

Results and Analysis of the RPG Podcast Listener Survey May 2009

General Methodology

There were **549 surveys** completed. I'm assuming that all of these responses were from unique individuals. I used an Excel Spreadsheet to perform analysis and the two references to US Averages are from Wikipedia (which I feel is accurate enough for these broad comparisons). While some respondents were clearly from outside the US, the number was not high enough to be statistically significant. Besides, comparisons to US averages aren't meant to be scientific but to provide context for the numbers presented.

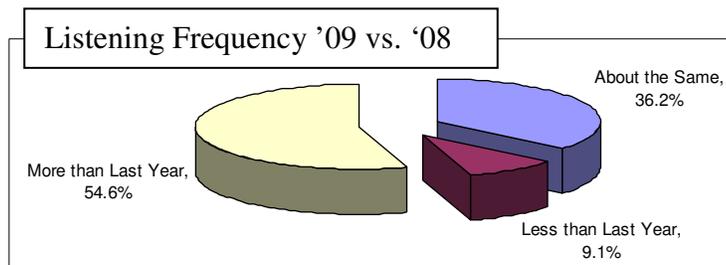
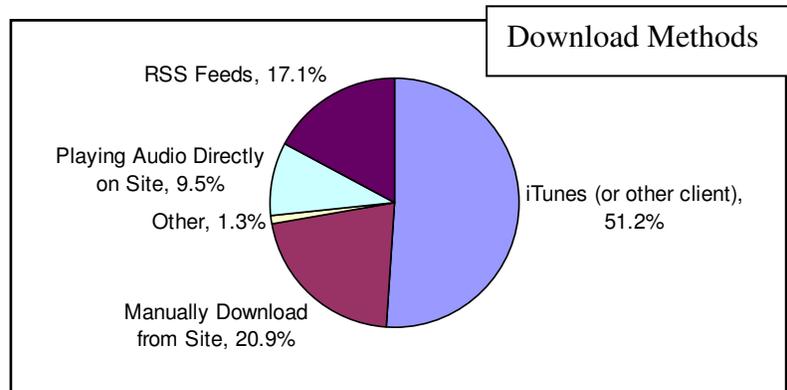
There were **30 female respondents**. Where I found it interesting or informative, I included statistics for females in addition to general data which also includes their data (i.e. – they are technically included twice on those charts). Again, this data is more curiosity than anything else as comparing 30 female respondents to 519 male respondents isn't very scientific.

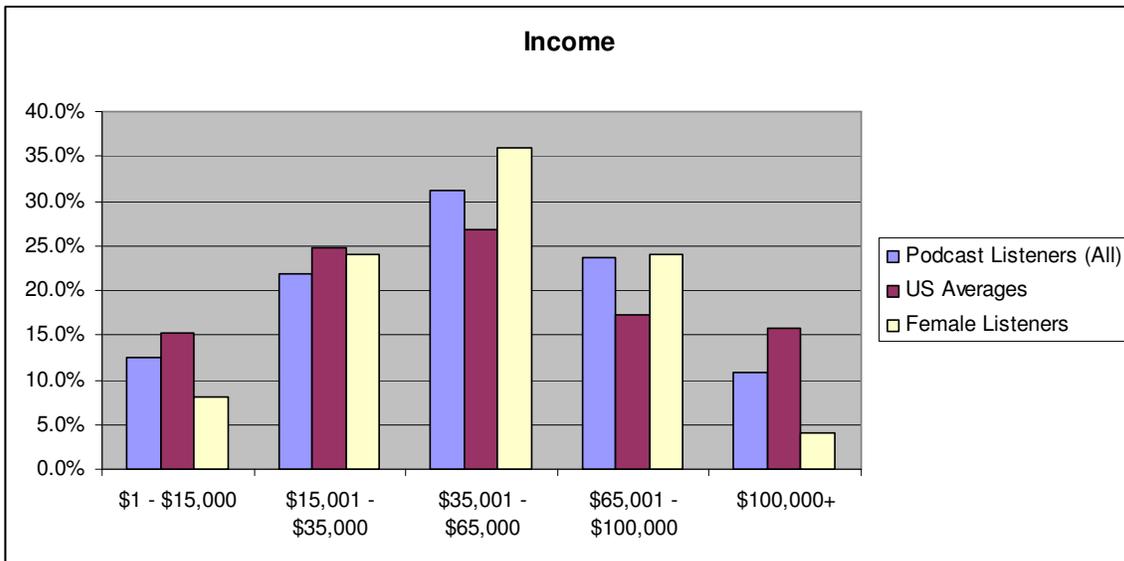
53% of listeners are married (and exactly half of the female listeners are). Beyond this mention here, there is no further analysis on married vs. single.

