

**Examining the developments of product placement in UK TV dramas from 2002  
to 2012.**

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**Dissertation submitted to the University of Leicester  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
MSC Marketing**

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my dissertation supervisor for their advice and contributions to the writing of this dissertation. Also to those who proof read my work.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines product placement in UK television dramas and how it has developed between the years of 2002 and 2012. This is an important issue, as the nature of society is changing, so marketing is too. Consumers are changing the way they view traditional marketing methods and how they access their television programmes. These combined prove problematic for products. This study looks at how these changes have altered the ways in which product placement is used.

The literature reviewed begins by looking at the various terms for, and basic definitions of product placement and identifies the key characteristics of product placement; their features, the types of placements that are used and how they are used within a programme. The literature also discusses the advantages and disadvantages of using product placement and its growth in recent years. Its effect upon brand attitudes, brand recall and persuasion to purchase are also considered. Product placement's role in a postmodern society and the subsequent ethical considerations and laws are also reviewed, along with previous studies conducted and their relevance to the primary research.

The methodological design is inductive and interpretivist. The primary research gathers qualitative data through analysing three episodes of each of the ten selected drama series. The data was analysed by comparing and contrasting the results from each of the five series with one another and in response to the literature reviewed.

The research found there to be five main conclusions in how product placement has developed from 2002 to 2012. There has been an increase in the number of placements and a rise in the use of the mere exposure effect to generate positive brand attitudes. Additionally the use of brands to form consumer identities is used in 2012 placements, as are the placements more highly connected to the narrative. Finally, there has been an introduction of laws that 2012 placements largely adhere to. In light of these, recommendations were made to fully obey the laws set out for product placements and two items of further study; the relation of brand attitude to plot connection of the placements and whether or not featured products are used by the audience in the construction of their identity.

## **1. Introduction**

This dissertation looks to examine how product placement has changed in British television dramas from 2002 to 2012; in its nature and use. Product placement is a marketing tool that can be used as part of the marketing mix. Product placement is the inclusion of branded products into programmes; or films; for both use by characters or for scene staging purposes and can be visual or verbal. It has a nature about it which both attracts and deters marketers from using it. This study acknowledges that its use occurs in everyday modern media consumption and therefore is important to be examined.

Product placement was originally viewed as a “show the can” technique, in which products were simply shown in an obvious way on the screen so as to be clear to the audience. This has since evolved, as theory now looks at how involved the placed product is with the programme; how engaged in the narrative and also with which member of the cast.

The very nature of product placement poses both positives and negatives. The covert way in which products are placed is seen by some as an advantage, but to others is the reason for determining it as harmful. Some suggest that a hidden tool such as product placement can allow for audiences to be persuaded without their knowledge, of which can be seen as unethical. Others however, view product placement as a way for audiences to access their aspirational lifestyles, to emulate their favourite characters or actors; to create their personalities by consuming products. These are all powerful views, which are necessary to examine.

Product placement was seen as a secondary marketing tool, but is now becoming considered as a more valuable device due to its character and changing societal conditions. Audiences view television differently to how they did ten years previously; busy lifestyles, access to catch-up and to on-demand, with the addition of DVR recorders have changed the way audiences act. These technologies provide the modern audience with the ability to firstly, access programmes whenever they wish to and secondly, to fast-forward advertisements; both allowing television programmes to fit into their lifestyle. Therefore, audiences do not watch advertisements, as they are skipped, so product placement provides a solution; include the advertisements in the programmes.

As a result, this dissertation seeks to examine how the use of product placement in UK television dramas has changed from 2002 to 2012. The objectives are to look at the developments in the ways placements are included; have there been changes in frequency and subtlety; and to discuss the varying brands that are placed; how might these effect the consumer.

These objectives propose to examine how a subtle promotional tool has developed in its nature and the way in which it targets the consumer. Modern life has altered in the last ten years and, as consumption of media texts is a part of everyday life, it is important to look at how product placement has changed with it.

This chapter, chapter one, begins the dissertation by comprising of an introduction. The second chapter of the dissertation reviews the literature surrounding product placement. This considers the theories upon how product placement is constructed for use in programmes, how placements are interwoven into said television shows and what effect this bears upon the audience. Theories discussed in the literature impact upon the data collection process and on how the information collected is analysed.

In the third chapter, the methodology used is outlined. The primary research uses programmes released onto DVD, so as to be available in the public domain. The programmes were originally broadcast on UK television channels, comprising of; BBC1, ITV1, Channel 4, Channel 5 and Sky1. The data for the research was collected using a data collection sheet through analysis of the episodes of the chosen programmes. The study used inductive and interpretivist methodological design to collect qualitative information.

Chapter four discusses and analyses the findings of the primary research. It is examined in terms of theories found in the literature review. And chapter five concludes these findings before completing recommendations on the back of the conclusions drawn; comprising of both practical and theoretical.

Finally, chapter six reflects upon the process of the study. Strengths and weaknesses are observed and possible improvements upon the research are made. Note, chapters seven and eight contain references and appendices.

## **2. Literature Review**

This chapter will seek to review the available literature surrounding the topic of product placement. The chapter will consider seven areas of interest within product placement, with the eighth looking at previous research that has been carried out; and the ninth discussing its relevance to the primary research. Multiple theories will be compared and contrasted and those of particular interest and significance to the primary research will be drawn out.

There is a wide array of literature surrounding product placement, but the dominating theories centre around the medium of film, and any television programmes subject to study are American. There are also various terms within the literature for product placement; 'branded entertainment', 'embedded marketing' and 'brand placement'. However, the definitions of product placement although differ slightly, culminate in two of particular interest.

Cowley and Barron (2008)'s definition is as follows:

*'Product placement is a combination of advertising and publicity designed to influence the audience by unobtrusively inserting branded products in entertainment programs such that the viewer is unlikely to be aware of the persuasive intent'* (Cowley and Barron 2008: 89).

This highlights the subtlety of product placement; a key issue that will be discussed later both in terms of being covert or it as a benefit; and the hybrid nature of product placement within the marketing mix. The other definition of significance is from Deery (2012) and is as follows:

*'Product placement, the practice of arranging for brands or products to be embedded in media content'* (Deery 2012: 15).

This is demonstrative of defining product placement as a mere transaction between seller and producer. However, as discussed later, the details of the contract between both parties may influence the placement considerably.

This chapter will now look at the various forms of product placement, why it is used and both the advantages and disadvantages of its use. It will also discuss the ethical issues that encompass and the laws that must be adhered to. All of these are beneficial as they assist the understanding of what product placement is, why its use has increased and how it is placed within the promotional mix. The features and the regulations will, provide focus and subject for the remainder of the paper and its research.

## **2.1 Characteristics of Product Placement**

The literature identifies a number of key characteristics and types of product placement of which echo both the placement itself and the business transaction as described by Deery (2012). La Ferle and Edwards (2006) offer the distinct elements of product placements, the different ways in which they function. Tiwsakul et al (2005) state there are three main types of product placement; screen placement, script

placement and plot placement. A screen placement involves the product being seen as part of the scene in the programme, whereas a script placement is a product or brand name being cited by a character. A plot placement is when the product is key to the programme's storyline, for example a character's *iPhone* is stolen. La Ferle and Edwards (2006) entitle screen placement as the visual characteristics of the placement, and separate into primary and secondary categories of how clearly the product is shown; including whether or not it is the only product on screen at one time.

Instead of script placement, La Ferle and Edwards (2006) discuss it under the title of verbal characteristics. Verbal characteristics are representative of how many times the product is mentioned and how it is spoken of; the brand name – *Heinz* - or by type - *Heinz* tomato ketchup - and the relevance of the product to the scene. Finally, Tiwsakul et al (2005)'s plot placement is similar to La Ferle and Edwards (2006) placement prominence. Both plot placement and prominence refer to how subtle, or not, the placement is within the scene. Prominence however, centres on which character refers to the product, the length of exposure and if the characters interact with or because of the product. Plot placement summarises this by theorising that it is how much the product is part of the story. La Ferle and Edwards (2006)'s specifications, whilst elaborating on Tiwsakul et al (2005)'s, do have a tendency to overlap within one another. For example the positioning of the product; in the forefront or not; and amount of attention commanded to the product, features in both visual/verbal but could be listed under prominence.

The previous descriptions can be exemplified for instance by a box of *Special K* cereal in ITV1 soap '*Coronation Street*'. The box can be used simply to demonstrate that the characters of Sally and Kevin are in the kitchen, so it may be displayed on the worktop in the background of the camera shot, of which it would be there for scene-setting. But, if the box of cereal is at the forefront of the camera shot and on the table, it would be evident that the characters are eating breakfast from this visual placement. In addition to being prominent in the shot, Sally may ask Kevin if he would like some *Special K*, which would then be a verbal placement; or a script placement; and be a more central part of the narrative.

Tiwsakul et al (2005) however, omit the number of references and the positioning of the product from their categories and choose instead to focus on the relevance to the plot. With this in mind when taking forward these theories, a proposal that there are four main facets to be observed; audio characteristics, visual characteristics, prominence of placement and plot connection. These will be taken forward into the next chapters and be key in the primary research of this piece.

## **2.2 Product Placement as a Promotional Tool**

Whilst product placement has different forms, all the forms seek to achieve similar outcomes. Persuasion is the main objective, along with product recall and recollection, but additionally product placement can achieve changes in attitudes towards brands and memory of the brand.

Russell (2002) discusses brand memory and attitude and how they are affected by modality and plot connection. Russell (2002) describes modality as a perceptual variable which is related to encoding mechanisms and memory retrieval; i.e. the higher the awareness of the placement by the audience, the more likely they are to not just remember it, but also to log it as a memory that can be retrieved at a later date, when perhaps the product is seen whilst they are shopping. For example, when the character of Nikhil in ITV1 soap '*Emmerdale*' is drinking a *Tropicana* orange juice, as a pose to it being seen just on the table in his house as part of the scene, the audience are more likely to remember Nikhil drinking it and consequently remember the placement, when they see the *Tropicana* juice on the shelves at the supermarket, because the placement was more prominent and more obvious.

