



# The Arbitron National In-Car Study

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2009 Edition

Presented by:

**Diane Williams**  
Senior Media Research Analyst  
Custom Research  
Arbitron Inc.  
142 West 57th Street  
New York, NY 10019  
(212) 887-1461  
diane.williams@arbitron.com



## Introduction

Welcome to the *Arbitron 2009 National In-Car Study*. This report will provide a detailed examination of America's in-car media audience and its exposure to outdoor advertising, radio and audio technologies. The study will also examine the shopping and purchase decisions of America's mobile consumers.

Arbitron has published several benchmark studies documenting America's relationship with various media, including dial radio platforms (satellite, Internet, podcasting, HD<sup>®</sup> radio) and place-based advertising in such diverse venues as movie theaters, airports and bars. Our work in examining the mobile audience began in 2001 with the *Arbitron Outdoor Study: Outdoor Media Consumers and Their Crucial Role in the Media Mix*. The *Arbitron 2003 National In-Car Study* represented our first comprehensive national analysis of America's total in-car experience, including exposure to both printed outdoor advertising and radio, the in-car broadcast medium; this report is a follow-up to that landmark 2003 survey. In 2008, Arbitron examined next generation outdoor advertising in the *Arbitron Digital Billboard Report: Cleveland Case Study* and in 2009 explored big city travelers' attitudes toward outdoor advertising in the *Arbitron Outdoor Billboard Report: Los Angeles County Case Study*.

All of these studies and more are available for free download at [www.arbitron.com](http://www.arbitron.com).

## Description of Methodology

A total of 1,858 people were interviewed to investigate Americans' travel habits and their use of various forms of media. From January 16 to February 15, 2009, telephone interviews were conducted with respondents aged 12 and older. Seventy percent of the sample was chosen at random from a national sample of Arbitron's Fall 2008 survey diarykeepers and 30 percent was recruited through random digit dialing (RDD) sampling in certain geographic areas where Arbitron diarykeepers were not available for the survey. The results of this study are reported among the 1,666 respondents who were aged 18 or older.

Total Calls Attempted:	7,585
Unresolved (no answer):	5,063
Total Persons Reached:	2,522
Refusals:	664
Completed Interviews:	1,858
Cooperation Rate:	74%

## Definition of Terms:

**Travelers:** United States residents aged 18 years or older who have traveled in any vehicle in the past month 98% of population aged 18 or older.

**Billboard viewers:** United States residents aged 18 years or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes 71% of the population aged 18 or older.

## Some Significant Findings of the Research Include:

- **In-car media, including billboards and radio, reach the sum of American consumers on a regular basis.** Ninety-eight percent of U.S. residents aged 18 or older have either driven or ridden in a vehicle in the past month and 93% of Americans have listened to AM/FM radio during the past week.
- **Americans spend nearly 20 hours in their cars per week and travel more than 200 miles.** The average traveler aged 18 or older spends 18 hours and 31 minutes in his or her car per week and covers 224 miles. Key demographic groups including Persons 18 to 34 and Persons 25 to 54 average more time and miles in their cars.
- **Mega-milers are more likely to live in high-income households.** Thirty-nine percent of mega-milers (those who travel more than 150 miles per week) have a household income of \$75,000 or more per year compared with 27% of average Americans (*see Appendix A and B of this document*).
- **Travelers take note of billboard advertising.** Seventy-one percent of travelers often look at the messages on roadside billboards and more than one-third (37%) report looking at an outdoor ad each or most of the time they pass one.
- **Digital billboards are making headway nationally.** More than half (55%) of travelers have noticed a digital roadside billboard in the past month and nearly one-third (32%) have noticed one in the past week.
- **Viewers learn a lot from billboard ads.** Billboard viewers recall seeing a wide range of actionable information, including stores and restaurants they later visited, radio and TV programs they were interested in, events they wanted to attend or something funny they shared with friends later that day.
- **Transit advertising and street furniture expand outdoor advertising beyond billboards.** Fifty-nine percent of travelers aged 18 or older have noticed a public bus, not including a school bus, in the past week and 39% have noticed an advertising message on a bus; nearly half (47%) noticed a bus stop, and taxi cabs have been spotted by 38% of travelers.
- **Billboard viewers see AM/FM radio remaining a significant part of their in-car media experience despite changes in audio technology.** Ninety-three percent of Americans aged 18 or older listen to an AM or FM radio station for five minutes or more during an average week and more than eight in 10 (81%) billboard viewers agree they will continue to listen to AM/FM radio as much as they do now despite increasing advancements in technology.
- **Satellite and Internet radio round out the in-car broadcast media options.** Twelve percent of billboard viewers report having a satellite radio subscription and 38% are very or somewhat interested in listening to Internet radio in the car.
- **More and more consumers are experimenting with new video platforms that affect their consumption of at-home TV commercials.** Thirty-five percent of billboard viewers own a digital video recorder such as a TiVo<sup>®</sup>, which allows users to time shift programming and even avoid commercials entirely; an equal number have either rented a TV series on DVD or watched episodes On Demand through their cable or satellite TV providers. More than one in four viewers have watched a TV program over the Internet and more than one in 10 have downloaded a show from the Internet.

