

Reaching The Culture

Investing with Audio to win
with Black Consumers



A NABOB report powered
by Nielsen



Introduction



Jim Winston
NABOB President

Dear Friends and Partners,

I'm proud to present *"Reaching the Culture: Investing with Audio to Win with Black Consumers"*—a new report powered by Nielsen and produced by NABOB, the National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters, a proud division of the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc.

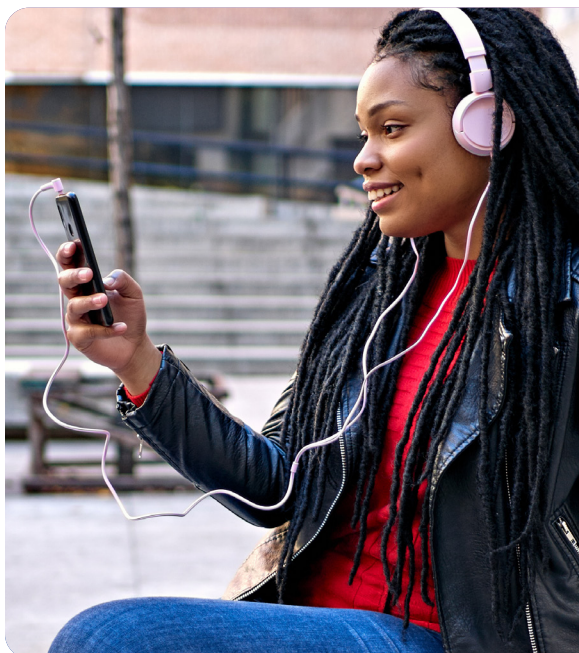
Since 1976, NABOB has championed the voices of Black-owned media across radio, television, and digital platforms. Today, our more than 200 members continue to do more than broadcast—they shape the culture.

This report affirms what we've always known: Black consumers are not only driving content—they are the culture, curating trends, shaping narratives, and influencing the broader media landscape.

With a buying power nearing \$2.1 trillion and a population of over 48 million, the Black community represents a powerful and essential audience. Yet, reaching this dynamic group requires more than traditional strategies. Nearly 90% of Black consumers still tune into radio—proving that, even in the digital age, radio remains a trusted, relevant, and culturally resonant medium. In fact, over 75% of Black audio listening time goes to radio—far above the national average.

Black radio doesn't just play music; it builds community. From trusted local hosts to culturally rich conversations, Black-owned stations offer brands a powerful gateway into the hearts and minds of their most influential consumers. Younger, digitally savvy, and trendsetting, Black Millennials are driving influence within their circles—and radio continues to be where they tune in for connection, information, and inspiration.

Continued on page 3.



Radio: a top reach vehicle among Black audiences

Radio reaches **30 million Black consumers every month** - on par with connected TV devices and smartphones. This makes radio essential for advertisers seeking effective reach and engagement. As audio habits diversify, radio delivers unmatched scale with Black Americans and, more importantly, critical connections between Black-owned broadcasters and their audiences.

Source: Nielsen Audience Insights Data, Q3 2024, Q3 2024, Black Adults 18+

This report is both a data-driven look at evolving media behaviors and a call to action. Brands and advertisers must move beyond performative engagement and invest in the platforms that authentically reach and represent Black audiences. NABOB and USBC Media remain committed to amplifying Black voices and ensuring that our stories—and our storytellers—receive the recognition, investment, and respect they deserve.

Thank you to our partners at Nielsen for helping shine a light on the continued impact of Black-owned audio. We invite you to explore this report, share its insights, and most importantly—join us in building a more inclusive and representative media future.

Sincerely,

Jim Winston

President

National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters (NABOB)

