



Best Practice Guide to Advertiser Funded Programming (UK)

Branded Content Marketing Association

The BCMA
6th Floor, Charlotte Building
17 Gresse Street
London, W1T 1QL

www.thebcma.info
[@thebcma](https://twitter.com/thebcma)

1. AN INTRODUCTION TO ADVERTISER FUNDED PROGRAMMING (AFP)

AFP, or Branded Content as it is now more often called, has been around since the 1930s in Radio and Television, when original daytime dramas in the US were funded by washing powder manufacturers such as Proctor and Gamble and Colgate-Palmolive and the "Soap Opera" has remained with us ever since. The key to the successful strategy all those years ago was for the brands to give their customers the entertainment they wanted during the day. The brand would be associated and so appreciated. It was less about brand "values" and more about the brand as benefactor.

This simple and effective approach of putting viewers first when designing content should remain firmly at the heart of any Branded Content initiative today. There are all sorts of clever ways to exploit the content but the content must be able to stand alone without any brand involvement.

A wide range of blue chip brands have now been involved in the making of content; on television, in cinemas, at events, online and on mobiles: Unilever, Proctor and Gamble, the COI, Adidas and Vodafone, to name but a few.

Television is embedded in our culture and is much talked about and shared. All of which makes a close association with TV content an attractive and potentially very rewarding proposition for advertisers. AFP provides the opportunity for brands to participate in the phenomenon that a successful TV show can be; on air, off air and online.

2. AFP: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT ISN'T

A clear understanding of this is the key to a positive outcome and time well spent.

AFP can be described as 'any means by which an advertiser can have a deeper relationship with programming production beyond traditional media activity'. By this definition there must be a funding relationship (full or in part) with the programme or series. Put another way, it is 'beyond sponsorship' - where the advertiser's money goes directly into production and leads to a degree of content/format ownership. It's programming that wouldn't exist without the brand partner.

It is not editorial about a brand.

Advertisers need to remember that they are buying into the editorial integrity of the programme and reaching consumers by association with the programmes values. This is not a restraint - it is the key to success. Gillette World of Sport was a great early example of an advertiser funded programme: it was a show that the target audience wanted - but it wasn't about razors or shaving gel, but more about bringing great content to its core target audience.

3. WHY SHOULD BRANDS GET INVOLVED AND HOW DOES AFP BUILD ON TV SPONSORSHIP?

Branded Content is often looked at as "sponsorship +", and this is a pretty good thing to keep front of mind. The consumer/brand relationship operates in a similar way. AFP can do all the things sponsorship can do for a brand - enhance, reinforce or shift a brand image etc, and much, much more.

A TV sponsorship campaign, done well, can yield real benefits for a brand if the right show is available, at the right time; if it can be secured; and if there is sufficient time to plan and co-ordinate the activation (exploitation) before it goes to air. However, this is not always possible.

Through AFP, advertisers can negate these provisos, maximise the potential of TV sponsorship on their own terms and garner a number of significant benefits from having a deeper relationship with programming and with broadcasters and producers.

4. SO WHAT CAN BRANDED CONTENT GIVE YOU THAT BUILDS ON THE ESTABLISHED BENEFITS OF TV SPONSORSHIP?

- A competitive edge: great programmes that can be sponsored are in demand. Branded content can help you avoid a bidding war for a diminishing amount of programming. You can exclude your competitors by owning the commercial relationship from the start.
- Synchronicity: arrange TV content-led marketing at a time that suits your marketing cycle when there is no suitable TV content available "off the shelf".
- Maximum value: longer lead times mean more time to better plan and budget for an integrated campaign. More time too, to enable you to co-create the additional off-air and multi-platform content that consumers want.
- Deeper brand experience: a 30 or 60 minute brand experience; all of the content shapes consumers entire attitude and image of brand (not just the branded credits).
- Additional exclusive content
- Franchise creation: AFP gives clients the opportunity to create a franchise from scratch that didn't exist before, e.g. Orange Playlist or Red Bull's 'Flugtag'. It can also initiate the development of new programme or product categories.