This is, according to Russell (2002), directly linked to the plot connection of the placement and interacts to influence memory and attitude. High modality and plot connection encourages persuasion to buy the product that has been placed. Specifically, an incongruence of modality and plot improves the audience's memory of a placement, but not necessarily persuasion, whereas congruency; i.e. a better match between the two; improves persuasion. This is because incongruence causes a reaction, the audience notices the placement as it stands out, but congruency enables subtle persuasion. An example of incongruence often occurs in verbal placements; in ITV soap '*Emmerdale*' the character of Jai asks Charity if she is going to work in the *Mazda*, however a regular line would just ask if she was going to take the car to work, so therefore the use of the make of the car stands out for the audience. Thus, the incongruence has made the placement obvious to the audience, so therefore it is better remembered and can be easily recalled when a *Mazda* car is seen that the character of Charity also drives that car.

Whereas in a visual placement with congruency, whereby the character of Charity is seen to be driving the *Mazda* car; this is a more subtle placement as it relates to the plot in that driving a car to work is a regular occurrence. Hence the audience is more likely to be subtly persuaded, as they have not necessarily recognised the placement.

Russell (2002) believes that audio placements have more meaning and higher perceptual value. Visual placements can sometimes seem vulgar, in what Tiwsakul et al (2005) call a “showing the can style”, the products are dropped into the scene with no real relevance or thought. Whereas audio placements form part of the characters’ conversation, in similarity to real audience members’, so appear more credible. Cowley and Barron (2008) feel that audio placements can be least effective when they have low plot connection as they are more obvious to the audience. These types of placements can also lower brand attitudes as they create irritation towards the placement, the placement stands out and is noticed as a promotional tool by the audience. This is key for audience members who have high programme liking (HPL) as they are more involved in the programme to begin with, and therefore more susceptible to placements. In particular, the use of products within the scene rather than for use to set the scene, are favoured. LPL audience members are less engaged with the programme and consequently are positively influenced as they cannot remember the placement, nor do they respond to it negatively. Their low engagement with the programme renders them subject to persuasion via their subconscious memory. Avery and Ferraro also agree with Russel (2002) that audio – script as they describe it – placements are most effective. These placements are unobtrusive and create realism within the programme. For example, a teenage character such a Ruby in Channel 4’s *Hollyoaks* would not have a bedroom complete without hair products and make-up, so the

placement of *L'Oreal*, *John Frieda* and *TreSemme* would not look out of place, and would in fact make the scene appear more realistic to the audience.

Avery and Ferraro (2000) agree with Cowley and Barron (2008) that the use of products in placements is successful. Avery and Ferraro (2000) state that if the characters in the programme use the products that are being placed, it establishes approval by the audience as the products are being used by characters they have a connection with. This is what Balasubramanian (1994) calls the modelling paradigm. The product is modelled by an actor and as a result, consumers purchase because their favourite actor is using the product. A good example of this can be taken from ITV's *Coronation Street*, if the audience see the character of Steve drinking a *Beck's* beer or the character of Kylie drinking a *Magners* cider, they may also want to do the same to emulate their favourite characters.

Cowley and Barron (2008) address the implicit/explicit approaches in relation to changes in brand attitudes. Constant exposure increases implicit memory and the consumer mistakes this accessibility of the memory for a favourable attitude towards the brand and consequently improves the chances of the consumer choosing that brand at point of purchase. Matthes et al (2012) support this by saying despite the unobtrusiveness and the lack of active process, the placement can still have an impact on brand attitude.

An explicit memory of an audio placement with a high plot connection Cowley and Barron (2008) state, are the type of placements that are most successful. Balasubramanian (1994) sees these types of placements as the classical conditioning principle, by which exposure enables two stimuli to be paired by association. A conditioned stimulus – the character, the programme – is paired to an unconditioned stimulus – the product. The audience has no pre-conceived ideas about a product; for example Vo5 hairspray; but they have formed a judgment on the character of Theresa in Channel 4's *'Hollyoaks'*, therefore when they see Theresa using Vo5 hairspray their feelings towards Theresa are connected to the hairspray.

However, Balasubramanian (1994) does note, this may create a negative paired association due to the character, narrative or programme, or if the placement is a source of irritation. Continuing with the Vo5 example, if the audience feel negatively towards the character of Theresa; perhaps her lose morals; then they may associate the hairspray with lose morals, which is a negative result. Additionally, if the viewer is aggravated by constant placements of Vo5, then the feelings of annoyance may also be transferred to the hairspray.

Matthes et al (2012) see this as the cognitive psychology theory of the mere exposure effect. This is a learning effect that takes place outside the conscious awareness, much the same as classical conditioning, by which embedded knowledge is cultivated. The audience are not aware of the memory of the product being created, nor are they aware of the associations being generated, it is occurring in their subconscious mind. It involves repeated exposure to an unknown stimulus to increase the liking for that stimulus. Here, Matthes et al (2012) are suggesting that

even basic exposure, as long as it is repeated frequently, can in time create positive feelings towards a product; a sense of familiarity as such. An example is the constant use of *Nokia Windows* mobile phones in Channel 4's '*Hollyoaks*'. A large proportion of the characters in the soap use *Nokia Windows* mobile phones, so the mere exposure effect suggests that with a considerable number of characters using the phones in every episode, the continuous exposure to them may create a favourability towards the phones from the audience; they are familiar, at ease with the product because they recognise it. This differs slightly to Balasubramanian (1994)'s theory, as a second stimulus for the first to be paired to, does not have to be present. However it does involve repeated exposure to said stimulus.

Matthes et al (2012) note that the mere exposure effect can only occur when the audience are in high engagement with the programme, so they are Cowley and Barron (2008)'s HPL's. This disagrees with Cowley and Barron (2008) as they see HPL's as the most likely to oppose a placement, whereas Matthes et al (2012) suggest that if the viewer is engaged in the programme, they are less likely to notice the placement because their attention is devoted to the narrative. Matthes et al (2012) do state that the placement must be subtle in order for the placement to work in the mere exposure effect upon moderate to high involvement audiences. This theory involves misattribution, which echoes Cowley and Barron (2008)'s implicit memory theory.

In order for the mere exposure effect to take place, Matthes et al (2012) say that the placement must feature between 10 and 50 times. This is likely to be applicable to Cowley and Barron (2008)'s implicit memory theory and Balasubramanian (1994)'s classical conditioning. This can be taken through to the study to examine whether or not these theories could occur in the programmes being observed.

### **2.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Product Placement**

As the previous section outlined, product placement has its place as a promotional tool in that it is effective in persuasion, recall and changing brand attitudes. However, these functions hold both advantages and disadvantages, of which this section will outline.

Russell (2002) states an advantage of product placement is the natural nature of it and the realism it can create. It can be natural as characters are intended as representations of real people, so to see others consuming is considered normal. This in turn creates realism in a programme for the same reasons, the characters appear real to the audience, they are behaving in a similar way to the audience members. As long as it is not recognised as a persuasive tool, it can enrich the plot, theme and characters and give them a sense of sincerity as they are consuming in the same manner as the audience, the use of brand names reflects contemporary society. For example, in ITV1's *Coronation Street*, when the character of Deirdre; a middle-aged housewife; returns from the supermarket the audience would expect to see brands in her shopping bags; *Dolmio, Pledge, Flash, Uncle Ben's* or *Walkers*; so as to echo real life.

This is supported by Tiwaskul et al (2005) who agree product placement enhances the realism of a programme. Avery and Ferraro (2000) also list this as an advantage, they call it verisimilitude, and state product placement adds this to a programme. This is further supported by Baker and Crawford (1995)'s research, who state this benefits all three stakeholders in that it provides the seller - brand – with a credible advertisement, for the audience it is believable in terms of Russell (2002)'s theory of realism, and for the producers it benefits them financially and adds verisimilitude to their programme.

Cowley and Barron (2008) state a major benefit is that viewers cannot avoid the exposure to the placement. Whether subtle or prominent, it is still evident and cannot be escaped whilst viewing the programme, due to as Cowley and Barron (2008) say; it is a hidden motive of persuasion. Avery and Ferraro (2000) agree with Cowley and Barron (2008) but add that television's pervasiveness in contemporary life also prevents avoidance; the importance given to television in contemporary life ensures it is viewed avidly and because it is rarely switched off, the audience is constantly exposed to placements. There is therefore a substantial confidence that the featured placements will be viewed with a distinct degree of concentration by the audience, as they hold television in high esteem. Additionally, the frequency of placements on television; especially when compared to placements in film; is a major advantage. Television has a larger audience, of which Avery and Ferraro (2000) found its audience spend 40% of their spare time watching it and it is switched on for 7.2 hours a day. This allows for repeated exposure to placements.

For Balasubramanian (1994) the main advantage is the control the brand has over the placement. Balasubramanian (1994) sees it that because the brand is paying for the placement, they remain in control of the message that is delivered, i.e. where the product is placed and who it is in conjunction with. This is a disadvantage of product placement's closest guises of celebrity endorsement and sponsorship, with which an element of control is relinquished when the responsibility for promotion is let to the counterpart.

Deery (2012) looks upon product placement as specifically beneficial to the programme producers. The placement offers the opportunity to generate revenue. Bogost (2007) also examines the benefits from the viewpoint of the programme producers. Bogost (2007) suggests that placements offer a socially productive type of advertising in that they give the text context and the products are contextualised in a fictional environment whereby the audience has already suspended disbelief. Whilst these are key benefits for producers, they are not something to be considered by brands.