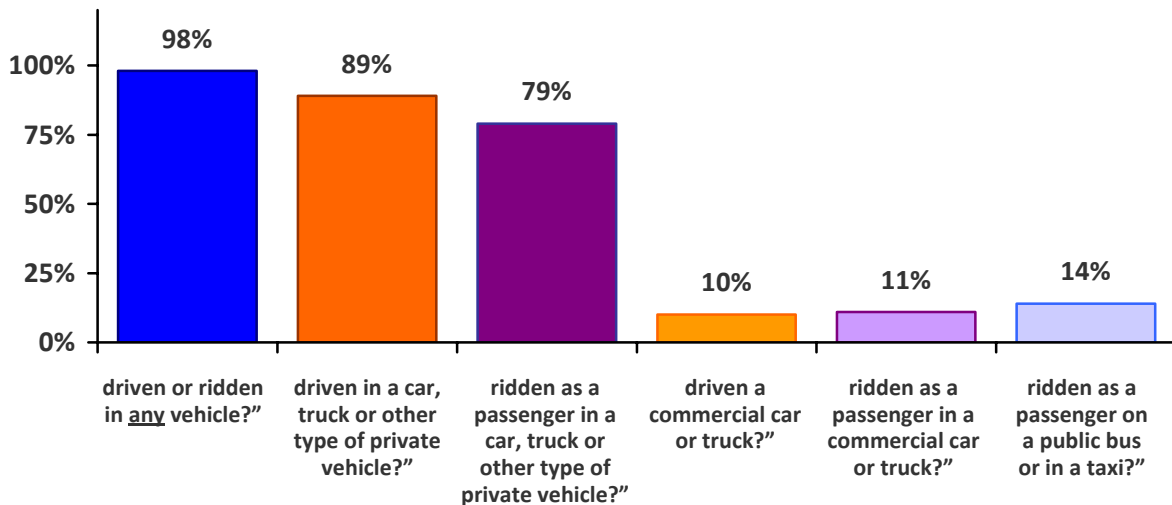
- **Billboard advertising is one of the last messages a consumer receives before making a buy decision.** Nearly three-quarters of billboard viewers shop on their *way home* from work; more than two-thirds make their shopping decisions while *in the car* and more than one-third make the decision to stop at the store *while* on their way home – all times when billboard advertising has the opportunity to be influential.
- **Roadside billboards drive store traffic.** Nearly one-quarter of billboard viewers say they were motivated to visit a particular store *that day* because of an outdoor ad message and nearly one-third visited a retailer they saw on a billboard *later that week*. Half of viewers reported receiving directional information from a billboard and one-quarter said they *immediately visited* a business because of an outdoor ad message.

# Key Findings

## I. Vehicular Travel

### In-Car Media Has the Potential to Reach Nearly All Americans Each Month

“Now let’s talk about vehicles and transportation. In the last month, have you...



Base: United States residents aged 18 or older.

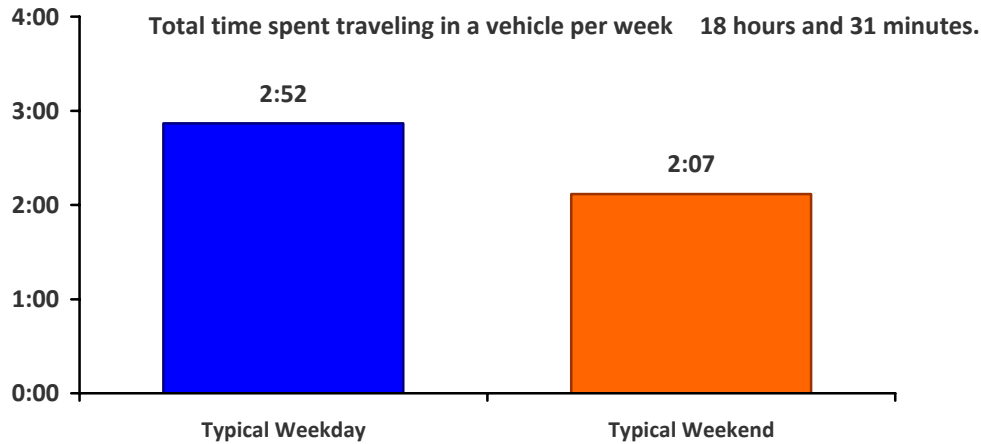
**The vast majority of Americans travel in a vehicle each month.** Ninety-eight percent of United States residents aged 18 or older have either driven or ridden in some kind of private or public vehicle in the past month. Young adults aged 18 to 34 are slightly less likely to have driven a vehicle, but they are more likely than older Americans to have ridden in a public bus or taxi in the past month.

“In the past month, have you...	Age 18-34*	Age 25-54*
...driven or ridden in any vehicle?"	97%	98%
...driven in a car, truck or other type of private vehicle?"	85%	91%
...ridden as a passenger in a car, truck or other type of private vehicle?"	81%	80%
...driven a commercial car or truck?"	11%	12%
...ridden as a passenger in a commercial car or truck?"	15%	12%
...ridden as a passenger on a public bus or in a taxi?"	20%	15%

\*30% of total respondents are aged 18 to 34 years old; 57% are aged 25 to 54.

## American Travelers Spend More Than 18 Hours per Week on the Road

“How much time in hours or minutes do you spend combined, either driving or riding as a passenger in any vehicle, on a {TYPICAL WEEKDAY/WEEKEND}?” (results displayed in hours:minutes)



Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who have traveled in any vehicle in the past month.

**American travelers spent nearly three hours per weekday and two hours per weekend day traveling in a vehicle.** On average, United States travelers aged 18 and older spend 18 hours and 31 minutes on the road each week; it breaks out to 2 hours and 52 minutes per day Monday through Friday and 2 hours and 7 minutes per day on Saturday and Sunday. Young adults aged 18 to 34 spend an average of 1 hour and 41 minutes *more* on the road per week than older adults.

	Age 18-34*	Age 25-54*
<b>Hours traveled on a typical <u>w</u>orkday</b>	3:00	3:11
<b>Hours traveled on a typical <u>w</u>eekend</b>	2:34	2:08
<b><u>T</u>otal time spent traveling in a vehicle per week</b>	20:12	20:10

\*30% of total respondents are 18 to 34 years old; 57% are 25 to 54.

