

# State of Podcast Agencies

2023 REPORT

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# Introduction

In our modern content marketing landscape, brands are under constant pressure to find new and creative ways to reach their target audience and build connections and engagement.

Podcasts are a powerful tool for doing just that, offering a unique and compelling way to relate with consumers, build reach, and drive revenue. And with the rise of branded podcasts, podcast agencies have emerged as key players in content marketing.

The State of Podcast Agencies 2023 seeks to better understand the agency landscape and explore the constraints, challenges, and opportunities facing podcast agencies and their clients.

# Methodology

The CoHost team surveyed 46 podcast agencies for this report, identified and selected via a number of resources including podcast agency websites, podcast agency lists, cold outreach, and the Quill & CoHost network.



# Executive Summary

## KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE STATE OF PODCAST AGENCIES 2023 REPORT

### 99 problems and agency resourcing is #1

Nearly half of podcast agencies cite resourcing (people, time, budgets) as their biggest constraint. Agencies work with an average of **7 tools** throughout their production process but over **78%** of agencies have **fewer than 10 employees**. This is a sign that podcast agencies are under-resourced and need solutions to save time and increase efficiency.

### One tool isn't enough for podcast agencies

On average, podcast agencies are using 2 hosting platforms, 2 recording softwares, and 3 extra podcast tools for clients. This sparks the question as to why agencies require so many different tools in their stack. It's clear that there is no all-in-one solution for agencies to rely on.

### Agencies can't ditch the downloads

Downloads are the most popular metric podcast agencies use to measure client success. But we suggest downloads are being used as a proxy since it can be challenging, time consuming, and expensive to report on more meaningful metrics.

### Growth and reporting challenges are holding clients back

Audience growth and measuring ROI are the two biggest constraints on podcast agencies' client's success. Agencies need better tools and tactics to drive growth for their clients' shows, and they need the tooling (i.e. tracking links, analytics) to understand the impact of podcasting on marketing objectives.

### Agency acquisition magic: Word-of-mouth marketing

Social media is the most popular tactic to grow a podcast agency but word of mouth and referrals are the most common way podcast agencies are acquiring new customers. If agencies struggle to attribute ROI for their clients, this might be an issue they struggle with for their own business as well.

### The ROI revolution in podcasts

"Better Podcast Data to Measure ROI" is the biggest podcast trend agencies predict over the next **5** years. This is unsurprising since measuring ROI is the second biggest constraint agency clients are experiencing.

# Our Participating Podcast Agencies



## PODCAST AGENCY OVERVIEW

# Podcast Agencies Are Small but Mighty

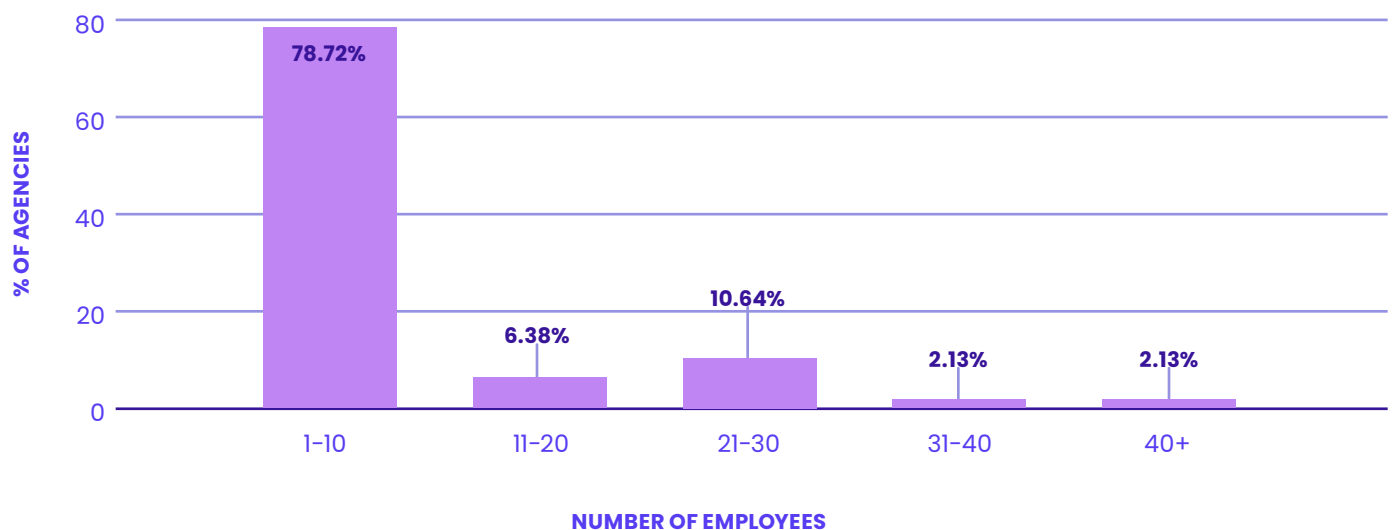
The average team size is fewer than 10 employees

## PODCAST AGENCIES ARE SMALL IN SIZE

Over **78%** of podcast agencies have 10 or fewer employees.

The second most common employee count is between 21-30 employees (**10.64%**). Overall, podcast agencies tend to be considered small businesses with their limited number of employees.

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES AT PODCAST AGENCIES



"Podcasts are a powerful tool for brands looking to connect with their audiences in a meaningful way. With the ability to tell compelling stories, share valuable insights, and create lasting relationships, podcasts have emerged as a leading content marketing medium for forward-thinking brands. By partnering with skilled podcast agencies, brands can leverage the unique strengths of podcasts to deliver their message and achieve their marketing objectives."

—Fatima Zaidi, Co-Founder & CEO of [Quill & CoHost](#)

"Brands will come to realize that a podcast is more than an audio channel. There's nothing quite like a podcast when it comes to building genuine relationships within your industry while also generating awareness for your company's unique perspective."

