A study to assess the promotional methods that are most influential on customers who visit UK theatres. A case study on the Bristol Hippodrome.

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Declaration

“A study to assess the promotional methods that are most influential on customers who visit UK theatres. A case study on the Bristol Hippodrome”.

I declare that this dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidate for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.

Signed Alice Kennedy (ST20042711):

Date:
Abstract

Theatre in Britain has played an important role in tradition and culture for centuries. Theatre marketing has traditionally existed in printed formats of brochures and posters but as technology has developed, the role of theatre marketing has simultaneously advanced, thus modern day theatre marketing has seen an increasing use of digital media as a tool for promotion.

The aim of this study is to discover which promotional methods used by theatres are most influential on current patrons and whether non-attendance is due to poor promotion or other factors. To achieve this, the researcher has used the Bristol Hippodrome as a case study and has carried out primary research by interviewing attending patrons and non-attending Bristol residents. The researcher has investigated the different promotional techniques currently used by the Bristol Hippodrome and has evaluated the strengths and weakness of each.

The results from the study showed that regardless of the advancement of digital marketing, participants are most influenced by traditional theatre marketing methods (such as brochures and word of mouth) and would still visit the Bristol Hippodrome if zero social media promotion were used. Furthermore, the majority of non-attendance was not due to factors relating to the promotional techniques used by the Bristol Hippodrome. From the results, the researcher has made recommendations for future promotion plans.
Acknowledgements

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ATG – Ambassador Theatre Group
PA – Participant A
PB – Participant B, etc.
AIDA – Attention, Interest, Desire, Action
PR – Public Relations
PEST - Political, Environmental, Social and Technological
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Chapter 1

Introduction
1.0 Chapter Overview
The introduction gives an overview of the research project by explaining the significance of the study and how the study may be of use to others. The chapter will then discuss the increasing influence marketing has on theatres in today’s business environment with a specific focus on promotion. A brief insight to the history of British theatre will be offered with an introduction to the case study, the Bristol Hippodrome. The aim and objectives of the project and the methodology for the research will be stated, concluded by an explanation of what each of chapter of the study entails.

1.1 Background to and Significance of the Research
The concept of marketing aims to manage profitable customer relationships by understanding customer needs and consequently undergoing processes to satisfy them with products and services (Armstrong and Kotler, 2014). Marketing is by no means a new concept but as technology advances and digital influence increases, customers today are more selective with what they spend their money on. As a result, organisations are forced to be competitive when promoting their products or services in order to win the market’s approval.

Theatre marketing has traditionally existed in printed formats of brochures and posters (Fraser, 2004) but as technology has developed, modern day theatre marketing has seen an increasing use of digital media as a tool for promotion. As people’s lives have become busier and society enters a ‘multi-screen generation’ (Anonymous, 2011), there is an increased need to ‘stay connected’. Thus, theatre marketers have recognised new media as a powerful way to communicate with their targets (Baines et al, 2012).

Academics, such as Brassington & Petitt, have looked deeply into the theory of marketing, however the researcher believes there is a lack of existing study specifically relating to theatre marketing. Consequently, for this study the researcher has focused on the promotional theatre marketing. A case study approach has been
adopted, allowing the researcher to analyse the efficiency of promotional methods used by the Bristol Hippodrome and their influence on patrons.

1.2 British Theatre History
Theatre in Britain has played an important role in tradition and culture for centuries. In Elizabethan England, influenced by William Shakespeare, theatre broadened its appeal to wealthy land-owning classes and even achieved Royal patronage. Purpose-built theatres were constructed, such as The Globe in London, although the lower classes were always kept in separate spectator areas (such as the ‘pit’ or the ‘gods’) in contrast to the wealthier folk, who might take a private box (Styan, 1996).

Shakespeare’s use of language did much to strengthen the bond between the performer and audience and enhanced the theatrical experience that the market desired (Shuter, 1995). The popularity of theatre in Britain may occasionally rise and fall due to PEST factors (political, environmental, social and technological), but today theatre-goers continue to open their hearts to those who have something to perform (Billington, 2009).

Theatre is people-based business that sits within the service sector, meaning its products (shows or productions) are intangible (Brassington and Pettitt, 2013). The success of a theatre as a business depends primarily on the quality of the product and the way in which it is marketed. Modern day theatre marketing still shares the same concepts as it did centuries ago, however due to technology, theatre marketing today has considerably developed (Seric et al, 2014).

1.3 The Bristol Hippodrome
The Bristol Hippodrome has proudly stood in Bristol’s city centre attracting generations of local and regional visitors with its full and varied programme of entertainment for over 100 years. The Grade II listed building has a seating capacity of 1951 over three levels and still retains many of the features originally designed by Frank Matcham, the greatest theatre architect of the Edwardian era – a unique selling point (USP) that differentiates the Hippodrome from modern theatres.
The Hippodrome’s doors first opened in 1912 and despite the potential effects of two World Wars, a stage fire and the competition of cinema and television, it continues to flourish (Parker and Hudson, 2014). Today’s Hippodrome is owned by the Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG) who regard it as a “flagship” venue among their 39 London and regional venues in the UK.

Diversification is essential to secure an audience for the future as the Bristol Hippodrome is a self-funding operation that does not receive local or national grants. The venue caters for the mass-market and has an ‘open doors attitude’, offering a wide variety of shows to target many audiences (Armstrong et al, 2012). Everyone must be made welcome – niche markets cannot be catered for with so many seats to fill. The Hippodrome currently partakes in a wide range of promotional methods to market its shows to its targets, which cover all five areas of the promotional mix; advertising, public relations, personal selling, sales promotion and direct marketing (Brassington and Pettitt, 2013), of which will be discussed later on.