Tiwsakul et al (2005) suggest a disadvantage of product placement is that there is no evidence to prove product placement increases sales. Although, there is no evidence to suggest otherwise either. Matthes et al (2012)'s research supports this as they found product placement has a lower recall level than traditional advertising. But this does not examine changes in brand attitudes.

Cowley and Barron (2008) dispute Tiwsakul et al (2005) as they say product placement has only positive or at worst, neutral effects.

Balasubramanian (1994) found the limited availability of placements to be an advantage; a programme littered with placements would highlight the extent to which they are being used and as a result, irritate the audience, which as previously discussed has a negative outcome. The suitability of the placements is also an issue; products may not be suitable for placement in all programmes, so as not to appear obvious and once again, incur a negative reaction. For example, you would not expect to see factory worker Lisa in ITV1's *Emmerdale* using a *Ted Baker* handbag, nor would the audience expect to see the wealthy character of Megan wearing an unbranded pair of sunglasses. This results in limited availability due to suitability issues.

There are key advantages and the main identified is the addition of realism, or verisimilitude that product placement gives the programmes it features in. Whilst there is little evidence that placements increase sales, which some see as a disadvantage, it is clear that it cannot be avoided and thus recall or brand attitudes must be altered, so its evasiveness is evidently a benefit also.

## **2.4 Growth in Recent Years**

It is evident from the literature that there has been a growth in product placement and it is, as La Ferle and Edwards (2006: 85) state 'here to stay and has only scratched the surface of what it will become in the future'.

According to La Ferle and Edwards (2006) placements are prevalent with one every 3 minutes. Demonstrating how cluttered programmes now are and how product placement is, as Tiwsakul et al (2005) say, a major player of the promotional mix; additionally Avery and Ferraro (2000) state programmes are peppered with brands and placements prolific. La Ferle and Edwards (2006)'s findings can be taken forward and examined in the primary research later in this paper. Karrh (1998) suggests the abundance of placements is due to the global reach and shelf life of placements. Now programmes are sold all over the world, brand names and products can travel with them. This extends the programmes' shelf life, but in addition to this the development of 'on demand' also allows for extended existence of programmes and their consequent placements. All of which Karrh (1998) puts forward as the reason for growth in the number of placements.

Russell (2002) states that product placement has increased rapidly over the last two years and that there is now increased competition for the starring roles in programmes, something which Cowley and Barron (2008) support. Cowley and Barron (2008) also put forward that its increase is an attempt to change brand attitudes and create positive associations. Despite this, Cowley and Barron (2008) later state that product

placements feature in a limited amount of programmes. This could be due to regulations or suitability issues which limit the availability, so whilst they state there are few placements, what are there have increased in relation to past placements.

It is clear from the literature why product placement is used and why there has been a growth in its use. The idea of clutter can be taken into the next section and further discussed in societal terms.

## **2.5 Postmodernism and Product Placement**

Tiwsakul et al (2005) state that product placement is a reaction to postmodern society. Audiences are now fragmented, as is society, and they have grown sceptical towards traditional advertising methods. As a result, product placement is a subtle way to reach the audience as it is unavoidable. Matthes et al (2012) agrees with this view and says that consumers are surrounded by advertising messages and are more aware of being persuaded. Therefore in order to break through the clutter and awareness, brands are using product placements.

McNatt and Oleck (2000) pick up on Tiwsakul (2005)'s fragmented audience theory, as they say the development of technology; such as TiVo; now allows the time stricken consumer to fast-forward adverts; or 'zapping' as Avery and Ferraro (2000) cite; and catch-up on programmes as and when they wish. As adverts can be skipped, product placement was born to combat this avoidance. Deery (2012) also looked at how

technological developments have brought about product placements. Audiences are now migratory thanks to DVR and the Internet, and have become hard to catch. Thus a placement cannot be avoided if they are watching a programme.

Additionally, Lehu (2007) cites that it is not just time constraints of the postmodern consumer, but also their lack of interest. Their intense lifestyles have altered their personalities and now, as Lehu (2007) says they have shortened attentions spans. Lehu (2007) states that the increase in advert breaks has shortened programmes from the previous 90 minutes to 42 minutes, a result in clutter of adverts; or “ad-creep” as Bogost (2007) calls the influx of adverts; and consumers now only have to concentrate for 42 minutes, therefore if they are zapping adverts then product placements seek to infiltrate their moments of concentration that seldom occur.

With this in mind, Deery (2012)’s statement seems appropriate ‘product placement is therefore looked at as a useful strategy in the post-advertising era’ (p: 16).

## **2.6 Ethical Product Placement**

There are a number of ethical issues to be considered when implementing product placement. Whilst the subliminal effects of product placement are seen as an advantage and a dividend, Tiwsakul et al (2005) consider the fact that this can also pose as an ethical issue. The

audience are unaware they are being persuaded and therefore unable to accept or reject the embedded marketing, which some see as unethical. The verisimilitude of product placement is the main ethical issue outlined by Avery and Ferraro (2000), who state that perhaps the audience should be made aware of persuasive intent and that verisimilitude acts as a guise.

Tiwsakul (2005) also outline the placement of certain products, for example alcohol and cigarettes. These can be seen as ethically charged products and promoting them, particularly in conjunction with a consumer's favourite character or aspirational celebrity, can in addition to the subliminal nature, be seen as unethical. The products are not encouraged by some audience members and can be the subject of blame in terms of illness and focus of addictions and therefore promoting them is not favourable. Sensitive products as well as ethically charged products are identified by Avery and Ferraro (2000) for omission. These could include products that are seen by some groups to induce illness; in extension to the obvious products previously described; and those which may be of aversion by certain groups; animal rights activists for instance.

A final issue Tiwsakul et al (2005) found is promotion to vulnerable groups. Vulnerable children and adults cannot decode the promotional messages effectively and cannot construct informed decisions themselves. When writing in another article, Tiwsakul and Hackley (2005) further this idea, in that the postmodern consumer may be a vulnerable group. It is assumed that postmodern consumers are skilled at interpreting messages, but in postmodern times the lines are blurred between culture and messages, in which it becomes difficult to distinguish between

product placement and storylines in drama. Postmodern consumers already utilise aspirational figures to guide their consumption; particularly in the beauty industry – Cheryl Cole and Nicole Scherzinger for *L’Oreal*; so if a placement is disguised as a storyline, then they may feel they are making the decision to consume the same products themselves, but what is actually occurring is the consumption of the product placement which was entwined as a storyline. A recent example of this can be taken from an episode of ITV1’s *Law & Order: UK* in which the story centred on stolen money that was used to buy an *iPad*. Whilst the product is central to crime being solved, the audience may not realise the recurring product placements in the programme; both visual and verbal. So consumers can be seen as vulnerable, but this is however an uncertain idea which is open to discussion.

## **2.7 Product Placement Regulation**

Baker and Crawford (1995) discuss in 1995 how both the BBC and Independent Television Commission (ITC from heron) did not allow for the placing of products in programmes in exchange for money. However, as Tiwsakul and Hackley (2005) found, the ITC was replaced in 2003 by OfCom who work based on viewer complaints. This has, although as Tiwsakul and Hackley (2005) state there are still two further regulatory bodies; Advertising Standards Agency (ASA from heron) and Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP from heron); allowed as Tiwsakul et al (2005) later discovered, for a deregulation within advertising and promotion, moreover in the use of product placement.

Prosser (2010) details specifically the laws that must be obeyed when undertaking product placement. Product placement is permitted, except for products that are high in fat, salt and/or sugar, gambling products, alcohol, smoking accessories or infant milk, a reflection of the ethical issues as described by Tiwsakul et al (2005). Prosser (2010) also states that product placement should not affect editorial independence, which infringes slightly upon the degree of involvement of the product with the characters and narrative, as illustrated by Tiwsakul and Hackley (2005). Finally, Prosser (2010) outlines that product placement is not authorised on the BBC and audiences must be made aware of the product placement content within the programme they are about to view. All of these regulations, in particular the final two, will be subject to study later on.

## **2.8 Relevant Previous Studies**

The literature highlights a number of previous primary researches that have been conducted. These will be useful to exemplify in the primary research for this paper. The three main studies for focus are Tiwsakul & Hackley (2005), Cowley & Barron (2008) and Ferraro & Avery (2000).

Tiwsakul and Hackley (2005) researched soaps and mini series on BBC 1 & 2, ITV1, Channel 4 and Channel 5. This methodology is particularly useful for the primary research that will be conducted, as it will bear a resemblance to Tiwsakul and Hackley (2005). The primary research will also sample programmes from five channels; four of which will be the same as Tiwsakul and Hackley (2005). However, the research will focus on drama series as a pose to soaps and mini series so as to differ.

Cowley and Barron (2008) looked into modality, congruity with plot, type of programme and placement prominence. Modality, congruity with plot and placement prominence are particularly useful to the primary research in this piece. The primary research will examine the prominence of featured placements as a key criterion. Additionally, modality and plot congruency will also be examined and the relevance of this theory explored.

In it seems, an amalgamation of the two, Ferraro and Avery (2000) conducted a content analysis to determine prominence and subtlety of placements. Once again, this will be useful in the primary research as it will too examine how prominent or subtle the placements are, as a key focus. Ferraro and Avery (2000)'s study was however, conducted using American programmes, while in differentiation this study will use British television programmes.

### **2.9 Relation of Literature to Primary Research**

The literature shows a growth in product placement and how it bears effect on contemporary life. It also suggests that there are many features, with subtlety being a main characteristic. The literature also touches upon post-modernism and how it effects product placement and vice versa.

It is evident from the literature that product placement can be used in various ways to achieve different outcomes. The variety of applications for product placement generates a point of focus for study. The studies conducted previously and the theories outlined in this chapter demonstrate how product placement has been a subject of study over time, which also creates a point for study. Research has also been either American or conducted on soaps or mini series, which too produces an aim for research. Finally, in addition, studies have not used a combination of multiple theories, so the primary research will be a development upon previous studies.