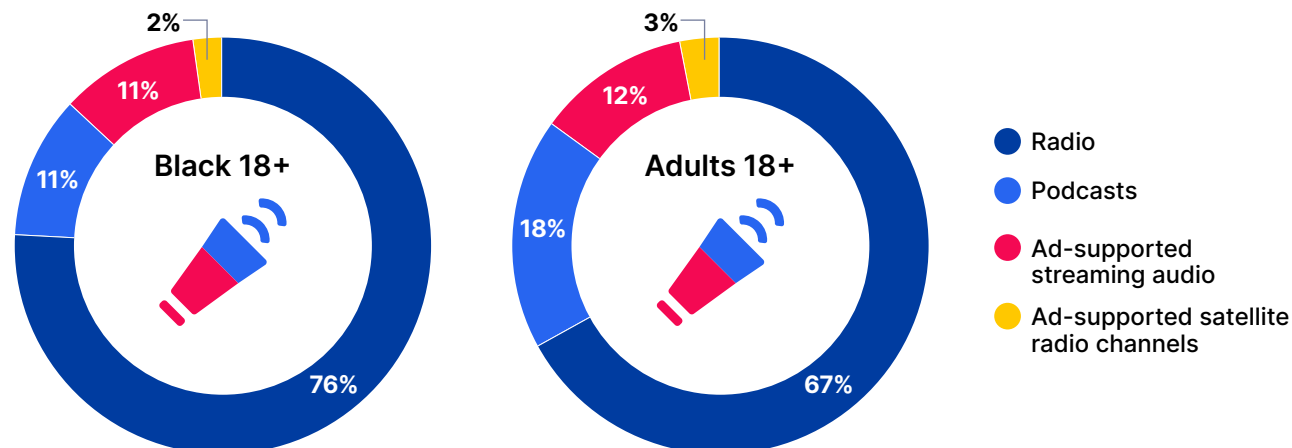
A Division of the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc.

Radio dominates ad-supported audio for Black listeners

Radio is the dominant ad-supported audio platform among Black consumers; more than three-quarters (76%) of daily ad-supported audio listening goes to radio.

Edison Research Share of Ear

% daily ad-supported audio listening time



Source: Edison Research, "Share of Ear," Q4 2024; Black Adults 18+ (left), Adults 18+ (right)



Urban radio just had its best year ever. Black women are leading the charge.

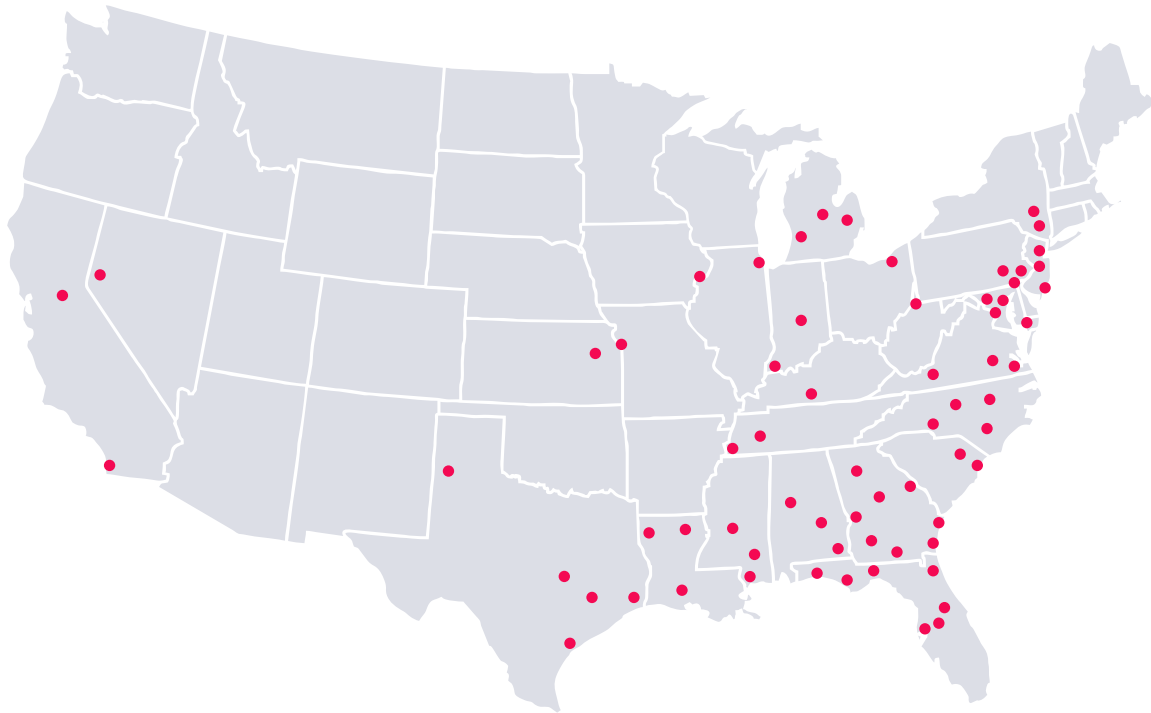
As the sixth most listened-to format overall with a 5.3% audience share, 2024 saw the highest share of audience for the [Urban Adult Contemporary | R&B](#) format since Nielsen's wearable audio methodology, Portable People Meter (PPM), began in 2011. R&B's success last year speaks to the mass appeal of the format across all audiences.