There are many other potential marketing and commercial benefits, from title rights and credit integration, to product deals, promotional appearances and international barter of commercial airtime. The wide adoption of broadband, the hosting of television properties on new platforms and the enthusiasm of viewers for more of the right content related to their favourite programmes is of considerable incremental benefit for those involved.

The recent introduction of product placement in the UK is also likely to provide brands with new opportunities to turbo-charge their content partnerships; both sponsorships and AFPs.

5. SOME BRANDED CONTENT EXAMPLES

Like great sponsorship campaigns, many branded content initiatives use entertainment as a gateway to further consumer interactions, both online and at events. Nike is a good example of this having funded a series of programmes with Sky, including Most Wanted (a nationwide search for the next generation of football talent led by Sir Alex Ferguson) and Wayne Rooney Street Striker with Coke Zero (a series of events and trials to find the UK's best street footballer with Wayne Rooney as judge). Red Bull X Fighters also used the prominence of on-air thrills and spills to bring people together off air for an international 6 week competition of extreme motor-cross series, showcased on UKTV.

Here's a selection of examples for you:

T-Mobile transmits its musical passion

T-Mobile wants to amplify the impact of its Street Gigs, unique money can't buy concerts by some of the hottest names in UK music

- It works with C4 to create an ad-funded series called Transmission with T-Mobile
- The activity increases the reach of the programme by 5,000% and the series is re-commissioned for a second and third series in 2007

The challenge

T-Mobile wants to bring people closer to the things they love. For many youth audiences music ranks very high on the list of the things they love. T-Mobile established "Street Gigs" a series of spontaneous gigs in surprising and unique locations. The programme started in 2005 and expanded in 2006 with bands playing in locations as varied as the Natural History Museum, a car park and even a kebab shop. Headline acts have included Kasabian, the Strokes and Athlete. The brand let its customers experience these events by texting those in the area two hours before the gig with details of the band and location. The first few hundred to turn up with the invitation get in. The challenge was to enable these exciting events to be experienced by a broader audience. T-Mobile needed to find a bigger audience without destroying the unique nature of the concerts.

The solution

The solution was a co-funded show called Transmission with T-Mobile. A 12-part series of 60-minute shows featuring five live bands per show. Also included would be two big name studio guests and two presenters as the programme was filmed in 10 different cities across the UK. Broadcast on T4 and repeated on C4 and E4, T-Mobile was name-checked not only in the programme title but also in through co-branded trails across the network, a first for Channel 4. There was also editorial support for the show as well as traditional sponsorship break bumpers. The series started in June 2006 and ran until September. T-Mobile used the co-funded show as the heart of a wider campaign that also included online content, PR and a staff campaign with a ticket giveaway for T-Mobile employees.

Results

Transmission averaged 2.3 TVRs among 16-34s, significantly more than the same T4 slot normally achieves and three times more than BBC 2's coverage of T in the Park. Adding TV to the Street Gigs programme amplified its reach by 5,000%. Off-air the show generated 40 articles a week, all of which were positive and the number of requests to participate in the Street Gigs increased by 500% on the T-Mobile website. T-Mobile saw an increase in overall sign-ups around the broadcast and enjoyed above average click through rate of 12% – compared with an industry standard of 8%. New registrations are up year on year with registrations in the first quarter of 2007 matching the total achieved in the whole of 2006. Nearly 4,000 daily visits were made to the Transmission support sites and 500 mobile users also requested additional WAP content. The success of the first series was such that the show returned for a second run out in April 2007. Twelve 60 min shows were broadcast on C4 at 23.00 Friday nights with repeats on E4 on Saturdays and C4 mid-week. This achieved a loyal audience of around 600,000 peaking at around 1m viewers per week. A third series has been confirmed for broadcast in September 2007 with hosts Lauren Laverne and Steve Jones returning to the helm and taking viewers on a tour of another ten UK locations. There will also be two one-hour best off shows to be broadcast around Christmas 2007.

British Gas gets kids to 'Green up Your Life'

British Gas wanted to raise awareness of its Generation Green initiative to promote 'green' issues amongst children and their families

- An ad funded series of TV programmes called 'Green up Your Life' was developed to be shown on CITV alongside an online game.
- 100% of kids who watched the programme and played the game said they'd learnt something new about the environment.