With this in mind, the primary research will focus on multiple theories outlined in the literature review; the number of placements featured and how involved the placement is with the characters and narrative, the type of placement and how prominent it is. Also, the primary research will look at how these theories apply to placements in programmes from ten years previously to those in the modern day. Of which these programmes will all be British and drama series.

### **3. Methodology**

The methodological design of this study is an inductive, interpretivist, subjectivist and epistemological paradigm. The research is qualitative in its use of a textual analysis. This methodology best serves the exploration of the changes in product placement in British television dramas in the last ten years.

#### **3.1 Research Methods**

This study uses inductive methodology as a pose to deductive, as the research looks to examine phenomena rather than explain or prove hypotheses. This also explains the reasons for choosing interpretivist, subjectivist; also known as qualitative; research methods as these too look to investigate and understand, rather than searching for answers and verifying hypotheses. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008).

The researcher is however, part of the social world she is investigating. This can be useful as the researcher begins from a point of understanding, rather than having to gain knowledge about the subject matter, but in turn this can instigate preconceptions and biases. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008). As Mason (2002) states, the researcher may find it difficult to recognise that there may be different versions of the nature and essence of the social world she is investigating. The researcher may either fail to recognise the alternative viewpoints or may take the universal stance. Additionally, there are different elements of the social reality of which is under examination. There are various

components of social realities and Mason (2002) cites these to include; subjects, objects, rationality, emotion, thought, feeling, memory, consciousness, subconsciousness, understanding, interpretation, stories, narratives, texts, words, codes, social/cultural practices, cultures and societies. These are the most relevant of the components to this research in that they apply to either the audience of the media texts being analysed; the emotion towards and memory through the subconscious of a placement; or the ways in which the texts will be decoded; consciously interpreting objects with rationality. The ways of decoding the texts are particularly relevant as interpretation and understanding are key to correctly comprehending the social codes in which the texts were both created in, and for. This was however, recognised and overcome by previous knowledge; previous knowledge that was useful, as a pose to being a hindrance as Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008) cautioned against.

Mason (2002) states that when analysing media texts, it is useful to first identify what you want the texts to tell you. This enables selectivity, so with this in mind; the primary research conducted used a textual analysis, of television dramas in order to establish which products are being using in product placement in the programmes. Programmes from 2002 were be chosen from multiple channels; commercial, independent and satellite, to ensure the study covers a wide range of British channels. The same was done for the programmes from 2012, as these channels are still considered to be the main television channels. The design of the study enables research to be conducted from past and present programmes, as the main aim is to look at the changes that have evolved over a time span of ten years.

### **3.2 Sampling**

Mason (2002) states that selectivity is significant in the analysis of media texts, the researcher must recognise what is meaningful to examine in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the research. With this in mind, the sample is as follows.

The study looks at drama series on what are considered the main television channels by BARB (2012). The sample comprises BBC1, ITV1, Channel 4 and Channel 5 as these each have a 90% and above share of the audience figures. As well as the main channels, of which is a combination of independent and commercial channels, a satellite channel is also included. This is Sky1 as it is the satellite channel with the highest quarterly proportion of the audience, at over 40% (BARB 2012). In addition to their high viewing figures in 2012, the chosen channels also bore similar figures in 2002 (BARB 2002).

From the channels, the programmes chosen are drama series, that are both made by British companies and their narratives set within the time in which they were produced; i.e. 2002 and 2012, not period dramas. These acute criteria limited the number of programmes available for selection. The result being; BBC1 programmes '*Cutting It*'; season 1; and '*Hustle*'; season 8; ITV1's '*Footballers Wives*'; season 1; and '*Homefront*'; season 1; Channel 4's '*Teachers*'; season 2; and '*Shameless*'; season 10; Channel 5's '*A Mind To Kill*'; season 5; and '*Jack Taylor*'; season 1; and finally Sky1 programmes '*Mile High*'; season 1; and '*Mad Dogs*'; season 2. Some series have more episodes than others and episodes of varying length, therefore to ensure all programmes are represented equally, three hours worth of episodes are studied of each

of the series. This amounts to three episodes, with the exception of two series, of which these have episodes lasting 90 minutes, so two episodes of these equal the required running time.

### **3.3 Data Gathering**

Based upon the literature review, the study focuses upon six main themes. When conducting the textual analysis the placements were examined in terms of; prominence of placement, engagement with narrative and with characters, the type of placement; staging, audio or usage. Also the number of placements, how involved the placement is with the programme; high, moderate or low; and consequently whether or not mere exposure is likely to occur.

The process involved a data collection sheet; of which examples of blank and completed charts can be found in the appendices. This involved firstly noting the brand name and the product that was placed. Secondly each placement was examined in terms of each of the characteristics as described above. The type of placement was recorded, whether it was visual or audio and whether its purpose was for staging or use. The prominence of the placement was noted as being either in close or regular camera shot, or in the background and also whether it was a main, secondary, extra or guest character that was interacting with the product. Next it was recorded how engaged the product was, with firstly the character and secondly the plot; on a scale of high, medium or low. Finally the length of the placement was noted. This involved interpretation

at the discretion of the researcher, it is subject to individual opinion as to how engaged the product is with the narrative and character, which may bear affect upon the results.

Collection of the data took approximately thirty hours as there were three hours of each series to be studied and ten series in total. This could have been improved by a second viewing of the programmes in order to eradicate the risk of any placements being overlooked.

### **3.4 Accessing the Research Site**

The drama series have previously been released onto DVD, this makes access to the programmes both accessible and legal. Additionally, some series are on catch-up devices online; such as 4od; which in turn allows for immediate access. Both platforms allow for controlled and repeat viewing of the programmes, which is paramount for use in a study.

### **3.5 Ethics**

Some television programmes may include copyrighted material; however this study uses programmes released into the public domain, so as to ensure no copyright infringement occurs.

Additionally, as previously stated, the researcher is part of the social paradigm under investigation. So she must exclude all pre-conceptions and ideas in order to remain unbiased, so as to prevent influence upon the research.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data has been analysed and examined for emergent themes in addition to the exploration of the six main themes for study. The programmes were watched and the placements seen were logged in accordance with the six points of study. A chart was generated in order to do this, which comprised of; the brand name of the product that had been placed, the actual product type, the prominence of the placement, the relevance to plot/character, the type of placement and the number of times the placement of the product occurred. When the product was seen or heard a judgement was made upon the prominence and relevance the placement held.

Once each episode of each series had been analysed, the number of placements in each episode and series were counted. The results were then compared with one another, the results from the year 2002 programmes to the 2012 and similarities and differences drawn. This brought about a theory of if and how product placement has altered since its use in 2002 to its use in 2012. In application of past literature theoretical ideas as to why this may be were generated.

## **4. Findings and Analysis**

The following chapter will examine the results of the primary research; the developments in product placement from 2002 to 2012. The results will be analysed in terms of the themes and ideas they project; when compared and contrasted with one another, and studied in relation to the surrounding literature.

### **4.1 Frequency of Product Placements**

The literature highlighted an increase in the number of product placements featured in programmes. Therefore, observing the changes in frequency of product placements from 2002 to 2012 is both a relevant and clear place to begin.

#### **4.1.1 Basic Frequency Results**

On the BBC1 programmes 'Cutting It'; 2002; and 'Hustle'; 2012; there was a significant increase in placements. The number of placements increased from 15 in 2002 to 46 in 2012. However, there was not such a significant increase in the ITV1 programmes studied. In 2002 'Footballers Wives' featured 21 placements, and in 2012 'Homefront' placed 31. Channel 4's programmes 'Teachers'; 2002; and 'Shameless'; 2012; bore much the same results as BBC1 with 15 placements in 2002 increasing to 45 in 2012. These results concur highly with La Ferle and Edwards (2006: 85)'s statement that product placement is 'here to stay and has only scratched the surface of what it will become in the future'.

Channel 5 however produced different results altogether. There was in fact a decrease in placements from 2002 to 2012. 'A Mind To Kill'; 2002; featured 29 placements, but 'Jack Taylor'; 2012; featured 28. Whilst these figures do demonstrate a decrease, the reduction is slight, so much so that in relation to the increase shown for the other programmes, the decrease could be said to be a plateau in the number of placements rather than a decrease. This result does however, support Cowley and Barron (2008)'s contradictory view that products are placed in a growingly limited number of programmes.

Sky1 produced a similar result to Channel 5. Whilst the frequency of placements did not decrease, nor did it increase greatly either. In 2002 'Mile High' featured 17 placements, with 'Mad Dogs' in 2012 having 19. Therefore, in similarity to Channel 5, Sky1 could also be said to have remained the same frequency, as the increase is not as substantial as the other channels. It could be said that the lack of placements is due to a theory Balasubramanian (1994) outlined, that placements must be selected carefully so as to prevent irritation of the consumers and also, the placements must be relevant to the programme. So, it is possible that there are a low number of placements in Sky1 programmes, as the producers firstly wanted to avoid littering the programme and secondly, did not find a number of suitable placements for the programme.

#### **4.1.2 Comparisons Between Channels**

It is evident from the primary research that there are differences in the number of placements, dependant upon which channel the programme is aired.

The channels with the lowest frequency of placements were Channel 5 and Sky1, these had the lowest share of the viewing figures; in accordance with BARB (2012); in comparison to the other channels chosen for study. The lower number of placements may, therefore, be due to the lower audience share that these programmes have; as advertisers might wish to place their products in other programmes, in order to gain the largest audience reach.

Deery (2012)'s theory states that products are placed to generate revenue so, a further reason for the low number of placements on Sky1 may be due to the fact they have a regular source of income in addition to placements and advertising. Sky has a subscription fee, so this also generates revenue, resulting in a lesser need for income.

