistically significant 23% uplift between the two. Just under half (43%) of Outsiders would describe news updates on commercial radio as useful to them, compared to 35% of all listeners.

Outsiders were 23% more likely than average listeners to describe commercial radio news updates as useful

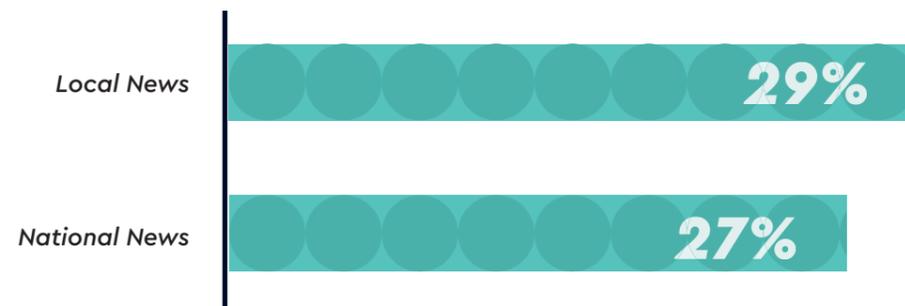


Why might this be the case? It may be due to the type of news that Outsiders prefer. For instance, almost half (48%) of Outsiders said they found radio 'a reliable source when I wanted regular updates, instead of lengthy and detailed news reports'.

During the day

Commercial radio is also the top source for Outsiders for news in the morning – both for national news (27%) and local news (29%). Super-seekers are more likely to turn to newspaper websites or apps, while Enthusiasts prefer TV in the morning.

Commercial radio is the top source for Outsiders for news in the morning

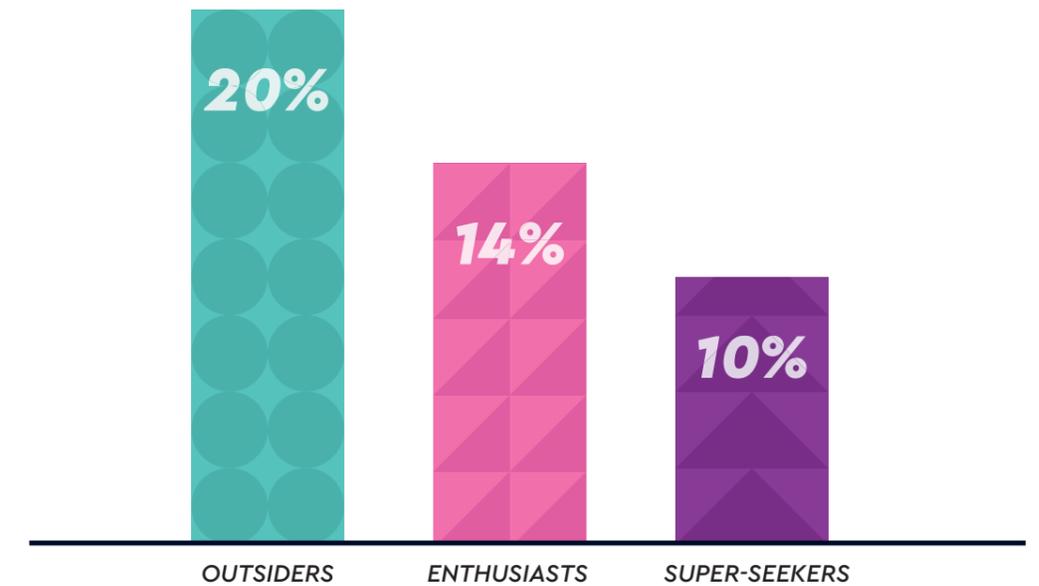


Question: In the morning, which, if any, of the following news sources is best at providing you with national and local news updates?

When it comes to comparing the most useful sources of news overall, 20% of Outsiders picked commercial radio as the source that they rely on for regular updates throughout the day.

This compared to a 15% average for all listeners, 10% of Super-seekers and 14% of Enthusiasts. Outsiders were therefore twice as likely as Super-seekers to find commercial radio as the *most useful* source of news overall for regular updates throughout the day.