The challenge

British Gas had some of the strongest green credentials in its market as measured by carbon per household. However, in a time when company after company is shouting about their apparent green credentials, it is increasingly hard to achieve recognition and credibility. British Gas was particularly lagging behind in the green perception stakes.

After research indicated that actions speak louder than words when trying to communicate effectively with the public, British Gas decided to create change through a schools and communities programme called Generation Green. The programme aimed to promote environmental awareness and encourage green behaviour. The activity's core objectives were to:

- Raise awareness of Generation Green and 'green' issues amongst children
- Encourage environmentally conscious behaviours in children and their families through engaging content.

The solution

The aim was to bring Generation Green to life by providing engaging content via channels that children would already be choosing to use. Therefore, they wanted to be involved with media brands that children trust and enjoy.

Research from Childwise showed that, on average, children spend 6 hours a day watching TV, playing games and surfing the internet. Therefore, TV was chosen to form the backbone of the campaign due to its ability to engage children powerfully with relevant content over an extended period of time. The campaign was shaped to include three media touch-points: TV, online and gaming.

An ad funded series of TV programmes called 'Green up Your Life' was developed to be shown on CITV. The 10 x 5 minute programmes featured three teams of kids (the Eco-Rangers) who were competing against each other to complete environmental challenges. The shows were aired daily on CITV from Sept 15th 2008 in the prime 3.50pm slot and then repeated on 3 occasions as they were received so well by viewers and had outperformed the slot average.

To drive awareness of Generation Green and British Gas, the initiative featured in the programme's sponsorship bumpers. There was a 10 second opening credit and a 5 second closing credit around each programme. Additionally, there was voice over promotion over the end title sequence that directed viewers to ITV.com/CITV to find out more information about Generation Green.

As well as the ad funded programme, British Gas took the Generation Green message to families through spot advertising. The campaign ran over a four week period from 15th September to 12th October. Key times when parents and children would be watching together were targeted, so programmes such as X-Factor, Harry Potter and the Pride of Britain Awards.

To compliment the TV campaign, British Gas showed the same TV ad copy at cinemas, conducted an adult-targeted online ad campaign around key ITV show sites such as This Morning and Loose Women and finally extended the TV programme content into an online game. The game was hosted on CITV.co.uk and Popcorn.co.uk (children's cinema site). Furthermore, the game was promoted by the end credits voiceover at the end of 'Green up Your Life' episodes. This created an even stronger link between the TV show and the game.

Results

The Generation Green project was always designed to be a long term commitment, yet initial results show the campaign has been extremely successful.

BARB figures showed a total of 843,000 individuals and 525,000 kids saw the show. However, as the show was deemed such a success by ITV, it was repeated in 2009 with an increase to 933,000 individuals and 563,000 kids. In addition to this, 100% of kids who watched the programme and played the game said they'd learnt something new about the environment.

Viewers of the TV show were 108% more likely to see Generation Green as a positive 'green' example than non-viewers.

Children who had seen the show were 78% more likely to talk about 'green' issues frequently

As well as figures produced by official research, there were also a number of other results that indicated to the effectiveness of the campaign. By the end of 2008, 33,000 families had learnt about how they could reduce their energy consumption by completing an Energy Savers Report through Generation Green.

Also, 9,400 real life Eco-Rangers signed up in the shape of classroom light monitors by the end of 2008.

Vodafone shows how to 'Chase the Dream'

Vodafone wanted to build awareness of its new sponsorship of the McLaren F1 team

- The strategy included creating an hour-long TV show that screened in 21 countries. Edits were also shown both in-flight and online
- Sponsorship awareness increased significantly, illustrating that branded content is extremely powerful

The challenge

At the start of the 2007 F1 season McLaren had a new car, two new drivers and a new title sponsor.

Vodafone wanted to make the most of its place at the front of the grid and highlight the intricacies of building a successful Formula 1 team.

