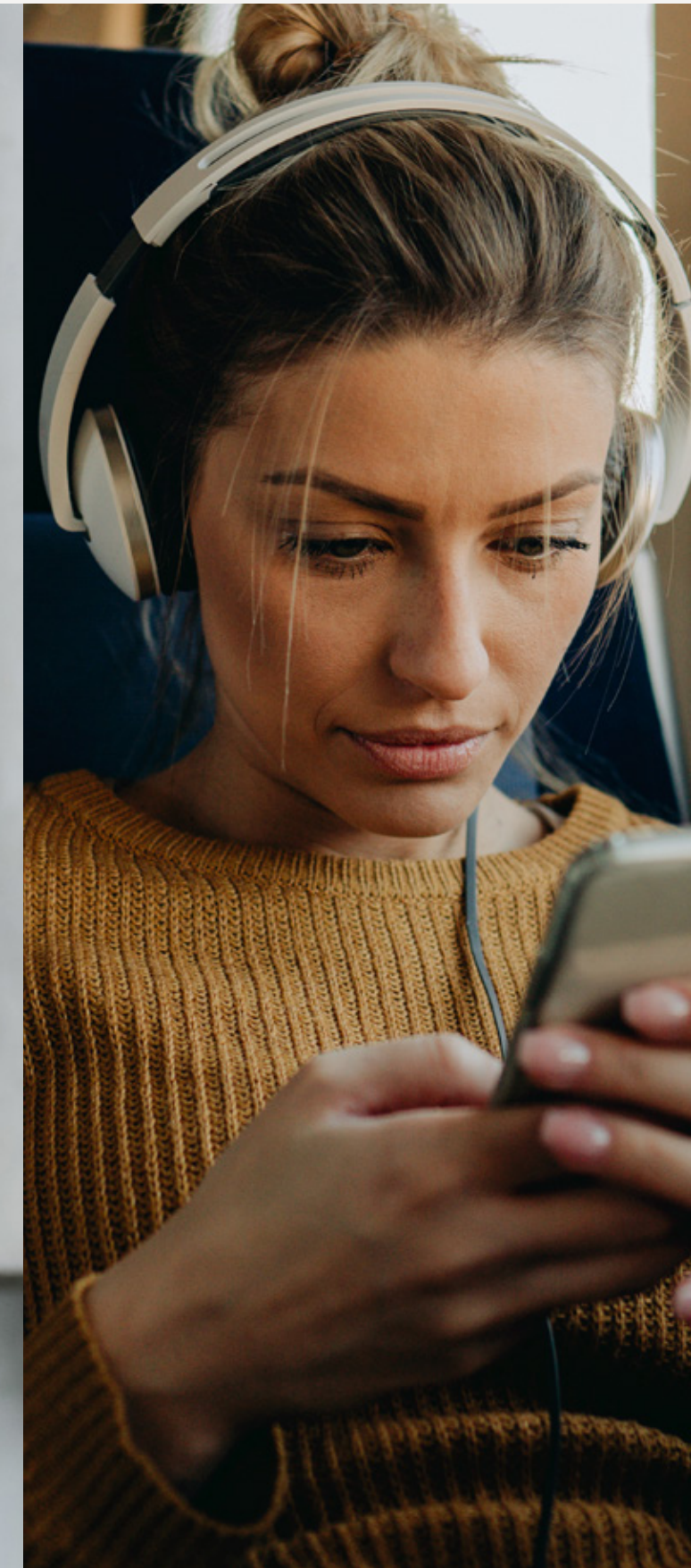


# THE POWER OF ACTIONABLE AUDIO ADS







**CREATE STRONGER,  
MORE MEANINGFUL  
BRAND ASSOCIATIONS &  
DRIVE SALES BY TAPPING  
INTO THE POWERFUL  
COMBINATION OF  
CONVERSATION & VOICE  
COMMERCE.**