Commercial radio the most useful source overall that they rely on for regular updates throughout the day



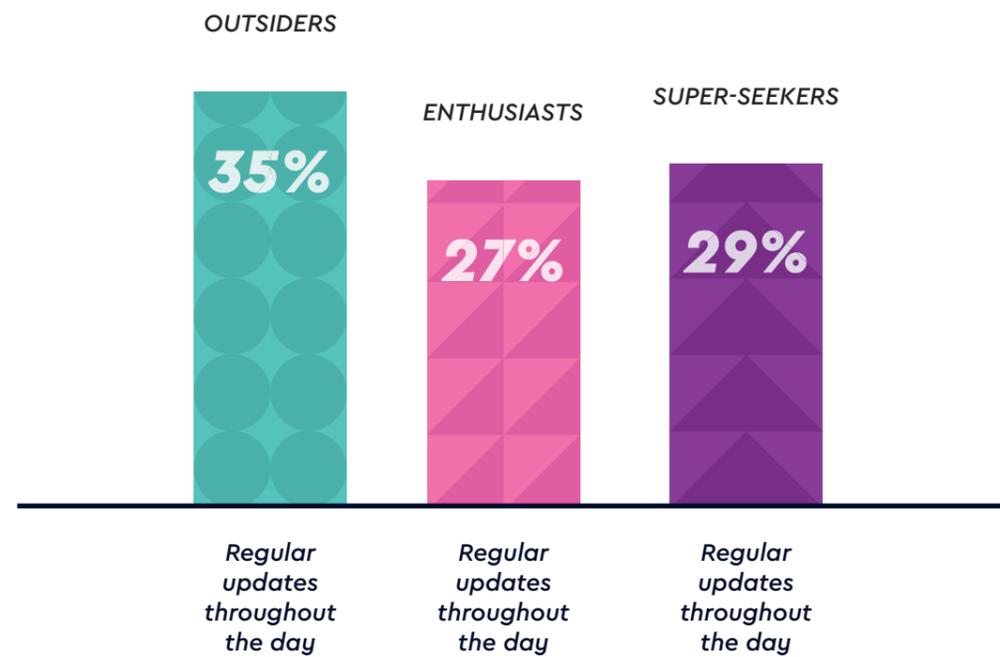
Question: Please can you tell us which news source you find most useful, as well as which other sources you also use for the following? Regular news updates throughout the day

During emergencies

Despite being less likely to seek out updates or follow breaking news than other more engaged news consumers, Outsiders do particularly appreciate the important role of commercial radio during emergencies. In national emergencies Outsiders are the group most likely to use commercial radio for regular updates.

In local emergencies Outsiders are more likely than both Super-seekers and Enthusiasts to rely on commercial radio for keeping in touch with breaking news. As outlined below, the same applies for regular updates throughout the day.

During local emergencies Outsiders are more likely to rely on commercial radio for



Question: During a local emergency such as flooding in your region, which, if any, of the following news sources do you consider to be the best for the following?

On average, the research found that listeners were more likely to think that commercial radio (30%) is best for regular updates than BBC radio (23%) during local emergencies, such as flooding. In total 46% agreed that radio was best for regular updates during these times, more than any other media.

How does this compare to BBC radio?

In addition to its value for Outsiders, we know that commercial radio has a broader and more diverse audience than radio overall. According to official Radio Joint Audience Research (RAJAR) data, our sector reaches 62% of the Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) audience, compared to a 42% reach by BBC services. Commercial radio also reaches 67% of listeners considered to be in a lower socio-economic classification (C2DE), compared to 52% reached by the BBC.

