



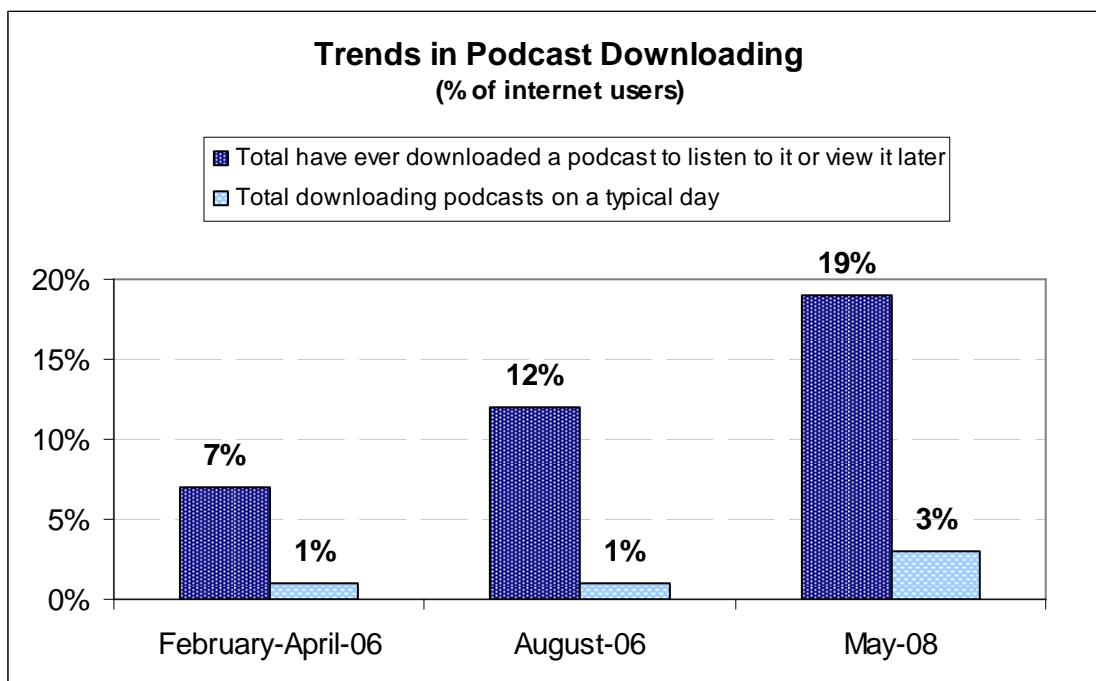
## PEW INTERNET PROJECT DATA MEMO

**BY:** Mary Madden, Senior Research Specialist & Sydney Jones, Research Assistant  
**RE:** Podcast Downloading  
**DATE:** August 2008

*19% of internet users have downloaded a podcast*

As gadgets with digital audio capability proliferate, podcast downloading continues to increase. Currently, 19% of all internet users say they have downloaded a podcast so they could listen to it or view it later. This most recent percentage is up from 12% of internet users who reported downloading podcasts in our August 2006 survey and 7% in our February-April 2006 survey.

Still, podcasting has yet to become a fixture in the everyday lives of internet users, as very few internet users download podcasts on a typical day. Even of those who say they download podcasts, just 17% do so on a typical day.



These results come from a nationally-representative telephone survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project from April 8 – May 11, 2008 of 2,251 adults. The portion of the survey that covered podcast downloading was administered to 1,553 internet users. The margin of error on the internet sample is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

### ***More options for podcast downloaders***

As demand for podcasts has grown, so too has the catalog of offerings for users. In November 2006, we reported that Podcast Alley, a popular podcast directory, cataloged over 26,000 podcasts with more than 1 million episodes.<sup>1</sup> Now, that number has nearly doubled to over 43,000 podcasts and well over 2 million episodes. The most extensive podcast genre is “technology” with over 4,000 podcasts available on the subject; this genre is followed closely by comedy, religion and spirituality, and business.<sup>2</sup>

Companies like iTunes regularly prompt users to subscribe to automatic daily downloads of their favorite podcasts.<sup>3</sup> “Get podcasts, served fresh daily,” reads an advertisement on the iTunes Store podcast webpage. Instead of getting your morning newspaper delivered to your doorstep, you can get your daily podcast delivered to your iTunes desktop. (For instance, users can subscribe to daily podcasts of newspapers and magazines such as *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Economist*.)