1.4 Rationale
To complete her final year project, the researcher is grasping the opportunity to draw together two personal interests; a developing regard for the concepts of marketing, with a passion for attending theatre, which began at an early age with regular visits to the Bristol Hippodrome. This case study aims to fill an existing void in literature relating to theatre marketing and the fresh data and analysis will be beneficial to other arts marketing strategists. Time management will be essential throughout the research process as resources are limited.

1.5 Research Methods
The researcher will be undertaking primary and secondary data collection to complete the project. The Literature Review will satisfy the secondary research for the dissertation, which consists of a critical analysis on existing literature relating to theatre marketing.
The researcher will undergo primary research with two contrasting sample groups; 10 people who already attend the Bristol Hippodrome and 10 people who live in Bristol but have not yet paid a visit. Primary data collection will take a qualitative approach, obtaining descriptive data through a semi-structured interview (White and Rayner, 2014). The researcher will interview people of different ages in order to achieve results that are reliable and relevant to the aim of the study.

1.6 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to discover which promotional methods used by the Bristol Hippodrome are most influential on current patrons and whether non-attendance is due to poor promotion or other factors. The researcher will investigate the different promotional techniques currently used by the Bristol Hippodrome and will evaluate the strengths and weakness in of each technique employed. From this, recommendations for promotional improvements can be offered. Five objectives have been set to fulfil the aim:

1. To critically review the current literature relating to promotional applications with a specific focus on theatres.

2. To undertake primary research data collection with customers who currently attend shows and performances at the Bristol Hippodrome to learn which promotional techniques have caused or influenced them to visit the theatre.

3. To undertake primary research data collection with people in Bristol who don’t currently attend shows and performances at the Bristol Hippodrome. The intention is to discover whether their non-attendance is due to the types of promotional techniques used by the Bristol Hippodrome or due to other factors.
4. To present the primary data using a variety of formats and to review, analyse and discuss the results, identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the promotional techniques used by the Bristol Hippodrome.

5. To consolidate the research findings by offering recommendations for future improvements to the Bristol Hippodrome’s promotional activities.

1.7 Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation comprises of five chapters, beginning with the Introduction, which states the aim and objectives informs, gives a background and rationale to the study.

The second chapter satisfies the secondary research for the study. The Literature Review provides the reader with existing academic knowledge, theory and information on the topic, creating a framework for the researcher to build upon.

Next comes the Methodology, which satisfies aims 2 and 3. This explains the approach and methods for primary data collection and states any limitations or risks that may be attached.

Chapter four constitutes the Results, Analysis and Discussion. Here the findings from the research are presented and interpreted in a logical fashion. The researcher then analyses and discusses the data for themes and patterns whilst referring back to the literature review to make comparisons.

Chapter five Concludes and summarises the findings against the original 5 objectives of the study. From this, the researcher can make Recommendations for future studies.
Chapter 2

Literature Review
2.0 Chapter Overview

A literature review provides existing knowledge to frame a topic and acts as an anchor to attach new ideas (Oliver, 2012). This chapter will satisfy the secondary research for the study by discussing expert opinions on marketing with a specific focus on promotion and the communications mix. Promotional techniques that are used the Bristol Hippodrome will also be explored. There is currently little literature relating specifically to theatre marketing therefore much of the material within this chapter is sourced from mainstream marketing sources, taking a generic review of literature. This will assist the research study as the findings can be applied to a theatre context.

2.1 Marketing

The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) defines marketing as:

“the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably”.

Marketing has existed for centuries and is by no means a new concept however as technology advances and the influence of the Internet increases, people have become more selective on what they spend their money on. As a result, organisations are forced to be more competitive when marketing their products in order to win the target’s approval (Baines et al, 2012). Building relationships by creating value for customers is a key marketing process (Armstrong et al, 2015) and it is a marketeer’s job to recognise physical, social or individual needs (Armstrong et al, 2012) and satisfy them with products that will benefit them as well as the consumer.

Armstrong et al., 2012:188) define market segmentation as “dividing a market in to smaller groups of buyers with distinct needs, characteristics or behaviours” and say it is essential that each segment is distinct, accessible, measurable and profitable.

Businesses today have recognised that segments have different needs and require unique products so it would be impossible to satisfy every member of the
marketplace with the same product. Consequently, organisations undergo market research in order to learn the most effective strategies to address their target segment using the marketing mix (Armstrong et al, 2012).

The Bristol Hippodrome has a broad appeal and offers an entertainment experience for the mass market. Each product has a unique marketing strategy and if the positioning of the product is correct and the communication of the marketing mix is successful, the Hippodrome generally gets a good return on its investment.

2.1.1 The Marketing Mix

The marketing mix (Figure 1), first introduced by Eugene McCarthy in 1960 (nicknamed ‘the four P’s’), is a tool that determines a series of crucial elements that contribute to a product’s success (Baines et al, 2012). Brassington and Pettitt (2013) state that successful marketeers will use the mix to position the right product, in the right place, at the right price using the right promotional techniques.

More recently the mix has expanded to seven ‘P’ elements, created especially for organisations that focus on offering service products such like those in the tourism, hospitality and events sectors (Booms and Bitner, 1981). This expansion was
necessary as the four ‘P’s are “not enough for todays more complex product offerings” (Masterson and Pickton, 2014:233). For marketing strategies to take effect it is crucial that all 7 elements of the mix are considered, however this project will focus only on promotion.