The aim was to create a global platform highlighting Vodafone's new link with the team, whilst also creating a deeper connection with the viewer than is possible in a simple 30-second ad.

The solution

The 2007 season was possibly the most exciting ever in F1 history and McLaren and its drivers, Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso, were right at the heart of the story.

Vodafone created 'Chasing the Dream', an hour-long documentary. This one-off programme made the most of the unique access available to Vodafone whilst also incorporating the brand ideal of 'Make the Most of Now' by showing the challenge of getting a new car and its drivers to the starting grid.

The telecoms brand featured in the programme as the new sponsor and the show was distributed as a package with sponsorship bumpers and a set of supporting branded online tools.

The show was initially broadcast in the UK, making its debut on ITV 1 in March 2007. It was then transmitted a further three times across the ITV network.

'Chasing the Dream' was also broadcast in a further 20 countries around the world on both terrestrial and satellite TV stations during the 2007 racing season.

Further edits were created including a 30-minute show for airline entertainment, which was broadcast by 17 airlines. Exclusive content was also placed on broadcaster websites such as ITV.com, the Vodafone Live! Portal – delivering added value to subscribers – and digital TV platforms such as Joost.

Results

'Chasing the Dream' had a major impact on perceptions of Vodafone and consumer awareness of its involvement with F1.

In the UK favourability among viewers towards Vodafone increased substantially and research shows that viewers were subsequently more likely to consider the brand for their next upgrade than non-viewers.

Sponsorship association among avid motorsports fans also increased over non-viewers.

Vodafone's brand positioning was also communicated by the show with the majority of viewers grasping the underlying message of "chase your dream" and understanding the importance of "making the most of the moment."

Aquafresh for Kids

Aquafresh was entering the older kids' toothpaste market for the first time.

- They created a mini film with singing and dancing about brushing teeth, which aired every day before bedtime.
- Aquafresh for Kids is now the number one brand in the market.

The challenge

Aquafresh for Kids was a new entry in the older kids toothpaste market. Although the brand Aquafresh was well established in the milk teeth market, this was the first time it had targeted 3-9 year olds with the new brand Aquafresh for Kids.

To ensure their message was a success, Aquafresh needed to engage mums and kids and the best way to do that was to create something they could share.

Although many full time mums have the TV on all day, levels of attention are highly variable. The best time to reach them was when mums and children were sitting down in front of the TV to unwind together.

Spending time with mums also revealed two important insights. Firstly that busy mums like anything that makes their life easier and secondly that kids love to learn songs with actions and would demand to see their favourites time and time again.

If Aquafresh could help calm the bathroom battle and reduce the struggle as mums got their kids ready to go to bed, then it would really make an impact.

The solution

The solution was to work closely with channel Cartoonito to create a song about brushing your teeth before bed.

The Nurdle Schmurdle Song featuring Milky, Lily and Billy – who feature on Aquafresh's kids' packs – and a group of real life kids would show children how to brush their teeth and do a tooth-brushing dance.

The mini film aired at 6.58pm every evening on Cartoonito, which then became a destination for mums and kids at a time when they could do the dance together and learn about the importance of brushing teeth properly.

The content was also streamed on the Cartoonito website so that it could be downloaded whenever and wherever kids wanted it.

A series of 30-second vox pops showing the Nurdles and their human friends talking about their love of brushing teeth ran across Turner and Viacom kids' channels both in the evenings and the mornings.

The internet added an interactive element to the campaign with kids invited to record online what they liked about brushing their teeth. This also provided Aquafresh with contacts for further conversations.

The Nurdles have made appearances at London Zoo, supermarkets and even have their own storybook, as well as monthly appearances in BBC magazines.

Results

The Nurdle Schmurdle has become extremely popular on Cartoonio and is the most downloaded piece of content on the channel's website. The Nurdle story book was ordered by 50,000 mums within a month of the launch.

Aquafresh has grown its share substantially between 2007 and 2008 at the expense of key competitors Colgate and Oral B. It is now number one in the market, up from number three in mid-2007.

PCSOs call on TV support

Police Community Support Officers need to boost recruitment and understanding

- An ad-funded show broadcast in peaktime on ITV 1 attracts an audience of 14m adults
- The show delivers £18m of media value for every £1 invested.