The highest number of placements came in the programmes from BBC1 and Channel 4, with ITV1 closely behind. The high number of placements can be explained for BBC1 and ITV1; in direct comparison to Channel 5 and Sky1; in that BBC1 and ITV1 have the highest share

of the audience, so therefore the largest reach and consequently attract more brands. Additionally, in accordance with Karrh (1998)'s theory, programmes are exported all over the world, something which occurs for BBC1 and ITV1 programmes regularly, so this may be another reason for the increased number of placements. This, as Karrh (1998) says, provides the opportunity for products to travel worldwide in conjunction with the programmes.

Another reason for the high number of placements in BBC1 programmes could be because product placement is a principal source of income for the channel. BBC1 is an independent channel, so aside from the television licence they have no traditional advertisements to generate revenue. Thus, income from brands wishing their products to be placed in popular programmes is welcomed. This finding, supports Deery (2012)'s theory, as it agrees that product placements are a source of income.

The high number of placements in the Channel 4 programmes may be caused by the niche nature of the channel and the programmes it broadcasts. Channel 4 is renowned for creating programmes that are risqué, and as a result the channel attracts a niche, and often younger audience. Whilst a niche market may seem a negative factor, for advertising it is the opposite as the channel provides a place for advertisers to find in one place, their otherwise elusive niche market. This result looks towards Cowley and Barron (2008)'s theory that viewers cannot escape product placement, so the niche market that may be difficult to target can be advertised to in a known place, whereby they cannot avoid the advertisement.

Additionally, it could be said that the increase in product placements on Channel 4 is due to the young audience their programmes attract. Teenagers and young adults often watch television online or on demand and therefore do not see traditional advertisements; so product placement provides not only a place where brands can be certain they will be seen, but also seen by their target audience. Once again, this finding supports Balasubramanian (1994), as Channel 4 can ensure their products and programmes match their specific target audience. It also provides the reassurance that the least amount of irritation occurs, as the target audiences of both are as closely matched as possible.

Placements in the ITV1 programmes saw a gradual increase. As stated previously, the number of placements could be high due to the audience share the channel has. The increase in placements could also, be in relation to the competition to secure revenue from advertisers. The rising number of channels in contemporary television creates competition from the larger advertisers, so product placement, as Deery (2012) suggests, offers an alternative method to secure income from the brands.

### **4.1.3 Cluttered Programmes**

The literature review outlined the idea of clutter in television programmes; the rise in product placements is resulting in programmes littered with brands.

The primary research strongly projects this as a reality for contemporary programming. In the programmes from 2002 the placements were less frequent, with the most prevalent averaging one every three minutes. Whereas the 2012 programmes; with the exception of Channel 5 and Sky1; the placements averaged at just over one per minute.

One placement every minute is a distinct multiplication in the number of placements used. La Ferle and Edwards (2006)'s research found one per three minutes to be cluttered, so the primary research's findings of almost one per minute is an increase by three fold, and consequently must be seen as clutter.

## **4.2 Visual Placements**

This sub-chapter will examine the visual placements featured in each of the programmes studied, comparing and contrasting the results from 2002 to those from 2012.

#### **4.2.1 A Comparison of the Characteristics in Visual Placements from 2002 to 2012**

The majority of the visual placements used in the BBC1 2002 programme were for staging purposes and placed in the background of the shot. These placements help to set the scene; in this case, a hairdressers; as the products are natural to the location. There were only a few products placed for use by the characters and on the occurrence of this, it was used by a main character and the product was in a close or regular shot so as to be clearly seen. For example, the main character of Allie was clearly seen drinking a can of *T&T* soft drink.

In direct comparison to those from 2002, the placements in the BBC1 programme from 2012 were for usage by the characters. The majority of the placements were also in close or regular shot, but there was no selectivity on which of the characters was using the products; main, secondary and extra characters were all seen using them. An example of these being, an extra was seen drinking a bottle of *Innocent* juice, and in another scene the main character of Emma was driving an *Alfa Romero*.

The placements in ITV1's 2002 programme were largely for usage by the characters. The products were mainly for use by the main characters in a close or regular shot. For example, the main character of Chardonnay reading newspaper *The Sun* or the character of Kyle watching a *Philips* television set.

Placements in 2012 on ITV1 bear much resemblance to those in 2002. The majority were placed for use by the character and those characters were largely the main ones. The placements were also in close or regular shot so as to be dominant in the view of the audience. A good example of this is Claire driving a *Range Rover* Discovery to eat lunch at the *Gusto* restaurant. Where the products were used for staging they were placed in the background.

In the 2002 programme on Channel 4, all but one of the placements was there for usage by the characters. The majority were used by the main characters in the foreground, but when used by extras it was done so in the background. For example the main character of Brian eating a bowl of *Kellogs* Rice Krispies and an extra carrying a sports bag bearing the *Gola* brand name.

2012 Channel 4 placements are similar to those from 2002 in that they are mainly for usage in close to regular shot by main characters. However, in 2002 products were placed for use by extras, whereas in 2012 the majority were used by main characters, with only a few by secondary. For example, the main character of Billy wearing an *Ellesse* polo shirt and main character Aiden wearing a *Lonsdale* cap. The only secondary character was Billy's child Stella eating a packet of *Fox's* mini party rings.

The visual placements in the 2002 programme from Channel 5 were mainly for use by the characters. The type of characters however, was a combination of both the main and secondary characters in both close and regular shot. Examples include; main character Noel eating a *Dominoes* pizza in close shot, to a secondary character driving a *Vauxhall* car.

The placements in the 2012 Channel 5 programme were similar to those from 2002 in that they too were for use by varying character types. They also were comparable in that they also were seen in close and regular shot. Examples comprising; the pub visited by the main character Jack and newspaper *The Irish Observer* read by a secondary character. In divergence to 2002, the 2012 placements also featured a number of staging products. These mainly comprised *Carlsberg* lager and *Guinness* beer in order to form realism in the pub setting.

Sky1's 2002 programme placed products for both usage and staging, there was no constant of the two. Furthermore those placements differed in prominence too, ranging from background to close shot. For example, a bottle of *Malibu* rum was seen in the background to illustrate the collection of alcohol in the flat and a packet of *Walkers* ready salted crisps used to demonstrate the distribution of snacks on board the flight, in regular shot. As a pose to a close shot of the *LDV* mini van taking the flight attendants to the aircraft and the character of K.C. driving a *VW* convertible car. One consistency was that the majority of the products only came into contact with main characters.

The 2012 placements on Sky1 bare resemblance to 2002 in that they too had a mix of usage and staging products that were shown in a range of camera shots. For example *Beck's* beer was seen in the background to illustrate a street of bars and a *Toyota Auris* was placed in a regular shot alongside a *Citroen Saxo* to demonstrate the setting of a car park. In contrary to the *VW* and *BMW* shown in close shot and driven by main character Woody. In direct comparison to the 2002 placements, the mass of the 2012 placements were used by the main characters.

The 2002 findings echo Tiwsakul et al (2005)'s research in that products in the background add realism, as audiences would expect to see brands in characters' home or place of work. Additionally, this supports Avery and Ferraro (2000) who state that products have a verisimilitude, and they are in the background and not obvious to the audience.

#### **4.2.2 Comparing the Plot Engagement of Visual Placements from 2002 to 2012**

The BBC1 2002 placements all had a low to medium engagement with the narrative. Where there was medium narrative engagement, it was not directly linked to the plot, but used to illustrate a character's actions. An example of this is, the character of Gavin wearing *Nike* tracksuit bottoms whilst jogging; not directly linked to the narrative, but it aids the illustration of jogging, as the audience understand the product to be worn during exercise.

The products used by the main and secondary characters in the BBC1 2012 programme tended to have a higher engagement with the plot than those used by the extra characters. For example a *Blackberry* mobile phone used to make an important call by Mickey, or a *MAC* Macbook Pro used for editing by Sean. This is in opposition to those from 2002, as they had low or medium connection to the narrative.

The majority of the 2002 ITV1 placements had low relation to the narrative and were included due to opportunity, almost as a tool for staging. Taking the example of the *Philips* television set, the brand need not have been visible, but the opportunity arose for it to be included, much the same for the main character of Tanya carrying a *Louis Vuitton* handbag. The products were close to being visual placements for staging, but because they were supposedly owned by the characters, the products were placed for usage.

In similarity to the placements from ITV1 2002, the majority of the 2012 placements had low relevance to the plot, for example the main character of Louise seen driving a *Nissan*. There was however, a placement with high relevance to the plot, *Mojitos 88*, a club which provided the location setting for multiple scenes. A placement with a high plot connection such as this was not seen in the 2002 ITV1 programme.

In the Channel 4 2002 programme, apart from the exception of one of the placements, which had a medium relation to the narrative; the *Sanyo* Talkbook Dictaphone recorded the character of Jenny making a noise that Susan wished to relay to other main characters of Brian, Simon and

Kurt; the placements were all used in low connection to the plot. An example being, the character of Brian was simply wearing a t-shirt that happened to bear the *Adidas* logo.

As previously exemplified, the products featured on Channel 4 in 2012 were merely being worn by the characters, so all of the placements had low connection to the narrative. This is in direct comparison to the placements from 2002.

In the 2002 Channel 5 programme, in addition to the variety in characters using the products and the camera shots, there was also no preferred form of engagement with the narrative, as the placements ranged from low to high. An example of a low engagement product is the wearing of *Adidas* sportswear, as the product is simply being worn and bears no relevance to the development of the narrative. Whereas a victim's receipt via fax of a demand from the perpetrator of a crime on a *BT DectFax* machine links to the plot as the product delivered the note.