—Tristan Pelligrino, Co-Founder of [Motion](#)



## AGENCY TOOLS

# Podcast Agencies Have Too Many Tools in Their Toolbox

Time and efficiency should be top of mind for agencies

## PODCAST AGENCIES USE 7 TOOLS THROUGHOUT CLIENT JOURNEYS

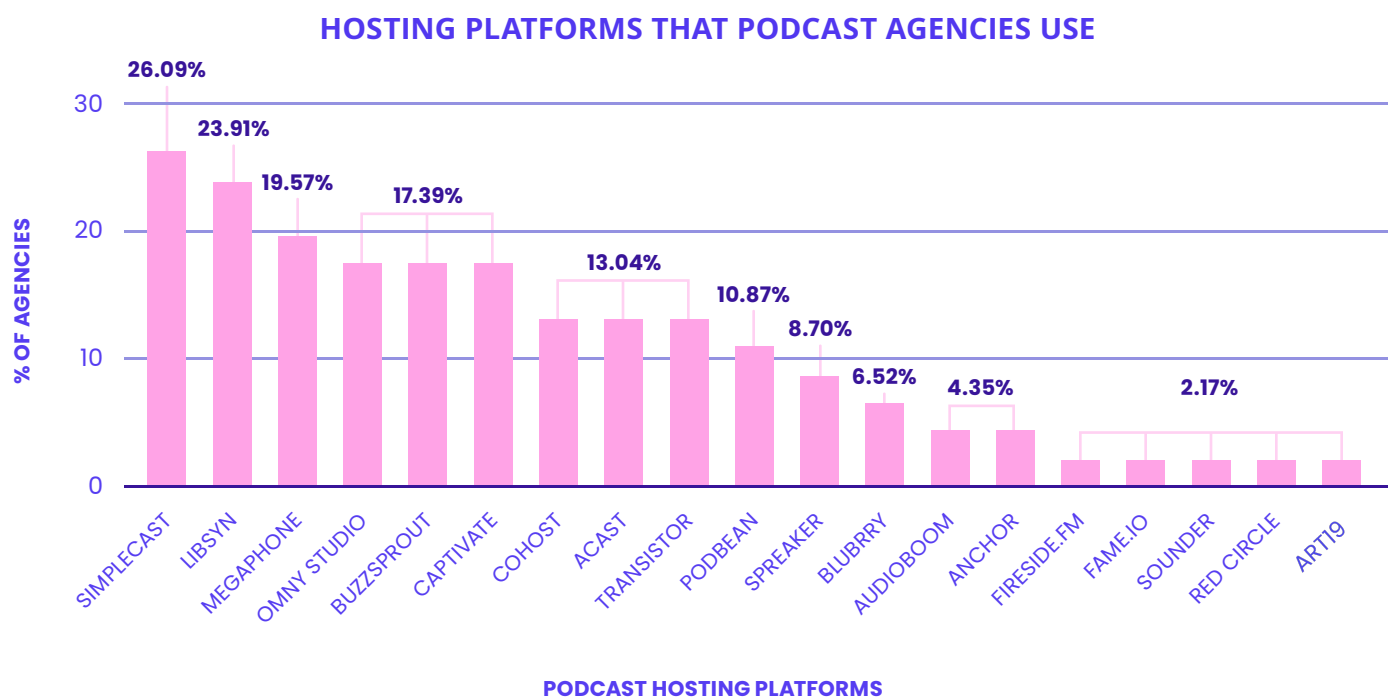
The survey revealed that podcast agencies are using an average of 7 tools throughout a client's journey. This is a high number, especially when considering that over **78%** of podcast agencies have **fewer than 10 employees**.

With so many different platforms in use, it can be challenging for agencies to manage and streamline their workflow. Inefficient processes can lead to wasted time, increased costs, potential for human error, and lower-quality output, which can ultimately harm the reputation and success of agencies.

It's essential for podcast agencies to prioritize **time management** and **efficiency** in their operations. This may involve investing in tools and software that can help automate tasks and streamline workflows, as well as implementing best practices and standards for project management and client communication.

## PODCAST AGENCIES ARE USING TWO HOSTING PLATFORMS FOR CLIENTS

The most common podcast hosting platform used by podcast agencies is Simplecast (**26%**).