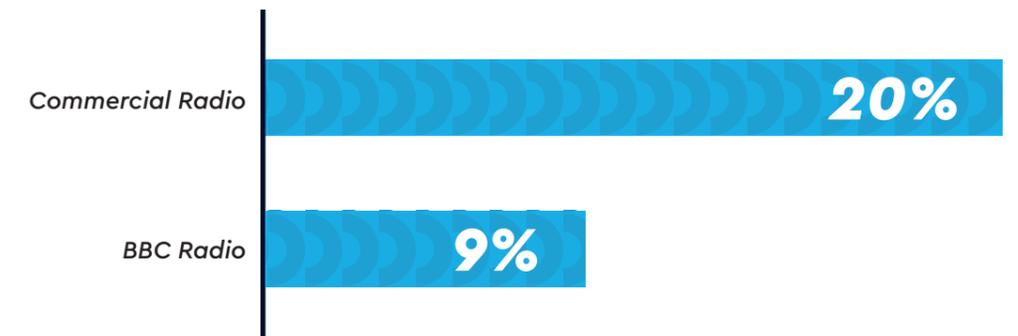
In addition, it is worth noting that a quarter of local commercial radio listeners (6.4 million) do not tune in to any other type of radio service.



Local commercial radio listeners do not tune in to any other type of radio service

When it comes to the most useful source for regular news updates, Outsiders are more than twice as likely to identify commercial radio (20%) than BBC radio (9%). This is perhaps a reflection of the demographics of Outsiders, as commercial broadcasters appear to cater well to this group which is ultimately revealed in the audience data.

Outsiders are twice as likely to identify commercial radio than BBC radio as the most useful source for regular news updates



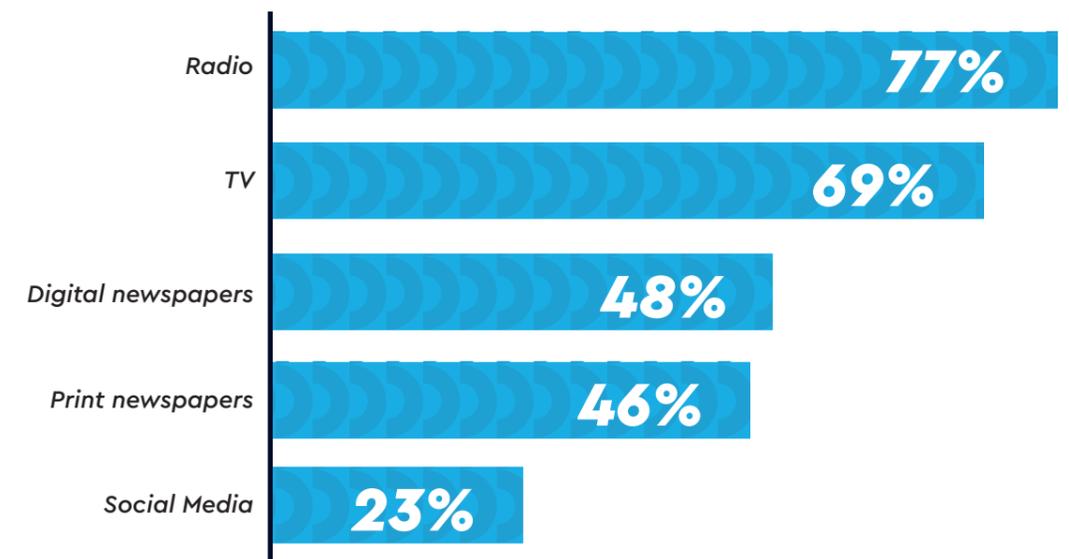
Question: Please can you tell us which news source you find most useful for the following? Regular news updates throughout the day.



DRIVING VALUE AND TRUST

Radio's strong performance among all listener groups (including Outsiders) translates into consistently high levels of trust and value overall. Our research found that eight out of 10 listeners (77%) said that they trust news on radio, more than any other medium. This is consistent with other sources, such as the European Commission's annual trust Eurobarometer, where radio has been the most trusted media for more than a decade.

Radio is the most trusted source of news



Question: To what extent do you trust national/local/regional news stories from each of the following news sources?

On the whole Outsiders tend to trust all media less overall. However, it is striking that the levels of trust in radio appear to stand up strongly. Radio is also the most trusted medium for Outsiders for national news (69%) and local news (66%) ahead of TV, newspapers and social media.