Similarly to 2002, the Channel 5 2012 placements demonstrated a difference in how engaged the products were with the narrative, although the 2012 products only varied from medium to high connection, as a pose to the full range of low to high shown in 2002. For example; a *DELL* laptop used for an Internet search and the *Bus EireAnn* coach service retuning the main character Jack to the narrative setting.

None of the Sky1 2002 placements were highly connected to the narrative. A *Puma* sports bag was placed in the overhead luggage on the aircraft, but this was not a crucial storyline, the action was taken to create realism in the scene. The characters of Lehann and K.C. drinking *Britvic* orange juice was also placed in low connection to the plot, as it was a brief action.

The 2012 Sky1 placements differ to those from 2002 in how they linked to the plot. With the exception of one placement, the products were either low or highly linked to the narrative. For example, Quinn wearing *Adidas* trainers was a low connection, but the *VW* car driven by Woody was used to escape and therefore a high engagement. The products were largely either worn by the characters or used to move the narrative forward.

Mostly the 2002 placements were of low plot connection, with the exception of those from Channel 5. The placements were largely for scene setting purposes. Cowley and Barron (2008) state that repeated exposure to a product increases implicit memory, of which the consumer mistakes recognition of the product for a positive brand attitude. So, the use of products with a low connection to the narrative, could be said to be an attempt at this.

By 2012, the majority of the placements were found to be of high narrative engagement. Placements were in the main, to move the narrative forward. The characters used the products in order to progress the plot, for example the character of Woody driving the other characters to their escape in a VW car. This, is an example of the use of Balasubramanian (1994)'s modelling paradigm theory. Balasubramanian (1994) states that if the audience see characters they admire using a product; it creates an approval from them. The product is modelled by the actor and character, so the audience member wishes to do the same, resulting in a purchase.

The placements that were of low plot relation in 2012 were because the characters were wearing the products. This is an example of Balasubramanian (1994)'s classical conditioning theory. Characters are seen wearing products, but because the product has little connection to the narrative, they do not notice it as much. The two stimulus; character and product; are paired together. The unconditioned stimulus of the product is paired with the conditioned stimulus, the character, to project the attitudes the audience hold towards the character onto the product.

#### **4.2.3 The Mere Exposure Effect**

The literature review outlines the concept of the mere exposure effect by Matthes et al (2012). This concept involves the repeated, but often short, exposure to a product in placement. The repetition of the placement allows for the memory of the product to be logged, and the short exposure to the placement means the audience do not give it their full attention. Thus the placement is remembered by the subconscious.

The opportunity for the mere exposure effect to occur is available in the 2012 programmes more than those from 2002. The only 2002 programme it may be possible in is ITV's 'Footballers Wives', as a *Philips* television is seen repeatedly for no more than 4 seconds per placement.

Focusing on the placements in 2012, in BBC1's 'Hustle', there are two placements that may allow for the mere exposure effect. Both *Audi* and *Rolls Royce* have multiple placements, whereby the *Audi* appears for no more than 3 seconds per placement. The placement of the *Audi* is similar to that of *Fox's* in Channel 4's 'Shameless'. But Sky1's 'Mad Dogs' placement of the *VW* uses longer lasting placements at a maximum of 7 seconds. Although the placements are extended, they still remain short enough for the mere exposure effect to happen.

Despite the lack of repeated placements in each of the 2002 episodes, there are two brands that do not repeat enough in one episode for the effect to occur, but are repeated throughout each of the episodes studied. *VW* and *Coca-Cola* are recurrent in multiple episodes of Sky1's 'Mile High', so if an audience watches the entire series the effect may still take place.

In terms of direct evaluation alongside Matthes et al (2012) theory, it appears from the primary research that the mere exposure effect is something used to greater extent in the drama series from 2012.

#### **4.2.3.1 Persuasion Knowledge Model**

The literature review identified the theory by Cowley and Barron (2008) of the persuasion knowledge model (PKM from hereon). This is similar to, but furthers the mere exposure effect. The PKM puts forward the idea that the constant exposure to a product increases the implicit memory, the accessibility of the memory, i.e. how well the consumer can recall the product. The increase in recall is mistaken for favourability towards the brand.

For example, the repeated showing of *VW* in Sky1's 'Mile High', *Lonsdale* in Channel 4's 'Shameless', *BMW* and *Audi* in BBC1's 'Hustle' and *VW* in Sky1's 'Mad Dogs'.

As previously outlined, there is increased opportunity for the mere exposure effect to occur as a result of a proliferation in short, repeated placements. Consequently, as the PKM relies on related criteria to operate, the PKM may also transpire from these placements, and thus a

positive brand association achieved. Matthes et al (2012) may suggest the rise in the use of the mere exposure effect and PKM is due to audiences becoming more aware of advertising messages, so subliminal techniques are being implicated to combat this.

### **4.3 Audio Placements**

This next sub-chapter will look at the audio placements; or script placement, as Tiwsakul et al (2005) cite; from the programmes studied.

Results from 2002 to 2012 will be compared and contrasted.

#### **4.3.1 Comparing Audio Placements from 2002 to 2012**

There were a large number of verbal placements in the 2002 BBC1 programme. The majority of them were spoken by a main character but had low connection to the narrative. For example, the characters of Gavin and Allie were discussing toys their future child would not be allowed to have, which included the products *Playstation* and *Barbie*. These bore a low connection to the narrative, as it was a hypothetical conversation; the character of Allie had not yet conceived.

In comparison to the 2002 placements, the BBC1 2012 programme had considerably less audio placements. Mostly, the products featured in the programme due to the characters ordering a drink or giving directions; the character of Mickey ordering a *Jagermeister*, the secondary character of Dolly informing the main characters that the thieves are staying at the *Goodridge Hotel*.

Audio placements in the 2002 ITV1 programme were infrequent. Of the placements featured, mostly they were spoken by main characters referring to their photographs being published in a magazine. For example Kyle stating his wedding photographs would be published in *OK* magazine and Tanya suggesting Chardonnay's accident may be reported in *Hello* magazine.

There was a distinct increase in the number of verbal placements in the ITV1 2012 programme from those in 2002, although similarly the placements had low plot connection. The placements were mostly spoken by main characters and contributed to regular activities in their daily lives. The suggestion that *McDonalds* should be visited and the ordering of a *Jagermeister* drink are two key examples.

There was only one verbal placement in the 2002 programme on Channel 4. This was the character of Simon asking for a Diet *Coke* of which had a low involvement with the narrative.

In contrast to the lack of audio placements in the 2002 programme, there was a considerable number featured in the Channel 4 2012 programme. The products were everyday durables ranging from *Johnson's* baby powder to *Bird's Eye* fish fingers. As in the 2002 programme, the placements were spoken by main characters and were of low engagement to the plot.

Channel 5's 2002 programmes featured a high number of audio placements. Moreover, the placements had a higher relevance to the narrative. For example the main character of Noel asking for the victim's *Barclaycard* records to be checked, and instructing the deadline for the *The Western Mail* to be increased. These products had a high connection to the crime that had been committed and to their solving.

In contrast, the 2012 Channel 5 programme had few verbal placements. Mostly the placements were, in similarity to 2002, spoken by main characters, but they were not as closely linked to the narrative as those from 2012. The ones with the most relevance were those that instructed an action from another character. For example, Jack directing another character to visit *The G Hotel* or to look up something in the *Yellow Pages*. Whilst assisting the plot, they were not as vital to it as in the 2002 programme.

Sky1's 2002 programme featured only one audio placement. The placement was spoken by a main character and had a medium plot involvement as its mention prompted a disclosure. The character of Marco enquired as to whether or not the tablet he had just taken could be

purchased from *Boots*, to which Will replied they are not sold there; i.e. the tablets were illegal drugs. Without the placement the character would have not gained the knowledge, thus the product had a medium connection to the plot.

In 2012 on Sky1, there was in comparison to 2002, an increase in audio placements. However, on the whole there were still few in total. The placements were all spoken by main characters, but the involvement with the narrative was varied. *BMW* was mentioned in passing, whereas *Western Union* was discussed as the method for receiving much-needed money.

The majority of the placements in both 2002 and 2012 were spoken by main characters. This, as with visual placements, once again echoes Balasubramanian (1994)'s theory of the modelling paradigm. The audience will hear the characters speaking of the products and wish to use the products themselves, because their favourite characters do. The integration with the plot increased from low to high from 2002 to 2012, with the exception of Channel 5, suggesting an agreement with Cowley and Barron (2008) that high engagement audio placements are preferable.

### **4.3.2 Audio Placement Integration**

The literature review put forward Russell (2002)'s theory that audio placements with low plot involvement hold the likelihood of attracting the attention of the audience and causing irritation. However, low narrative involvement may not always create irritation, as the placement may be overlooked causing it to blend into the scene and formulate a more realistic scene.

The majority of the audio placements were of low plot integration. Despite this, the products were relevant to the dialogue and to the scene, but not in the production of the narrative. For example ordering a drink of *Jagermeister* or suggesting a visit to *Mojitos 88* forms a part of the conversation. This conversation is natural and the type the audience would themselves participate in so does not necessarily create annoyance, as Tiwsakul et al (2005) suggest, it would create realism. This is relevant to almost all of the programmes studied, and not confined to programmes from 2002 or 2012, therefore disagreeing with Russell (2002). It may also create a favourable attitude towards the brand, as the characters are firstly, engaging in similar activities to the audience, and secondly, are doing so with a brand they identify with.

An exception to this is however, the 2002 Channel 5 programme. 'A Mind To Kill' featured several audio placements, all of which, as previously described, were highly engaged with the narrative. Thus in accordance with the theory, successfully advertising to the consumer;

subconsciously and without creating awareness or irritation whilst doing so. So, the placements are achieved in terms of both Russell (2002)'s theory, which reduces irritation and Avery and Ferraro (2000)'s which enables subconscious advertising.