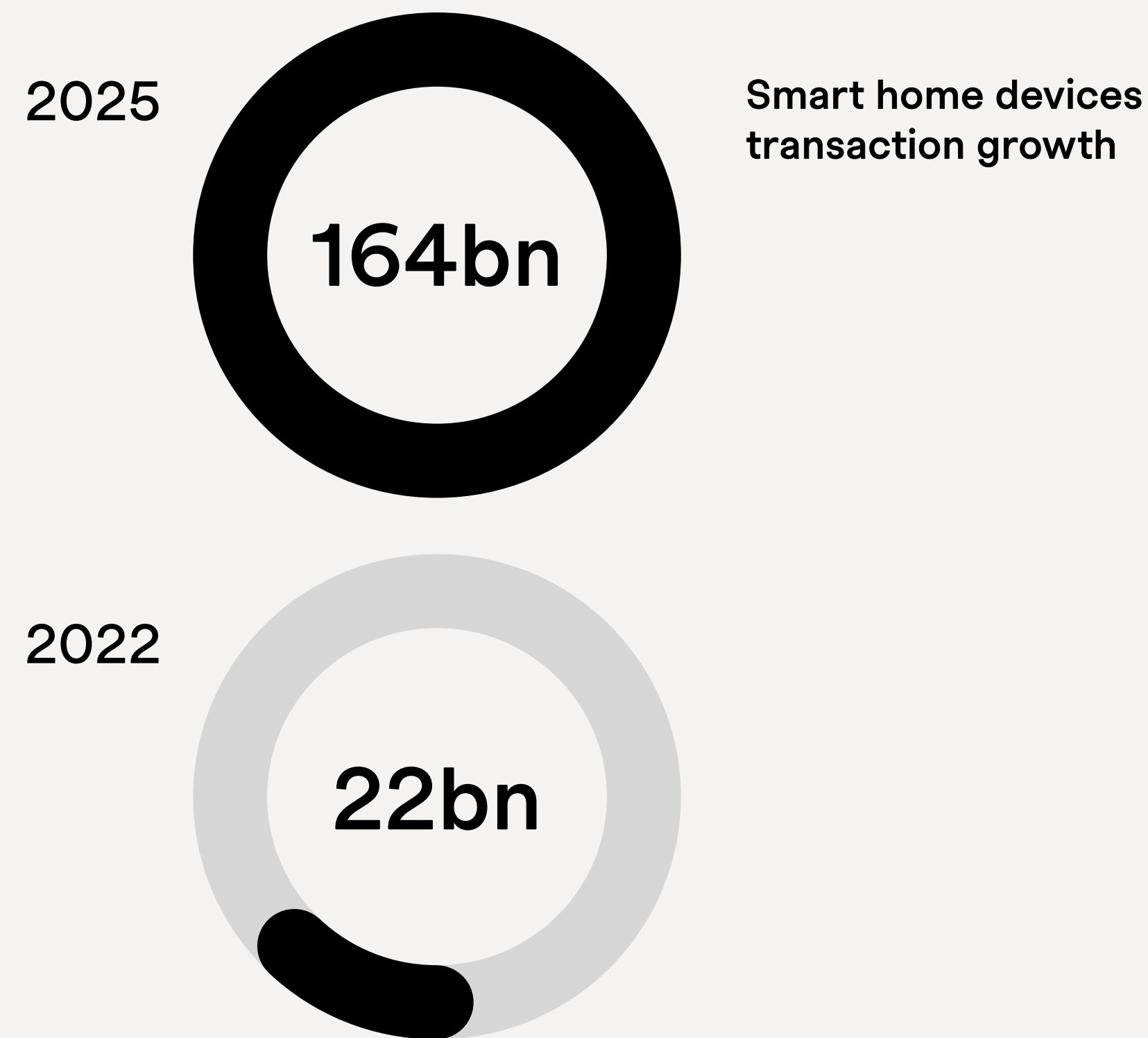
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At 6.08am on 8 October 1973 the first British radio commercial, a 60-second spot created by Lintas for Bird’s Eye fish fingers, was broadcast just after LBC, the country’s first commercial radio station, went on air<sup>1</sup>. Almost 50 years later, radio advertising has undergone significant technological innovations, and today is a medium at the forefront of popular culture and social evolution.