Listening Habits

The average listener subscribes to **7.89 podcasts** and downloads them from iTunes. Female listeners average only **3.79 shows**.

Fortunately, most listeners are listening to more podcasts than they did last year.



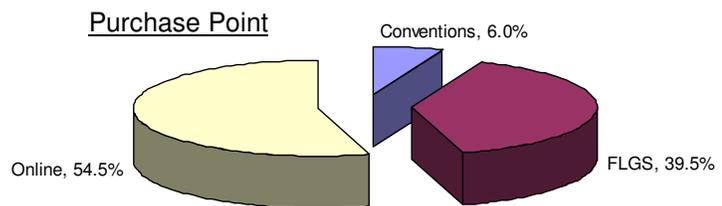


Money

RPG podcast listeners are doing somewhat better than the average American in terms of household income, except in the topmost category. But the unemployment rate among listeners is **8.9%**, higher than the US average of **7.2%** (only **4%** of female listeners are unemployed).

The average listener spends **\$472.76 per year** on games. Female listeners spend **\$895 per year** on games – almost twice the overall average! This could be the result of an actual difference in spending or women could have reported their spending more accurately than men. (Or it could just be a statistical anomaly due to the disparity in sample sizes.) The wording of the survey was not clear on what should or should not be included – for example: convention expenses.

As one might expect of an Internet savvy bunch, the preferred purchase point for RPGs among listeners is online.



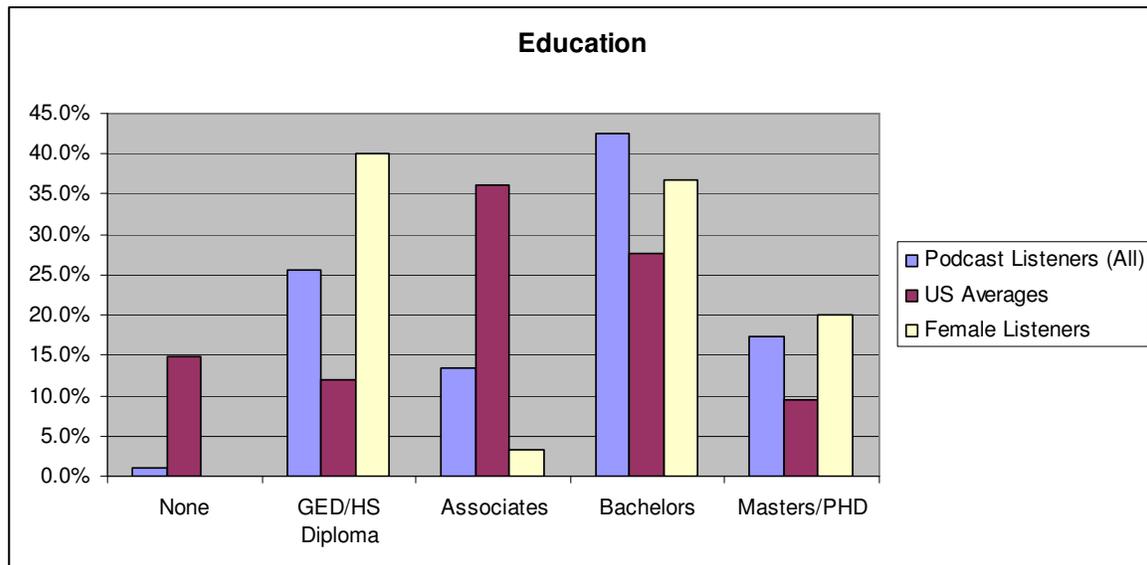
Since the average annual spending on games input field was an open one, I had to take a few liberties with the data. Where respondents entered greater than, less than, or approximately symbols I took those numbers as an exact value. Where they entered ranges (e.g. \$100 to \$200) I used the center of the range as the exact value (e.g. \$150). If non-US currency was used I omitted that data.

Education

On the whole, RPG podcast listeners are better educated than the general public. This one was a little tricky to compare as the US averages referred to the percentage with High School diplomas *and* higher education and the percentage with some college rather than the percentage with a HS diploma and no further degrees. I used the percentages listed for the higher degrees and no diploma to derive the US average for the GED/HS Diploma category. I think this is a valid method of interpolation.

