

United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Report and Forecast 2025-2034

Market Report | 2025-06-06 | 124 pages | EMR Inc.

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Report description:

The United Kingdom audiobooks market reached a value of around USD 282.83 Million in 2024. During the forecast period of 2025 and 2034, the market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 10.30% to reach around USD 753.84 Million by 2034.

United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Growth

The audiobooks market in United Kingdom is driven by its huge publishing industry and English-speaking population. According to the "Vision for Publishing 2023" report by the UK's Publisher's Association, the industry contributed EUR 11 billion to the country's overall economy by exporting highest number of books globally. Furthermore, it generated a total revenue of EUR 7.1 billion, out of which digital publishing with e-books and audiobooks accounted for EUR 3.2 billion.

The market is also being driven by a change in people's reading habits as audiobooks are being preferred over e-books and hard copies. A recent survey conducted by the National Literacy Trust in 2021 affirmed that over 2 in every 5 UK adults listened to audiobooks in their spare time while nearly 3 in 10 read them at least once every week. This high inclination towards audiobooks can be attributed to the flexibility of reading and multi-tasking provided by them, further enhancing United Kingdom audiobooks market value. Furthermore, audiobooks have not only made reading accessible but also more captivating for the growing Gen-Z and millennial population. Social media reviews on bestsellers, convenient use of smartphone devices, and efficient narrations by well-known celebrities have been a major factor in driving the adoption of audiobooks among young readers.

Additionally, the market has so far witnessed organic growth, yet both public as well as private sector are actively participating to support the audiobooks demand growth in United Kingdom. For instance, the government's elimination of Value Added Tax (VAT) from audio books has made them cost-friendly, which has driven their sales. Similarly, the entry of music streaming platforms such as Spotify in the UK market has made audiobooks accessible to many subscribers. Additionally, the introduction of startups such as books.org has opened new opportunities for independent bookshops to feature their audiobooks with full profit margin on every sale. These efforts have positively impacted the market growth.

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Key Trends and Recent Developments

Growing publishing industry, shifting preference towards audiobooks, emergence of startups, and AI-based narration are increasing the United Kingdom audiobooks market revenue.

May 2024

Voxblock, the screen and wifi free children's audiobook player company, has announced a partnership with Scottish-based distributors, Scotia and Chameleon, one of the largest distributors of school and educational products in the United Kingdom. The partnership is aimed at establishing Voxblock's stronghold in the country's education sector.

May 2024

A Britain-based startup, Sounded Limited launched in May 2023 announced its partnership with the US-based Dreamscape Media to distribute its audiobook catalogue of more than 8,000 titles. Audiobook titles from Dreamscape will now be included in Sounded.com's audiobook offerings through its online desktop and mobile app services. The partnership is said to expand the Sounded audiobook catalogue further.

October 2023

In a major move to set its foot in UK audiobooks market, Spotify has enabled the live streaming of audiobooks for its premium subscribers in the region. The company has made 150,000 audiobooks available as part of its premium subscription with 15 hours of listening time monthly. If subscribers exhaust this limit, they can pay extra to purchase additional hours.

March 2023

US-based publishing company, Bookshop.org has completed a fundraising round worth EUR 1.5 million. The funds will be used by the company to add audiobooks and e-books to its UK platform and develop a mobile app for customers. The platform and mobile app will enable independent bookshops in the country to offer audiobooks and e-books to their customers for the first time.

Overall Growth in the U.K. Publishing Industry is fuelling Audiobooks Demand

The demand for audiobooks in the country is the direct impact of its robust publishing industry. The region houses some of the largest and most reputed publishing houses in the world. According to the UK's Publishers Association, the total revenue generated by UK publishing industry in 2023 was EUR 7.1 billion, a 3% increase from 2022, where digital publishing (e-books and audiobooks) held a major share. Audiobooks downloads alone created a revenue of EUR 206 million during this period, a 24% year on year rise.

Increased Preference for Audiobooks Due to Shift in Consumer Behaviour

With a working population as high as 74.5%, consumers in the country are having a hard time contributing to reading the hard and soft copies of their preferred published materials. Audiobooks, on the other hand, completely rule out the challenge of time constraints. Consumers can listen to the audio versions of published materials while multitasking or travelling, and this flexibility is the key trend of United Kingdom audiobooks market.

Emergence of Startups Leading to Market Expansion

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The market is witnessing the rise of startups which are garnering huge investment from industry leaders. For instance, Xigxag, a startup recently launched in the United Kingdom with a unique listen-and-read audiobook product had garnered an investment worth EUR 500,000 from Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Investment Fund (CIOSIF) in the year 2022 after raising EUR 250,000 worth of investment through crowdfunding in the preceding year. The growth of such innovative startups is leading to growth of United Kingdom audiobooks market.

AI Narration and Translation of Audiobooks Leads to a Wider Consumer Reach

AI is increasingly being used by major industry players to enhance the quality of narration in audiobooks and translate the same into multiple languages, resulting in a wider reach. Following this trend, major publishing houses are partnering with product-based AI companies or investing in them for desired results. For instance, Harper Collins UK has announced a partnership with Elevenlas in May 2024, an AI research and tech company based in New York, to produce audiobooks in major non-English languages.

United Kingdom Audiobooks Industry Segmentation

"United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Report and Forecast 2025-2034" offers a detailed analysis of the market based on the following segments:

Market Breakup by Genre:

- Fiction
- Non-Fiction

Market Breakup by Preferred Device:

- Smartphones
- Laptops and Tablets
- Personal Digital Assistants
- Others

Market Breakup by Distribution Channel:

- One-time Download
- Subscription-Based

Market Breakup by Target Audience:

- Kids
- Adults

Market Breakup by Region:

- England
- Wales
- Northern-Ireland
- Scotland

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United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Share

According to the U.K.'s Publishers Association, audiobook downloads generated a revenue of around EUR 205 million in 2023. In terms of market share, non-fiction audiobooks witnessed the highest number of purchases, accounting for 12% of the total purchases. Furthermore, an independent survey by the Neilson books affirmed that audiobook consumers in the UK have reported listening to non-fiction more than fiction, with readership estimates recorded at 70% for non-fiction and 68% for fiction in 2023, respectively. The increased userbase for non-fiction books has significantly propelled the segment's growth.

Leading Companies in United Kingdom Audiobooks Market

Market players are focused on diversifying their catalogues and enhancing the listening experience of readers by integrating AI features.

- Amazon.com Inc.
- Apple Inc.
- Barnes & Noble Booksellers, Inc.
- Google LLC
- Blackstone Audio, Inc.
- Storytel AB
- W. F. Howes Ltd.
- Penguin Random House Co.
- Storytec Ltd.
- Bolinda Digital Pty Ltd.
- Others

United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Report Snapshots

United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Size

United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Growth

United Kingdom Audiobooks Market Share

United Kingdom Audiobooks Companies

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