Black women are at the forefront of the genre's record success including artists like SZA, Victoria Monét, Coco Jones, Muni Long and more. In fact, Black women took seven out of 10 of the top spots on [Billboard's first-ever Hottest R&B Artists List](#). As this new class of talent ascends in the industry, radio is an essential part of artist discovery for potential fans. Black listeners age 18-34 are nearly 20% more likely than the general population to discover new music by listening to the radio. It's no wonder then that Urban AC | R&B was a top 10 most-listened to format among all 18-34 year olds, up 36% compared to 2020.

And, of course, R&B and hip hop radio remain a gateway for marketers to reach and connect with the community where these genres began. Black Americans average more than nine hours a week across radio and a variety of genres. In fact, when it comes to daily ad-supported audio use, radio gets 76% of Black Americans' time, making radio an integral part of any audio marketing campaign.

R&B and hip hop radio stations deliver top 5 reach and influence among ALL consumers.

In more than 60 Nielsen markets there are Urban AC or Urban Contemporary stations which rank top 5 among Adults 25-54.



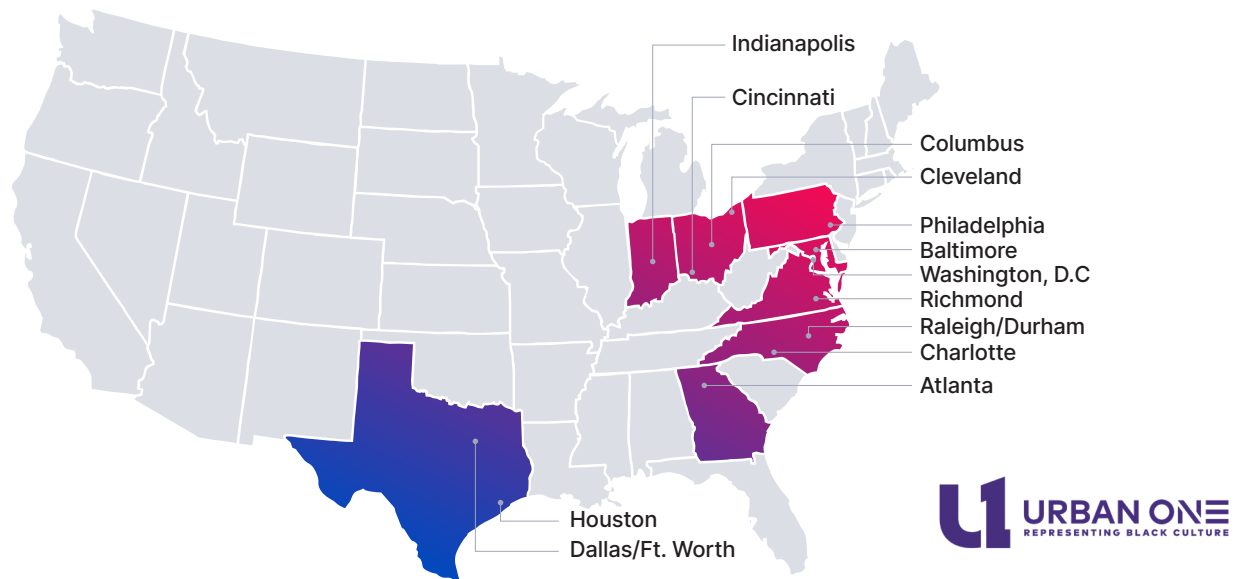
Albany, GA	Flint, MI	Monroe, LA	Sacramento, CA
Atlanta, GA	Florence, SC	Montgomery, AL	Saginaw, MI
Atlantic City, NJ	Frederick, MD	Morristown, NJ	Salisbury, MD
Augusta, GA	Greensboro, NC	Muskegon, MI	San Diego, CA
Baltimore, MD	Hudson Valley, NY	Myrtle Beach, SC	Savannah, GA
Beaumont-Port Arthur, TX	Indianapolis, IN	Newburgh, NY	Shreveport, LA
Biloxi, MS	Jackson, MS	Norfolk, VA	Tallahassee, FL
Bowling Green, KY	Jackson, TN	Orlando, FL	Tampa, FL
Brunswick, GA	Jacksonville, FL	Panama City, FL	Topeka, KS
Bryan-College Station, TX	Kansas City, KS-MO	Pensacola, FL	Trenton, NJ
Charlotte, NC	Killeen-Temple, TX	Philadelphia, PA	Tuscaloosa, AL
Chicago, IL	Lafayette, LA	Quad Cities (Dvprt-RI-Mol), IA-IL	Valdosta, GA
Cleveland, OH	Lakeland, FL	Raleigh-Durham, NC	Washington, DC
Columbus, GA	Laurel-Hattiesburg, MS	Reading, PA	Wheeling, WV
Corpus Christi, TX	Lubbock, TX	Reno, NV	Wilmington, DE
Dothan, AL	Macon, GA	Richmond, VA	
Evansville, IN	Melbourne, FL	Roanoke, VA	
Fayetteville, NC	Memphis, TN		