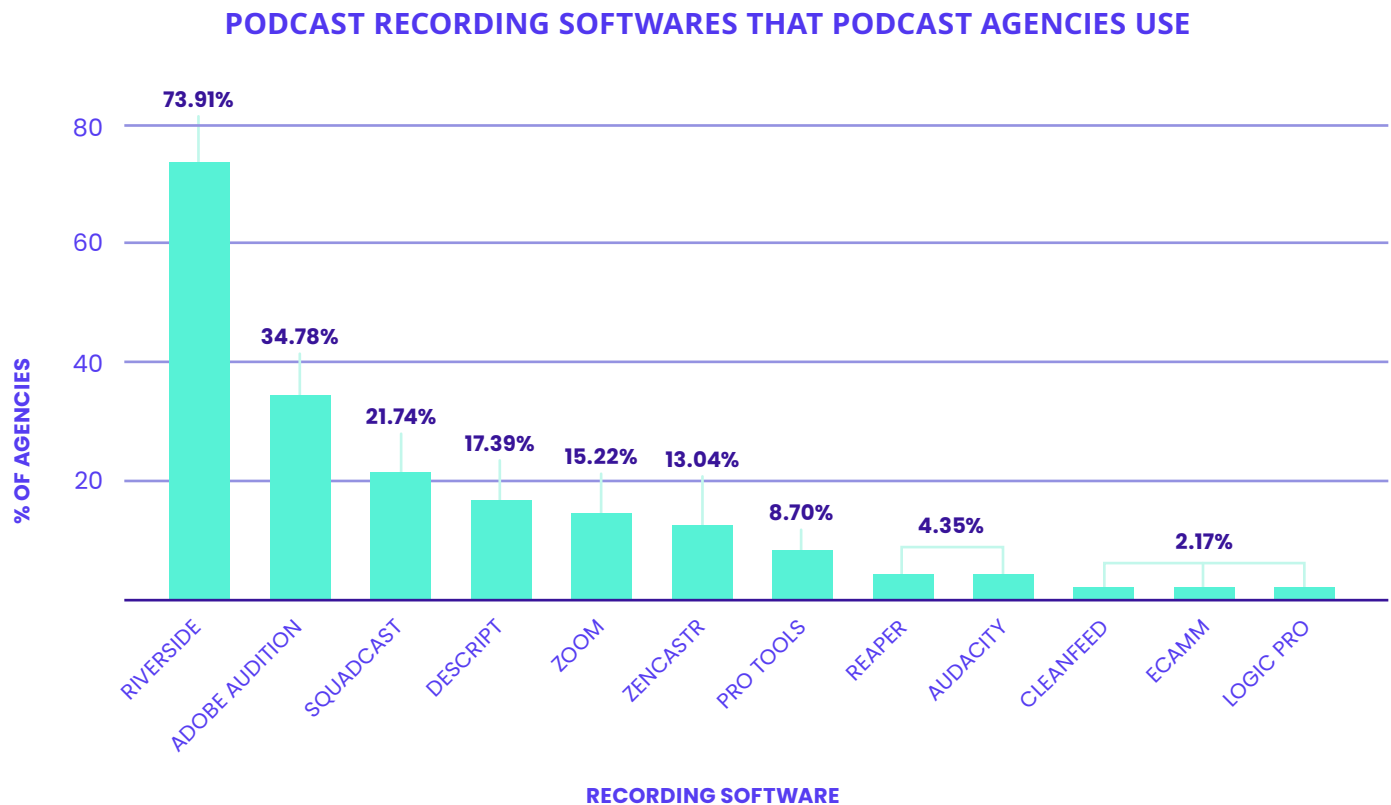
The survey discovered that **49%** of podcast agencies are using more than one hosting platform. The overall average number of podcast hosting platforms used for all respondents is 2 hosting platforms per agency.

Nearly **half** of podcast agencies manage different hosting platforms for their clients, uncovering a significant insight into the industry. For both podcast agencies and their clients, there isn't one podcast hosting platform that solves all client needs, therefore, clients need varying software.

## PODCAST AGENCIES ARE USING TWO RECORDING SOFTWARE FOR CLIENTS

Riverside.fm was the most popular recording software used by podcast agencies with almost **74%** using the platform. This was followed by Adobe Audition (**34.78%**) and Squadcast (**21.74%**).

The survey discovered that **64%** of podcast agencies use more than one recording software. **Podcast agencies use an average of 2 recording softwares.**



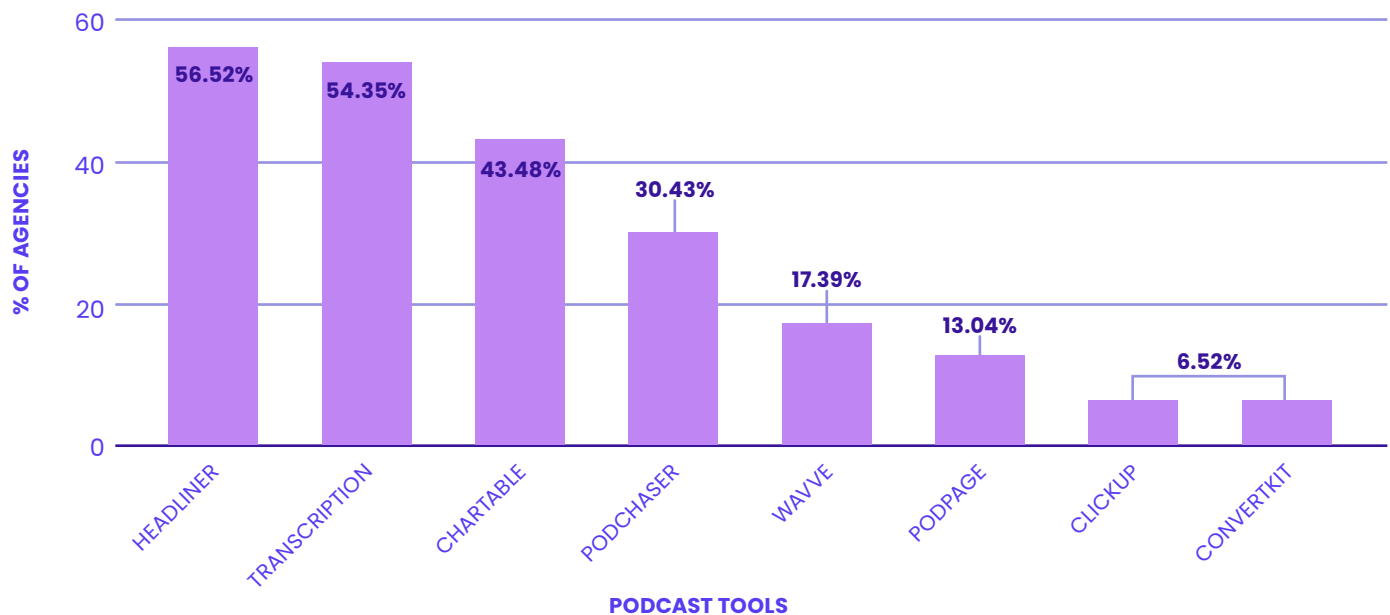
Similar to the insights for podcast hosting, this prompts the question of why podcast agencies use different recording software for different clients. This supports the idea that there is no all-in-one solution that serves what all clients need.

