

Video didn't kill the radio star

 By [Jon Savage](#)

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Spotify's stellar performance when it comes to engagement is proof that radio - well, audio in all its forms from podcasts to retail radio and spatial audio - is the come-back-kid in the marketer's rock band, particularly within the all-too-fickle youth market.



Jon Savage

[Research](#) released by the digital platform shows that it outperforms all other media types – not just audio – when it comes to engagement, and it also suggests why.

According to the research conducted by Spotify in partnership with the research team at Neuro-Insight, a leading firm in the field of cognitive research, digital audio is uniquely powerful thanks to its interactivity and personalisation.

Yahoo! Vindication!

Together with my team, we started The Eye, a highly targeted, on-demand digital radio station with regular contributors/DJs and a fully integrated advertising model to incorporate brand culture into its programming.

The Eye was intended to be the learning curve on which the team would explore the technology and the marketplace to build a light-weight radio station (read: flat structured, nimble and low-cost) that could deliver the same – if not better – returns for advertisers than those delivered by major commercial radio stations.

On-demand digital radio

It's taken them a great deal of hard work to convince brands and advertisers of the strength of digital radio, but helping them has been the analytics Spotify, TikTok and Facebook to study audiences and truly connect with them.

The Spotify/Neuro-Insight team adds another arrow to digital radio's quiver because it succinctly explains that the medium has a distinct neurological impact.



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More than that, it proved that some types of sound have a stronger impact than others; in particular, the listening experience for digital audio was significantly elevated across all metrics compared to radio ... leading to higher memorability, engagement, and emotional intensity.

And, wait for it, the power of digital audio is amplified even further on Spotify.

Find out more about the how Spotify/Neuro-Insight came up with these conclusions [here](#).

Here are the implications of this research for South Africa's brand managers.

For five years, we've been building neural audio fingerprints for brands who are working in the audio space – whether it be in retail radio, podcasting or digital broadcasting.

During that time we've proven over and over again how the right music strategy with the right demographic can have a significant impact on purchasing power, how long a person will stay in a physical store – and, as the analytics show – how much longer you can entice people to engage with the brand online – a particularly powerful metric if you are an online store.



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This has been a revelatory journey for us and our clients Sportscene, Totalsports and Markham that have taken the digital plunge, and are winning. With Sportscene Radio, we not only managed to grow a digital audience of nearly half a million users per month, but even garner a nomination for best contribution to hip-hop at the SA Hip-Hop awards.

In addition, we are simultaneously building the biggest audio network in South Africa consisting of the most prominent audio content creators on the continent – watch this space!

I sincerely hope other brands will start paying attention to the data as audio engagement is extremely powerful and overlooked by too many.

ABOUT JON SAVAGE

Jon Savage is HaveYouHeard's head of content

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