College campuses have also served an important role in promoting podcasts. Many colleges and universities now provide podcasts of various lecture series and important speakers on campus. Some professors are experimenting with podcasts in other ways, such as producing their own podcasts or having their students respond to readings and lessons by creating podcasts rather than (or in addition to) traditional papers.

### ***Who is downloading podcasts?***

Men continue to be more likely than women to download podcasts; 22% of online men compared with just 16% of online women report ever having downloaded a podcast. However, men and women are equally likely (3%) to download podcasts on a typical day.

Age differences are more defined with regard to podcast downloading than they were in 2006 when all age groups, except for those 65 and older, were almost equally likely to download podcasts. Now, the dividing line is around the age of 50, with internet users under 50 years old significantly more likely than older users to download podcasts. Fully 23% of those under 50 say they have ever downloaded a podcast and 4% downloaded one yesterday, compared with 13% and 1% of their older counterparts. Since 2006, younger generations have more fully embraced the technology, their percentages nearly doubling since 2006.

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<sup>1</sup> “Podcast Downloading” (Pew Internet & American Life Project, November 22, 2006) Available at: [http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/193/report\\_display.asp](http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/193/report_display.asp).

<sup>2</sup> Site statistics accessed on July 17, 2008 via the Podcast Alley website: <http://www.podcastalley.com/>. Genre-specific statistics: [http://www.podcastalley.com/top\\_podcasts.php?num=50](http://www.podcastalley.com/top_podcasts.php?num=50)

<sup>3</sup> Information found on July 17, 2008 on the iTunes store website podcast page: <http://www.apple.com/itunes/store/podcasts.html>.

Internet users with six or more years of internet experience are significantly more likely than those with less online experience to have ever downloaded a podcast, and they are also more likely to download podcasts on a typical day.

<b>The Audience for Podcast Downloads</b>			
<b>Demographic groups</b>	<b>Percentage who have ever downloaded a podcast</b>		
(as groups of internet users)	<b>February-April 2006</b>	<b>August 2006</b>	<b>May 2008</b>
Total internet users	7%	12%	19%
Men	9%	15%	22%
Women	5%	8%	16%
Age 18-29	10%	14%	27%
Age 30-49	8%	12%	20%
Age 50-64	5%	12%	15%
Age 65+	4%	4%	8%
High school graduate	6%	9%	15%
Some college	6%	13%	19%
College graduate or more	9%	13%	23%
Live in households earning less than \$30,000	8%	12%	19%
\$30,000-\$49,999	8%	14%	17%
\$50,000-\$74,999	7%	12%	19%
\$75,000 or more	7%	13%	23%
3 years or less of online experience	5%	6%	11%
4-5 years of online experience	7%	7%	13%
6+ years of online experience	8%	13%	22%
Dial-up connection at home	6%	10%	8%
Broadband connection at home	9%	14%	22%

Sources: Pew Internet & American Life Project surveys. May 2008 survey of 2,251 adults (1,553 were internet users). Margin of error is  $\pm 2\%$  for the total sample and  $\pm 3\%$  for internet users.

August 2006 survey of 2,928 adults (1,990 were internet users and 972 were asked the podcast downloading question). Margin of error is  $\pm 2\%$  for the total sample and  $\pm 3.5\%$  for the 972 internet users

