

Analysis of food adverts shown during a sample of primetime television

In our sample of 10.75 hours of primetime (ITV) television (TV) recording, and 10 hours of early evening TV recording (Channel 4), we found that the average number of adverts per hour shown on ITV was 40 and the average number of food adverts per hour was 9. For the Channel 4 sample, the average number of adverts shown per hour was 36 with on average 4 food adverts shown (see tables 1 and 2 for total number of all adverts and food adverts shown for recorded samples).

Table 1. Total adverts and food adverts in the primetime ITV condition (X Factor)

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Total Adverts</i> | <i>Total Food Adverts</i> |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 07/12/2013 (1.5hrs) | 62 | 13 |
| 30/11/2013 (1.75hrs) | 72 | 16 |
| 24/11/2013 (1hr) | 40 | 10 |
| 23/11/2013 (1.5 hrs) | 61 | 16 |
| 17/11/2013 (1 hr) | 40 | 6 |
| 16/11/2013 (1.5 hr) | 66 | 14 |
| 10/11/2013 (1 hr) | 43 | 5 |
| 09/11/2013 (1.5 hrs) | 44 | 14 |
| Total (10.75 hrs) | 428 | 94 |

Table 2. Total adverts and food adverts in the early evening Channel 4 condition (The Simpsons and Hollyoaks)

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Total Adverts</i> | <i>Total Food Adverts</i> |
|------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 25/10/2013 (1hr) | 31 | 6 |
| 01/11/2013 (1hr) | 43 | 6 |
| 08/11/2013 (1hr) | 34 | 6 |
| 12/11/2013 (1hr) | 28 | 3 |
| 14/11/2013 (1hr) | 38 | 6 |
| 22/11/2013 (1hr) | 35 | 4 |
| 29/11/2013 (1hr) | 35 | 4 |
| 05/12/2013 (1hr) | 40 | 4 |
| 06/12/2013(1hr) | 38 | 1 |
| 13/12/2013(1hr) | 34 | 2 |
| Total (10hrs) | 356 | 42 |

Furthermore, in the ITV sample, 22% of total adverts were for food items and within these food adverts, the most frequently advertised type of food advert was supermarket adverts for unhealthy food products (24.5% of food adverts). The second most frequently advertised food type were fast-food restaurants (13.4%), with chocolate and confectionery products being third most frequent (11.7%) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Top 5 most frequently advertised food categories in the X Factor TV sample

| <i>Food category</i> | <i>Brand/product frequency</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| Non-core supermarkets | Aldi (11) Morrison's (5) Sainsbury's (2) Tesco, Co-op, Iceland, Lidl, M&S (all 1) | 23 | 24.5% |
| Fast food restaurants | Dominos (3) KFC (3) McDonalds (3) Subway (3) Burger King (1) | 13 | 13.4% |
| Chocolate and confectionery | Lindt (4) Haribo (2) Cadburys, Ferrero Roche, Maltesers, Ricolo, Snickers. | 11 | 11.7% |
| Non specified supermarket | Aldi (4) ASDA (3) Sainsbury's (3) Lidl (1) | 11 | 11.7% |
| High fat/salt/sugar spreads | Clover (3) Flora Buttery (2) | 5 | 5.3% |

Within the Channel 4 sample, the data demonstrated that 11.8% of all adverts shown were for food and the most frequently advertised food type was for fast food products, counting for 19% of the share. Further frequently advertised foods in the early evening Channel 4 condition are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Top 3 most frequently advertised food categories in the Channel 4 TV sample

| <i>Food category</i> | <i>Brand/product frequency</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| Fast food restaurants | McDonalds (3) KFC (8) Burger King (1) Justeat.co.uk (1) | 8 | 19% |
| Non- specified supermarket | ASDA (2) Tesco (2) Iceland (1) Sainsbury's (1) | 7 | 16.7% |
| Chocolate and confectionary | Cadburys (1) Lindt (1) Skittles (1) | 3 | 7.1% |

Considering again the ITV sample, themes of *fun* were the most frequent persuasive appeal used in the food adverts (30.5%), which may appeal more to children than other age groups. This was followed by emphasis on *price* and *convenience* of foods (Table 5). With regards to the primary target audience of food adverts, the majority were aimed at *families* (62%), however children or child aged characters (not including brand equity or licensed characters) were used in the majority of food adverts in this sample (52.6%). Additionally, around a third of TV food adverts displayed a website or a Twitter hash tag, usually at the end of the advert. This is important to note as thirty-six per cent of 8 - 15 year olds with a mobile phone undertake cross-media multi-tasking 'most times' when they are watching television according to a recent Ofcom report (Ofcom, 2013). Therefore, the TV adverts may prompt children to go online to see to interact with brand for a lot longer than their exposure to the TV advert.