The rapid rise in popularity of smart speakers has created a new opportunity for brands to engage with consumers through radio advertising in a way that leverages the power of the human voice to increase long-term brand impact as well as drive sales. The extent of this opportunity for marketers is huge, the challenge is keeping up with the pace of development of this new trend. According to Juniper Research, smart home devices will carry out more than \$164 billion worth

of transactions in 2025. That’s more than 630% growth in five years from the \$22 billion expected this year<sup>4</sup>.

In order to better understand the power of Actionable Audio ads, Say It Now, Octave Audio and Xaxis partnered with Neuro-Insight to quantify the uplift in the impact of audio advertising when consumers engage in a 30-60 conversation with a voice assistant - known as an actionable audio ad - compared to traditional broadcast radio ads.



<sup>1</sup> [campaignlive.co.uk/article/history-advertising-no-160-first-radio-commercials](https://campaignlive.co.uk/article/history-advertising-no-160-first-radio-commercials)  
<sup>2</sup> [statista.com/statistics/956343/ownership-of-smart-speakers-uk](https://statista.com/statistics/956343/ownership-of-smart-speakers-uk)  
<sup>3</sup> [getdigitalradio.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PwC-Consumer-attitudes-to-devices-and-consideration-to-purchase-February-2021.pdf](https://getdigitalradio.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PwC-Consumer-attitudes-to-devices-and-consideration-to-purchase-February-2021.pdf)  
<sup>4</sup> [juniperresearch.com/researchstore/fintech-payments/smart-home-payments-market-research](https://juniperresearch.com/researchstore/fintech-payments/smart-home-payments-market-research)

## THE STUDY HAS PROVEN THAT

# 25%

Actionable audio branding moments elicit a 25% increase in overall brain activity levels compared to branding in standard ads

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# 23%

There is a stronger brain response during interactive ads compared to just 4% stronger during standard ads

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# 21%

When listening to actionable audio ads left-brain memory, approach, and engagement are stronger than benchmark levels by, 8%, 21%, and +14% respectively

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## UPLIFTS

There are significant uplifts in multiple brain responses compared during moments when consumers interact with smart speaker audio ads compared to standard benchmarks

## 2.3X

Actionable audio ads offer 2.3x the branding potential compared to standard radio ads

As you read on, we hope you find inspiration and enjoyment in our findings and insights. Please feel free to get in touch with us directly if you have any questions. After all, back and forth communication through conversation is the most effective way to create a trusted relationship.

Charlie Brookes  
Director, Octave Audio

Charlie Cadbury  
CEO, Say It Now

Tilly Sheppard  
Product Manager, Xaxis



# INTRODUCTION

Smart speakers have transformed the way we interact with our homes, online content, and advertising. Today, half (51%) of UK households own at least one smart speaker<sup>2</sup> and 64% of audio content consumption on smart speakers is radio<sup>3</sup>. Radio advertising has always offered marketers unique ways to reach consumers. One of the most notable developments in radio advertising is the introduction of Actionable Audio Ads (AAAs) which consist of three distinct components:

- 1 Radio ad voiced by smart speaker 30-40 sec
- 2 Smart speaker call to action
- 3 Frictionless voice interaction

For brands, AAAs offer a wealth of opportunities to engage and interact with audiences in meaningful ways. Read on to learn more about how the human brain reacts to interactive audio ads and how to transform these insights.