2.2 Promotion

Brassington and Pettitt (2013) describe promotion as the direct way in which an organisation communicates with its target audiences. In order to create the perfect promotional programme, an organisation must be sure of its target market as making decisions without identifying the potential buyers would be a misuse of time (Christopher and Woodruff, 2004). Goldblatt (1997) reinforces the importance of promotional marketing: an organisation may have the best quality product, but unless there is a strategic plan for promoting it, it remains the best-kept secret. With this in mind, promotion could arguably be seen as the most important element of the mix because “no matter how good a product is, if people do not know it is good, they will not buy it” (Masterson and Pickton, 2014:320).

The role of promotional marketing is to “move people closer to a purchase decision” (Masterson and Pickton, 2014:320) and it is considered so highly that it has its own separate mix, known as the marketing communications mix, comprising: advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing (Brassington and Pettitt, 2013) and in an ideal situation, an organisation would use all five elements however this is not always achievable with budget and time limits.
The AIDA model of promotion (Masterson and Pickton, 2014:329) is a tool which encompasses cognitive, affective and conative emotions to aid marketers when setting promotional objectives. Product owners must first catch the targets attention to succeed in marketing. An interest for the product may then develop by advertising its benefits to “motivate individuals to want more information about the product” (Masterson and Pickton, 2014:328). However, the level of interest gained depends on how effective the advertising and public relations (PR) choices are. A desire for the product can be established at the same time as an interest, however for some, further promotion is required in order to fully develop a desire for the product. Personal selling and sales promotion techniques might be used to further persuade the potential customer to take action to purchase the product and close the sale, which concludes the final stage of the AIDA model.
2.2.1 Advertising

Armstrong et al. (2015) state that many people think of marketing only as advertising, yet marketing covers a much wider spectrum, incorporating psychological tactics to lure customers in. Kotler et al (2010:389) define advertising as “any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services”. Advertising creates awareness for products, which relates to the early stages of the AIDA model and allows potential customers to see that a product is “publically understood and accepted” (Kotler et al, 2010:375).

![Figure 4 Advertising Essentials (Masterson and Pickton, 2014:339)](image)

Masterson and Pickton (2014) provide an ‘Advertising Essentials’ cycle which comprises four critical elements to advertisement. Directing an advert to the right audience using appropriate media choices is essential, whether these media be paid, owned or earned media (P.O.E.M) (Masterson and Pickton, 2014). Marketeers undergo detailed research to understand what an audience requires from a product - the greater knowledge obtained about a group, the stronger the communication can be. Once an audience is established, the message can be specifically designed to suit the target. Effective adverts combine multiple methods of creative execution as these approaches enhance a potential customer’s attention and interest, such as using humour, playing music or featuring a celebrity.
2.2.2 Public Relations
Kitchen (1996) describes public relations (PR) as the planned and sustained effort to obtain favourable publicity through public media sources. PR may use the same mass media as advertising however this communication is produced from an impartial source, therefore has the opportunity to have a greater influence on potential customers (Kitchen, 1996). Armstrong and Kotler (2015) say that earned PR can have a strong impact on public awareness (at a much lower cost than advertising) because it has more credibility.

2.2.3 Sales Promotion
The Institute of Promotional Marketing defines sales promotions as promotional techniques with a defined time period which ‘add non monetary value’ to a product to convince potential customers that they need it. Sales promotion works best to achieve short-term tactical objectives such as to compete with a rival or to introduce a new product (Masterson and Pickton, 2014). Kotler and Scheff (1997) say that sales promotion offers contribute communication, incentive and invitation and can be applied to any promotional technique. An example of sales promotion technique within the context of theatre would be offering discounted tickets to those who sign up to the mailing list.

2.2.4 Personal Selling
Personal selling involves an oral presentation to potential patrons, upselling the product by highlighting its benefits (Hughes and Fill, 2007). It is different to advertising because it is a two-way communication process rather than one, giving potential customers the opportunity to ask questions about the product. This type of promotion may have more of an influence on some people because the seller can tailor the message specifically to that person (unlike an advertisement can), making the receiver feel valued therefore increasing the likelihood for purchase.

2.2.5 Direct Marketing
Direct marketing is a non-public, immediate and customised form of promotion where messages are quick and can be tailored to a specific person or group to aid
relationship marketing (Kotler et al, 2010). This can be executed using a data base of names via email, telephone, print or online. The seller will leave a form of contact for the potential buyer to respond to, as direct marketing aims to trigger a ‘call for action’ to purchase (Stone, 1997).

It is impossible to use only one element of the marketing communications mix when creating marketing strategies because each element interlinks and compliments another. Similarly, it is difficult to categorise a promotional technique to a single phase of the communications mix because most represent more than one. Appendix 1 shows the promotional methods used by the Bristol Hippodrome, which element of the communications mix and type of media it represents, whether it is direct or indirect promotion and states its advantages and disadvantages.

2.3 Theatre Marketing
Pallin (2003) simply describes the role of theatre marketing as the selling of the show. Theatre marketing is the use of strategic marketing practices to further the sale the art (O’Reilly and Kerrigan, 2010) which requires imagination to create effective and persuasive communication for a variety of audiences and market segments (Hill et al, 2003). “Creativity is at the heart of arts marketing” (Hill et al, 2003:viii) because it attempts to communicate an experience. Marketing within the theatre industry concerns using tactics to promote however other key aspects of the mix (place, product and price) need to be considered. The collaboration of marketing and theatre helps to enhance customer experience whilst increasing awareness of the products that theatres offer (Ryan et al, 2010).

