



Modernizing PPM Audio Measurement: The 3-Minute Listening Qualifier

What's happening?

To be counted in a radio station's Nielsen audience estimate, listening sessions historically must total to at least 5 minutes within the quarter-hour. Nielsen will be modifying the minimum qualifier to credit listening in PPM markets **from 5 minutes to 3 minutes**.

Why is this happening?

Consumers listen in shorter durations; 45% of PPM all listening occasions are shorter than 5 minutes. An average song is around 3 minutes long. Under current rules, commercials often run at the quarter-hour breaks and advertisers are not getting full credit for audiences to ads.

When is this change taking place?

The January 2025 PPM survey period, which begins on January 9, 2025 and releases starting on February 24, 2025.

Which markets are impacted?

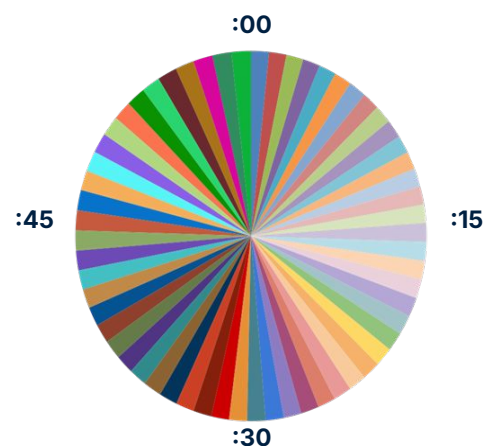
48 Nielsen [Radio PPM markets](#).

How will this change the estimates?

Based on initial impact data, the average audience (AQH) increased by an average of 24%. Results for individual stations will vary based on a number of factors including time of day, age of audience, format and market.

Better aligning radio measurement with radio usage

As you can see from this chart showing a distribution of start times across an average hour, people come to radio equally at every minute. Listening start times do not coincide with the start of a quarter-hour. New listeners come to the radio every minute of the day.

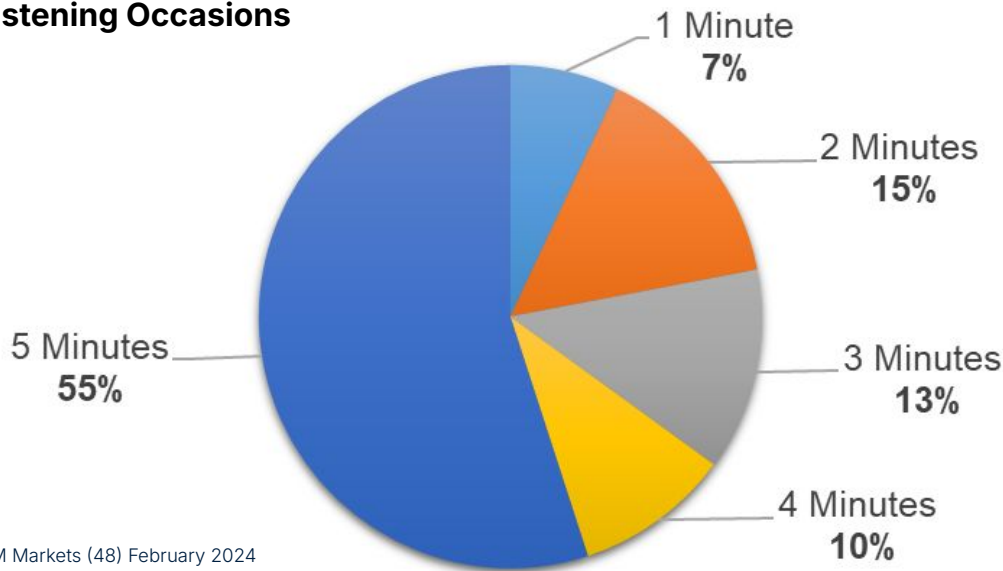


**In an average hour of radio
listening, start times occur equally
at each minute.**

Electronic measurement also shows that a substantial portion of listening takes place in shorter but meaningful durations.

Nearly half (45%) of radio occasions are shorter than 5 minutes and can be un-credited today. A move to the 3-minute listening threshold is expected to create a **one-time increase** to radio listening levels for all stations across all PPM markets.