<sup>1</sup> [campaignlive.co.uk/article/history-advertising-no-160-first-radio-commercials](https://campaignlive.co.uk/article/history-advertising-no-160-first-radio-commercials)

<sup>2</sup> [statista.com/statistics/956343/ownership-of-smart-speakers-uk](https://statista.com/statistics/956343/ownership-of-smart-speakers-uk)

<sup>3</sup> [getdigitalradio.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PwC-Consumer-attitudes-to-devices-and-consideration-to-purchase-February-2021.pdf](https://getdigitalradio.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PwC-Consumer-attitudes-to-devices-and-consideration-to-purchase-February-2021.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [juniperresearch.com/researchstore/fintech-payments/smart-home-payments-market-research](https://juniperresearch.com/researchstore/fintech-payments/smart-home-payments-market-research)



# KEY FINDINGS

“ Using robust first-party data, we’re able to create detailed and precise, specialist profiles for individual brands providing a springboard for personalized messaging and even more effective advertising campaigns. ”

Charlie Brookes  
Director, Octave Audio

“ In digital marketing, real-time optimisation is key, Say It Now gathers live engagement data that enables you to optimise your audio campaigns in-flight for maximum performance against your campaign goals. ”

Charlie Cadbury  
CEO, Say It Now

“ Actionable Audio Ads enable us to create powerful brand experiences. Partnering with companies like Octave Audio and Say It Now increases the pool of data and the granularity of insights we have which in turn allows us to plan campaigns tailored to specific audiences for maximum results. ”

Tilly Sheppard  
Product Manager, Xaxis

Branding is more intensely recognised in interactive or actionable audio ads compared to standard radio ads.

Comparing brain responses to the final mention of a brand to the average levels of response throughout the ad shows the following:



# 23%

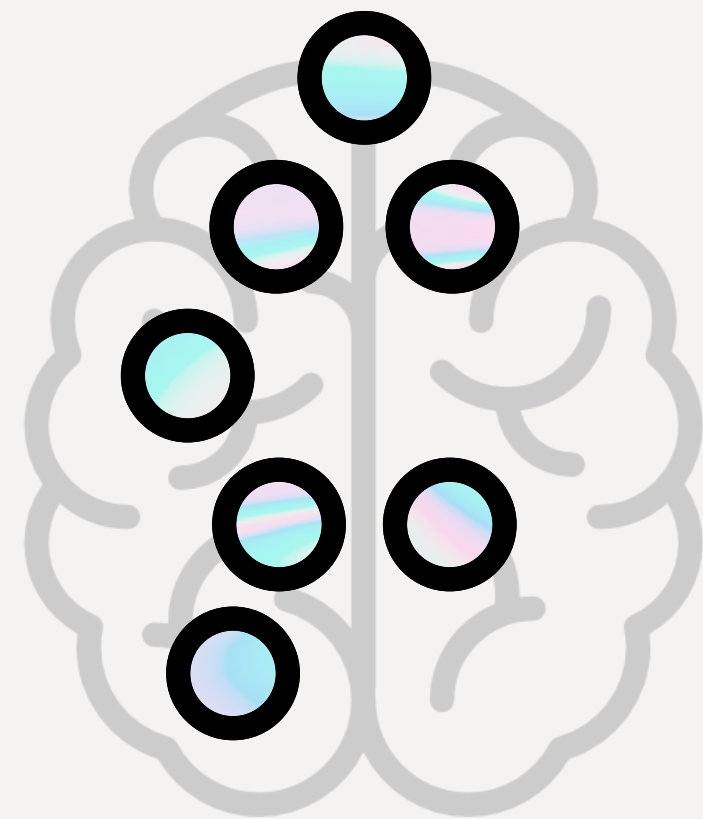
**Stronger brain response during interactive ads** compared to just 4% stronger during standard ads



