IAB Tech Lab Podcast

Measurement Independent Certification

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Ausha is a podcast hosting and marketing platform that provides a suite of hosting, distribution, promotion, and monetization tools for beginners and experienced podcasters to launch and grow their shows.

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BPA – Ausha IAB Podcast Measurement Report

Technical Guidelines Version 2.1

GUIDELINE	CONTROL	COMMENTS
I. Filtering		
Eliminate Pre-Load Requests	*Pre-loading of podcasts directly results in podcast downloads being counted when they should not. There are two IAB Tech Lab approved solutions to handle this:* • Policy put in place to not allow pre-loading in players and on websites (e.g. preload=none for HTML5) • Use a download threshold based on ID3 header payload plus 1 minute of recording time to determine if request was for a play/ download or for pre-loading	Supported
Eliminate Potential Bots and Bogus Requests	*There are a number of scenarios where the raw requests include requests that should not be counted because they likely come from bots or from products that behave in ways that make them look like real downloads. IAB recommends that metrics providers filter potential bots and bogus requests.*	
	• *IP threat filtering*	Supported
	• *Domain threat filtering*	Supported
	• *User Agent filtering*	Supported
	• *Apple 2 byte range filtering*	Supported
Automatically Triggered Downloads	**Apple watchOS Duplicate Downloads: Filtering Guidance** Downloads to an Apple Watch device appear to be duplicative of downloads to a user's iPhone after the watch performs its synching cycle. Additionally, the majority of watchOS downloads were observed to be automated downloads and not user initiated. Given these concerns, it is recommended that the following Apple Podcasts app watchOS user agent requests should be filtered out altogether up front and not be counted as unique downloads/listeners: • UA's that begin with **atc**/ and include **watchOS** (for example atc/1.0 watchOS) • UA's that contain **(null)/(null) watchOS***	Supported
Handling HTTP Requests	HEAD requests - these should not be counted because this is typically used to check for changes because no data is transferred in a HEAD request.	Supported

	GET requests:
	• 200 (ok request) should be counted
	• 206 (partial request) A partial request should only be counted if the download covers the 1 minute rule, and de-duplication based on IP Address/UA is being done to cover cases where the user might be skipping ahead. Determining whether the requests cover the 1-minute requirement might require reassembling of the requests.
	• 304 (not modified request) -> signal that user has existing file and wants to see if it changed.
	• Platform specific statuses:
	  ○ 000 (Akamai partial request) Handled the same as 206.
	  ○ 302 (redirect) for redirection based measurement services.
		Supported

II. Apply File Threshold Levels		
	To count as a valid download, the ID3 tag plus enough of the podcast content to play for 1 minute should have been downloaded.	Supported

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	If the podcast is too small or if it isn't possible to compute the file and ID3 sizes regularly, complete file downloads (100% of the file, including the ID3 tag) should be used.	
III. Identify and Aggregate Uniques		
Identifying Uniques (for Downloads & Users)	*Identifying unique requests is important in counting downloads for an episode and in counting audience size. The following method is recommended, and the details of the filtering methods should be kept transparent.*	
	Filtering using IP address + User Agent • A combination of IP Address and UA is used to identify unique users and downloads. For example, if the same file is downloaded 10 times by 6 user agents behind one IP address that would count as 6 users and 6 downloads. • Other methods may be used to identify unique users. Alternate methodologies must be reviewed and approved.	Supported
Metrics for IPv6 Addresses	IPv6 addresses pose certain challenges due to the fact that IPv6 addresses are not static, with multiple new addresses being cycled on a singular device in a given time period. To address potential discrepancies, IPv6 addresses should be **truncated to the first 64 bits** before calculating uniques for the Listener and Download metrics. Note that the IPv4 or partial IPv6 can be hashed for privacy reasons without adversely affecting the calculations.	Supported
Play-Pause-Play Scenarios	If a unique download is divided into multiple file requests, for example if a user plays the first half of an episode using a website audio player, clicks pause, and then resumes a half-hour later, then that should still be counted as one unique download. Care should be taken to not count these as multiple downloads/ users.	Supported
IV. Generate Metrics		
Podcast Content Metric Definitions	**Download:** A unique file request that was downloaded. This includes complete file downloads as well as partial downloads in accordance with the rules described earlier	Supported
	Listener: data that represents a single user who downloads content (for immediate or delayed consumption). Listeners may be represented by a combination of IP address and User Agent as described earlier. The listeners must be specified within a stated time frame (day, week, month, etc.).	Supported
Podcast Ad Metric Definitions	**Ad Delivered:** an ad that was delivered as determined by server logs that show either all bytes of the ad file were sent or the bytes representing the portion of the podcast file containing the ad file was downloaded.	Not Supported
	Client-Confirmed Ad Play: counts an ad that was able to prompt a tracking beacon from the client when the file was played. Whenever possible, metric should include information about how much of the ad was played using the markers: ad start, first quartile (25%), midpoint (50%), third quartile (75%), and complete (100%).	Not Applicable
High Level Metrics	The Content and Ad metrics described above should also be made available at 3 levels – publisher / show / episode	Supported

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V. Publisher Player Recommendations		
	Do not implement Auto-play. This will result in a bad user experience for the user with audio they were not expecting to hear.	Supported
	Do not Pre-load - unless the intent was clearly to play the podcast.	Supported
	Use ID3v2 tags, so that the headers are located at the start of the podcast (not at the end). This allows players to use the ID3 data ahead of streaming time without downloading the full podcast file.	Supported
	ID3 tag sizes - recommend that the ID3 size be limited to 300kb with 800x800 px max for the art.	Supported
	File request - For a full download, ask for the entire file in one go. For a progressive download, ask for the file in slices (byte range). This way a full download can be distinguished from a progressive download.	Supported
	Do not modify the enclosure URL when requesting media, don't add extra parameters.	Supported
	Do not cache podcast episodes on your servers. Always download the latest episode from the enclosure URL for every app user wanting to listen.	Supported
	Use the GUID - as opposed to episode URL, title, publication date, etc. - to identify new episodes in the RSS feed that should be automatically downloaded to a user's device. The GUID is designed to be persistent through changes to hosting environment, titles, etc.	Supported
	Employ an "automatic download unsubscribe" behavior (e.g. - stop auto downloads after 5 episodes of non-listens).	Supported
	Do not automatically download all episodes (e.g. back catalog episodes) by default. This creates unnecessary drain on the publishers' servers and consumes users' bandwidth.	Supported
User Agent Structure	Provide enough details in the user-agent header to allow it to be consistently differentiated from the user agent of other devices. Whenever possible, this should be applied to both RSS feeds and audio files.	Supported
	OS hosts should allow the user agent to be modifiable when using their libraries.	Supported
	Platforms should avoid adding unnecessary information (such as injecting user or session IDs) to the user agent string, and in encoding practices.	Supported
	Platforms are recommended to submit their user agent header value to the IAB Spiders and Bots inclusion list so that it is not considered a bot and can be a signal used to determine the device information.	Supported
	If the app or platform does employ the use of bots to index content, it is recommended to specify a user-agent that is distinct from the application user-agent and includes the word "bot" to clearly identify its use case.	Supported