

**Voices.com**

# **2019 Future Trends in Marketing, Advertising and Voice Over**

## Introduction

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You may have noticed that throughout 2018, 'voice' dominated the media. From the rapid adoption of home assistants like Google Home and Amazon Alexa, to the astronomical growth in industries like elearning and audiobooks, voice-rich media is cropping up everywhere...and it's not going to slow down.

Whether you work in entertainment, media, advertising, marketing, education or other industries, you can expect to see a trend towards voice-rich media ramp up in 2019, as the world prepares for a new voice-enabled, audio-rich way of life.

As the world's largest online marketplace for voice actors, Voices.com is in a unique position to provide insight into vocal trends, including sought-after vocal qualities, media production trends, and how voice over is being leveraged throughout various industries.

This report showcases the top trends in the voice over industry that Voices.com is predicting for 2019. These predictions are based on findings from Voices.com's vast internal data, as well as the survey responses gathered from over 1,700 creative professionals working in diverse industries around the world.

## Gender Equality and Pay Equity in 2020

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### Equal Pay for Equal Work Exists in Voice Over

Last year, we reported that the demand for female voices on Voices.com was rising to close the gender gap (traditionally, more jobs have been posted seeking male voices). Not only has this trend continued, it's picked up its pace.

By 2020, women and men will have equal employment opportunity in the voice over industry (on Voices.com) - five years faster than we previously predicted.

Excitingly, there is also evidence that in voice over, women and men earn equal pay for equal work. On Voices.com, women are winning 44.1% of the work, as well as earning 44% of the pay. This balance between jobs won and the portion of the pay, means that, on average, there is equal pay for equal work. However, there are some subtleties where disparity remains - most notably in audiobooks, where women make approximately \$270 less per project.

Other notable findings in voice over work by gender, include:

Gender parity exists in the demand for voice over work in podcasts.

The biggest gap between genders exists in movie trailer work. 72.4% of movie trailer jobs are posted for male voices, and 27.6% for females. However, work for women in movie trailers is still on the rise and has increased by approximately 12% between 2015 and 2018.

Between 2017 and 2018, the most significant gains towards parity occurred in documentary and video game voice over work, where opportunities for women grew by 5% in each area.

Currently, the category where demand for female voices dominates is within telephone (IVR) voice over, where women complete 75% of the jobs.

However, despite the great opportunity for women in this growing industry, they are entering the voice acting space disproportionately slower than men. In 2016, 46% of new voice actor registrations were female, but throughout the past two years (into 2018), the number of new female members dropped to only 40% of the total.

### 2019 Prediction:

Marketplace demand for female and male voices will become increasingly balanced, reaching a 50/50 split by 2020. This has occurred 5 years faster than we originally predicted in 2017. Given the speed at which this trend is progressing, we wouldn't be surprised if demand for female voices picks outpaces demand for male voices by 2020.

## The Gig Economy Continues Growth

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### Freelance Voice Over Careers Highly Sought Out, Offer Economic Empowerment

Voices.com's voice actor base, already significant in size (the largest, by far, in the world), grew by 24% this year, pushing the 2018 projection for total registered talent over 400,000.

These voice actors hail from over 148 countries, and a large portion reside in the United States where the move towards freelance employment as a main job or as a side hustle, is prevalent and growing. A 2018 Gallup poll indicates that 36% of U.S. workers are participating in the 'gig economy.'

### Agencies Shrinking, Corporate Teams and Freelance Economy Growing

Last year, 61% of respondents identified themselves as part of an agency or production house, whereas in 2018, only 48% did.

This 13% drop is reflective of wider news stories throughout 2018, which have been reporting that brands are building their in-house creative teams, while letting their agencies go.

The fact that global juggernaut Amazon has cut agencies out of advertising deal, opting to work directly with brands, is more proof of this shift.

Interestingly, survey respondents also indicated that hiring freelancers has become a staple of their culture. 60% stated that they are using more freelancers (online, contract, etc.) than ever before.

### 2019 Prediction:

If you work in a creative field, in-house or in an agency, be prepared for the rise of the 'specialist' to take root (even more so) throughout the coming year. Instead of being a jack of all trades (generalist), those who master their craft will find coveted flexible jobs throughout the creative industry.