The role of theatre marketing has developed considerably since the 1980’s, before which only traditional methods such as posters, flyers and word of mouth were relied upon (Fraser, 2004). These tools are still used today, however the promotion options today are much broader due to digital development. Gibbons (2005:157) says “the relationship between art and advertising now seems richer and more complex than ever”.
2.4 Promotion Materials

The chapter will now continue by reviewing the different media types that are used by theatres for their marketing processes. Such media include television, radio, newspapers etc. Each of these will be discussed in detail as the researcher seeks to identify the strengths and limitations of each in relation to theatre marketing.

2.4.1 Television

Advertising on television is a form of indirect paid media that reaches a wide audience in a short period of time. However, Kotler et al (2010) say that marketers are losing confidence in and shifting their budget away from television advertising due to mass media costs rising and audiences shrinking. Ryan (2014:xi) says “television froze a generation of consumers to the couch for years” however due to new media, this is now not the case. A study undertaken by Ofcom (2015) states that the number of minutes of TV people aged 4+ watch each day has decreased by 12 minutes between 2014-2015 (232 down to 220 minutes) and Ryan (2014) believes this could be linked to the threat substitute products such as tablets, laptops and smart phones, which offer the same product features plus more.

2.4.2 Radio

Radio advertisement gains trust through public relations whilst enhancing “personalities and enthusiasm” unlike print can offer (Hill et al, 2003:214). Kotler and Scheff (1997) suggest that marketeers can use radio advertisement to play a familiar piece of music to prompt potential customers in a way that printed materials cannot do. Schulberg (1989) says that a radio advert should be designed as if it is addressing one person and should always have an objective, for example to achieve requests for tickets for a show. He suggests that a radio advert should mention the business’s name several times, include a time-frame for potential customers to abide by and repeat a means of contact that they can respond to. It is common that listening to the radio is a secondary activity to activities such as driving or cooking, so catching the audience’s attention is crucial. The Hippodrome uses local stations including Heart Bristol and Somerset, Sam FM (formally Jack FM) and Breeze. Heart’s is the largest of the three and its core audience (41%) is aged 25-44 (This is Global, 2016).
Sprout Social (2015) state that over 80% the UK’s population aged 12-65 listen to the radio with an equal male and female audience, so if a theatre can afford it, radio promotion has the potential to reach a wide audience.

2.4.3 Newspapers

Figure 5

National newspaper audience age split
Newspaper advertisements have existed for centuries and are a traditional form of PR, however Sweney (2015) said that today buying a traditional print advert to promote is no longer the answer. Research undertaken by the Media Briefing (2014) states that the number of newspaper readers in the UK has fallen by 13% since 2013 and since 2001 and there has been a 43% decline in the number of copies of the 10 major national newspapers sold per day. The study also shows that 1/5 of UK newspaper readership is people who only access the newspaper via their smartphone (Figure 5). These results suggest that due to the influence of technology and the internet, newspaper popularity is decreasing.

Kotler and Scheff (1997) say that a newspaper advertisement must have a strong picture to draw attention with a headline which interests the reader to read it – this can be related back to the AIDA model. They also state that even an outstanding advert will be noticed by less than 50% of the exposed audience and less than 10% will read the whole advert. Since 1997 it is likely that due to the 43% decrease in newspaper readers since 2001, that today even less people are exposed and take notice of newspaper adverts.

2.4.4 Brochure

“The season brochure is the most basic and effective direct-mail piece for performing arts organisations” (Kotler and Scheff, 1997:352).

The purpose of a theatre brochure is to stimulate excitement by highlighting upcoming productions including dates, seating and ticket information and how to purchase. Fraser (2004) regards brochures as a traditional method for arts marketing, however Ryan (2014) says that print media is experiencing increasing pressure due to the influence of technology. Regardless of this, the purpose of a brochure today remains the same as ever and is still a popular promotional material used by theatres. Similar to a newspaper advertisement, a brochures’ success is dependant on eye-catching front cover graphics. Kotler and Scheff (1997:355) say
that a theatre brochure must persuade readers to subscribe to membership and “must include an order form” however today, including an order form seems outdated.

2.4.5 Outdoor Advertising
Fill (2009) identifies three main types of outdoor advertisement; street furniture, transit and billboards. The concept of street furniture is to combine both public service and advertising (Jcdecaux, 2016) using materials such as multi-service columns and free standing digital panels, both of which are used by the Bristol Hippodrome. Transit involves advertisements on buses and taxis – this has the power to be influential as it makes a statement and is only used in the geographical area, however “pedestrians might only get a quick look at an advertisement placed on a vehicle” Kenneth and Donald (2013:239). Kenneth and Donald (2013) say that billboards are the most common form of outdoor advertising, however they reinforce the disadvantages of billboards:

- There is usually a short exposure time
- Drivers must pay attention to the road so might not be able to look

Anyone who travels past outdoor promotions are exposed, so each has to be attractive to catch viewer’s attention, similarly to other print promotion. In 2003, digital advertising accounted for around 1% of outdoor advertising expenditure however in 2010 it rose to 11% (Koeck and Warnaby, 2014), supporting the increase of digitalization.

2.4.6 Face-to-Face
Although digital technologies have impacted the way organisations communicate, the traditional communicating tools remain popular (Fill and Mckee, 2012). Face-to-face promotion refers to any personal selling techniques outside of the business, for example street promotion or a pop-up stall in a public location. Hutchinson et al (2005) suggest street teams should promote where the target market can be found as it allows for networking. Face-to-face promotion has an advantage over telephone
calls and emails because it is more difficult for customers to ‘escape’ from face-to-face communication.

2.4.7 Buzz Marketing

Word of mouth is one of the “fastest growing areas in alternative marketing” (Kenneth and Donald, 2013:285) because people enjoy sharing information when they are passionate about a product. Masterson and Pickton (2014:334) believe that buzz marketing is “one of the most powerful ways to transmit a message” because a friend or relative talking positively about a product rather than a paid actor featuring in an advertisement holds greater credibility. Word of mouth can be beneficial to an organisation however it can also be negative which can lead to destroying the deputation of a brand, perhaps due to a consumer’s bad experience.