Source: Nielsen Audio Fall 2024 Markets with Urban Adult Contemporary | R&B or Urban Contemporary | Hip-Hop/R&B stations ranked in the top 5 for share of audience (AQH share) among Adults 25-54; Mon-Fri 6a-7p



SPOTLIGHT Black-Owned Radio

Founded in 1980 in Washington DC by [Cathy Hughes](#), Urban One is the largest Black-owned, Black-targeted cross platform media company in the US; programming 70 stations in 13 markets under its Radio One division and many leading nationally syndicated networks and personalities across 315 affiliates in 95 markets under its Reach Media entity. From lyrical Hip Hop and rhythmic R&B to soul-stirring Gospel, provocative News/Talk and Sports, Radio One and Reach Media provide a platform to amplify the voice of Black America for more than 36 million listeners every month as key divisions of the Urban One portfolio.



Leverage Black-Owned Radio to elevate your media campaign

With lower spend requirements and commanding reach, radio can be an incredibly effective addition to your media mix. Using Nielsen Media Impact to compare ad spend and advertising outcomes across three Radio One markets (Charlotte, Indianapolis and Houston), it's easy to see how small shifts in existing budgets can grow reach and impressions while lowering the costs of those impressions.

By shifting 20% of the budget from broadcast TV to Radio One stations:



Overall cost per thousand
(CPM) **decreased 13%**



Impressions **increased 14%**



Reach **increased 24%**



Budget **remained the same**

Source: Nielsen Media Impact, 2024, Persons 18+

Black-Owned Network Radio

American Urban Radio Networks (AURN) is the # 1 Nielsen rated national audio network company reaching Black Americans. With over 47 million weekly listeners on 6,000 affiliates, AURN provides unique and compelling programming which harnesses the creative energy, vision, and power of Black culture.

Source: Nielsen RADAR 159

Black-owned radio stations have long been a trusted source of news, entertainment, and community connection for the Black community. This deep-rooted trust is why radio continues to reach nearly 90% of Black listeners each month. With influential DJs, dynamic personalities, and culturally relevant storytelling, Black radio amplifies Black voices and keeps audiences engaged. More than just reach, Black-owned stations foster a meaningful connection with listeners, offering brands not just exposure but an implied endorsement through their support of these vital platforms.

Andy Anderson

Chief Revenue Officer, AURN



Black-Owned Local Family Stations



Black-owned local family stations also provide important outlets in smaller markets for audio engagement. In Columbus, GA, for example, Davis Broadcasting has seen **+10% growth** in reach among Black consumers 25-54 since 2023.

Source: Nielsen Columbus, GA radio metro weekly cume











Radio's reach (and influence) remains strong

According to Nielsen measurement, radio averages the same weekly reach with Black adults as connected TV. For advertisers, the opportunity of audio is strong. A recent Nielsen survey found Black listeners are 2x more likely to want to try a brand's product advertised on local radio.*

Some advertisers are already spending big with radio. When we look at the top 10 spenders on Black-owned radio, the majority increased their spend in the first half of 2024.