# 21%

**Left brain memory approach and engagement are stronger** than benchmark levels by 8%, 21%, and +14% respectively

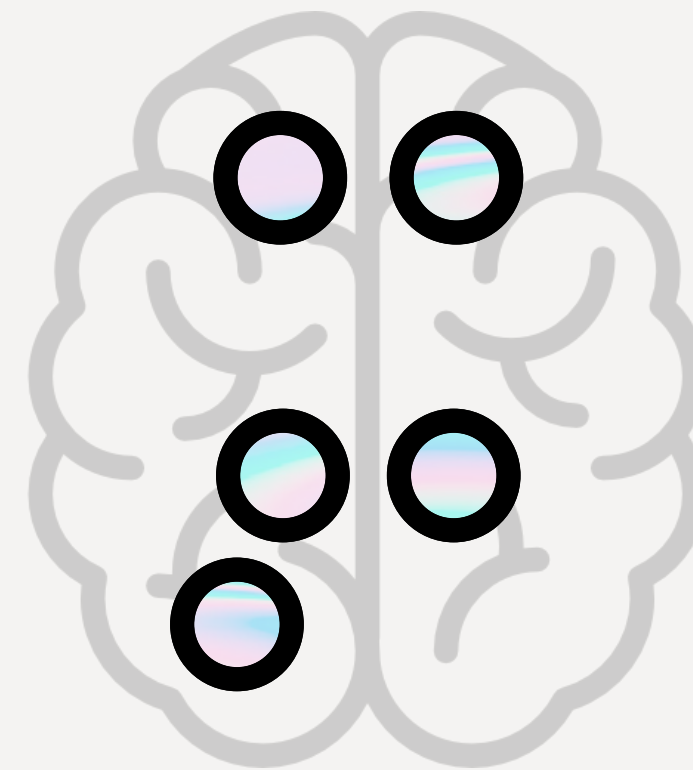
Brain response for the three different branding moments during the interaction period vs benchmarks



**+11**

**Respondent**

- +3% Engagement
- +32% Approach/withdrawal
- +11% Memory: left
- +26% General attention
- +17% Emotional intensity



