

Please Don't Change the Music: How Background Music Coherence Enhances Flow, Credibility, and Persuasion in Podcast Advertising

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Abstract

Podcast advertising is increasingly embedded within the narrative flow of episodes, yet little is known about how the surrounding soundscape shapes consumer responses. Across two experiments, we examine how background music coherence between podcast episode and native advertisements influences persuasion. We show that coherent soundscapes enhance attitudes toward the advertised brand by preserving listeners' flow experiences, which in turn increase perceived advertisement credibility. Serial mediation analyses confirm that higher background music coherence increases flow, which boosts credibility and subsequently attitude toward the brand. These findings highlight auditory prominence as a key construct in audio persuasion and demonstrate how subtle acoustic design choices meaningfully shape advertising effectiveness in podcasting contexts.

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