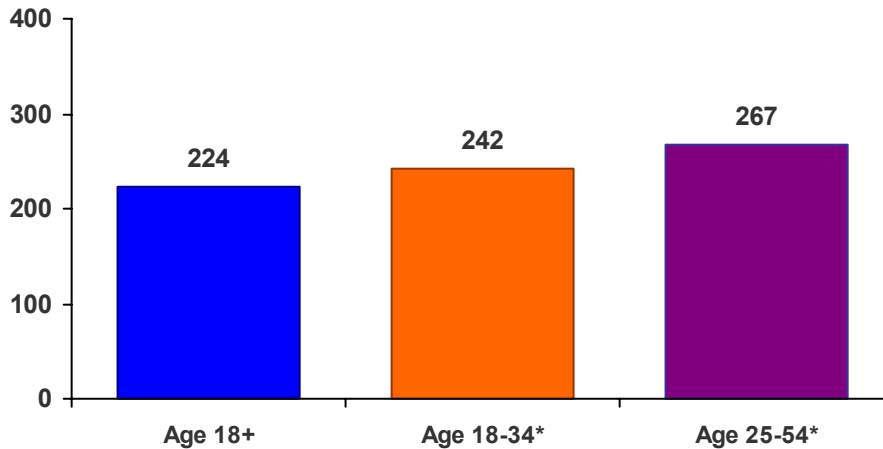
### Time Spent In-Car Increased From the 2003 Survey

During our 2003 national in-car media survey, Arbitron found that Americans averaged 2 hours and 11 minutes in their cars during an average weekday; in 2009, Americans are reporting spending 2 hours and 52 minutes in their cars per weekday a 31% increase.

Please note: The 2003 study was fielded during the summer and the 2009 study was conducted in winter.

## Americans Ride 224 Miles or More per Week

“Approximately how many MILES have you traveled combined, either as a driver or passenger in any vehicle, IN THE PAST WEEK?” (results displayed in mean number of miles)



Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who have traveled in any vehicle in the past month.

\*30% of total respondents are 18 to 34 years old; 57% are 25 to 54.

**U.S. travelers rack up an average of 224 miles on the road per week.** American travelers aged 18 and older drive an average of 224 miles in a vehicle as a passenger or driver per week. Travelers in the prime 25 to 54 demo cover the most distance during a seven-day period, with an average of 267 miles traveled.

Another useful way to examine travelers is by dividing the population into three evenly portioned segments. Mega-milers are the heavy travelers who account for most of the miles traveled in the U.S. This group differs from other travelers in significant ways; they tend to be younger (a higher concentration of mega-milers are in the 18-34 and 25-54 age demos) and more affluent (live in higher-income households). See Appendix B of this document for more details.

	Light Traveler (travel less than 50 miles)*	Medium Traveler (travel 50-150 miles)*	Mega-miler (travel over 150 miles)*
Percent of total travelers	25%	35%	32%
Average (mean) miles traveled	19	93	524
Median miles traveled	20	100	300

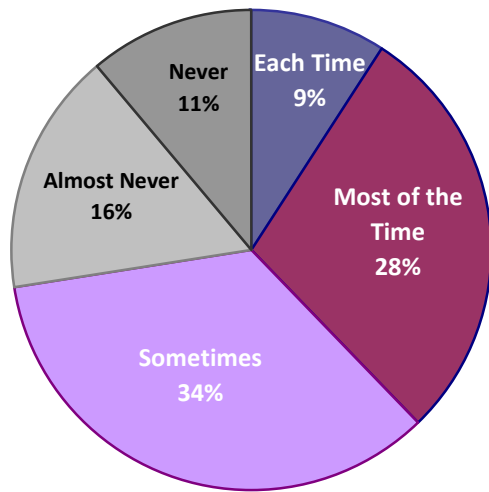
\*Per week

Note: 8% of travelers were unsure about the number of miles they cover in a week and could not be placed into any of the three categories.

## II. Billboard Advertising

### Travelers Note Ad Messages Some, Most or Each Time They Pass a Billboard

“How often do you notice the advertising messages on roadside billboards?”



#### Spotlight on Digital Billboards

“One specific type of billboard is called a digital billboard. These digital roadside billboards repeatedly change advertising messages electronically every eight seconds.

Have you noticed any digital billboards...

**...in the past month”**

55% of travelers | 61% of billboard viewers

**...in the past week”**

32% of travelers | 38% of billboard viewers

Base: United States residents aged 18 or older.

Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who have traveled in any vehicle in the past month.

**Travelers who notice billboards look at the advertising messages.** Seventy-one percent of travelers aged 18 or older notice the advertising messages on billboards either sometimes, most of the time or each time they pass one; nearly one in 10 notice the advertising message *each time* they see a billboard.

	Age 18-34*	Age 25-54*
Each time you notice a billboard	11%	10%
Most of the time	30%	31%
Sometimes	34%	36%
Almost never	15%	14%
OR Never	10%	9%
<b>Each, Most OR Sometimes (to be known as <i>billboard viewers</i>)</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>77%</b>