Radio's important role during the day

Radio is the number one source of news updates in the morning (74%) and in the afternoon (59%). Interestingly, this result is driven by high commercial radio scores and not the BBC, with commercial stations significantly more likely to be identified as a news source of choice at these times.

Commercial radio's high ratings at these crucial points in the day are likely to be a reflection of the very focused purpose and value that it provides. This value is recognised by the majority of the audience in the statements below.

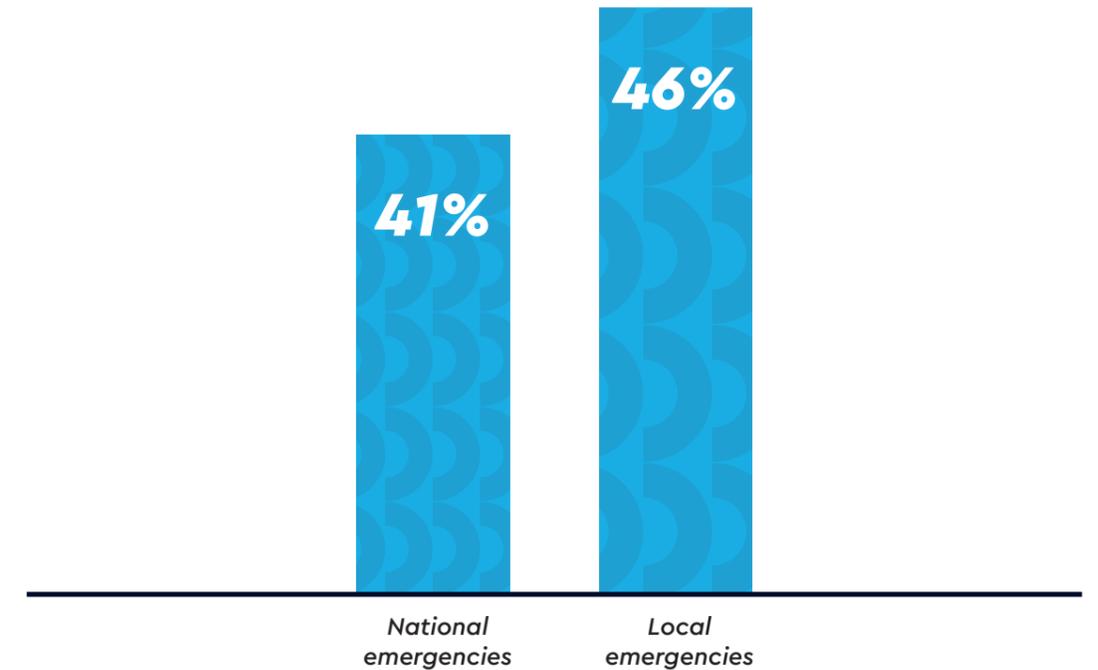


Question: Thinking about news updates on commercial radio, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements

We recognise that radio is not the most popular source at all times during the day and for all types of news. For example, TV is strongest for evening news (75%) and best for in-depth analysis (45%).

During emergencies a significant proportion of all listeners will turn to radio for regular updates during national emergencies (41%) and local emergencies (46%).

A significant proportion of all listeners will turn to radio for regular updates during national and local emergencies



Question: During a local emergency such as flooding in your region, which, if any, of the following news sources do you consider to be the best for the following?

Fake news and regulation

One of the reasons radio ranks so highly as a trusted news source is its professional journalism, which ensures it is reliable and free of fake news. Almost seven out of 10 listeners (67%) said they were concerned or very concerned about the rise in fake news. This is up from six out of 10 (61%) when we asked the same question as part of our *Breaking News* study in 2017.

Social media and online news sources remain unregulated and awareness of regulation is generally low. Around half of listeners (49%) did not know commercial radio is regulated by Ofcom. Of these listeners, a third (34%) said that knowing Ofcom regulates commercial radio made them trust it more.

Interestingly there is a direct correlation between trusted media and those that are regulated by Ofcom.