The challenge

Police Community Support Officers used to get a bad press. Dubbed “plastic policemen” in reference to their limited powers by some sectors of the media, communicating their real value was a tough job.

The brief was to raise awareness and understanding among the general public as well as generating enquiries from potential recruits.

Research identified that the real barrier to success of the PCSO was not lack of awareness or understanding, instead the campaign should focus on increasing the value people put in the role of PCSOs.

Those members of the public who had had contact with a PCSO had a positive impression, however since only 10% of those questioned had actually met one, the negative media message was dominant.

The solution

The challenge was to use media to create virtual meetings between PCSOs and a wider cross section of the public. Manning Gottlieb OMD worked with OMD Fuse and ITV to create an ad-funded programme that would create new contacts on a mass scale.

Beat: Life on the Street followed real PCSOs and showed their work alongside the regular police and contacts with public. It was the first time the Home Office had funded programming and also the first ad-funded show to run in peaktime in the UK.

The first episode in the six-part series aired at 6pm on October 29 2006 and the show attracted an average audience of 2.8m.

The TV content was also leveraged via PR in the TV listings titles and local newspapers. The stars of the show were heavily promoted with live webchats on ITV.com. Local DJs went out on the beat with PCSOs and DVDs of the show have been created for potential recruits.

Results

The show and associated activity delivered real and substantial change in consumer attitudes to PCSOs. The public value of the PSCOs soared from an average of 28% to 62% for consumers who had watched Beat.

Interest in signing up as a PSCO rose from 8% among non-viewers to 30% among viewers.

The cumulative audience for the show was 14m adults and each show delivered 30 adult TVRs for the cost of just 100 Adult TVRs 30-second spots.

Independent research showed that the show delivered £18 worth of value for every £1 spent on the production. The show was also repeated in July 2007, delivering further value for the Home office

And finally a campaign example that used the power of a big on-air show to drive the success of a content partnership that appeared online.

Sainsbury's Try Team were a hit with The X-Factor

Sainsbury's needed to maintain a high level of awareness during the festive period when their competitors were also frequently featuring on TV

- Through a partnership with the biggest programme on TV, The X-Factor, Sainsbury's bring themselves closer to mainstream family life
- Sales for the 12 week period up to 29th December were up by 4.7%. Sainsbury's achieved its best ever Christmas performance

The challenge

Sainsbury's were competing with the other supermarkets to achieve stand-out in a congested TV environment. The lead-up to Christmas is a pivotal time for supermarkets. Sainsbury's needed an idea that would encourage consumers to shop there over the festive period whilst not compromising on the quality of its food and drink.

It needed to do this by convincing families that it represented good value for the family shop, but also Sainsbury's wanted to bring the brand closer to family life. Inspiring people to 'try something new today' is in the DNA of Sainsbury's. It is a passionate philosophy based on the benefits of good value home cooking, with the aim of extending the cooking repertoire of families. Proof of this philosophy can be found in the Sainsbury's Try Team – a team of women from across the UK who have been inspiring the nation to cook for over fifteen years. As more families were cooking at home during the recession, the brand wanted to drive positive perceptions of good value for the family. They also wanted to utilise the Try Team as well as enhance their online presence.

The solution

This is the story of how a novel TV marketing campaign firmly put Sainsbury's into the heart of British family life. The TV solution involved the use of the Sainsbury's Try Team and the partnership with the biggest show on TV – The X-Factor. The Try Team were

used to inspire a mainstream TV audience to share the food they love with the people they love, simply and cheaply.

With a budget of less than £250k, The X-Factor Big Nights In With Sainsbury's was created - an online partnership with ITV.com, Fremantle and the decade's biggest TV show. The Try Team visited the X-Factor house once a week to cook with the finalists. This unprecedented access allowed them to shoot 45 films over a nine week campaign.

For viewers it afforded a rare chance to see their favourite TV personalities be themselves off air, learning to cook and having fun whilst creating tasty dishes. For Sainsbury's, it allowed full brand and product integration into a TV phenomenon. The videos were uploaded to a content rich Sainsbury's food channel which was fully integrated into the X-Factor website.