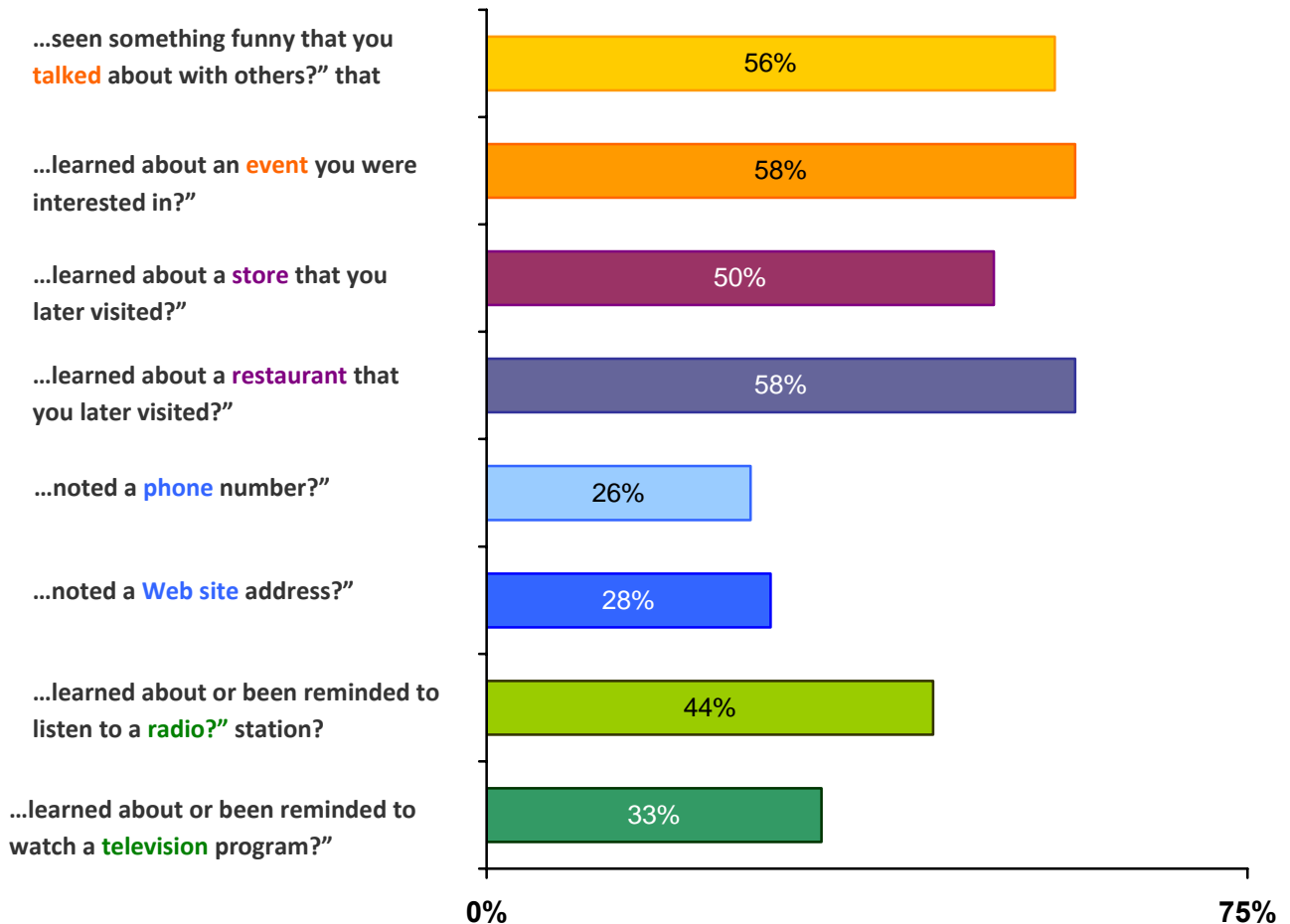
\*30% of total respondents are 18 to 34 years old; 57% are 25 to 54.



## Viewer Engagement With Billboard Advertising

"Now I would like to ask you about some things you learn from seeing roadside billboards.

On a roadside billboard, have you ever... (Answer: yes)



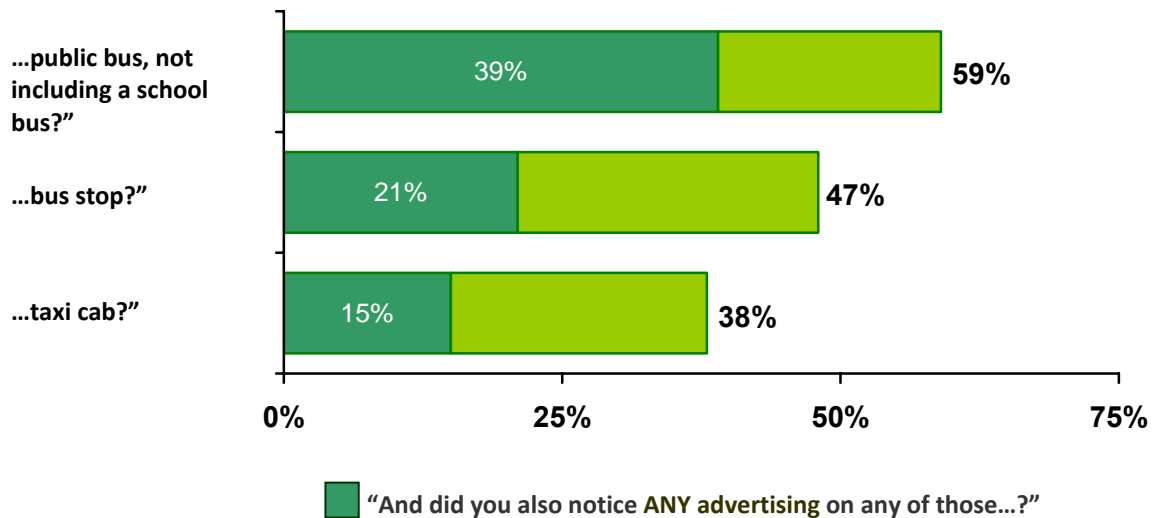
Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes.

**Roadside billboard viewers engage with a range of billboard advertising messages.** More than half of viewers aged 18 or older have learned about an event they were interested in attending (58%), learned about a restaurant they later visited (58%) or talked about something funny they saw (56%) on a roadside billboard. More than one-third of viewers have been reminded to tune into a TV program (33%) or a radio station (44%); and more than one-quarter of viewers have noted a phone number (26%) or Web site address (28%) written on an outdoor billboard.

### III. Other Types of Outdoor Advertising

#### Buses and Taxis Keep Outdoor Advertising on the Move

“At any time IN THE PAST 7 DAYS have you noticed a... (total)



Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who have traveled in any vehicle in the past month.