49%

Half of listeners did not know commercial radio is regulated by Ofcom



34%

Of these listeners, a third said that knowing Ofcom regulates commercial radio made them trust it more

Almost seven out of 10 listeners (67%) said they were concerned or very concerned about the rise in fake news





RADIO NEWS DURING COVID-19

Commercial radio has played an extremely important role during the pandemic and continues to deliver vital updates as localised approaches are taken and likely to continue following national lockdowns.

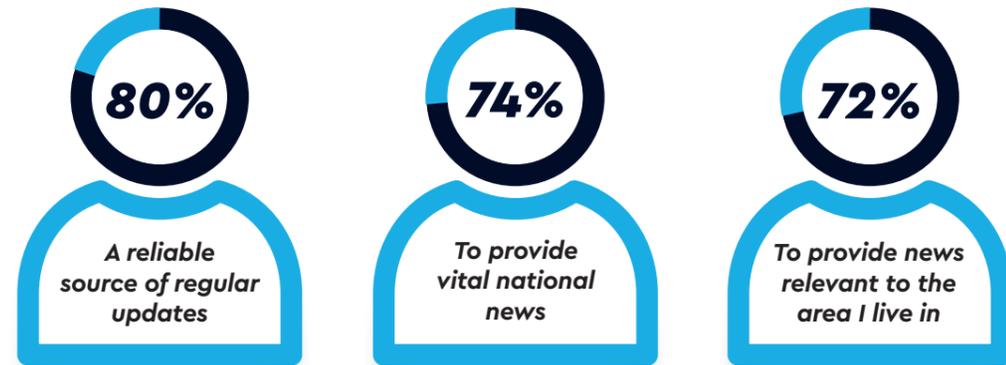
Despite the operational issues of newsgathering in a pandemic, we know that commercial radio has gone above and beyond during this period. Providing valuable output even in the height of lockdown, with uninterrupted access to news and information.

In fact, the reaction of commercial radio has been to invest more time and resource in informing listeners. A survey we ran during the first national lockdown found that commercial stations were broadcasting 25% more news bulletins and for 28% longer.

This additional output and other ways in which broadcasters supported listeners through the initial lockdown and beyond were showcased in our *Commercial Radio: A Force for Good* report⁴ (published in July 2020).

⁴www.radiocentre.org/a-force-for-good/

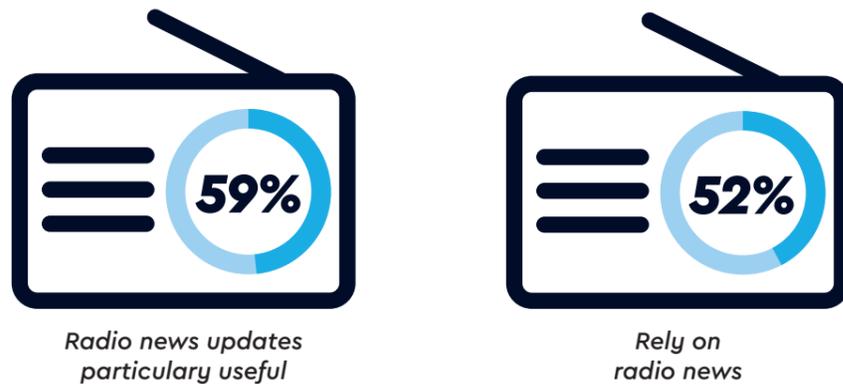
The pandemic made listeners realise how much they can rely on radio



*Question: Thinking about your news consumption during the pandemic, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. *Excludes respondents that neither agreed or disagreed.*

This has fed through to general positive attitudes to radio during the pandemic. It is also worth noting the way that news provision on commercial radio has evolved in recent years. While the mainstay of radio news remains the bulletin at the top of the hour, radio journalists are increasingly comfortable providing video news – whether on location or in the studio, through interviews or pieces to camera that are clipped and shared online. Providing radio stations with another way of disseminating news and extending audience reach.