* Nielsen Attitudes on Ads Study, 2024

Top 10 ad spenders on Black-owned radio

Rank (H1 2024)	Advertiser industry	Ad spend change 2023 - 2024
1	 Business & consumer services	+17%
2	 Entertainment & amusements	+26%
3	 Retail	+6%
4	 Drugs & remedies	+3%
5	 Auto, auto accessories & equipment	+23%
6	 Insurance & real estate	+18%
7	 Toiletries & cosmetics	+92%
8	 Publishing & media	-5%
9	 Household equipment & supplies	+256%
10	 Travel, hotels & resorts	-20%

Source: Nielsen Ad Intel, Spot Radio Spend for 34 Black-owned AM & FM stations in PPM Markets, Q1-Q2 2023 and Q1-Q2 2024

SPOTLIGHT

Agency expertise on connecting to Black consumers through radio



Burrell Communications Group is the nation's largest Black-owned full-service advertising agency with a client list ranging from McDonald's to Toyota to Xfinity. Donna Hodge serves as SVP, Head of Media Services at Burrell with over 25 years of experience in media planning, buying and advising clients.

With a recent Nielsen study finding Black listeners are 2x more likely to want to try a brand's product when advertised on local radio. Here's Donna's take on what brands are missing when they leave out Black-owned radio in particular from their media plans.

- 1** The opportunity to build authentic audience connection. Black-owned stations have deep cultural ties with their communities and often serve as a top source for trusted content and information on a wide range of topics.
- 2** Higher engagement and influence. With deep ties to the community, Black radio was one of the first mobile and social mediums. As members of the community, on-air personalities have a great deal of influence on listeners. Their endorsements carry more weight with their audience.
- 3** Localized and community-based marketing resources. Black-owned stations often serve as community hubs, offering on-the-ground insight into local culture, events, and consumer needs. Black stations have access to data that can be leveraged for more effective hyper-local targeting.
- 4** Immediate ROI. From personality endorsements to on-the-ground activations, Black-owned radio can drive immediate traffic and sales for retail brands.



By ignoring Black-owned radio, brands lose access to a powerful and engaged audience, miss an opportunity to build trust, and deliver ROI.

Donna Hodge
SVP, Head of Media Services
Burrell Communications Group

The power of podcasts

Podcasts offer audiences less scripted content that can seem more authentic, and as anyone can start a podcast, they also offer valuable opportunities for representation and community building. However, for brands, navigating the fragmentation that comes with the ability of anyone with a mic to start a podcast can be daunting.

But the payoff can be worth it. Among Black listeners, podcast ads drive strong brand recall, motivating listeners to learn more and make purchases. In fact, 73% of Black podcast listeners were able to recall a brand name after ad exposure compared to 70% overall.*

The Urban One Podcast Network, for example, is a curated slate of premium content across diverse genres, enriched in information, insight, and entertainment powered by Black stories.

“Mick Unplugged” delves into the principles of modern leadership and has reached as high as the #1 Self Improvement podcast, #2 Educational, and Top 30 across all podcasts on the Apple podcast charts.

“Dear Future Wifey” explores the intricacies and complexities of relationships from dating to marriage and everything in between.

* Nielsen Podcast Brand Impact Norms Database, Q2 2024

Men on the mic

Black men in America today are connecting with media that reflect the many systemic changes and challenges they are encountering in their lives. Media that lets them take control becomes a proxy for community and provides this demographic an opportunity to feel heard and seen through it all.

3x
more likely to be impacted by influencers

2x
more likely to post comments on social media

29%
rely on podcasts to stay informed

50%
of Black men 50-64 are also online radio listeners

45%
get news online



About NABOB

NABOB is the national voice of Black-owned broadcasters. Since 1976, we've proudly served as the nation's only trade association dedicated to advocating for Black radio station owners. Today, as a vital vertical under the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc., we remain committed to advancing Black media ownership and pushing for policies that ensure equitable representation across the media landscape.

As the largest collective of Black-owned media entities, NABOB leads with purpose—amplifying authentic voices, empowering emerging talent, and driving transformative change within the broadcasting industry. Our vision is to create a future where Black-owned broadcasters not only thrive but set the standard for innovation, leadership, and cultural influence.

A cornerstone of USBC Media, NABOB is dedicated to building a media ecosystem where Black ownership is valued, where diverse stories are elevated, and where Black media leaders play a central role in shaping the narrative of our time.



About Nielsen

Nielsen shapes the world's media and content as a global leader in audience measurement, data and analytics. Through our understanding of people and their behaviors across all channels and platforms, we empower our clients with independent and actionable intelligence so they can connect and engage with their audiences—now and into the future. Nielsen operates around the world in more than 55 countries. Learn more at www.nielsen.com and connect with us on social media.

Audience Is Everything®