The Sainsbury's campaign was the perfect example of how a TV property could be adapted and used across other media. 21 Try Team recipes were created for Sainsburys.co.uk, and these tips were seeded on YouTube and Facebook. In addition to this, Sainsbury's was also the first grocer to use Sky's green button service. The recipes were uploaded to the service as a series. Finally, pre-roll advertising was used across ITV.com for the duration of the series.

Results

Over 38% more ad impressions were served than estimated by ITV.com.

Over 3.5 million pre-roll video adverts were delivered on ITV.com.

Sales for the 12 week period up to 29th December were up by 4.7% - Sainsbury's achieved its best ever Christmas performance.

Dwell time for the online content surpassed some of the biggest media sites (including BBC sites and Sky)

6. How do you do it?

There is more than one way to get an AFP to air. Here are a few routes:

- **Route 1:** clients supply a brief setting out the core values of its brand and the nature of the programme it is looking to fund, working with a commissioning editor or sales house representative to attract the right production partner. Most

broadcasters prefer this route, as the idea is more likely to be aligned to the channel requirements from the start.

- **Route 2:** the programme concept is put to a production company and the format is worked up with the client prior to being presented to a broadcaster. This is a good option for an advertiser who has identified an ideal production partner and wants multiple programme ideas.
- **Route 3:** a broadcaster is looking for a particular programme or genre to fit its programming schedule. This programme will need funding. They put a brand programming brief out to tender with producers. This is good for all parties, because it starts with a scheduling requirement, which comes with an increased chance of a commission.
- **Route 4:** programmes are delivered "ready made" to the broadcaster, who has to find an appropriate slot for it in its schedule. This arrangement is suitable for brand owners who already own entertainment properties and wish to barter them against commercial airtime.

Shows can be fully or partly paid for by the advertiser. In some cases co-productions rather than complete funds can encourage buy-in at the broadcaster level as it maintains their vested interest.

Broadcasters work differently. Clients and agencies must understand the different commissioning and commercial practices of each broadcaster in order to achieve the best results. The best way to approach this is to first get the programme idea and then discuss business terms.

For broadcasters, each branded content proposition will be assessed as to whether it will strengthen the relationship with the client. This relationship includes spots, sponsorship, web TV, online and AFP.

However, it's not always about starting afresh, and successful AFPs don't necessarily have to originate with a new idea. Sometimes they come into being once a programme is already underway.

For example 'Frock Me' was first aired in October 2008. It was commissioned by Channel 4 as a T4 flagship fashion series presented by Alexa Chung, Henry Holland

and Radio 1's stylist Gemma Cairney. In Spring 2009 the series was re-commissioned and a partner sought to fill the funding gap. TK Maxx was the ideal partner as they wanted to up their credentials within the fickle world of fashion and a branded content relationship with 'Frock Me' gave them brilliant access and endorsement from the coolest of the cool. Publicity shots were used for in-store POS and the show generated exclusive interviews and one-off pieces in key magazines and other media. And, of course, they commissioned exclusive additional televisual content for the TK Maxx facebook app and for partner sites.

Sage and ITV worked together to bring back a pre-existing show – 'The Krypton Factor' - to inject personality into their brand and drive engagement with their business software. Because this was a content partnership, the advertiser could access additional material which appeared on their website, direct mail and software etc. The funding of the Krypton Factor supported Sage's own interactive website "trainyourbusinessbrain.com" which utilised the games featured on Krypton Factor to calculate a "business IQ". Offline, Krypton Factor appeared in all Sage's other marketing communications and the campaign lived beyond the 10 week run of the programme.

7. THE LEGAL BIT: ENSURING EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

In reference to Advertiser Funded Programming, people often talk of a degree of "ownership". But what does this mean, and to what extent can a funder be involved in the TV programme?

On air, AFPs are subject to the same Ofcom broadcasting code rules as conventional sponsored programmes. Crucially, the funder must not influence programming content or scheduling in such a way as to affect the editorial independence or responsibility of the broadcaster and the commercial relationship must be transparent.