Matorin (2007) says that for buzz marketing to take effect, the product must be unique, new or stand out from competitors. He comprises three stages to buzz marketing:

1. Inoculation – when the product is introduced.
2. Incubation – when the product is used and tried.
3. Infection – product users increase and gets people talking.

In the above sections the researcher has reviewed the literature relating to traditional promotional techniques used by theatres. However, it is also necessary within this chapter to review the literature relating to modern applications of marketing used by theatres that involve electronic formats. The following sections will review each electronic format that is currently used by theatres.

2.4.8 Digital Marketing

In 1997, Kotler and Scheff predicted that the world wide web was expected to grow as a major marketing tool over the next several years. Nineteen years later, it is almost impossible to imagine a world without the internet. Internet marketing has been defined as “achieving marketing objectives through applying digital technologies” (Chaffey, 2009:416) and it has changed the market’s expectations of “convenience, speed, price, product information and service” (Armstrong et al,
The internet allows consumers to instantly access digital information and can be described as the mass market of tomorrow (Ryan, 2014). Today’s world is connected more than ever.

2.4.9 Website

Ryan (2014) believes an organisation’s website to be the most important element in its digital marketing strategy as it is the shop window to the digital world. In today’s digital age, if an organisation does not have an attractive website, they are not likely to succeed as a website is often a first point of call for potential customers seeking information about a product (Chaffey and Smith 2008). An effective website enables accessibility to all and perpetual frequency, which is difficult to achieve through any other form of promotion (Fill and Mckee, 2012).

2.4.10 Mailing Lists

Kotler and Scheff (1997) believe that well-conceived, executed and targeted direct mail is the primary tool for customer retention. Mailing lists used to only exist in the form of post, however email is now a large contributor to arts marketing. Ryan (2014:36) describes emailing marketing as the “granddaddy of internet marketing”, however marketeers promoting via email need to be aware of the risk of potential spam bombardment as this is likely to lead to customers unsubscribing. Ryan (2014:179) advises marketers to be careful not to use direct mail as “unsophisticated mass-marketing techniques” because it will destroy a business’s credibility and reputation. Furthermore, it may be difficult for theatres to collect a database of emails, however it is very easy for customers to unsubscribe, so respecting a customer’s privacy is crucial.

2.4.11 Social Media

The strength of social media is increasingly becoming “a central part of people’s lives, cultures and global economies” (Albertazzi and Cobley, 2010:9) and this has been recognised and utilised by theatres. Carroll and Romano (2011) state that Facebook now has more users than the entire population of the United States with over 500 million users, so in that context, if Facebook were a country it would be the
third largest in the world. Pew Research Center (2015) state that 90% of young adults aged 18 to 29 use social media compared with 35% of all those 65 and older concluding that social media is a much popular marketing medium with younger generations. However, Mangold and Faulds (2009) identify that social media has a strong influence at all stages of the consumer decision-making process, which marketers use to their advantage.

2.5 Chapter Review
Within this chapter the researcher has used secondary resources to consider the theoretical aspects relating to broad marketing, theatre marketing and promotion. She has looked at both traditional and modern (electronic) techniques that theatres use in order to remain competitive. The study will now continue with a review of the research process employed in the methodology chapter.
Chapter 3
Methodology
3.0 Chapter Overview

Creswell (2008) defines research as the process of collecting and analysing data to increase an understanding of a topic. The purpose of this chapter is to justify the methodological decisions and processes that were used to conduct the primary research to fulfil the aim of the study. The researcher will discuss the approach and methods that were used, including their advantages and limitations and will discuss the use of participants, always considering issues around ethics, validity and reliability. The findings from the primary research will then be used for analysis and discussion and to draw conclusions in relation to the aim and make recommendations.

3.1 Research Approach

Kaden (2006:77) says that “choosing the right methodology for your research is crucial” so prior to data collection, the researcher evaluated the different approaches to establish the most suitable for the study. The chosen approach complies with Johnson’s (1994) ‘four key suggestions for a research approach’ as the study is:

1. **Focused,**
2. **Systematic,**
3. **Moves beyond generally available knowledge** and
4. **Provides a basis for analysis and elucidatory comments.**

3.1.1 Secondary Research

Stewart and Karmins (1993:73) define secondary research as “sources of data consisting of information collected by others” and Clark et al (1998:8) state that secondary research is necessary “to establish what work has been undertaken in a particular area before”. In Chapter 2 the researcher analysed existing academic material relating to marketing and promotion techniques used by theatres. The secondary resources used to obtain this data included academic books, journals, articles and websites, accessed via the Cardiff Metropolitan Library. This secondary
research satisfies the first aim of the study and will be referred back to in the next chapter when the researcher analyses and discusses her findings.

### 3.1.2 Primary Research

In contrast to secondary, primary research relates to gathering original data (Lombard, 2010) which is collected afresh. Kothari (2004) therefore allows the researcher to move beyond generally available knowledge (Johnson, 1994). This project centres around a new case study therefore primary data collection was essential in order to fulfil the objectives. The primary data gathered will provide a basis for analysis and elucidatory comments (Johnson, 1994), satisfying objectives 2 and 3.

### 3.1.3 Case study

This dissertation uses a case study approach, which looks at a particular situation in a real-life context and allows the researcher to investigate the topic in detail to receive rich data (Crowe et al., 2011). Any information gathered and conclusions drawn can be used by other theatres to potentially aid their marketing strategies, however one must remember that a case study approach only looks at one example. Therefore, it cannot be generalised for the wider population or assumed that the results would be the same for every theatre.