## PODCAST AGENCIES ARE USING THREE ADDITIONAL PODCAST TOOLS FOR CLIENTS

The most popular tool that podcast agencies use (excluding podcast hosting and recording software) is Headliner, with more than half of agencies using this platform (**56.52%**). After Headliner, the most popular tools are transcription tools such as Trint, Rev, and Otter.AI (**54.35%**).

**70%** of podcast agencies are using more than one podcast tool in addition to their podcast hosting and recording platforms. On average, podcast agencies are using 3 additional podcast tools.

### TOOLS THAT PODCAST AGENCIES USE



\*Other tools that podcast agencies added were ListenNotes, PodKite, Voxalyze, Podfollow, Wildcast, Basecamp, Asana, Canva, Animoto, and Notion.

This suggests that aside from the necessary platforms needed throughout the podcasting process like recording and hosting, podcast agencies still aren't receiving the tools or insights needed to effectively execute a client's podcast. Therefore, they're forced to bring additional tools into their stack.



"More and more brands now realize how effective branded podcasts, done well, can be for their organizations. With more organizations jumping into branded podcasts, the competition for listeners means a higher bar for success. Therefore, brands will increasingly turn to agencies that not only excel at production quality, marketing, and measurement but to agencies with a proven understanding of storytelling, host star power, and listener connection."

—**Elaine Appleton Grant**, CEO & Co-Founder, [Podcast Allies, LLC](#)

"Moving forward, it seems like podcast production isn't enough. Clients are wanting video, social media content, video clips, blogs, marketing, paid advertising, and really granular data that measures some sort of financial ROI. They want a large bundle of services under one roof."

—**Eric Montgomery**, Founder & Chief Engineer, [The Podcast Haven](#)



## AGENCY CHALLENGES

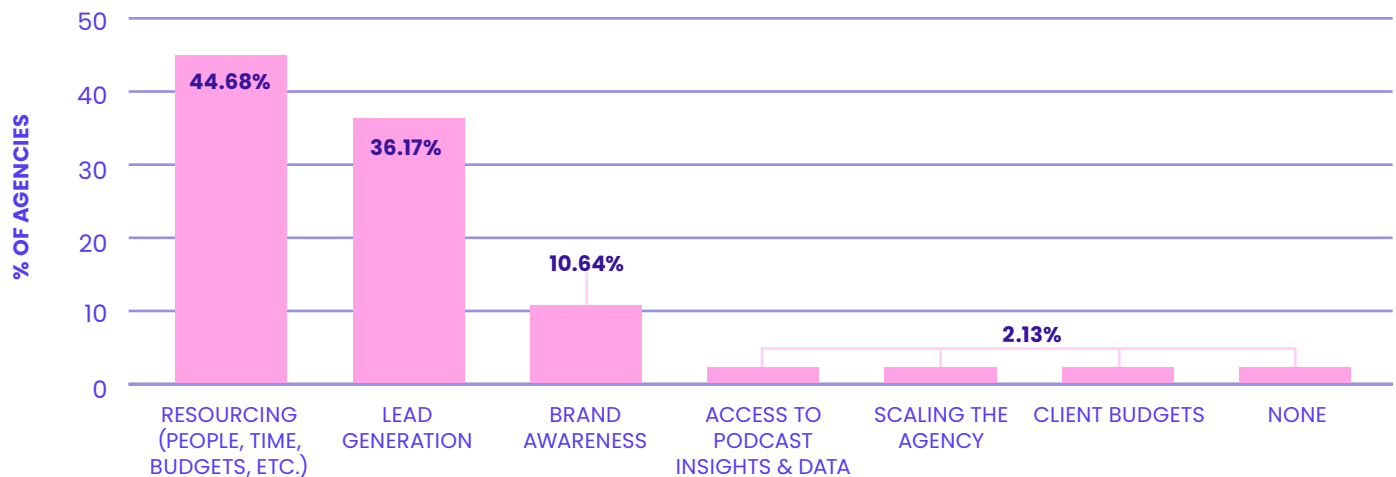
# Resourcing is the Biggest Challenge for Podcast Agencies

Podcast agencies are small in size but have to manage many tools throughout client journeys

## PODCAST AGENCIES ARE STRUGGLING WITH RESOURCING

44.68% of podcast agencies stated that resourcing (people, time, budget, etc.) is the biggest constraint they're facing.

### THE BIGGEST CONSTRAINTS ON PODCAST AGENCIES



### AGENCY CONSTRAINTS

As discovered earlier in the report, over **78%** of podcast agencies have less than 10 employees and on average, use **7** tools throughout a podcast journey. This highlights the challenge of resourcing for agencies when it comes down to areas like the number of people they have, time, and budget.

Limited resources can create bottlenecks in the production process, potentially leading to delays, reduced quality of content, or not enough time spent on scaling the agency.



"B2B podcasting is without question the best opportunity to tie together strategic marketing and business development initiatives into one cohesive channel."

—David (Ledge) Ledgerwood, Podcast Strategist and Director of Revenue, [Content Allies](#)

"We need to continue to search for better data on our target audiences and to strive for an excellent listening experience. Video podcasting is also playing a huge part in expanding this space, and needs to be accounted for in our content strategies."