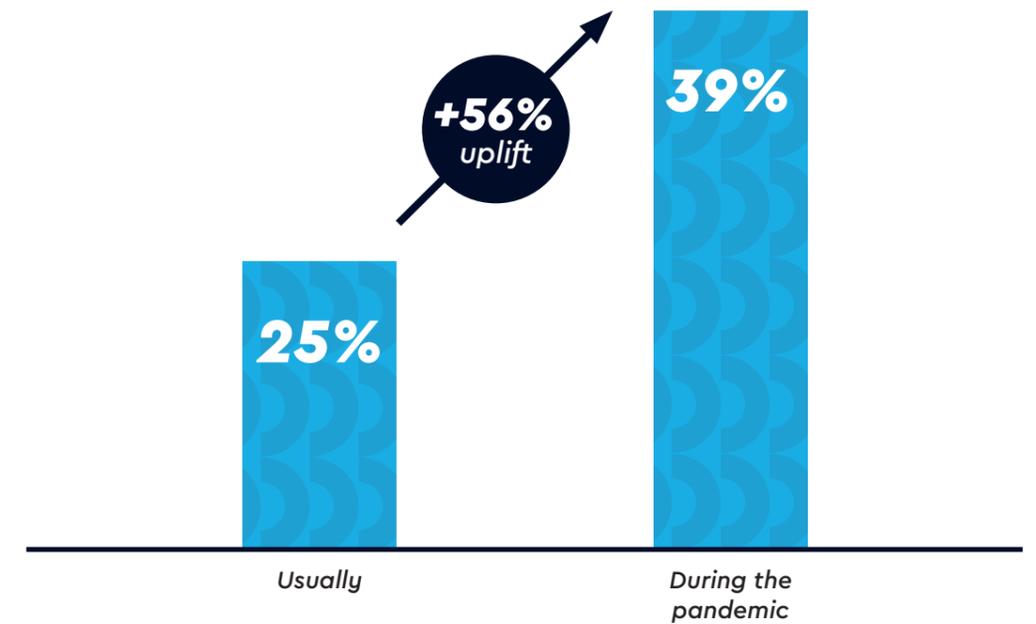
Radio during the pandemic



Question: Thinking about your news consumption during the pandemic, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements

There has also been a significant increase in those who find radio to be the best source of regular updates throughout the day – up to 39% during the pandemic (from 25% usually) which marks a 56% increase.