**+1**

**Alexa**

- +54% Approach/withdrawal
- +6% General attention
- +3% Emotional intensity



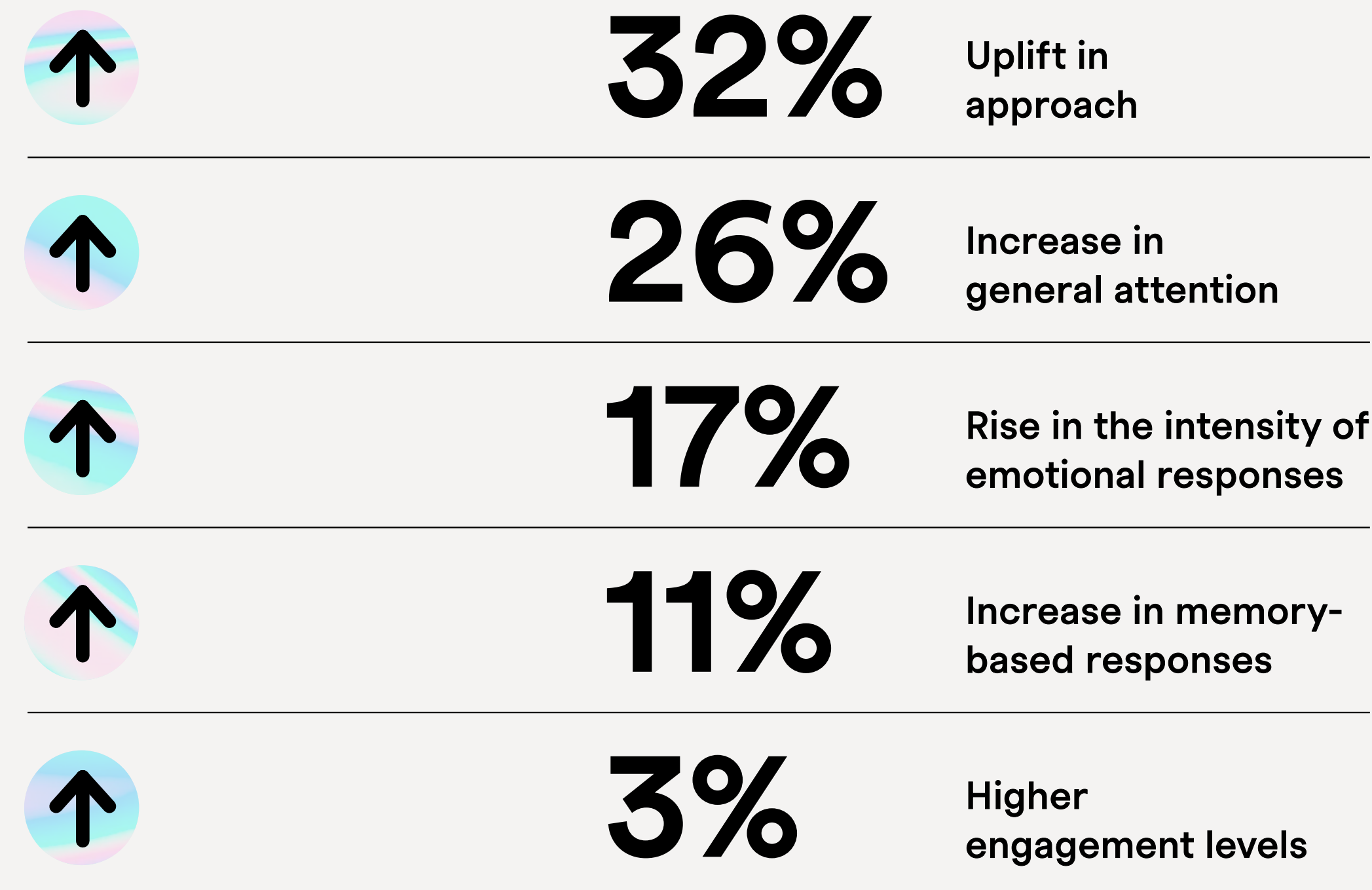
**-1**

**VO**

- +28% Approach/withdrawal
- +1% Memory: left
- +3% General attention

# BRANDING FEELS MORE PERSONALLY RELEVANT WHEN SAID OUT LOUD BY THE LISTENER.

There are significant uplifts in brain response during moments when consumers interact with smart speaker audio ads compared to standard benchmarks. Looking at specific areas we see:





## WHAT THE AUDIO EXPERTS THINK



“Interactive audio solutions are a key part of Octave’s suite of products. We have exclusive inventory across smart devices, which, when paired with our unique audience targeting, allows a brand to evoke an emotional connection between the product and the listener.”

Charlie Brookes  
Director, Octave Audio

“The interaction between a consumer and a smart speaker is unique and provides many benefits for brands. Understanding the relationship between the advertising messaging you use and the outcomes you see in memory response, attention, and emotions is key to capturing attention in the moment and building long-term relationships.”

Charlie Cadbury  
CEO, Say It Now

“By bringing the best of the audio market together through a fully-managed activation service, we leverage the power of actionable audio ads across our premium supply partners, and supercharge it with the increased relevance of dynamic creative. We put outcomes at the heart of your audio strategy with a cost-efficient reach solution built on consistent planning, targeting, buying and measurement.”

Tilly Sheppard  
Product Manager, Xaxis



# BEST PRACTICES

## 1. TARGETING & ADDRESSABILITY.

Why? No marketing campaign is going to deliver results if it is not targeted to the right audience. Effective audio targeting requires combining first-party listener data from your media partners as well as your own first-party audience and performance data. Data and technology partners can help you navigate this more effectively by identifying the audiences with the most suited demographic and behavioral traits for your brief.

## 2. ENCOURAGE CONSUMERS TO SAY YOUR BRAND NAME AS PART OF THE INTERACTION WITH YOUR AD.

Why? Engagement peaks (30% uplift) when consumers say your brand name during the interactive component of actionable audio ads. Try experimenting with placing this CTA at different points in your ad and optimise accordingly.