—Brianna Ansaldo, Founder, [Bamby Media](#)



## MEASURING CLIENT SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES

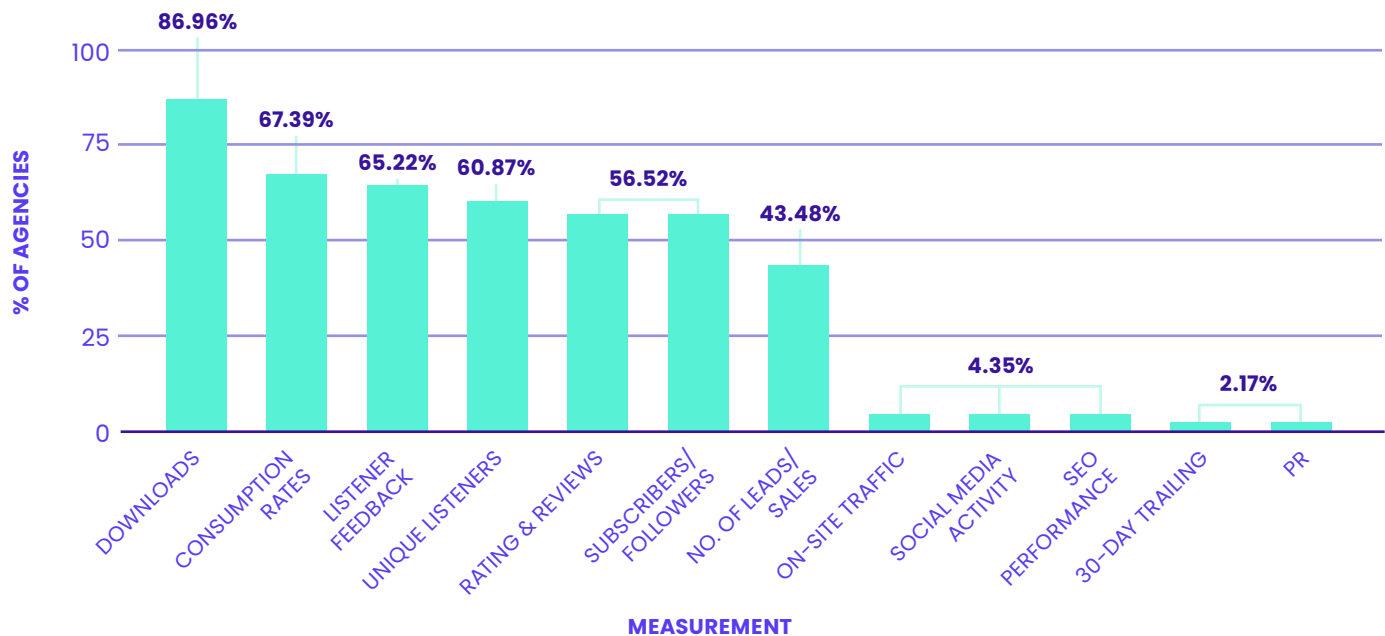
# Audience Growth and Measuring ROI Are the Biggest Constraints for Agency Clients

Podcast agencies are forced to look to downloads as a primary success metric

## PODCAST AGENCIES HAVE TO RESORT TO DOWNLOADS FOR SUCCESS METRICS

Downloads are the most popular way podcast agencies are measuring success with over **86%** of agencies using this metric.

### HOW PODCAST AGENCIES MEASURE PODCAST SUCCESS



But downloads are not the most reliable metric since it's not indicative of unique reach and doesn't give a sense of true engagement. This shines a light on the need for better metrics within the podcast industry to measure performance and ROI.

Additionally, less than half of podcast agencies (**43.48%**) are measuring success with the number of leads and revenue from the podcast. This highlights the need for podcast analytics that can tell a brand how its podcast is impacting its bottom line. Currently, there are very few tools available to measure podcast ROI. Thus, agencies are unable to give their clients data of podcasting's impact on bottom-line business metrics.

### Discover which companies are listening to your client's podcast

Explore CoHost's B2B Analytics to boost lead generation and understand your podcast's impact

**GET A  
FREE DEMO**

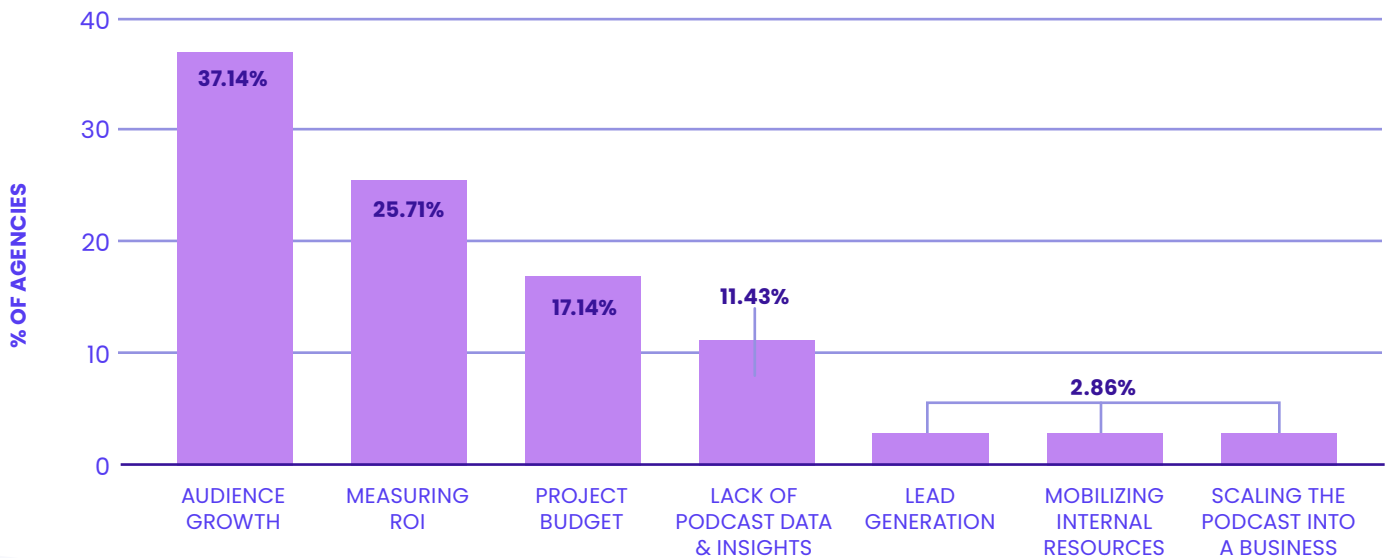
## PODCAST AGENCY CLIENTS ARE STRUGGLING WITH AUDIENCE GROWTH

According to the survey, audience growth is the biggest constraint for agency clients, with **37.14%** of respondents identifying it as a significant challenge. Building and maintaining a loyal audience is critical for any podcast, but this can be especially challenging for branded podcasts since there's a delicate balance between producing compelling content and coming across as promotional.