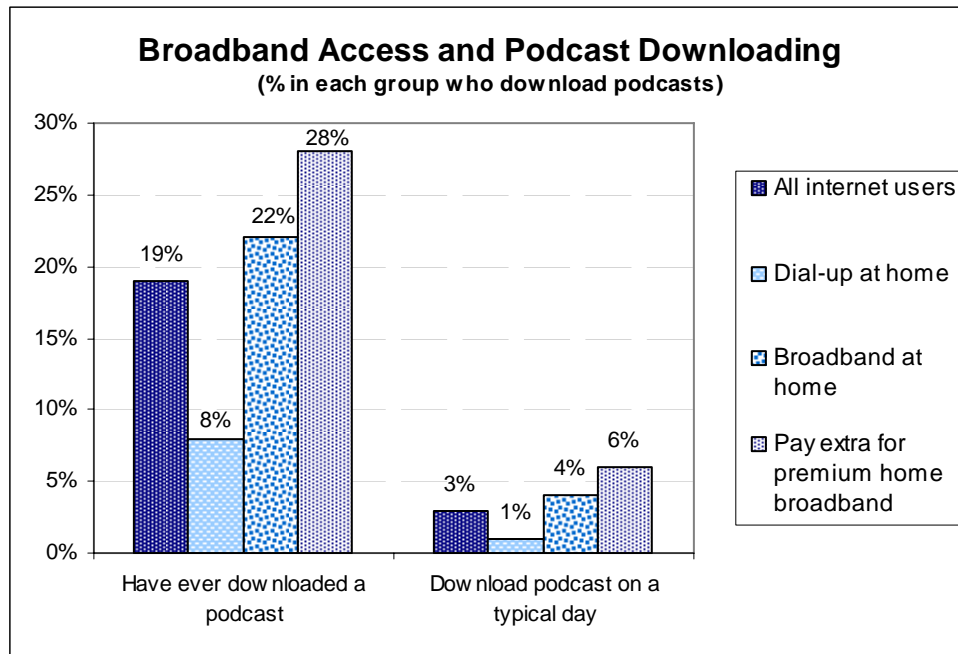
February-April 2006 survey of 4,001 adults (2,822 were internet users. Margin of error is  $\pm 2\%$  the total sample and  $\pm 2\%$  for internet users

### ***Broadband access and podcast downloading***

In a recent report on broadband adoption, we find that internet users who have broadband internet access at home are significantly more likely than those who have dial-up to have ever done certain online activities.<sup>4</sup> In many cases, those with high-speed internet access at home are also significantly more likely than dial-up users to do these activities on a typical day. Over time, podcast downloading has been a key activity that internet users

<sup>4</sup> "Broadband Adoption 2008" (Pew Internet & American Life Project, July 2008) Available at: [http://pewinternet.org/PPF/r/257/report\\_display.asp](http://pewinternet.org/PPF/r/257/report_display.asp).

are much more likely to do if they have broadband access. Internet users who subscribe to *premium* home broadband services are even more likely to download podcasts.



Internet users with broadband and premium broadband access at home are also significantly more likely than the average internet user to have ever downloaded a podcast.

### *iPod and MP3 player ownership*

Like podcast downloading, ownership of iPods and MP3 players has also increased since 2006. According to a December 2007 Pew Internet Project survey, 34% of American adults and 43% of internet users report owning an iPod or MP3 player, up from 20% of the total population and 26% of internet users in April 2006.

Young adults between 18 and 29 years old are the age group most likely to own MP3 players, 61% of whom own these gadgets. Parents, those with broadband access, and those with higher socio-economic status (higher income and education) are also considerably more likely to own MP3 players or iPods.

## Questions and Data

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### Spring Tracking Survey 2008 Final Topline 5/19/08 Data for April 8 – May 11, 2008

Princeton Survey Research Associates International  
for the Pew Internet & American Life Project

Sample: n = 2,251 adults, age 18 and older

Interviewing dates: 04.08.08 – 05.11.08

Margin of error is plus or minus 2 percentage points for results based on total sample [n=2,251]

Margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points for results based on internet users [n=1,553]

**WEB1** Please tell me if you ever use the internet to do any of the following things. Do you ever use the internet to.../Did you happen to do this **yesterday**, or not?<sup>5</sup>

#### Based on internet users [N=1,553]

	TOTAL HAVE EVER DONE THIS	----- DID YESTERDAY	HAVE NOT DONE THIS	DON'T KNOW/ REFUSED
Download a podcast so you can listen to it or view it later <sup>6</sup>				
Current	19	3	80	1
August 2006	12	1	88	1
Feb-April 2006	7	1	92	1

## Methodology

The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between April 8 to May 11, 2008, among a sample of 2,251 adults, 18 and older. For results based Internet users (n=1,553), the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid “listing” bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed numbers). The design of the sample achieves this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number. The response rate for the May 2008 survey was 25%.

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<sup>5</sup> Prior to January 2005, question wording was “Please tell me if you ever do any of the following when you go online. Do you ever...?/Did you happen to do this yesterday, or not?”

<sup>6</sup> Prior to April/May 2008, item wording was “Download a podcast so you can listen to it or view it at a later time”