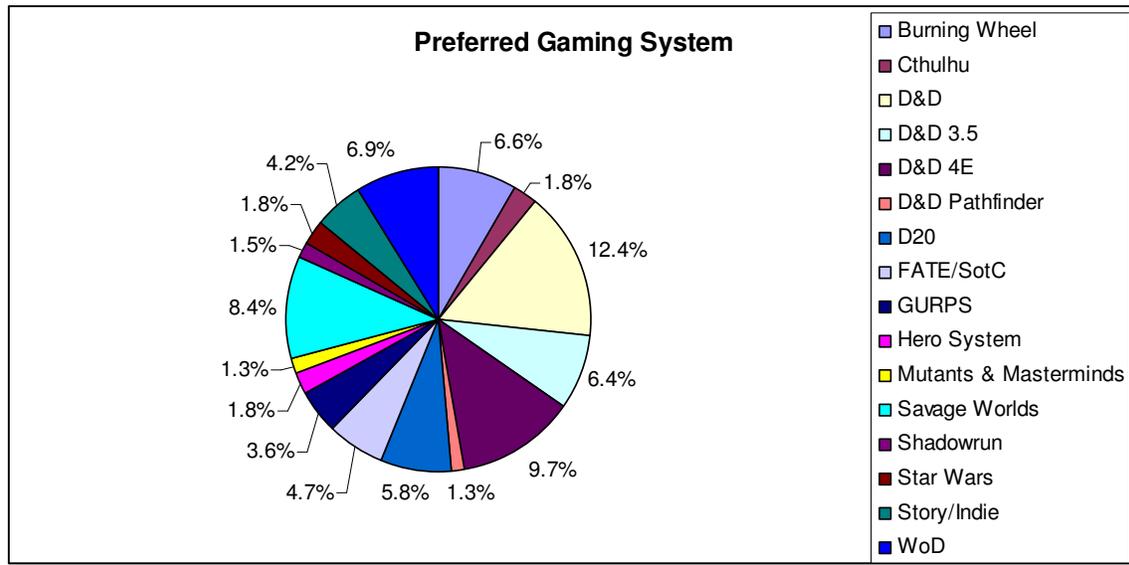
It is interesting to note that listeners are generally not stopping at an Associates Degree and have a much higher rate of continuing their education past this point. While female listeners show the same general trends, there are some large disparities which I think can be attributed to the low sample size.

The percentage of listeners with post-graduate degrees is significantly higher than the US average. Feel free to use \$10 words on mic!



Gaming Systems

The “Preferred Gaming System” field was also an open input field. In order to derive meaningful data, I did my best to interpret responses and consolidate game systems. There were many more gaming systems listed than are on this chart. 51 games not listed here had between 1 and 6 loyal followers. The cutoff was game systems or groups that garnered at least 1% of all respondents.



In addition, all versions of **D&D** total **31.9%**, and D&D with D20 holds **38.1%**.

Some notes about the groupings:

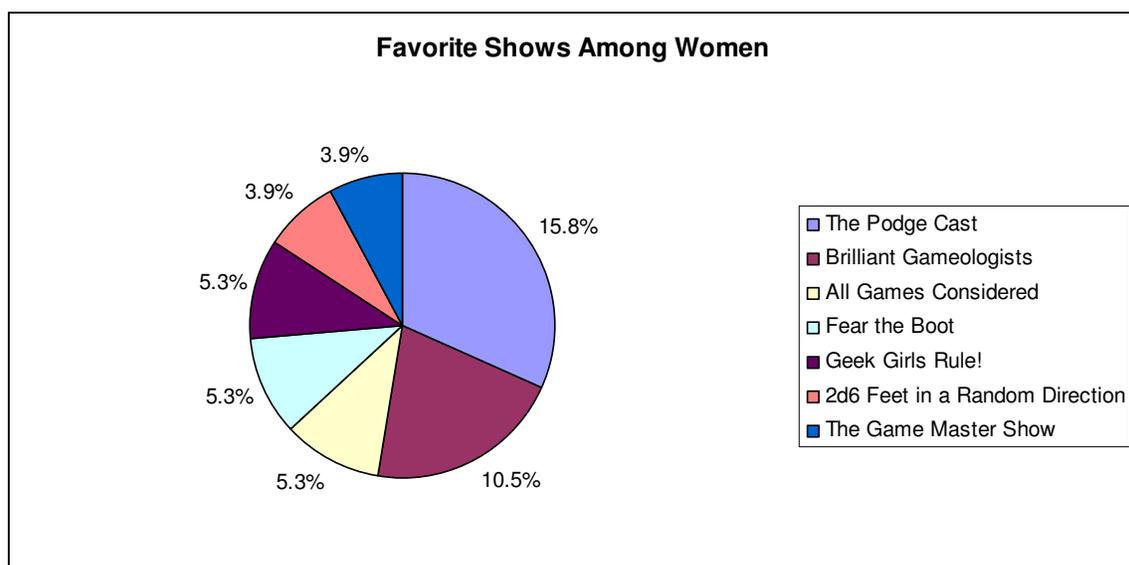
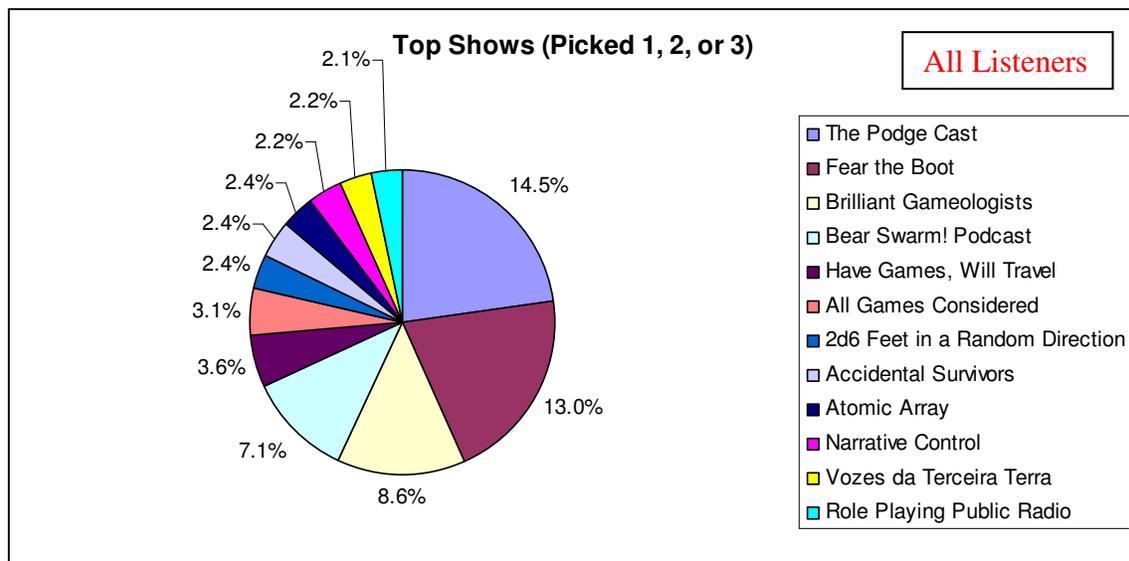
- “Story/Indie” includes: “Dogs in the Vineyard”, “Don't Rest Your Head”, “Houses of the Blooded”, “Indie Games”, “PDQ”, “Polaris”, “PTA”, “Sorcerer”, and “With Great Power...”
- “Cthulhu” includes all responses of “Basic Roleplaying” or BRP
- “Hero System” includes “Champions”
- “Burning Wheel” includes “Mouse Guard”
- “FATE/SotC” includes all versions of “FATE”, “Fudge”, and “Spirit of the Century”
- “Star Wars” includes “SAGA” and all responses of “D6” – Star Wars or otherwise
- “WoD” includes all responses of “Old WoD”, “New WoD”, “Storyteller”, and “White Wolf”

About a dozen respondents listed video game systems (including the SNES!), miniatures games, or board games as their preferred system rather than an RPG.

Top Shows

This is probably the least meaningful set of data given the survey distribution method (advertised by these shows) and the fact that shows were continuously added to the survey after it had started. The real purpose of this data is for the participating shows to perform analysis on the data from just their listeners. But with listeners following an average of almost 8 shows, there's still a good chance that a respondent does listen to your show even if he or she didn't list it as one of their top three. In fact, many respondents listed additional shows in their comments.

So take these next two charts with a big grain of salt. I consolidated all responses of first, second, and third favorite shows without any weighting to produce the results below.



Comments

While there's no objective means to categorize and quantify the various comments received (166 respondents left comments), there were some broad themes that emerged. The most common comment was about audio quality, usually focusing on varying volume levels on the recordings (15 direct comments on audio quality).

There were 18 comments that were generally negative towards banter, immaturity, lack of focus, etc. While it's easy to see that the most popular shows are round-table, banter shows, there is apparently an unfulfilled desire for more serious content. This paralleled the 12 comments for better research, more facts, and more links (and these were often from the same respondents).

There were nine comments that shows need to be released more frequently or consistently (FYI – I worked on this report rather than my show today).

Nine listeners want shorter shows and only two want longer shows. There were five requests for more reviews of RPGs and five requests for more Actual Play shows.

There were also many comments on specific shows (sometimes without the commenter actually naming the show!). It's highly recommended that you search the comments section for feedback on your show.