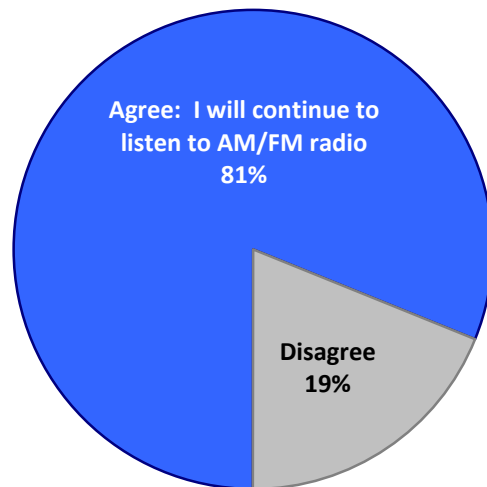
**Transit advertising and street furniture expand outdoor advertising beyond billboards.** Fifty-nine percent of travelers aged 18 or older have noticed a public bus, not including a school bus, in the past week and 39% have noticed an advertising message on a bus (that equals 66% of all travelers who noticed a bus). Nearly half (47%) of travelers noticed a bus stop in the past week and 21% of them noted an ad on it (that is 44% of travelers who noticed a bus stop). Taxi cabs have been spotted by 38% of travelers and 15% of them noticed an ad message on it (or 39% of travelers who noticed a taxi).

## IV. Radio and Other In-Car Audio Sources

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### AM/FM Radio Is the Soundtrack for Billboard Advertising

“Agree or disagree... you will continue to listen to AM/FM radio *as much as you do now* despite increasing advancements in technology.”



Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes.

**Billboard viewers see AM/FM radio remaining a significant component of in-car media despite changes in audio technology.** More than eight in 10 billboard viewers agree they will continue to listen to AM/FM radio as much as they do now despite increasing advancements in technology.

According to Arbitron's radio ratings service, 93% of Americans aged 18 or older listen to an AM or FM radio station for five minutes or more during an average week.<sup>1</sup>

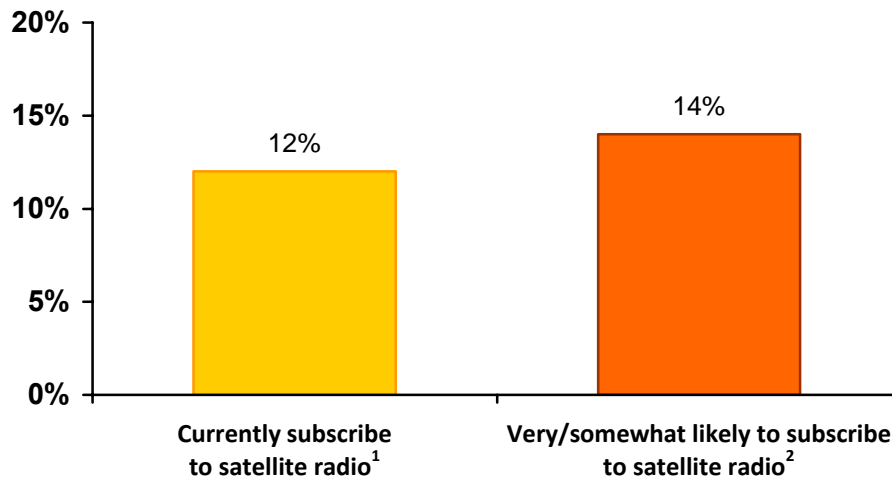
<sup>1</sup>Source: Arbitron Radio Today 2008 Edition.

## In-Car Audio Beyond the AM/FM Dial

“Do you currently subscribe to any services from SIRIUS® XM?”

“How likely are you to subscribe to SIRIUS XM satellite radio services within the next 12 months?”

(very likely, somewhat likely or not at all)



<sup>1</sup>Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes. These data are not expected to reflect the number of unique subscriptions stated by the satellite radio industry since this is a self-reported statistic and multiple persons can share a single subscription.

<sup>2</sup>Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes and do not already subscribe to satellite radio.

**More than 1 in 10 travelers have a satellite radio subscription.** Twelve percent of billboard viewers have a subscription to SIRIUS XM, and among those who do not, 14% feel they are very or somewhat likely to subscribe during the next 12 months.

### Internet Radio In-Car

“And how interested would you be in listening to Internet radio programming in the car?”

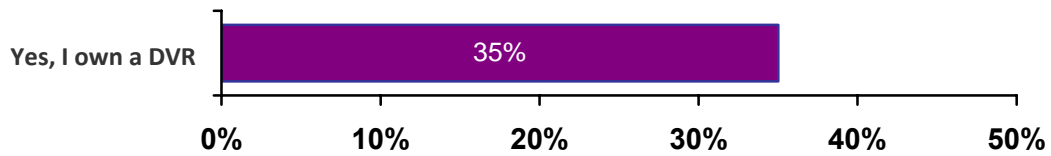
**38% of billboard viewers are very or somewhat interested in listening to Internet radio in the car.**

Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes.

