

BREAKING NEWS: HOW COMMERCIAL RADIO NEWS CUTS THROUGH TO LISTENERS DURING A GENERAL ELECTION

Commercial radio is a vitally important provider of news and journalism in the UK. With **39.7 million** listeners tuning in every week, and for a significant number of listeners it is their principal source of news.

Ahead of the general election on 4th July, Radiocentre commissioned [new research](#)ⁱ to better understand how the British public engages with news content now, and how this impacts their expectations of and attitudes towards different news sources.

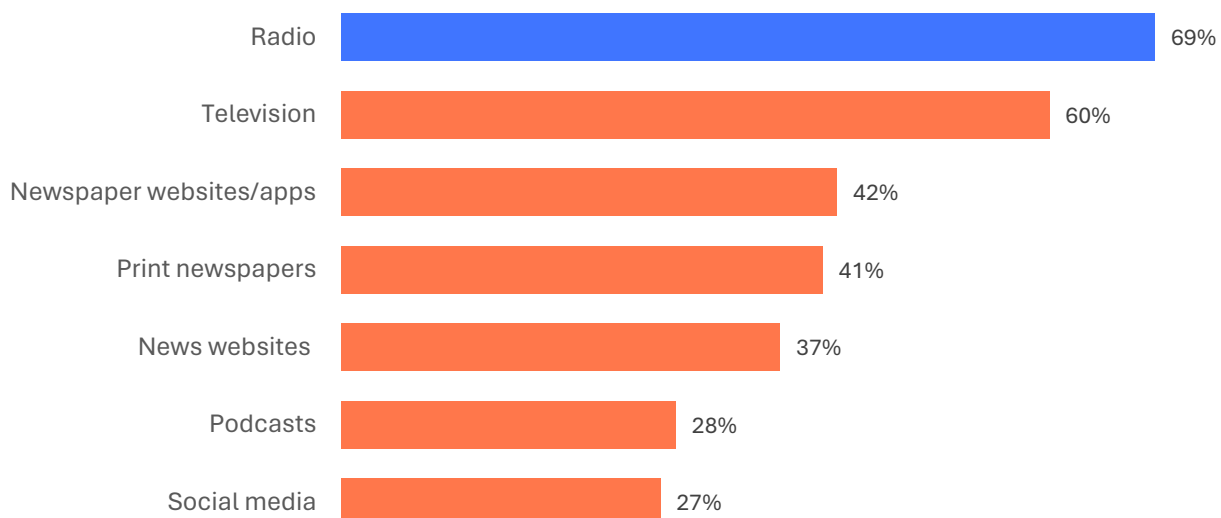
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Radio continues to be the most trusted medium for news and is considered to be the most impartial and accurate news source during an election**
- **Commercial radio news cuts through to listeners during an election – encouraging discussion and debate, while acting as a catalyst for further discovery**
- **Commercial radio news has a unique ability to reach an important group of potential swing voters**

RADIO – THE MOST TRUSTED MEDIUM FOR NEWS

- **Concern about false or misleading news is high** – 63% of listeners are concerned about false or misleading information presented as news.
- **Radio is the most trusted source of news across all media** – 7 out of 10 listeners trust news to be factual and true on radio. The least trusted news source is social media (27%).

Trust news to be factual and true from these sources

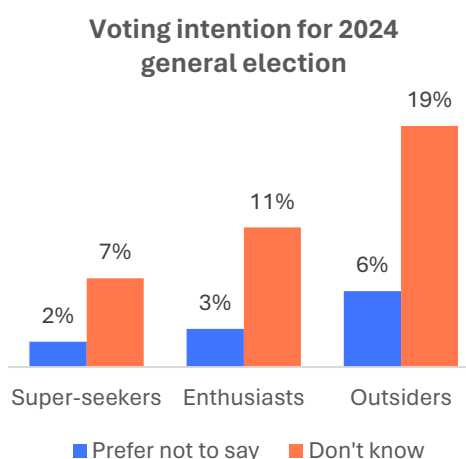


CUTTING THROUGH TO LISTENERS DURING AN ELECTION

- **Radio is seen as the most impartial and accurate news source.** It is therefore a particularly important medium for keeping the public informed via a news source that they trust during an election.
- **In the run up to an election, commercial radio is seen as the best source of audio news for a quick summary of key events and regular news updates throughout the day.** This is an important way of reaching listeners in a context where many people are avoiding news due to information overload.
- **Commercial radio news cuts through to listeners during an election** – Young people are most likely to discuss what they've heard on commercial radio with family and friends.

REACHING SWING VOTERS BEYOND THE BUBBLE

- **Commercial radio news has a unique ability to reach an important group of potential swing voters.** Outsiders (over 13 million commercial radio listeners who are least engaged with news) are more likely to say they don't know who they will vote for in the upcoming election.
- **Outsiders are the group most likely to turn to commercial radio as their primary news source.** They are particularly heavy users of radio in the mornings and cite commercial radio as the most helpful source for both national and local news updates throughout the day.



- **Outsiders' reliance on commercial radio for news has grown since 2020** – especially during local emergencies, and they are three times more likely to rely on commercial radio than BBC radio for regular updates.

COMMERCIAL RADIO NEWS – A SNAPSHOT

- Reaching over **39 million listeners** every week with vital news and information
- Broadcasting over **10,000 bulletins** every week
- Employing **hundreds of journalists** across the country
- Operating **over 20 newsrooms** and broadcast centres across the UK

ⁱ The full report can be found [here](#). The findings are based on an online survey conducted in Q1 2024 by Differentology, a leading market research company, of over 3,000 commercial radio listeners, made up of a nationally representative sample.