#### **4.4 Placed Brands**

This next sub-chapter will look at the various brands that were placed in the programmes. Products can, as with traditional advertising, be placed to for them to be associated with a programme or specific character(s). In doing this, as the literature review outlined, attitudes towards brands can be altered; both positively and negatively. This sub-chapter will also examine the ethical considerations the placements confront.

##### **4.4.1 Constructing Identity Through Brands**

Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998) state that consumers use cultural meanings of brands to build and sustain their identity. The self is a symbolic project whereby consumers must construct their identity using the available symbolic materials. As the literature review identified, modern consumers avoid or miss traditional advertisements, so the available symbolic material comes in the form of product placements. Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998)'s research furthers this in saying that advertising is the provider of the symbolic resources by which the consumer can use to construct their narrative identity.

Whilst the products placed in the 2002 programmes studied are used by the characters, they are done so sporadically and do not appear to be a part of their lives. One exception is the character of K.C. in Sky1's 'Mile High' who is frequently seen driving a VW convertible car. Except for this, the products placed did not feature throughout the episodes studied. So consumers who identify with K.C. would recognise her use of the *VW* and seek to use *VW* to show their personality.

On the contrary, the products from 2012 placed tended to be featured repeatedly. For example, *Ellesse* in Channel 4's 'Shameless', *Land Rover* in ITV1's 'Homefront' and *VW* in Sky1's 'Mad Dogs'. For consumers looking to construct their identity, the programmes provide brands of which the audience can consume in order to lead the lives of their favourite characters that they aspire to. This also supports Balasubramanian (1994)'s modelling paradigm theory.

Therefore, a considerable change in placements that has occurred in 2012 since 2002, is a rise in the way in which products are repeatedly placed so audience members can identify products with the characters they aspire to.

#### **4.4.2 Modality and Plot Connection**

As the literature review discussed, Russell (2002) established a theory surrounding modality and plot connection in relation to how meaningful a placement can be to an audience member. Russell (2002)'s theory states that placements with the highest meaning are those that are audio and integrated highly with the narrative, whereas visual placements that have a high connection with the narrative are the least so. Placements that have medium success are visual with low plot connection and placements with little success are audio with low plot connection. The more meaningful a placement is, the more positive audience attitude towards the product that has been placed.

On the whole, the audio placements from 2012 were of high plot connection and therefore more meaningful, as a pose to those from 2002. Low connection visual placements were common in 2002, those placements were also considered meaningful in accordance with Russell (2002)'s theory. The less meaningful placements were the audio from 2002 as these had low plot connection. But the least meaningful in agreement with the theory were the visual placements from 2012. Subsequently in line with Russell (2002)'s theory, 2012 audio placements were the most successful, followed by visual from 2002, next falls 2002 audio placements with the least successful being visual placements from 2012.

As a result, in concurrence with the theory, the audio placements have amended from 2002 to 2012 to produce a more positive reaction from the audience towards the products. Whereas the visual placements have decreased in their ability to provoke positive attitudes from the

audience towards the products. This may be due to the fact the products are becoming more entwined with the narrative, so as to not instigate feelings of irritation.

#### **4.4.3 Ethical Issues and Regulatory Considerations**

As the literature review found from Tiwsakul et al (2005) and Avery and Ferraro (2000), there are a number of ethical issues to be addressed within product placement. Prosser (2010) detailed the laws in connection to product placement on British television. The first of these being similar to the ethical issues outlined by Tiwsakul et al (2005), secondly the effect the placements have upon the narrative and finally, informing the audience that the placements will be featured.

Firstly, the placements did not target vulnerable groups; children, elderly or the disabled, which projects Tiwsakul et al (2005)'s research. However, the idea that postmodern consumers can be a vulnerable group does implicate the products outlined in the previous sub-chapter, as these have been identified as targeting postmodern consumers.

Additionally, both an ethical issue and regulation set by law, discovered in the literature review stated that products seen by some consumers as products that cause illness or harm, or that offend certain activist groups should be excluded from being placed in programmes. This said, in

opposition to the theories outlined by both Tiwaskul et al (2005) and Avery and Ferraro (2000), a number of products were included of this type, with an increase from 2002 to 2012. For example alcohol; *Fosters* and *Malibu*; and products high in fat and sugar; *Coca-Cola*, *Pop Tarts* and *Walkers*; were featured in the 2002 programmes. In 2012 there was a rise in alcoholic products; *Jagermeister*, *Cointreau*, *Tia Maria*, *Carlsberg*, *Guinness* and *Becks*; and those containing high levels of sugar and fat; *Dib Dab*, *McDonalds*, *McVities*, *Pringles*, *Coca-Cola* and *Twix*. In 2012 there was also the inclusion of *Primark*, which can be seen by some activists as an unethical brand; due to where their clothing is produced; and therefore may offend these particular groups.

The laws surrounding the type of products that can be placed do not appear to be adhered to. However, the programmes from 2002 are not subject to these laws as they were established 2010, but the programmes from 2012 should be. Nonetheless, regulatory bodies are in place; OfCom; who closely monitor programmes. OfCom operates using consumer complaints and therefore if consumers do not complain about the products being placed, OfCom does not employ the laws.

The inclusion of these prohibited products may encourage audience members to use them. Balasubramanian (1994) states that consumers use products that they see their favourite characters using, therefore audiences may consume products that could affect their health. However, sports brands *Ellesse* and *Lonsdale* are also placed, so they may on the other hand, encourage exercise.

A further regulation for consideration is the effect upon the narrative the placements bear. The law states that placements should not take control of the editorial independence. The products featured; whilst in high connection with the plot do not determine the plot, i.e. without the products the narrative would still be understood. The programmes therefore, adhere to the laws Prosser (2010) described. It is important for the placements not to take control of the narrative, else the programmes will be dominated with and by brands. Not only would the placements lose their verisimilitude as Avery and Ferraro (2000) describe, they would also become more obvious and, as Cowley and Barron (2008) suggest, cause irritation.

Finally, the law maintains that audiences should be made aware of product placement being featured in the programme they are about to watch. This is something that is adhered to in the 2012 programmes since the law was introduced; a significant change. The programmes feature a 'P' logo on their opening title sequence; and usually before a return to the programme after an advertisement break. Audiences were made aware of what the 'P' logo represented by a series of advertisements over a period of time before the symbol was launched. This could be seen as product placement becoming subject to consumer awareness in much the same as traditional advertising has been, as outlined by Matthes et al (2012) and a reduction in the effectiveness of placements. However, since, as Cowley and Barron (2008) state, consumers cannot escape being advertised to in the form of product placement, so ethically they must be made aware of it in general; not each individual placement; so as to be able to make an informed decision. Whilst audiences are aware that the programme they are about to watch will contain placements, they are not made aware of each individual placement, which allows the mere exposure effect and PKM to function.

## **4.5 Summary of Findings**

This chapter has examined the findings of the primary research in relation to the objectives set. The primary research has looked at the changes in product placement from 2002 to 2012; of both the placements themselves and the ways in which the audience receive them.

In looking at visual placements, most of the channel's programmes that have been studied have seen few changes in their visual placements from 2002 to 2012.

The majority of the channels use the same types of placements in 2012 as they did in 2002; ITV1, Channel 4 and Channel 5 all predominantly favour placements that are for use by the characters in full view of the camera but tend to have a low plot connection. These are often brands worn or driven by the characters, most likely because they blend into the scene and add realism.

Sky1, although different to the other channels, has also remained similar from 2002 to 2012 in the way it places products in its programmes. Sky1 has a tendency to vary which characters use the products and how engaged they are with the movement of the narrative.

It is BBC1 that has seen the most dramatic change in its placements. Products in 2002 were placed to stage the scene, in the background and therefore had low involvement to the narrative. Whereas products in 2012 were placed to be seen being used by the characters and often were key to moving forward the narrative.

Finally in visual placements, placing products so that the audience are subject to the mere exposure effect has become a tool for 2012 placements. The repetition and short sightings of products, in order to set the product firmly in the subconscious, are favoured in 2012.

In summary, the research showed that the audio placements studied have altered in their nature in 2012 since 2002.

Three of the channels saw an increase in the number of placements; ITV1, Channel 4 and Sky1; Channel 4 in particular saw the greatest growth by 2012, as in 2002 there was only one placement. Of the other channels; BBC1 and Channel 5; the number of placements in fact decreased. Both saw frequent placements in 2002, but by 2012 the number of products placed in the programmes studied had considerably reduced.

On the whole, how engaged the audio placements were with the plot remained the same from 2002 to 2012. For the majority of the channels, the connection to the narrative was low. As previously outlined, Channel 5 most successfully integrated the placements with the narrative, particularly in 2002, but by 2012 this had dropped to medium integration.

Finally for audio placements it was observed that, when not engaged with the narrative, did however bear relevance to the plot. The placements did not appear noticeable within the dialogue as they were used by the characters akin to how the audience would use the brand names themselves.

Generally it can be said that there have been notable changes in product placements from 2002 to 2012 in the ways in which they are used in programmes. The regulations to which they adhere have altered along with the ways in which they appeal to the audience.

Placements in 2012 are using more brands of which audiences can consume in similarity to their favourite characters in order to form their own identities. Brands are being placed so as to be seen to be used or worn by the characters, and as a result audiences will emulate them.

2002 placements did not abide by the ethical considerations or the laws, but the laws had not yet been implicated. 2012 placements adhere to most laws and ethical considerations, but not all. The placements respected who could be advertised to, but not what could be advertised, which could be seen to have consequences upon the audience.

The next chapter will conclude these results in more detail.

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The chapter will outline the main conclusions found in the primary research and consequently make recommendations in relation to surrounding literature, future study and practices.

### **5.1 Conclusions**

Following are the main conclusions that the primary research has brought about.