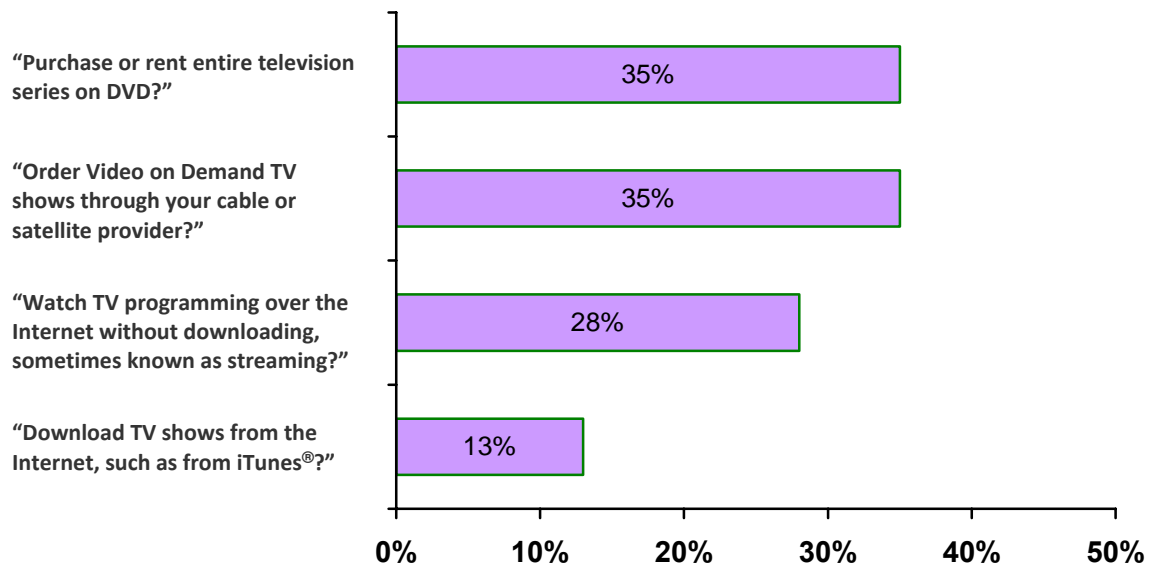
## V. Billboard Viewers and In-Home Media Fragmentation

### Shifts in Television Viewing Habits

“Do you currently own or use any Digital Video Recorders, such as a TiVo or a DVR supplied by a cable or satellite TV provider?”



“Have you ever watched TV programming in this manner?”



Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes.

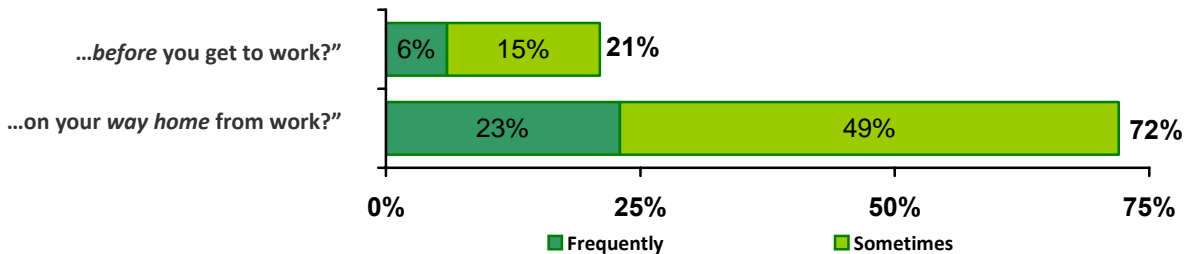
**More and more consumers are experimenting with new video platforms that affect their consumption of at-home TV commercials.** Thirty-five percent of billboard viewers own a digital video recorder such as a TiVo, which allows users to time shift programming and even avoid commercials entirely. More than one-third (35%) of viewers have also rented a TV series on DVD or watched episodes On Demand through their cable or satellite TV provider. More than one in four viewers (28%) have watched a TV program over the Internet and more than one in 10 (13%) have downloaded a show from the Internet.

## VI. Billboard Advertising’s Affect on Shopping Behavior

### Billboard Advertising Is One of the Last Messages a Consumer Receives Before Making a Buy Decision

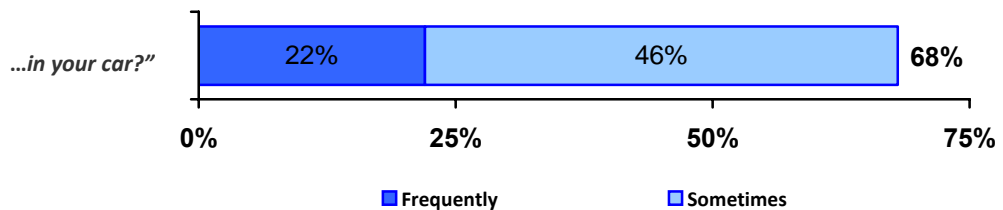
“Now think about the shopping you do during a typical week. I would like to know how often you do your shopping during various TIMES OF DAY in the course of a typical WORK WEEK...using a scale of FREQUENTLY, SOMETIMES or ALMOST NEVER? Here’s the first one...

How often do you *go shopping*...

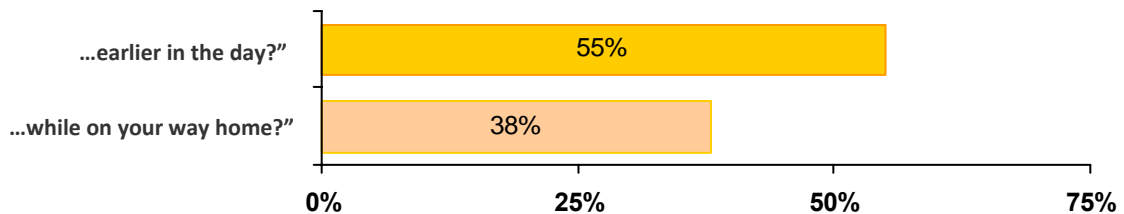


“Thinking about the purchases you make over the course of an AVERAGE WEEK, I would like to know how often you think about shopping or make your purchasing decisions when you are in various locations...again using a scale of FREQUENTLY, SOMETIMES or ALMOST NEVER. Here’s the first one...

How often do you think about and make *shopping decisions* while you are...



“Now think about the shopping you do on your way home from work. In general, when do you usually make the *decision to stop* at a store on your way home from work...