Measuring ROI was the second biggest constraint for agency clients (**25.71%**). While podcasts can be a highly effective marketing tool, it's difficult for brands to quantify the ROI of their podcasting efforts. Unlike other digital marketing channels, it can be challenging to track the impact of a podcast on lead generation or customer acquisition.

As a result, brands may struggle to justify the resources and investment required to produce and promote a podcast, particularly if they are unable to demonstrate a clear ROI.

### BIGGEST CONSTRAINTS ON AGENCY CLIENT SUCCESS



### CLIENT CONSTRAINTS



"Podcast agencies have never been more valuable. Brands and their agencies see us as leaders in the space and are looking for a trusted source to lead their podcast creative, audience growth, and project management. Podcasts are still very much seen as a specialized service and podcast agencies meet that need by providing a turnkey solution."

—Roger Nairn, Founder & CEO, [JAR Audio](#)

"I've always tried to look at a content marketing strategy for both the short term and the long term and build a moat, so you have so much helpful content that no one can even get close to you. When your content is so wide, so diverse, so useful, so helpful, and covers so many channels that no one can catch you, that's how you win. Podcasting is the strongest and most authentic foundation for this strategy."

—Eva Sheie, Founder, [The Axis](#)



## SCALING PODCAST AGENCIES

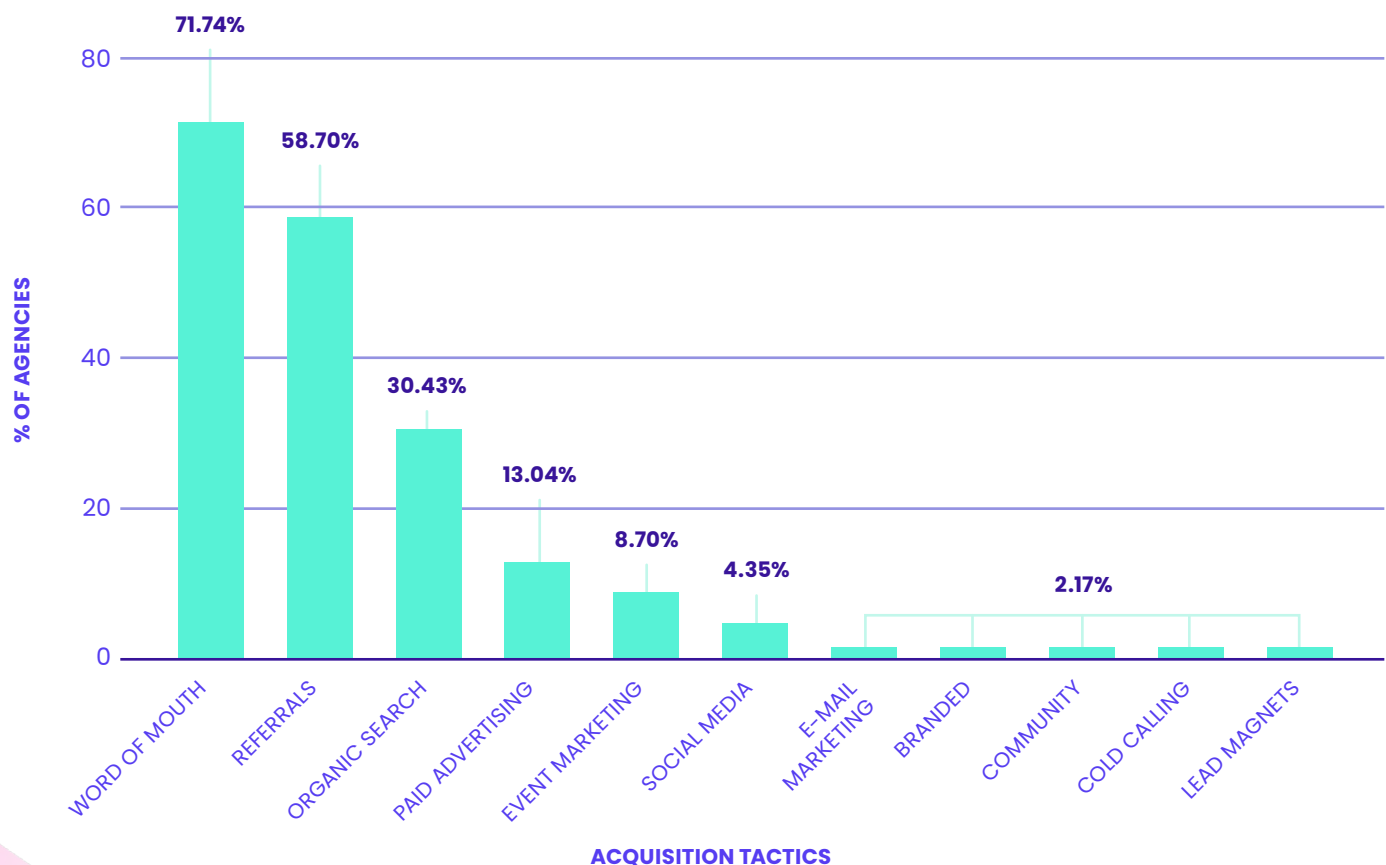
# Word of Mouth is the Top Customer Acquisition Channel for Agencies

**But social media is the most used marketing tactic**

## WORD OF MOUTH IS LEADING CUSTOMER ACQUISITION

Word of mouth is the most common client acquisition tactic for podcast agencies (**71.74%**). Word of mouth refers to the practice of promoting a business or service through personal recommendations and organic referrals from satisfied customers.