However, during the initiation phase, before deciding to invest their collective time and money in the programme idea, the broadcaster, producer and advertiser will have discussed and agreed the following:

- Programme format & script outline
- Cast outline including presenter
- Sponsorship credits

As to "ownership", the extent to which any additional approvals are awarded may depend on the extent to which the advertiser is funding the project: e.g. fully funding or a co-production and sharing rights with broadcaster or producer. These may include:

- Platforms and territories for distribution; i.e. mobile, online and geographic region
- Any third party licensing rights; e.g. logos, use of copyright by others
- Marketing and PR activity in support of the programme/ content

An advertiser can have more influence on the co-creation and deployment of off-air and multi-platform brand content assets.

This framework helps to define the stakeholder roles and protect the editorial independence and integrity of the production. In so doing, it creates a powerful platform for brand content marketing - programmes that viewers will want to watch, from people who know how to make them.

8. HOW TO GET THE BEST OUT OF BRANDED CONTENT

1. The most important thing of all is to know why you're doing it. Set yourself clear objectives from day one. However, brand content programming is about partnership and good relationships. Establishing and understanding the objectives, roles and contributions of the other stakeholders from the start is of equal importance.
2. Get help. This is an exciting but somewhat complex market, where a little help with navigation can go a long way. Ask the right questions at the beginning: e.g. who has the idea and who owns it? Who deals with commissioners, broadcasters? Who deals with the production company? Who does the deal and who is the contract with? Who owns and handles syndication and secondary

rights? Who implements the off-air? Who owns the off-air? Consider how you will justify your Advertiser Funded Programming. How will the ROI be measured - hard measures, such as product sales, shareholder value, or soft measures, such as brand perceptions and awareness? How will the AFP fit into your broader communications?

3. The programme format must be strong and stand out against its competition. It must justify its own place in the schedule as well as fulfil the marketing expectations of the client. Making a hit TV programme is difficult. Getting a place in the schedule is the target for an industry of talented producers in a competitive market: 95% of their programme ideas won't get a commission. The best ones that fit, will.
4. It follows that there is stiffer competition for a peak slot on a terrestrial channel. Big numbers have their place. However, it's not all about reach. Advertisers can use the multi-channel world of today's television to create destination programming for tightly targeted groups. There are also opportunities for brands to co-create content and engage with viewers through entertainment away from the broadcast stream. We know that consumers will seek out content from brands, if the content and call-to-action is right.
5. Programme partnerships can yield real benefits for all parties. However the journey can be a long one from the first meeting to the post-broadcast party. Continual project management is required to deliver a satisfactory result. Time frames can be long and the time committed may be more than you think. Scheduling changes are prevalent within all broadcasters - slots cannot and will not be guaranteed. The trick is to deliver the best product possible, which will then be scheduled by the broadcaster as best as possible. Remember too, that broadcasters often schedule 4-6 months ahead of transmission, although there are examples of some very swiftly created and broadcast AFPs.
6. To get the most out of branded content, clients must work to deliver value off-air via their own marketing or commercial activity. The broadcast sponsorship element of an AFP in isolation will not provide an ROI; there must be other routes to delivering realisable value, either via international markets, off-air initiatives or multi-channel distribution. In most cases, branded content adds weight and cut-through to the client's total communication mix. High brand awareness, driven by other TV and non-TV activities creates a better platform for AFP.
7. With a lack of prime time branded content slots, clients should invest in marketing support to promote the programme itself. As the equal stakeholder model suggests, it's in all parties' interest to get share of viewership.
8. Don't be too literal about the link between brand and content: it's about shared values. Enjoy the journey!

9. SUMMARY

- Through brand content programming, advertisers have the opportunity to engage with consumers in the context of entertainment that reflects their brand values, and to turn that engagement into dialogue.
- A deep relationship with good TV programming creates a hub around which a plethora of promotional tools can spin, both on-air and off-air. These include online and mobile applications, events, merchandise, PR, trade hospitality, point of sale licensing and other media promotions. Non-broadcast platforms are an excellent means of amplifying the broadcast commission.