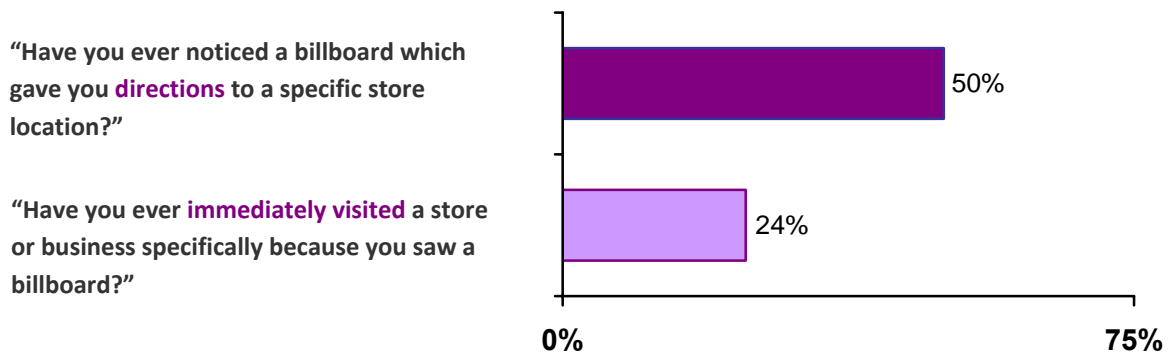
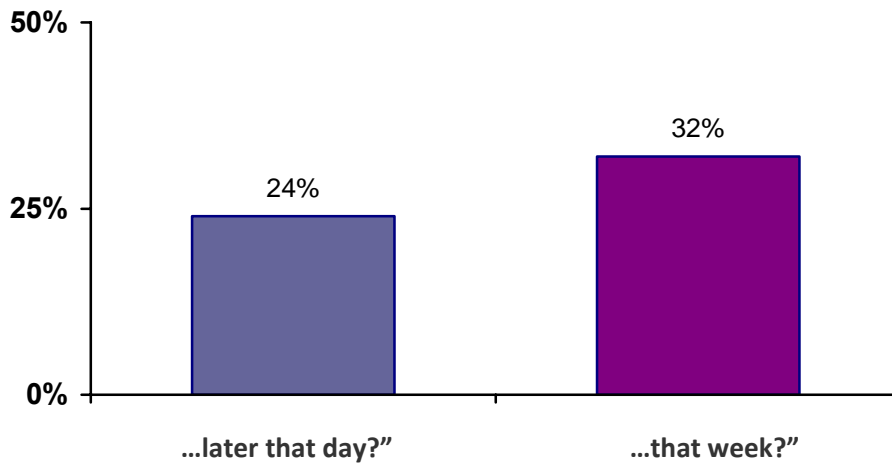
Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes.

**Billboard viewers make shopping decisions while in the car.** Nearly three-quarters (72%) of billboard viewers frequently or sometimes shop on their *way home* from work. More than two-thirds (68%) of billboard viewers frequently or sometimes make their shopping decisions while *in the car* and more than one-third (38%) make the decision to stop at the store *while* on their way home.

## Using Billboard Advertising to Drive Store Traffic

“Now think about when you are in a vehicle and you see a billboard advertising a store or business.

Have you ever noticed a billboard advertising a sale or special offer that **motivated you to visit** a certain store...

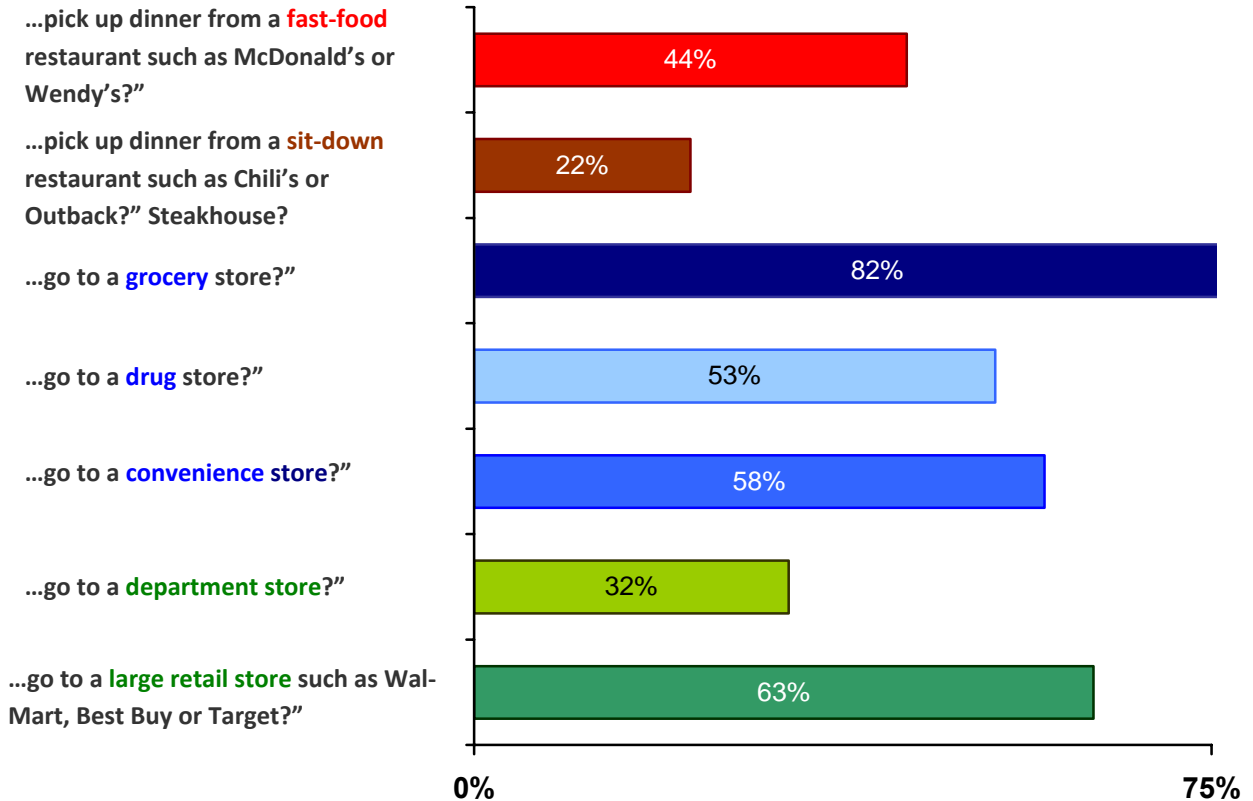


Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes.