### 3.1.4 Qualitative vs Quantitative

VanderStoep and Johnston (2009:167) suggest that “qualitative data is more descriptive than predictive” as it has no specific answer and takes a subjective approach from smaller sample sizes. In contrast, quantitative research tends to be objective and generates data with statistical results from larger sample sizes (White and Rayner, 2014). The researcher has taken a qualitative approach to research for this study as she believes this will allow her to best achieve the aim. A qualitative approach allowed the researcher to gather information regarding participants’ attitudes, thoughts and opinions that can be analysed for recurring themes and patterns so that recommendations could be made, therefore a quantitative approach has been dismissed.
3.2 Research Method
To fulfil the aim, the researcher believed it was crucial to speak to participants face-to-face to gather information regarding their attitudes on the topic. Therefore, conducting observations as a research method was ruled out as this would not allow the researcher to speak to participants to obtain the data required and also has ethical issues attached. Similarly, written surveys and questionnaires (quantitative research methods) were eliminated as these generate less descriptive responses (VanderStoep and Johnston, 2009:167).

Holding focus groups, which allow participants to interact with one another (White and Rayner, 2014), was considered as this method for research has “remerged as a popular technique for gathering qualitative data” (Morgan, 1996:129) within the past decade. However, the researcher felt focus groups were unnecessary as they would not aid the responses and would have also been inappropriate and unrealistic to conduct from inside the Hippodrome Box Office, especially on busy weekends. Additionally, participants within a focus group may have felt obliged to comply with others therefore affecting their true responses. Thus, the researcher opted to conduct interviews to obtain the primary data.

3.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews
Semi-structured interviews are a variation between a general conversation which has “no fixed agenda” (Winstanley, 2010:148) and a structured interview which has a “predetermined and standardized set of questions” (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008:113). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data regarding participant’s opinions, attitudes and beliefs on the topic.

The beauty of interviews is that they are of a relaxed nature and allowed the researcher to read facial expressions. Bryman (2004) says that it is the flexibility of an interview that makes it such an attractive method as the discussion can be changed easily if necessary. On the other hand, interviews require detailed
preparation and are time consuming to conduct and transcribe. Regardless of this, the researcher believed that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages and this style of data collection allowed the researcher to gather all the information she required to fulfil the aim of the study.

The interviews began with closed questions to ease the participant in to the interview then proceeded with more complex questions which required detailed data concerning the participant’s opinions. A balance of the two types of questions allowed the participant to feel comfortable (Winstanley, 2010).

When conducting the interviews, the researcher focused on listening to the participant and kept comments to a minimum. The researcher did not to take written notes because it would have been difficult to concentrate on listening to the participant whilst writing at speed. Having a third person to take notes was considered however this may have changed the dynamic of the interview and interfered with the participant’s privacy as the study was anonymous. The researcher felt it was unnecessary to video record the interviews because participants may have felt less relaxed, which may have had hindered responses. Thus, audio recording the interviews deemed the most appropriate option. Transcribing the interviews was time consuming however this ensured accurate data collection.

3.3 Analysis of Results

The researcher has used thematic analysis to examine the qualitative data to establish and pinpoint any occurring patterns or themes for the open interview questions (Vaismoradi et al., 2013), while content analysis was used to discuss and analyse results the closed, less descriptive questions.

3.4 Participants and Sampling

Sampling is a process which selects a representation of a population to analyse as it is impossible to gather information from every single person within a population (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008). Conclusions can be drawn from the representation to make a generalisation regarding the wider population. The researcher recruited
her participants using systematic sampling, which avoids selection bias where participants may be under or over-representative of a population (such like convenience or snowball sampling) (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008).

A total of 20 people were interviewed from two contrasting groups: 10 patrons who currently attend performances at the Bristol Hippodrome and 10 people who live in Bristol but do not currently visit this theatre. Having smaller sample sizes was more time-efficient and gave more manageable data therefore allowed the researcher to focus on the quality of the results.

3.5 Limitations, Reliability and Validity

To increase reliability (which ultimately increases validity), the researcher could have conducted the same primary research for a different city and theatre to compare results, however this was not achievable due to lack of time. As an undergraduate dissertation, time was a contributing limitation as the researcher had multiple assignments to manage simultaneously. Additionally, using a low sample size poses a disadvantage to the research because it represents a lower proportion of the population, however this was necessary to gather the descriptive data.

3.6 Ethical Considerations and Repeatability

Ethics relates to practicing good conduct and moral principles and is a crucial consideration when conducting research (Winstanley, 2009). Oppenheim (1992: 83) states that "no harm should come to the respondents as a result of their participation in the research" therefore, it was the researcher’s responsibility to ensure participants safety thus interviews were conducted in daylight inside the Hippodrome’s Box Office where staff were present. This also ensured the safety of the researcher.

Prior to the interviews, participants were given an information sheet and consent form which informed them of what the interview involved and stated that their responses will remain anonymous. The data collected was stored only on the researcher’s personal laptop to ensure confidentiality. The researcher did not interview any person who was vulnerable, for example under 18s and no data was
collected before ethical approval from the university was granted. A copy of the ethical approval, participant information and consent sheet and the permission letter to the Hippodrome can be found in Appendix 2, 3, 4 & 6. The researcher has also included a copy of both sets of interview questions in Appendix 5 so that the study can be repeated, as Nordson Asymtek (2013:1) reinforces “the ultimate goal is to have both a highly accurate and highly repeatable system”.

