Reality vs. Perception
Persons 12-34 Use of Radio has Risen and Listening Remains Level

In light of all the chatter about how and whether or not young people use radio today, we asked Bill Rose of Arbitron for an analysis of 12-34 persons' radio listening in the 10 PPM markets that have been in existence since Sept 2008. He tracked changes in % listening and for how long they listened. His findings are based on nearly 5,000 persons 12-34 from just these 10 markets and come from passive measure Portable People Meters rather than questions about people's perception of their media usage habits.

Here are his findings:

"Radio listening among young people age 12-34 has remained steady in the ten PPM markets that have been currency during the past three years. An analysis of these ten PPM markets reveals that the percentage of people age 12-34 who have tuned for five or more minutes during the week (weekly cume rating) has actually grown from an average of 93.0% in September 2008 to 94.9% in September 2010. In addition, Radio Time Spent Listening has been stable at 10:09 per week in September 2010 up slightly from 10:04 in September 2008. The stability of Radio listening is evidence of the medium's continued importance among young people and is especially noteworthy considering the highly publicized growth of smart phone usage, social networking and pureplay Internet radio during this span of time."

The Arbitron data is based on what 5,000 people in 10 markets actually did, vs. typically, what 1,500 people nationwide say they did. Building a communications plan using only perception-based data is like building on sand. That's why the advertising business demanded passive electronic measurement of TV and Radio. Arbitron's passive measurement data clearly shows that radio is as vital now as it was in 2008 in the lives of 12-34 year olds.