**Roadside billboards can be used to direct commuters to a retail outlet.** Nearly one-quarter (24%) of billboard viewers say they were motivated to visit a particular store that day because of an outdoor ad message and nearly one-third (32%) visited the retailer they saw on a billboard later that week. Half of viewers reported receiving directional information from a billboard and 24% said they have immediately visited a business because of an outdoor ad message.

## Where Consumers Shop on Their Way Home From Work

"IN THE PAST MONTH have you stopped on your way home from work to..."



Base: United States residents aged 18 or older who travel to work and notice the advertising messages on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes.

**Consumers shop at a wide range of venues on their way home from work.** More than eight in 10 (82%) billboard viewers who commute to work have stopped at a grocery store on their way home from work in the past month and nearly two-thirds (63%) have stopped at a large retail store. Convenience stores (58%), drug stores (53%) and fast-food restaurants (44%) are also popular places for consumers to visit on their way home from work.



## Appendix A

### Demographic Profiles of Total Persons Aged 18 or Older, Travelers and Viewers

	Total U.S. Population	Travelers (driver or passenger)	Roadside Billboard Viewers
<b>Gender</b>			
Men	48%	47% <sup>1</sup>	48% <sup>1</sup>
Women	52%	53%	52%
<b>Age</b>			
18–24	12%	12%	12%
25–34	18%	18%	19%
35–44	20%	19%	21%
45–54	19%	19%	20%
55–64	14%	15%	14%
65+	17%	17%	14%
<b>Employment Status</b>			
Employed full time	48%	48%	50%
Employed part time	10%	11%	10%
Unemployed	6%	6%	6%
Homemaker	7%	7%	8%
Retired	21%	21%	18%
Student	5%	5%	6%
<b>Household Income<sup>2</sup></b>			
\$50K+	50%	50%	50%
\$75K+	27%	28%	26%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Hispanic	12%	11%	12%
Non-Hispanic	88%	89%	88%

<sup>1</sup>How to read: Forty-seven percent (47%) of United States residents aged 18 or older who have traveled in any vehicle in the past month are male, and 48% of United States residents aged 18 or older who notice the advertising message on roadside billboards each time, most of the time or sometimes are male.

<sup>2</sup>Household incomes are reported out of those who provided a response: 66% of total sample, 66% of travelers and 70% of roadside billboard viewers.

Note: Totals subject to rounding. All sections do not add up to 100% because some respondents declined to answer certain demographic questions.

## Appendix B

### Demographic Profiles of Light, Medium and Heavy (Mega-Milers) Travelers

	Light Travelers (Fewer than 50 Miles) 25% of sample	Medium Travelers (50-150 Miles) 35% of sample	Mega-Milers (150+ Miles) 32% of sample
<b>Gender</b>			
Men	41% <sup>1</sup>	46%	58% <sup>1</sup>
Women	59%	54%	42%
<b>Age</b>			
18-24	13%	12%	10%
25-34	15%	16%	21%
35-44	19%	20%	21%
45-54	15%	19%	25%
55-64	13%	16%	14%
65+	25%	17%	9%
<b>Employment Status</b>			
Employed full time	34%	46%	65%
Employed part time	12%	10%	10%
Retired	29%	12%	12%
Homemaker	11%	3%	3%
Unemployed	7%	4%	4%
Student	5%	5%	5%
<b>Household Income<sup>2</sup></b>			
\$50K+	37%	49%	64%
\$75K+	16%	37%	39%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Hispanic	13%	11%	7%
Non-Hispanic	87%	89%	93%

<sup>1</sup>How to read: Forty-one percent (41%) of light travelers are male and 58% of heavy travelers are male.

<sup>2</sup>Household incomes are reported out of those who provided a response: 65% of total light travelers, 66% of medium travelers and 71% of mega-milers.

Note: Totals subject to rounding. All sections do not add up to 100% because some respondents declined to answer certain demographic questions.

## About Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA)

The Outdoor Advertising Association of America is the lead trade association representing the outdoor advertising industry. Founded in 1891, OAAA is dedicated to uniting, promoting, protecting and advancing outdoor advertising interests in the U.S. With nearly 1,100 member companies, OAAA represents more than 90% of industry revenues.

*\*Information supplied by OAAA.*

## About Arbitron Inc.

Arbitron Inc. (NYSE: ARB) is a media and marketing research firm serving the media—radio, television, cable, online radio and out-of-home—as well as advertisers and advertising. Arbitron's core businesses are measuring network and local-market radio audiences across the United States; surveying the retail, media and product patterns of local-market consumers; and providing application software used for analyzing media audience and marketing information data. The company has developed the Portable People Meter™, a new technology for media and marketing research.

Through its Scarborough Research, Arbitron provides additional media and marketing research services to the broadcast television, newspaper and online industries.

Arbitron's headquarters and its world-renowned research and engineering organizations are located in Columbia, MD.

Arbitron's Out-of-Home division provides training, consumer behavioral data, audience profiles and analysis software for out-of-home media. Currently, nearly 100 out-of-home plants/place-based media clients and thousands of media industry clients—agencies, advertisers, stations, marketers and networks—utilize Arbitron and Scarborough consumer behavior information and software.

Credible third-party measurement helps advertisers justify their investment in the medium. The company's 50+ years of audience measurement experience help sellers focus on selling the value of their advertising rather than justifying the credibility of their measurement. Arbitron research studies about cinema advertising, the outdoor industry, and traditional and nontraditional media can be found on the company's Web site at [www.arbitron.com](http://www.arbitron.com) and can be downloaded free of charge.

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SIRIUS® XM is a registered trademark of SIRIUS XM Radio Inc.  
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