Additionally, this move to specialization will also bode well for freelancers, such as voice over actors, who will be able to differentiate themselves from others by virtue of their honed skills and training.

## ELearning Industry Booms, Internet Videos Continue to Proliferate

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### Education and Internet Fastest Growing Sectors of Voice Over Work

Voices.com categorizes voice over work into over a dozen classifications, from audiobooks to video games, and more. Data shows that all areas of work are growing, but two areas saw more notable growth than others.

The educational category, which was already strong, saw a 10.4% increase (from 2017 to 2018). Considering multiple reports of explosive growth in elearning, which is predicted to become a \$200B industry by 2024, this growth appears to be rooted in a larger trend.

Content designed for internet use (e.g. video) also continued strong growth at about 13%, for the third straight year. This is no surprise given the meteoric and continuing rise in on-demand content.

Interestingly, survey respondents' focus was almost entirely lasered in on single project types - a departure from other years where creatives were stretched thin, managing a diverse portfolio.

39% of respondents indicated that they were dedicated to producing Training and/or elearning Videos 'Often' or 'Exclusively' - a 36% increase over last year.

Meanwhile, half (50%) of the survey respondents indicated that they complete Animated Videos or Internet Ad projects 'Often' or 'Exclusively.'

### 2019 Prediction:

Look out for more educational content to proliferate globally in 2019, as well as the growth in subscription model businesses and platforms to envelope educational content. Also watch for other streaming forms of internet video to take off, with video advertising following suit.

## Voice Over Trends Favor Voices that Connect with Key Demographics

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### Voice Over is a Lever to Pull for Attention, Emotional Connection and Information Retention

Voice over is becoming increasingly regarded as a critical creative component. The number of survey respondents who 'agreed' or strongly agreed' with these statements saw an increase from 2017:

75% (+8% vs last year) A good voice over is critical to my project.

71% (+5% vs last year) Using voice over helps me capture my target audience's attention for longer than if I didn't use voice over in that project.

80% Voice over is a tool that I use to help increase information retention in my target audience.

76% Voice over helps a brand connect better with the target audience.

66% Voice over is essential in creating an intended emotional reaction.

64% Projects with voice over generally perform better than those without voice over.

### 2019 Prediction:

With the rapid adoption of voice home assistants and the corresponding race to develop skills/apps, 2019 will see voice playing a more integral role in projects, not just for garnering attention, but as a tool for entertainment and expression of brand voice.

### Most In-Demand Vocal Characteristics

Here are the vocal characteristics respondents indicated they would be looking for more of throughout 2019:

30% said they're looking for more female voices.

27% are looking for more authoritative or professional voices.

27% indicated they'll be looking for the 'girl/guy-next-door.'

27% are looking for more non-English languages.

On the other side of the equation? Celebrity voices. 70% indicated that they're either looking for fewer celebrity voices, or not looking for them at all.

## Voice Technology Preference Leans Towards a Human Voice

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### Siri-ously Speaking, Synthetic Voices Don't Cut it, Yet...

Even with strides in technology, it seems that by-and-large, synthetic voices are not regarded as a suitable alternative for a natural human sound. 91% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a human voice is more powerful than a synthetic, or computer-generated voice.

But how they feel about the future of manufactured voices and how they'll stack up?

Public opinion is divided. When asked if they feel that synthetic voices will become a viable alternative to human voices over the next decade:

50% disagree or strongly disagree

25% are neutral

17% agree

8% strongly agree

### 2019 Prediction:

2019 will see more new voice-enabled or voice interacting technologies being introduced or refined, but what won't appear to change any time soon is the type of voice we all would prefer to hear attached to it - a human voice.

## Conclusion

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The way we engage with content is shifting: voice is now both powering and responding to our content needs - a new precedent for 2019 and beyond. Rising to meet this need will be voice-integrated and audio-rich content, which will proliferate at blinding speed, especially online and within the elearning industry.

Brands that want to continue to own and grow their presence with their audience will have to get on board, or risk being left behind.

While audio content grows, keep a look out for a greater presence of female voices, natural, human voice over (sorry robots), as brands deepen emotional connections with their key audiences.