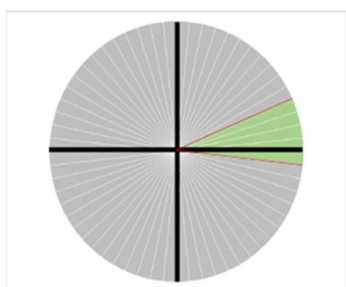
Length of Listening Occasions



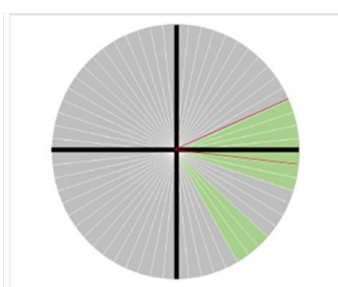
Source: Nielsen PPM Markets (48) February 2024

Nielsen still reports impressions based on 15-minute segments called “quarter-hours.” The Quarter-Hour, by definition, requires all qualified listening to occur within the walls of one of the four specific 15-minute segments of the clock. In some instances, a 5-minute listening session can be cut to as few as 3 minutes if the event is interrupted by the quarter hour break (Nielsen only credits at the whole minute level). These are real impressions that would be counted if they did not cross over the break between quarter hours.

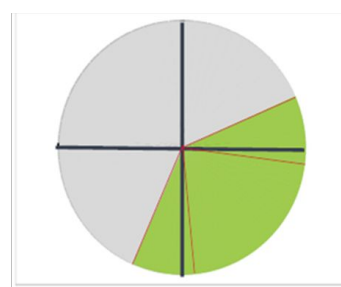
No impressions credited
5 minutes of listening



Only 1 impression credited
10 minutes of listening



Only 1 impression credited
23 minutes of listening



Benefits of the 3-Minute Qualifier

- Measurable ad impressions will increase as more listening is logged and reported, providing stronger inputs for attribution, outcomes measurement and mix models.
- Previously uncredited listening around the quarter hour break will now be captured.
- Reach for radio will expand as more daily cume is credited. Time spent listening also grows as more listening events from existing listeners are captured.
- Advertisers will benefit from increased choice, with more viable dayparts, formats and stations available.
- Radio programmers will be better equipped to optimize ad breaks and commercial placement.

Preparing for the adjustment

1 **Refer to market grids based on May 2024 Impact data** - The following page compares the average (AQH) audience increases from the 5-minute and 3-minute listening threshold across all PPM markets for a variety of demo groups. (Evaluation data available upon request from your Nielsen rep).

2 **Consider the timing of a 3-book average** - Be mindful of 3-book averages that contain the transition from 5-minute to the 3-minute qualifier. This would only impact averages that cross over from the end of 2024 (November, December or Holiday surveys) into Q1 2025 (the new qualifier starts with the January 2025 survey).

Release Date	NOV 2024	DEC 2024	HOL 2024	JAN 2025	FEB 2025	MAR 2025
1/28/25	No Change					
2/24/25		3-minute qualifier in one book				
3/24/25			3-minute qualifier in two books			
4/22/25				3-minute qualifier in all books		

3 **Posting and Buying local PPM markets and Nationwide** - The change to the 3-minute threshold can result in different delivery if survey methodologies are not aligned.

4 **Less change in Network Radio, but with improved top-market delivery** - Since network radio is a combination of PPM and Diary measurement, the gains will only appear in the largest markets that account for roughly one-third of the US radio audience, while the other two-thirds reported via the Diary methodology will remain unchanged.

5 **Seasonality & Variability** - Regular seasonal patterns in Radio audience listening levels will continue on a month-to-month basis (listening tends to peak in the spring and fall); as will panel-based variability.

6 **No change to Diary Markets** - Because few diaries contain listening occasions shorter than 5 minutes it is unnecessary to revise the listening threshold in Diary markets.

For more information, contact your Nielsen Representative or email questions to:

ppm3minquestions@nielsen.com

PPM 5-Minute to 3-Minute Listening Qualifier Market Table

PPM Total Market AQH Persons Using Radio, M-Su 6a-12M, May 2024

HOW TO READ: AQH persons estimates would have been adjusted by this amount in the May 2024 survey with the change from a 5-minute to 3-minute minimum listening threshold.