#### **5.1.1 Increase in Product Placements from 2002 to 2012**

The literature outlined that there had in recent years, been an increase in the number of product placements. The primary research, on the whole, showed a significant increase in the number of product placements featured in the programmes in 2012 since those in 2002. Widely, there was a rise in the number of placements, mostly three fold. As a result, programmes are cluttered. So it can be said that the number of placements has increased from 2002 to 2012.

### **5.1.2 A Rise in the Use of the Mere Exposure Effect to Create Positive Brand Attitudes in 2012**

The mere exposure effect is a theory found in the literature. It states that short and often placements subconsciously create a memory of the product, and a consequential liking for the product that was featured. The primary research showed products that were placed frequently but shown for a short amount of time. Therefore in accordance to the theory, products are more likely to be remembered by the subconscious. So, it can be said that there is a greater use of the mere exposure effect in the programmes from 2012 than those in 2002.

### **5.1.3 Using Brands to Form Identity in 2012 Placements**

A theme emerged that highlighted how consumers use brands to form their identities. They live in a society whereby they are uncertain how to construct their selves, so use brands they see in media texts to form who they are. The primary research found brands placed in the programmes from 2012 were worn or used by the characters. This meant that audience members could look to their favourite characters, see what brands they engaged with, and if the brands and characters stood for who the audience member wants to be, then they would do the same as the characters do; consequently demonstrating their identity. Therefore, another conclusion drawn from the primary research was that there are more products placed in the 2012 programmes than those from 2002 that audience members can use to form their identities.

#### **5.1.4 Higher Modality and Plot Connection in 2012 Placements**

The placements had a higher connection to the plot in 2012, the primary research found. According to the literature, these placements are deemed to be more meaningful if they are audio placements; and create more favourable brand attitudes; but less so if they are visual placements. The audio placements were higher connected as they were used for instructions or directions and consequently for moving the narrative forward. The visual placements were highly connected because characters used the products to move between scenes, the products were a key part of the narrative; aiding its progression, of which without them the narrative would have had an alternative outcome. As stated previously, the higher the connection of the visual placements, the less meaning they hold, but audio placements have a higher meaning if they are highly connected; thus developing positive brand attitudes. None the less, it can be observed that the primary research showed higher plot connection of placements in 2012 from those in 2002.

#### **5.1.5 Alterations to the Laws Surrounding Product Placements**

Laws have been outlined of which product placement should follow; these however are only applicable to programmes from 2012, based upon when the laws were introduced. On the whole the laws were respected, but there was a lack of obedience of some of the laws outlined. Products placed are not permitted to contain high salt, fats or sugars or be of alcoholic content. However, a high number of the products placed were in conflict with this law.

On the other hand, the remaining laws were adhered to. Products, despite being in high connection to the plot, were not in control of the production of the programmes. The law states that products are not permitted to dominate the programmes creative and production team, of which these placements do not. This can be said because, if the products used were replaced for alternative brands, the programme would not be affected.

Additionally, the law states that audiences should be made aware of placements being included in programmes. The research found this to be obliged, as programmes display a 'P' logo before programmes begin, and after advertisement breaks.

Thus, it can be said that the primary research found largely the placements in 2012, obey the laws set out for product placements.

#### **5.1.6 Achieving the Research Objectives**

This study set out to examine the changes in product placements from 2002 to 2012; in its use and the way in which consumers receive it. The research has identified five major aspects in which placements have altered. The primary research has identified that placements differ in 2012 from those in 2002 as there has been; an increase in the number of placements, a use of the mere exposure effect to create positive brand attitudes, a use of placed brands in constructing audience identities, higher plot connection of placements and an alteration to the laws

surrounding product placements. These five themes examine the how product placement has changed from 2002 to 2012 in British television drama series.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

In light of the conclusions to the primary research, the following recommendations have been suggested.

Firstly, the research found that product placements tend to deviate from the law set out to control the types of products placed in programmes on British television. The research found that audience members may emulate characters by consuming the same products in order to form their identity, so this heightens the first suggestion. Placements should be monitored so as to prevent products being placed that the law states should not appear. Use of such products is incited by their placement in programmes and due to their nature, the law should be upheld.

A second recommendation is to avoid clutter of placements in programmes. This achieves the following benefits. By avoiding clutter, audiences will be less irritated as their programmes will not be littered with products, nor will the placements stand out. In light of this, consumers will hold a more favourable attitude towards placements if they appear sporadically, due to not feeling bombarded. Additionally, in reducing clutter, it

allows for deeper thought into which products are placed, enabling a greater match between target audiences of both programme and product. This also creates more favourable attitudes towards brands, as the audience identifies with them.

The second recommendation looks to further research. The literature outlines that visual placements with high plot connection are less meaningful than those that are audio. Meaning is said to be created when positive brand attitudes are cultivated. Further research could examine the brand attitudes of consumers before and after these types of placements are viewed, in order to look at how their attitudes towards the brands change.

A final recommendation is also for further study. The primary research found that in conjunction with theory outlined in the literature review, audiences use brands featured in product placements to construct their identities. Further study could look at how this transcribes with the target audiences of the programmes. Study could examine whether the audiences use the products featured in the programmes they view.

## **6. Reflections**

This chapter reflects upon the study, evaluating the research process; strengths and weaknesses; and any problems encountered.

The purpose of this study was to examine the changes in product placement in British television drama series from 2002 to 2012. The primary research identified five changes, so it can be said that the research met the objectives set out. It was clear what the study set out to achieve, with a straight focus. Additionally, the research was planned and executed to a timescale which was achieved.

The research used the most beneficial methodology in order to achieve the purpose of the study. Although, the study was designed to be subjectivist, some of the analysis of findings could be seen as objectivist. This would be rectified by focusing less on frequencies and more on exploring the phenomena behind them.

Additionally, it is possible that a larger sample could have been used. A wider sample may provide more conclusive results, in the use of programmes from a further BBC channel and another Sky channel. This would allow for a deeper examination of the differences between commercial channels, with independent and channels with a subscription fee.

The study covered a wide range of theories, the majority of these in detail, and was well rounded. However some of the theories found in the literature review were not applied to the research. Possibly this could have been corrected by examining either visual or audio placements, for a more focused study.

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## **8. Appendices**

**Figure 1** – Sample of the data collection table used.

Channel:

Year:

Programme:

Episode:

Brand name	Product name	Type of placement				Prominence		Engagement (H/M/L) <sup>3</sup>		Length of exposure (secs)
		Audio	Visual	Staging	Usage	Visual (C/R/B) <sup>1</sup>	Character(M/S/E/G) <sup>2</sup>	Character	Plot	

Total number of placements:

- Number of placed brands:

- Number of products:

<sup>1</sup> C/R/B – Close/Regular/Background

<sup>2</sup> M/S/E/G – Main/Secondary/Extra/Guest

<sup>3</sup> H/M/L – High/Medium/Low

**Figure 2** – Sample of a completed data collection sheet.

Channel: *BBC1*

Year: *2002*

Programme: *Cutting It*

Episode: *1*

Brand name	Product name	<u>Type of placement</u>				Prominence		Engagement (H/M/L)		Length of exposure (secs)
		Audio	Visual	Staging	Usage	Visual (C/R/B)	Character (M/S/E/G)	Character	Plot	
<i>T &amp; T</i>	<i>Soft Drink</i>		X		X	<i>C</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Jimmy Choo</i>	<i>Designer clothing brand</i>	X				-	<i>S</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L</i>	-
<i>Donna Karen</i>	<i>Designer clothing brand</i>	X				-	<i>S</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L</i>	-
<i>Dolce &amp; Gabbana</i>	<i>Designer clothing brand</i>	X				-	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L</i>	-

Total number of placements: *4*

- Number of placed brands: *4*

- Number of products: *4*

**Figure 3** – Sample of a completed data collection sheet.

Channel: *BBC1*

Year: *2012*

Programme: *Hustle*

Episode: *1*

Brand name	Product name	Type of placement				Prominence		Engagement (H/M/L)		Length of exposure (secs)
		Audio	Visual	Staging	Usage	Visual (C/R/B) (M/S/E/G)	Character	Character	Plot	
<i>Range Rover</i>	<i>Vogue</i>		X	X		C	-	-	-	4
<i>Dib Dab</i>	<i>Sweet</i>	X				-	M	L	L	-
<i>Innocent</i>	<i>Fruit smoothie</i>		X		X	R	E	L	M	2
<i>Bollinger</i>	<i>Champagne</i>	X					M	L	M	-
<i>Rolls Royce</i>	<i>Car</i>		X		X	R	E	H	H	2
<i>Rolls Royce</i>	<i>Car</i>		X		X	R	E	H	H	2
<i>Alfa Romero</i>	<i>Car</i>		X		X	R	M	H	H	2
<i>Rolls Royce</i>	<i>Car</i>		X		X	R	G	H	H	6
<i>Lotus</i>	<i>Car</i>		X	X		R	E	L	M	2
<i>Lotus</i>	<i>Car</i>		X		X	R	E	M	M	2
<i>Audi</i>	<i>A1</i>		X		X	R	M	H	H	3
<i>Audi</i>	<i>A1</i>		X		X	R	M	H	H	2
<i>Audi</i>	<i>A1</i>		X		X	B	M	H	H	2
<i>Audi</i>	<i>A1</i>		X		X	R	M	H	H	2
<i>Audi</i>	<i>A1</i>		X		X	R	M	H	H	1
<i>VW</i>	<i>Van</i>		X		X	R	M	H	H	2
<i>Rolls Royce</i>	<i>Car</i>		X		X	B	G	H	H	3

<i>Olympus</i>	<i>Dictaphone</i>		X		X	<i>C</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	3
<i>Mac</i>	<i>Macbook Pro</i>		X		X	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	4

Total number of placements: **19**

- Number of placed brands: **11**

- Number of products: **11**