### HOW PODCAST AGENCIES ACQUIRE CUSTOMERS



## PODCAST AGENCIES USE SOCIAL MEDIA AS THEIR #1 MARKETING CHANNEL, BUT SHOULD THEY?

The survey showed that social media is the most commonly used tactic by podcast agencies to grow their business, with almost **87%** of respondents identifying it as a significant channel.

But it's unclear whether or not social media is actually helping agencies grow since word of mouth and referrals are the main driver of actual customer acquisition and growth.



"As times get tougher, authenticity becomes more important than ever for consumers. Brands can still develop an authentic voice and a firm relationship with their target audience through podcasting."

—**Annalise Nielson**, Senior Manager, Business Development,  
[Pacific Content](#)

"One of the challenges we often face with potential clients is a misperception of the effort required to make a great podcast. With so much "how to make a podcast" content online, they come to us with preconceived notions that aren't consistent with the reality of producing and distributing a brand podcast."

—**Richard Fawal**, Founder & CEO, [Voxtopica](#)



## PODCAST AGENCY PREDICTIONS

# Agencies Predict Better Podcast Metrics to be the Biggest Trend in the Next 5 Years

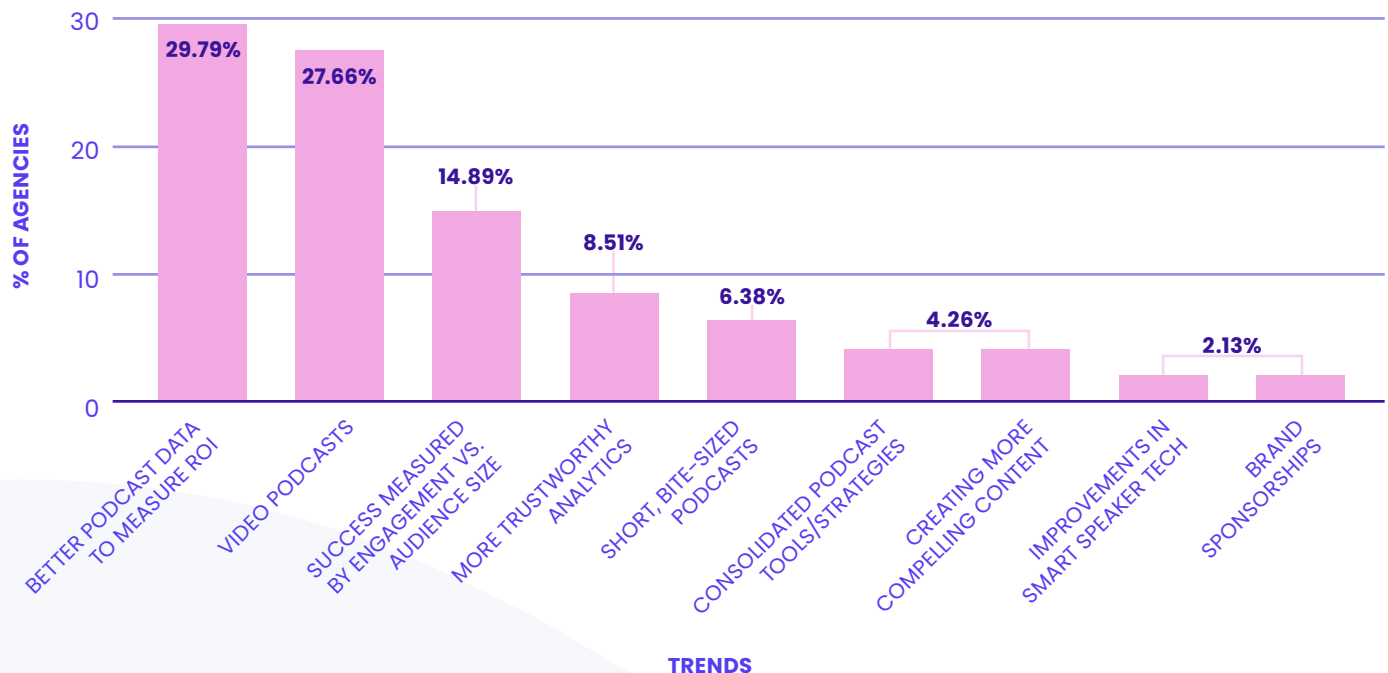
This data is necessary to help podcast agencies measure ROI

## 'BETTER PODCAST DATA TO MEASURE ROI' IS THE TOP PREDICTION

According to the survey, podcast agencies predict that "Better Podcast Data to Measure ROI" will be the most significant trend in the industry over the next 5 years, with **29.79%** of agencies predicting this development.

This prediction is unsurprising since measuring ROI was the second biggest challenge agency clients faced.

### THE BIGGEST TRENDS IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS



"Podcasting is one of the most powerful ways to connect directly with your audience. It is a trend that will not fade away but always grow and improve with new technologies. Podcasting is the medium for connecting people and sharing stories, a fad that will never fade."

—Nick Chamberlain, Founder, [EveryWord Media](#)

"Audio and video content are nothing new, but branded podcasts are still in their infancy. Agencies that can focus on the fundamentals while following emerging technologies, trends, and techniques will lead the industry."

—JP Davidson, Founding Producer, [Pop Up Podcasting](#)



# Podcast Agencies Need to Prioritize Time Management and Efficiency

**As podcasts continue to grow, agencies must find ways to save time and stay efficient in order to keep up with demand and scale**

From adapting to emerging technologies to forecasting the future of the industry, podcast agencies have demonstrated their resilience and adaptability within audio.

But as the market becomes increasingly competitive and more brands adapt audio into their content strategies, podcast agencies must continue to explore ways to save themselves time and increase efficiency in order to stay ahead of the curve.

## We hope this report has helped to:

- ✓ **Benchmark your podcast among other agencies**
- ✓ **Better understand the podcast agency landscape**
- ✓ **Provide new ideas for improving the performance of your podcast agency**
- ✓ **Introduce additional strategies for the growth of client podcasts**

# Hearing From Podcast Agency Leaders

"As long as there are businesses that need to develop new professional relationships, and audiences that need insight and information from the brands they work with, there will be a use for company podcasts."