Table 5. Top 3 findings for persuasive appeal and primary target audience used in X Factor food adverts

| <i>Coding category</i> | <i>Top 3</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Food brand frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|---|----------------|
| Persuasive appeal | Fun | 30 | Aldi (5) Clover (3) Sainsbury's (3) Flora buttery (2) Haribo (2) KFC (2)... | 30.5% |
| | Price | 16 | ASDA (3) Dominos (3) Aldi (2) Co-op (2)... | 16.5% |
| | Convenience | 8 | McDonalds (3) Bird's Eye (2) McCain (2) Morrisons (1) | 8.2% |
| Primary target audience | Families | 60 | Aldi (12) ASDA (5) Morrisons (4) Sainsbury's (4) Dominos (3) KFC (3)... | 61.9% |
| | Adults | 26 | Aldi (4) McDonalds (3) Birds Eye (2) Lidl (2) Subway (2)... | 26.8% |
| | Children | 9 | Clover (3) Aldi (2) Haribo (2) Cadburys (1) Coca-Cola (1) | 9.3% |

... = more food brands which only appear once in the category.

Table 6. Top 3 findings for persuasive appeal and primary target audience used in early evening Channel 4 food adverts

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--|----|-------|
| Persuasive appeal | Price | Aldi (2) ASDA (2) Sainsburys (2) Tesco (2) Burger King (1) KFC (1) Lidl (1) | 11 | 26.2% |
| | Health/Nutrition | Berocca vitamins (1) Calin+ (1) Centrum vitamins (1) Clover (1) Coca-Cola Zero (1) | 5 | 11.9% |
| | Enjoyment/ Satisfaction | Tesco (2) Coca-Cola (1) Iceland (1) Pringles (1) | 5 | 11.9% |
| | Unique/ New | ASDA Christmas crumpets (1) Fox cafe biscuits (1) Lidl chicken turkey duck roast (1) McDonalds Spicy chicken McBites (1) Warbuton sandwich thins (1) | 5 | 1.9% |
| | Families | Tesco (4) ASDA (3) McDonalds (3) Aldi (2) KFC (2) McCain baked potatoes (2)... | 29 | 69% |
| Primary target audience | Adults | Liberte yogurt (2) Lidl (2) Berocca vitamins, Calin+, Tesco Coca-Cola Zero, Sainsburys, , Uncle Ben's rice (all 1) | 10 | 23.8% |
| | Children | Cadburys (1) Iceland (1) | 2 | 4.8% |

With regards to the Channel 4 data, within the sample the most frequently used persuasive appeal was *price* (26.2%). This was followed by equal emphasis on *health/nutrition, enjoyment/satisfaction* and *unique/new* attributes of food products, each accounting for 11.9% of persuasive appeals used (Table 6).

With regards to the primary target audience of food adverts, the majority were again aimed at *families* (69%), however children or child aged characters were *not* used in the majority of food adverts (only in 38% of food adverts shown), differing from the ITV sample. Finally, the majority of TV food adverts displayed a website or a Twitter hash tag (71%) usually at the end of the advert.

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Appendix 1 – Glossary

The definitions used from the coding manual - used in the analysis of UK television adverts by Boyland et al. 2011 (based on work by Kelly et al., 2007; 2010):

- Non-core supermarkets = adverts for supermarkets featuring mostly non-core (unhealthy) foods. Examples from the study include Morrisons (chocolate bomb dessert) and Aldi (mince pies, smoked salmon, champagne, chocolate reindeer, Christmas cake).
- Non-specified supermarkets = generic supermarket adverts or not clearly for non-core or core foods.
- Primary target audience = intended target audience of advert determined by age of characters/actors, visual appearance of the ad (animated, colourful, simple shapes etc) and the theme (e.g., fun and fantasy).
- Primary persuasive appeal - categorised based on subjective judgement of the main focus of the advert:
 1. Quantity
 2. Convenience
 3. Taste
 4. Health/nutrition
 5. Energy
 6. Price
 7. Unique/new

8. Fun
9. General superiority
10. Peer status/sex appeal
11. Premium or contest
12. Weight loss/diet
13. Offers choices/options
14. Enjoyment/satisfaction
15. Product information
16. Corporate information
17. Other

APPENDIX 2– Research Protocol

Aims

The principle aim of this study is to undertake a detailed examination of the amount and nature of food advertising around commercial television shows popular with children shown on ITV and Channel 4. The study has 3 main aims: 1) to quantify the amount of food and beverage advertising shown around and identify what proportion of it advertises HFSS items; 2) to investigate how much of this HFSS advertising is directed primarily at children and; 3) quantify how much of this advertising would be permitted to be broadcast around children's programming under the Ofcom rules.

Methods

Utilising UoL television recording equipment, all adverts shown in the commercial breaks before, during and after 10hrs of The X - Factor 2013 and a similar block on Channel 4 covering The Simpsons and Hollyoaks will be recorded onto DVD and then subsequently coded by a researcher. All advertisements shown will be coded (such that the proportion of overall ads devoted to foods and beverages can be determined); however food advertisements will be coded in greater detail to include the food category (e.g., fast food restaurants, confectionery, high sugar cereal, low sugar cereal etc.), nutrient profile (using the UK Ofcom nutrient profiling model to determine if the item would be permitted to be advertised to children under the Ofcom rules), primary target group of advert (e.g., children, teens, adults and older adults), use of premium offers (e.g., giveaways, competitions, contests etc.), persuasive appeals used (e.g., taste, fun, health/nutrition), use of celebrity endorsers or brand equity/licensed characters and provision of a web address on screen or verbal reference to an associated website.