Market	Persons	Persons	Persons	Persons	Black	Hispanic
	6+	18-34	18-49	25-54	6+	6+
Atlanta	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 26%	+ 27%	+ 23%	+ 34%
Austin	+ 24%	+ 29%	+ 28%	+ 25%	+ 25%	+ 23%
Baltimore	+ 23%	+ 23%	+ 25%	+ 25%	+ 22%	+ 21%
Boston	+ 22%	+ 22%	+ 25%	+ 27%	+ 22%	+ 20%
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill	+ 24%	+ 31%	+ 30%	+ 28%	+ 23%	+ 30%
Chicago	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 28%	+ 28%	+ 23%	+ 25%
Cincinnati	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 29%	+ 26%	+ 22%	+ 26%
Cleveland	+ 25%	+ 28%	+ 26%	+ 28%	+ 23%	+ 22%
Columbus, OH	+ 26%	+ 31%	+ 29%	+ 28%	+ 28%	+ 24%
Dallas-Ft. Worth	+ 26%	+ 30%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 22%	+ 29%
Denver-Boulder	+ 26%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 24%
Detroit	+ 25%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 25%
Greensboro-Winston Salem-High Point	+ 24%	+ 26%	+ 26%	+ 26%	+ 21%	+ 25%
Hartford-New Britain-Middletown	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 19%	+ 27%
Houston-Galveston	+ 25%	+ 26%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 23%	+ 25%
Indianapolis	+ 25%	+ 32%	+ 29%	+ 28%	+ 25%	+ 29%
Jacksonville	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 29%	+ 27%	+ 23%	+ 32%
Kansas City	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 28%	+ 27%	+ 24%	+ 24%
Las Vegas	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 28%	+ 26%	+ 26%	+ 23%
Los Angeles	+ 26%	+ 30%	+ 30%	+ 28%	+ 24%	+ 27%
Memphis	+ 23%	+ 25%	+ 25%	+ 25%	+ 24%	+ 23%
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood	+ 22%	+ 26%	+ 24%	+ 24%	+ 19%	+ 22%
Middlesex-Somerset-Union	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 29%	+ 27%	+ 26%	+ 22%
Milwaukee-Racine	+ 22%	+ 28%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 22%	+ 22%
Minneapolis-St. Paul	+ 23%	+ 29%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 19%	+ 23%
Nashville	+ 23%	+ 24%	+ 24%	+ 24%	+ 21%	+ 26%
Nassau-Suffolk (Long Island)	+ 25%	+ 30%	+ 30%	+ 29%	+ 23%	+ 26%
New York	+ 22%	+ 25%	+ 25%	+ 25%	+ 21%	+ 21%
Norfolk-VA Beach-Newport News	+ 23%	+ 24%	+ 27%	+ 25%	+ 24%	+ 24%
Orlando	+ 23%	+ 30%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 20%	+ 26%
Philadelphia	+ 24%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 28%	+ 22%	+ 25%
Phoenix	+ 26%	+ 31%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 27%	+ 28%
Pittsburgh, PA	+ 22%	+ 24%	+ 25%	+ 24%	+ 18%	+ 29%
Portland, OR	+ 25%	+ 30%	+ 30%	+ 29%	+ 36%	+ 21%
Providence-Warwick-Pawtucket	+ 23%	+ 26%	+ 26%	+ 27%	+ 19%	+ 26%
Raleigh-Durham	+ 25%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 27%	+ 24%
Riverside-San Bernardino	+ 25%	+ 30%	+ 29%	+ 28%	+ 21%	+ 26%
Sacramento	+ 26%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 29%	+ 24%	+ 27%
Salt Lake City-Ogden-Provo	+ 29%	+ 31%	+ 33%	+ 32%	+ 12%	+ 32%
San Antonio	+ 27%	+ 33%	+ 31%	+ 28%	+ 23%	+ 27%
San Diego	+ 29%	+ 33%	+ 33%	+ 32%	+ 34%	+ 30%
San Francisco	+ 25%	+ 29%	+ 28%	+ 28%	+ 26%	+ 26%
San Jose	+ 26%	+ 31%	+ 29%	+ 30%	+ 23%	+ 27%
Seattle-Tacoma	+ 24%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 26%	+ 24%
St. Louis	+ 25%	+ 30%	+ 29%	+ 28%	+ 25%	+ 28%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater	+ 23%	+ 23%	+ 25%	+ 24%	+ 21%	+ 21%
Washington, DC	+ 23%	+ 29%	+ 27%	+ 26%	+ 22%	+ 27%
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton	+ 24%	+ 29%	+ 28%	+ 27%	+ 19%	+ 24%
48-Market Average	+ 24%	+ 28%	+ 27%	+ 27%	+ 23%	+ 25%