### Branding moments vs final branding in standard radio ads



### Strength of brain response





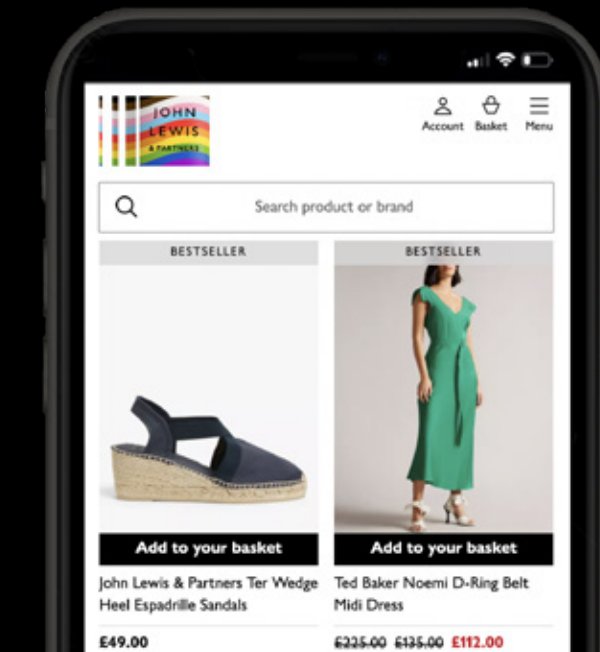
### 3. CREATE A TWO-WAY CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE CONSUMER & THEIR SMART SPEAKER.

**Why?** Positive engagement (approach) is 24% stronger hearing the smart speaker reply to their question compared to asking the question. Different responses will resonate differently with different audiences, make sure you take advantage of personalising your ads.

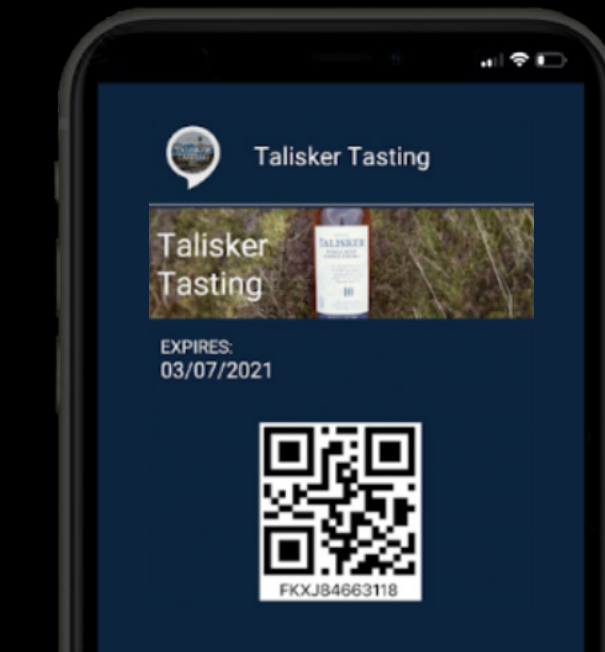
### 4. THINK OUTSIDE THE SPEAKER.

**Why?** Depending on the moment you reach different consumers or the nature of the action you're asking them to take may not always suit the audio environment. Here are some examples of how you can leverage this approach.