Radio as the best source of regular updates throughout the day

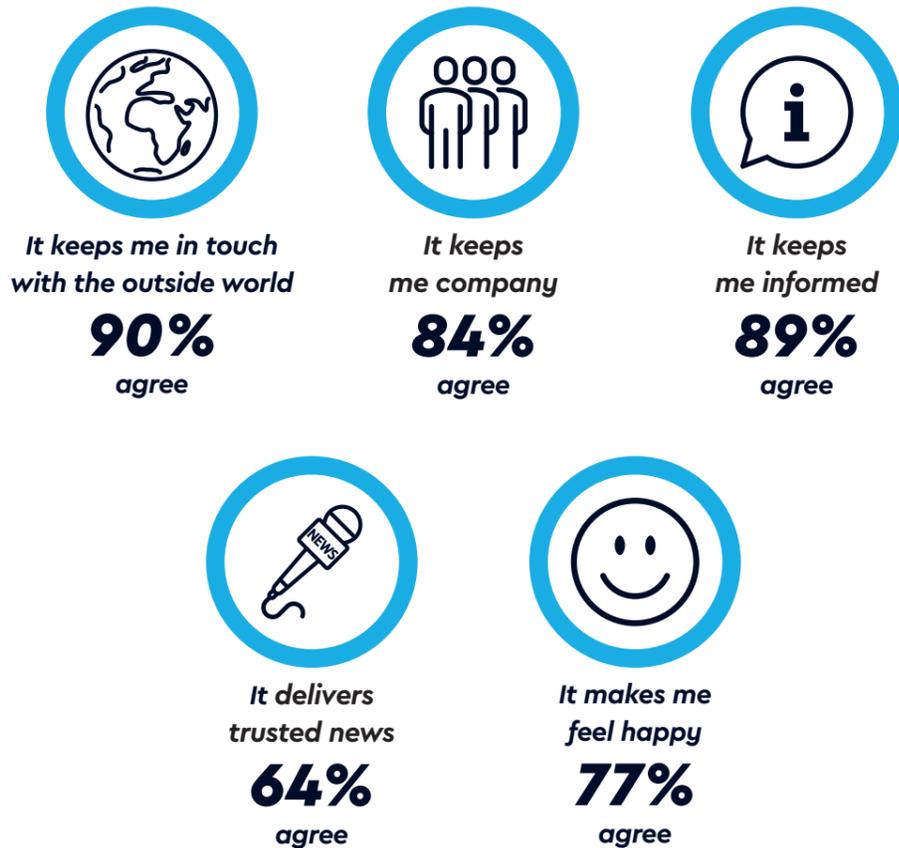


Question: During the pandemic and subsequent lockdown which, if any, of the following news sources have you found to be the best for the following?

Listening more while avoiding other sources

With more people working at home and changes to regular travel arrangements, there have notable shifts in the way people are listening to the radio during the pandemic. Most people are listening to the same amount of radio, but a sizeable proportion are listening significantly more. Research from November 2020⁵ highlights that more than a third of commercial radio listeners (38%) are tuning in for an extra one hour and 53 minutes each day compared to the period before the April lockdown.

The reasons people give for listening longer to the radio as they spend more time at home are unsurprising and include the following



⁵DRG audience research for Radiocentre - Nov 2020

In contrast to the high levels of listening and trust in radio, there are significant issues with the reliability of information on social media.



50%

Half of listeners avoided social media as information on Covid-19 was seen as inaccurate or misleading



40%

40% said that social media made them anxious

The Reuters Institute, based at the University of Oxford, examined UK Covid-19 news and how the public navigates information and misinformation about the coronavirus in a report published in October 2020. It found increased levels of news avoidance across all media, yet it also confirmed that radio is the least avoided form of mainstream news media.

Government advertising campaign

Commercial radio has been an important vehicle for delivering essential Government updates, both through public health information ads and in updates within news bulletins.

Messages change rapidly, so radio has proved an extremely valuable tool to help deliver updated messages to huge audiences, often targeting demographics that are harder to reach through other media.

The Government recognised the important role played by commercial radio by significantly increasing its advertising campaign spend as well as piloting a new scheme targeting specific communities.

Case studies – News that connects with listeners outside the bubble

Bulletins on commercial radio provide listeners with essential updates across the day. This trusted news is delivered to millions of listeners outside of the highly engaged metropolitan bubble.

As well as broadcasting regular news updates, commercial radio journalists have been at the forefront of breaking news. One way that broadcasters boost engagement with the news is by tailoring stories to the relevant audiences of specific stations.

Bauer

The news teams at Bauer provide bulletins for their 120 local, national and digital stations, including Absolute Radio, Magic, KISS, Scala Radio and Jazz FM. Alongside these stations, the Hits Radio network is made up of Hits Radio, Greatest Hits Radio, Country Hits Radio and other local brands.

Connecting directly with politicians in Westminster, Bauer's journalists ensure that relevant messages are heard by their listeners across the country and tailored to their audiences. In Northern Ireland the First Minister often goes directly to Cool FM and Downtown Radio to get her message across to younger audiences who hear these important updates because they are either tuning in to their favourite music station or getting their news via the Facebook pages of these stations.

Commercial radio news is of huge importance to Bauer's listeners. While they might only be listening to a relatively short clip on a music radio station, millions of people are listening and engaging with that content and they're often people who don't get their news from many other sources.

Global

Over 24 million people every week listen to Global's local and national bulletins and has recently launched LBC News, a new dedicated news station. Global's newsrooms has 140 broadcast and multimedia journalists, based in 13 newsrooms across the country.

Global's brands include Heart, Capital, Classic FM, Smooth, Radio X and LBC. Stories carried on local and regional stations like Heart and Capital are often used on national stations like LBC, LBC News and Classic FM. During the initial lockdown, Global's newsroom provided extra coverage of the daily Government briefings.