3.7 Chapter Review
The methodology chapter has justified the research methods that were used for the project and has discussed the advantages and limitations to each. The researcher has presented the methodological decisions in a systematic and focussed manor (Johnson, 1994) and given suggestions for if the study were to be repeated. The following Chapter will present the results from the research and will provide an analysis and discussion to establish any themes.
Chapter 4

Results, Analysis

& Discussion
4.0 Chapter Overview

Naoum (2013:142) describes the results, analysis and discussion as “the core” of a dissertation as it “consists of the research findings expressed by texts, figures, tables, charts, graphs and the like”. The researcher has combined the results and analysis with the discussion in a single chapter as it is easier to comprehend the information.

This chapter will present the data gathered from the primary research through graphs containing numerical data and participant quotes then will offer an analysis and discussion of the results. Within the discussions the researcher will refer to the literature review, comparing the findings to existing material to establish any themes that have emerged. The chapter will be formatted in a focused and systematic fashion (Johnson, 1994) as Naoum (2013:142) reinforces that “it is absolutely essential to present your results clearly”.

As stated in the methodology, the primary research consisted of two interviews with opposing sample groups: participants who do and don’t attend the Bristol Hippodrome. The interview with participants who do attend comprised of 13 questions and 11 questions were asked to participants who don’t currently attend. Of these, 8 identical questions were asked to both groups. A sample transcript of the interviews with attending patrons can be found in Appendix 7. The researcher has presented the questions in chronological order, combining both interviews, and for each question has stated which group or if both groups were asked the question. Participants A-J are attending patrons (blue graphs) and participants K-T are non-attendees (yellow graphs). Participant A will be referred to as PA. Participant B as PB, etc.
4.1 What is your age and gender?

**Figure 7: Attending Patrons**

This question was asked to both sample groups to see if the researcher used a reliable set of participants of different genders and age groups. Out of the participants who attend the Hippodrome, 8 females and 2 males were interviewed: the males were both aged 51-60, 4 female participants were aged 31-40 and the remaining 2 females were aged 18-30.
Figure 8: Non-Attendees

Of the participants who don’t attend the Hippodrome, 5 were aged 18-30; 2 females and 3 males. Two males and 2 females were interviewed belonging in the 41-50 age boundary and the final participant was female aged between 31-40. There were 5 females and 5 males interviewed from this group.

Figure 9: Total participants

Overall, more females were interviewed than males (13:7) and no males aged 31-40 were interviewed. The questions were not gender specific and males were included in each of the other age groups so the researcher is confident that this does not affect the reliability of the results. By chance, no participants over 60+ were interviewed, suggesting that elderly people prefer to order tickets via telephone rather than visit the Box Office and are less likely to be in the centre of Bristol on a weekend (when the researcher performed the interviews). Regrettably, it would
have been interesting to interview somebody over 60 because their views are likely to be quite different to those aged 18-30.

4.2 How many years have you lived in Bristol for?

This question was asked to both groups of participants. 70% of both sample groups have lived in Bristol their whole life however the number of years lived in Bristol from the remaining 30% of participants of the two groups differed. The attending participants who haven’t lived in Bristol their whole life have lived in Bristol for 20+ years, however non-attending participants ranged between having lived in Bristol between 10-18 years.

This difference in years living in Bristol may have a link to attendance at the Hippodrome – participants who have lived in Bristol longer have had more exposure to advertisements around Bristol (proven in 4.7). This could be a reason as to why those who have lived in Bristol longer have higher attendance.
4.3 Are you aware of the Bristol Hippodrome?

Figure 12

This question was exclusively asked to participants who don’t attend the Hippodrome before continuing with other questions regarding this theatre. If participants were not aware, they would not have been able to continue with the interview, however 100% of participants were aware of the Hippodrome.

As stated in the introduction, the Bristol Hippodrome has attracted mass audiences with its varied programme of entertainment for 103 years. PQ states that the Hippodrome is “known within the city due to its location and history”. The theatre, situated in the heart of the city centre, has become a landmark for Bristol which is evidently well-known by those who live in Bristol.
4.4 What was the most recent show or production you watched at the Bristol Hippodrome?

Figure 13

This question was exclusively asked to participants who currently attend the Hippodrome. 100% of participants had watched a show within the past 10 months, 40% of which had most recently seen the Christmas pantomime – Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs was currently playing at the time of the research interviews (December 2015 – January 2016). The joint second most common show that participants had seen last were Mary Poppins and the Sound of Music – both displayed during Autumn 2015. Joint third were the Full Monty (April 2015) and The Bodyguard (January 2016).

As previously stated, theatre has played an important role in tradition and culture for centuries (going back to Shakespeare in the 1600’s). The data collected from this
question suggests that attendees of the Bristol Hippodrome are fairly regular and make it a part of their tradition and routine to visit.

4.5 Roughly how many times have you attended the Bristol Hippodrome in your lifetime?

Figure 14

This question was also only asked to participants who currently attend the Hippodrome. The most popular response was 60+ times from 30% of participants and the least popular response was less than 10 times, representing just 10% of the participants. Participants who have attended 11-20, 41-50 and 51-60 times each represented 20%. The researcher has excluded 21-30 and 31-40 times from the pie chart as there were no participants who belonged to these categories. There suggests that there is no ‘middle-ground’ to participant’s attendance: they have either attended few times or a high number of times.
PB and PI, who have both attended 60+ times, say they attend roughly 3 times per year. PH says that being an ATG theatre card member encourages him to visit 2-3 times a month. The data suggests that those who have attended over 60 times are a high proportion of the Hippodrome’s regular customers, who make it a part of their routine to visit.