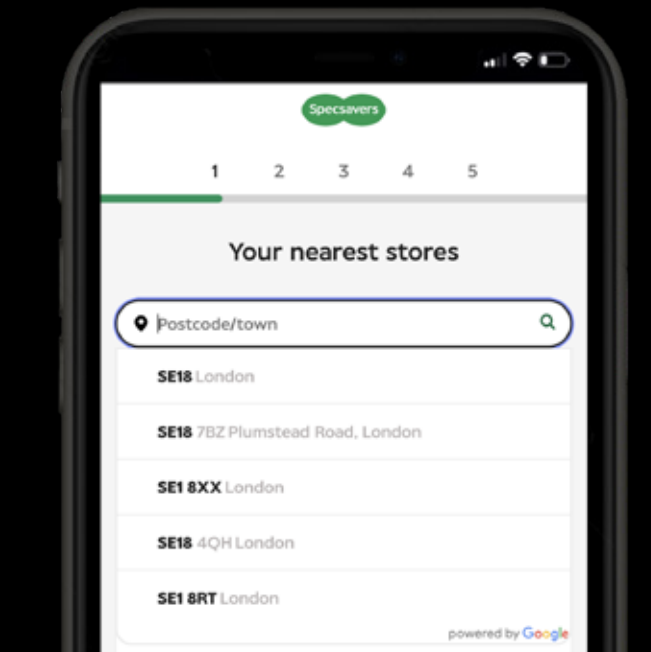
Links to your sales



Links to configurators



Coupons & vouchers



Links to your trailers



Links to download app





**OUR EARS ARE THE  
'ALWAYS ON' ORGAN.  
THIS SENSE WAS, &  
IS, A CRUCIAL ASSET  
FOR OUR SURVIVAL &  
IN THE CONTEXT OF  
MARKETING & MEDIA,  
A VITAL TOOL.**

“In the current conversations around attention, the focus is on visual attention, specifically measuring eye gaze, however this means that yet again marketers sometimes forget about the power of audio. Whilst humans are quite visually dominant, we know that auditory content can have a huge impact on capturing and sustaining attention whether used in isolation or in combination with visual stimulus, where it can in fact play a vital role in creating incremental or detrimental impact depending on how well it is used. This all makes total sense when you consider that our ears are the 'always on' organ. Our eyes are on the front of our face, giving us a limited field of vision without movement, but our ears allow us to hear all around us without moving. When we sleep, our eyes are closed but our ears are always open. This sense was, and is, a crucial asset for our survival and in the context of marketing and media, a vital tool for capturing attention. The recent project conducted in partnership with Say it now & Octave proved that beyond just the power of audio, there is incremental value in interactivity. The human brain seeks connection and enjoys interaction. Capturing attention is only part of the battle, sustaining it, and driving meaningful impact is also essential for brands. This is where interaction comes into play.”

Shazia Ginai  
CEO, Neuro-Insight



# SUMMARY

The findings from this study clearly show that Actionable Audio Ads provide a platform for brands to create stronger, more meaningful brand associations and drive sales.

By proving that interactive audio delivers more powerful neurological responses compared to standard radio ads, and that there are significant increases in multiple positive brain responses during interactive moments it is our hope that we can help to propel the industry forward and deliver real results for brands.

Thank you for reading The Power of Actionable Audio Ads, as we look forward to realising the potential of this channel, here are some final thoughts from our partners.

“We are proud to have partnered with Xaxis and Say it Now on this important industry research, it shows how a well-planned, actionable audio campaign distributed to the right audience can truly change a person’s relationship with a brand. We are excited by the rise of interactive and addressable audio advertising solutions and Octave audio is glad to be at the forefront of these innovations.”

Charlie Brookes  
Director, Octave Audio

“It’s really exciting to see the strength of the results in this study, they vindicate our commitment to working with Say It Now and Octave Audio to deliver audio campaigns that build relationships between listeners and brands. In the context of increasingly fragmented user attention, it’s great to see powerful proof that audio really cuts through.”

Tilly Sheppard  
Product Manager, Xaxis





# METHODOLOGY

Fieldwork took place on Thursday 24th – Thursday 31st March 2022 in London. The total sample size was 64 respondents aged between 18-65, split equally across the following four audiences that were defined by Octave Audio: Affluent Adults; Passionate Parents; Destination Dreamers; and Savvy Shoppers. These audiences were chosen to be the most relevant response to the Actionable audio ads to mimic a real-life activation between Say It Now, Octave Audio & Xaxis. All respondents were regular users of Alexa voice devices and non-rejectors of the six study brands.

Interactive radio ads from six brands were included in the study – CIF, Crisis UK, Listerine, MacMillan, MSC Cruises and NSPCC. Six foil ads, from non-competing categories and brands, were also included in the study, to provide a benchmark level of response.

Steady-State Topography (SST) was used to measure how the brain responds to different types of stimuli. Electrical activity in the brain was measured in order to report on a number of cognitive functions, including long-term memory, engagement, emotional intensity, approach/withdrawal, and general attention.



# 64

Respondents



# 18-65

Age range



# 4

**Audience segments**

Affluent Adults;  
Passionate Parents;  
Destination Dreamers;  
and Savvy Shoppers



# THANK YOU