The Global newsroom also delivers locally relevant bulletins in the Nations. For example, across a typical week in Wales, almost 550 bulletins go out to local Heart, Capital and Smooth services.

IRN

For many stations Independent Radio News (IRN) is the backbone of commercial radio news. During the lockdowns IRN made adjustments to ensure that they were equipped to deal with plenty of changing facts at all times of the day and night.

Many stations have extended their news bulletins, gathering local material and using the IRN supply of national and international news content to fully inform listeners at a time when trusted news and information is critical. As a UK-wide news supplier, IRN has consistently reflected the different approaches of the devolved nations.

Local commercial radio

Small independent stations (irrespective of their size and coverage) also have their own professional news teams gathering local stories and bringing listeners the national headlines, supported by suppliers like IRN and Radio News Hub.

Below is a small snapshot of some of the important journalism provided by smaller stations.

KMFM

Like other broadcasters, KMFM in Kent had to adapt incredibly quickly to an unprecedented situation that initially meant remote working, swapping a lively newsroom for a quiet room at home. KMFM embraced new technology and different ways of working to ensure their audience got what they needed. It was vital that while the world around listeners was changing, their stations didn't sound any different.

More than ever KMFM been using tools like Zoom to do interviews, sharing not only the audio in bulletins but also videos on social media. For many people their daily routine didn't exist anymore, but they still expected to hear the news every hour and KMFM made sure that continued.

Sunrise Radio

Sunrise Radio serves the Asian community across the UK. It knew that its listeners were engaged and appreciated the fact that the station stayed on air during Covid-19 giving them comfort, support and company, as well as information on what was happening and the announcements being made by government.

The British Asian community has been shown to be at greater risk of Covid-19. During the first lockdown in March the information out there was not necessarily reaching large swathes of the British Asian community as the messaging was not targeted at them. Sunrise pushed for community messaging campaigns which started in the summer and have given crucial messages around the pandemic.

Sunrise also decided to launch a current affairs news show on the back of the pandemic, giving the British Asian community a national radio voice. The programme launched on the 1st November, hosted by journalist Anila Dhami every Sunday morning. Feedback has already been extremely positive. Guests include a broad mix of politicians, Covid and medical experts, as well as Lord Bilimoria, President of the CBI and Tej Lalvani, CEO of Vitabiotics and a Dragon on Dragons' Den.

Q Radio

The pandemic continues to present Q Radio in Northern Ireland with many challenges, not least maintaining home-based studios for their journalists. But it's amazing what can be achieved with a quiet room, a laptop and a couple of pillows. Conversely, it has also provided Q Radio with a perfect opportunity to further encourage businesses, charities and members of the public to send in video content, giving them instant broadcast quality audio.

Crucially, Q Radio has also been able to explore more good news stories, devoting increased coverage for struggling charities, from which there have been many inspiring examples of community spirit.

DC Thomson

Since March, the DC Thomson news teams, supporting stations in Scotland including Pure Radio and Original 106, have been working almost exclusively from home. As a result, dining room tables and garages have become their studios. What became more apparent than ever during Covid-19 is how important a trusted voice is during a time of crisis.

In an era where claims of fake news are peddled in a bid to discredit the media, DC Thomson have been able to cut through and bring people the key facts in an easily consumable and immediate form. They are also doing that from a local perspective. For example, over the summer an elderly listener contacted her local station to find out the latest coronavirus data from her area, and it brought home just how much people rely on their local radio stations.

Connecting with commercial radio

Commercial radio reaches 36 million people each week. Hundreds of professional journalists provide up-to-the-minute tailored regular bulletins across the country.

The results in *Beyond the Bubble* highlight why political stakeholders should harness this massive reach by connecting with local news teams.

For more information on how to connect with news teams, please contact:

Michael Ireland

Head of Public Affairs

ABOUT RADIOCENTRE

Radiocentre is the industry body for commercial radio. We work on behalf of more than 50 stakeholders who represent over 90% of commercial radio in terms of listening and revenue.

www.radiocentre.org

