

Launching Audible by Amazon in Australia and New Zealand

The Problem Audible, Amazon's global audiobook platform, is a market leader in providing access to audiobooks, podcasts, and spoken word entertainment. However, despite its international success and footprint, Audible faced a significant challenge in entering the Australian and New Zealand markets. The task was twofold: first, to adapt the global media strategy to local tastes, and second, to establish Audible as a recognizable and relatable brand in a highly active outdoor-oriented market with distinct cultural preferences. Adding to the complexity was a heavily scrutinized budget, necessitating a high degree of efficiency and strategic precision.

The Solution As the Head of Digital Media at Hearts & Science ANZ, I spearheaded the successful media and marketing launch of Audible in the region. The campaign was built on a combination of innovation, transparency, and a data-driven localized approach:

Winning the Pitch with Transparency and Data:

Presented an unbiased, data-led planning approach that demonstrated how each media dollar would be optimized for maximum impact. Highlighted the importance of transparent media trading to ensure client trust and accountability.

Localizing the Global Strategy:

Redirected the global strategy to cater to Australia and New Zealand's unique media landscape, focusing heavily on outdoor advertising to reach audiences in active, outdoor settings. Integrated the use of local celebrities, voice actors, and Australian and APAC book titles to establish authenticity and relatability.

Maximizing Limited Budgets:

Developed simplistic yet effective attribution techniques to track media planning and campaign performance. Delivered insights that went beyond raw numbers to offer meaningful, actionable recommendations for optimizing campaign effectiveness.

Multi-Channel Approach:

Orchestrated a cohesive single point of truth across various media channels, including outdoor, digital, social, and audio platforms, ensuring consistent messaging and efficient targeting. Employed dynamic creative optimization to tailor content for specific audience segments, increasing resonance and effectiveness.

Collaborative Team Execution:

Marshalled cross-functional teams to align on strategic goals, ensuring insights were shared collaboratively and execution was seamless.



The Results The campaign delivered outstanding results, exceeding client expectations on multiple fronts:

- **Increased Awareness and Engagement:** Audible's prompted brand recall improved by 40%, while unprompted brand awareness rose by 30% within the first six months.
- **Subscription Growth:** Audible achieved a 55% growth in new subscriptions in its first 12 months in the region, far surpassing initial forecasts.
- **Client Satisfaction:** Amazon's Audible team expressed high satisfaction, praising the precision of media planning and the effectiveness of localized creative execution.
- **Award Recognition:** The campaign was recognized for its innovative media planning and data-led approach, earning awards including:
 - Best Use of Data in Media (Australian Media Awards 2020)
 - Excellence in Marketing Effectiveness (APAC Marketing Awards 2020)

Key Learnings and Takeaways This case study demonstrates how a global brand like Audible can achieve localized success through a combination of data-driven planning, cultural adaptation, and collaborative execution. By focusing on delivering insights rather than just numbers, and by employing transparent and accountable processes, Audible's entry into Australia and New Zealand became a benchmark for strategic and effective market launches.