**Megan Dougherty,**  
Co-Founder, One  
Stone Creative

"Clients need more than good recording, good editing, and good promotion. They need Agencies that speak the full Communications language, get what they're trying to do, and know how to help them get there. The podcast itself is a piece of the puzzle."

**Doug Downs,** President,  
[Storiesandstrategies.ca](http://Storiesandstrategies.ca)

"It's important to understand and at least acknowledge the use of video podcasting. If you don't know how to assist your client to produce a video-based podcast, find someone who can and then outsource them. YouTube used a major search engine source for entertainment, so find out how your agency can provide video production as a service."

**Jon K.,** Owner, Wayfare  
Recording Co.

"We want to see a world where a brand spends its money on an existing show with the perfect community for their needs. Podcasts built for brands are never as good as ones done by professional podcasters with communities built in."

**Matthew Staudt,**  
President, Jam Street  
Media

"Podcast agencies who treat their client's audio channel more like 'LinkedIn For Your Ears', rather than 'check out our new podcast' will deliver better results to their clients."


**Josh Butt,** Founder &  
Executive Producer,  
Ampel

"Rather than being organically played, podcasts are becoming an extension medium - especially for businesses. More listeners will be interested in checking whether the brand supports their values and has more to say than an average independent creator."

**Kris Nowak,** Partner  
& Producer, Earborne  
Media

"Ad agencies are largely missing the opportunity to align their clients' brand values to the rising-majority podcast audiences by relegating smaller creative agencies like mine to the narrow yet crowded 'multicultural' category (or another ghettoized budget category). They will continue to do this to their detriment, first alienating creators of color and by extension alienating their massive audiences."

**Juleyka Lantigua,**  
Founder & CEO, LWC  
Studios



“Brands are beginning to understand the power of voice. It is a key element to how they connect with their consumers or clients.”

**Michael DeAloia**, CEO,  
Evergreen Podcasts

“The fastest growing podcast listening audience is between the ages of 12 and 24, and this demographic is quickly becoming the driving force of our economy. As such, they’re demanding that brands be forthcoming about their commitment to social responsibility and change-making. Podcasting offers brands a powerful and authentic way to engage this audience and build their loyalty. In the not-too-distant future, a podcast will be a brand’s most competitive edge.”

**Tina Nole**, Founder &  
Chief Creative Officer,  
Larj Media

“A key value of branded podcasting is the relationships you build with the guests you bring on your show. Producing a branded podcast is a highly effective way to meet and have in-depth conversations with pretty much anyone you want to get to know—including your top prospects.”

**Jeremy Shere**, Founder  
& CEO, Connversa

“You can grow your business with a podcast.”

**Toby Goodman**, Owner,  
Listen Better Marketing  
Ltd.

“Marketers and business owners should view podcasts as an optimization tool for their branding and marketing efforts. While the podcast sits at the top of the content funnel for thought leadership and authentic voice, repurposing it in various formats for different platforms can fulfill the need of omnipresence and wider reach.”

**Roshni Baronia**,  
Founder, Done for You  
Podcasts

“Brands and individuals’ successful online presence will be determined by their investment in 3 pillars: a website, social media, and a branded podcast. From bigger brands, all the way to start-ups, to entrepreneurs, all will use podcasts as the epicenter of their business activities for effective lead generation, marketing, client, and team onboarding, and product testing. Podcast agencies will be as necessary as having a sales department in your business.”

**Ana Xavier**, Founder  
& CEO, The Podcast  
Space

“Podcasts are a solid marketing tool. Invest right and you will see success.”

**Sarra Messili**, CEO,  
Podcast Inc.



"Podcasters want to work with people who not only have the skills but also share their personal and brand values."

**Lauren Popish**, Founder,  
The Wave Podcasting

"The agencies who succeed will be the best at cultivating, retaining, and monetizing attention."

**Ryan Sullivan**, CEO  
& Founder, Podcast  
Principles

"'Know your customer' is a long-standing marketing phrase. For podcasters, our goal is to 'know your listener.'"

**Jeff Blundell**, Executive  
Producer-Podcast  
Division, Broadcast You

"The decentralization of the open protocol is both a key advantage and an Achilles heel of the podcast medium. Adopting the Podcast 2.0 standard will be key to preserving podcasting's open nature, yet provide brands and agencies with consolidated and real data analytics from across the ecosystem."

**Neil McPhedran**, Growth  
Marketer and Executive  
Producer, Podium  
Podcast Company

"Branded podcasts assist businesses with their Top of Funnel digital marketing efforts by giving listeners an organic way to discover its value proposition, through authentic engagement."

**George Mocharko**,  
Founder, The Podcast  
Editor

"I left a secure job in radio production to start my own podcast agency as I truly believe it will be the main player in audio entertainment. All media is moving from a macro to micro, niche content is winning and podcasts sit perfectly into the picture. The level of investment and interest in podcasting is skyrocketing and there is an opportunity for high-quality, well-crafted output. This is an incredibly exciting space to be working in."

**Bren Russell**, Owner,  
Podlad



## About CoHost

CoHost is a powerful podcast hosting and analytics platform built for brands and agencies. The platform makes it easy to publish, measure, and grow a podcast by equipping brands with the tools they need to scale. Some of the key features include B2B Analytics and lead generation insights, robust analytics, podcast download attribution, automatic transcriptions, and podcast websites. **Reach out to our team at [CoHost](#) or [book a demo with us](#).**



## About Quill Inc.

Quill is an award-winning podcast production agency that works with brands to produce high-quality audio content. They specialize in branded content and provide strategic marketing services. They help brands boost revenue and achieve their podcasting goals. **Learn more about [Quill](#) or [reach out to our team](#).**