4.6 Do you receive the Hippodrome’s seasonal brochure via post and/or any updates via email? Have you read the brochure?

![Bar chart](image)

*Figure 15*

This question was asked to both groups of participants. Out of the participants who do attend, 70% receive the brochure via post, 10% receive email updates and 100% of the participants have read the brochure. The graph also shows that zero participants who don’t attend the Hippodrome receive the brochure via post or email updates however 30% have previously read the brochure.
A 70% difference between whether or not the two groups have read the brochure may be because those who don’t attend have less exposure to the brochure, for example those who do attend have the opportunity to collect the brochure from the venue when they visit. PL (who does not attend) said she has flicked through a brochure before that a friend had, therefore, it is evident that the brochure is accessible to people via other ways than visiting the venue.

From the results it can be concluded that if those who currently don’t attend received the brochure via post or were part of a mailing list, it is likely that they would be more obliged to attend. PS (who does not attend) said he was “not aware” that the Hippodrome distributed information via post or email and PA, who receives the brochure only via post, said she “wouldn’t be against having email updates”. These quotes could imply that many of the participants were not aware of these services so may be the reason why they do not use them.

As previously cited, Ryan (2014:36) describes email marketing as the “granddaddy of the internet”. PH believes that “email is increasing” however the results from this question suggest otherwise: only 5% of the combined participants receive email updates from the Bristol Hippodrome regardless of a general increase in electronic promotion in the modern business environment.
4.7 Which promotional methods out of the following have you come in to contact with?

![Graph showing promotional methods]

Figure 16

This question enabled the researcher to gather information from both groups regarding which promotional materials used by the Bristol Hippodrome participants have been exposed to. Although a key promotional tool, the brochure was not
included in this question because it has already been covered in the previous question. The graph shows that:

- 90% of participants who do attend and 50% who don’t attend have seen a TV advert for the Hippodrome.
- 90% of participants who do attend and 80% who don’t attend have seen billboards/outdoor promotion for the Hippodrome.
- 30% of participants who do attend and 70% who don’t attend were certain they have heard a radio advert for the Hippodrome.
- 40% of participants who do attend and 10% who don’t attend have seen a newspaper advert for the Hippodrome.
- 20% of participants who do attend and 10% who don’t attend have seen Hippodrome staff undergoing face-to-face promotion.
- 100% of participants have experienced word of mouth promotion for the Hippodrome from both participant groups.
- 50% of participants who do attend and 20% who don’t attend have visited the Hippodrome’s website.
- 20% of the participants who do attend and 0% who don’t attend have visited the Hippodrome’s social media page(s).

4.7.1 Television

Regardless of the number of minutes of TV watched per day having decreased (Ofcom, 2015) (stated in Chapter 2), 70% of the total participants have seen a TV advertisement for the Hippodrome. 55% of participants said they had seen a TV advert for the Christmas pantomime – probably because this was on at the time that the researcher conducted the interviews so it was fresh in their memories.

As cited in Literature Review, Ryan (2010:xi) stated that “television froze a generation of consumers to the couch for years” and suggested that due to the influence of modern technologies less marketeers are choosing to advertise on television. However, of the 50% of participants who don’t attend who have not seen a TV advert for the Hippodrome (PN, PQ, PR, PS and PT) have neither visited the
Hippodrome’s social media pages, which disagrees with Ryan and suggests that TV cannot have been replaced by more modern media.

Kotler et al. (2010) stated that marketeers today are losing confidence in television advertising, however PI said she has seen TV advertisements for the Hippodrome “quite a lot, especially in the past year”. This suggests that despite the decline in popularity of television advertising, the Hippodrome continues to use this method to promote, where budgets allow. Furthermore, TV advertisements were ranked 4th when attendees were asked what the most influential promotional material is for them (4.9). Those with an interest in theatre may be more likely to pay attention to television advertising than those who have no intention of visiting. This refers to stages 1 and 2 of the AIDA Model (Masterson and Pickton, 2014).

4.7.2 Radio

50% of the total participants have heard a radio advert produced by the Bristol Hippodrome, however 25% of these said that they never or rarely listen to local radio, meaning they would have no or less opportunity for exposure. The Hippodrome uses local radio stations to advertise its products: Heart Bristol and Somerset, Sam FM (formally Jack FM) and Breeze. Radio is the only promotional material in this study that has been exposed to more participants who don’t attend than do attend (by more than double). This could be because the non-attending sample group were of younger ages – Heart’s core audience (41%) is aged 25-44 (This is Global, 2016).

PT (aged 18-30) raises an interesting point regarding radio advertisement:

“I think the radio is a difficult platform to advertise a show on purely because you can’t visualise the show and that’s usually what sells it”.

Kotler and Scheff (1997) say that a song (such as a soundtrack from the musical being advertised) can be played to enhance the advertisement, however the theatre is a very visual experience which captivates the listening and visual senses, therefore
visual aids in promotion materials are equally as important to enhance the effect. A television advert combines both visual and audio aids.

### 4.7.3 Newspaper

Only 25% of the total participants have seen a newspaper advert for the Hippodrome, however 70% of the total participants mentioned that they do not or rarely read the local newspaper. PF says that she doesn’t read the newspaper because of “her age”, implying that 18-30 year olds are less likely to read the newspaper. The remaining 30% of participants who did not mention whether they read newspapers or not were aged 31-40 (15%) and 41-50 (15%). These figures can be supported by the research undertaken by the Media Briefing (2014) *(Figure 6)* in Chapter 2, which shows that less than 30% of newspaper readers are aged 18-30.

When asked which promotional material they have been most exposed to *(4.8)*, zero participants said they have been most exposed to newspaper advertisements, which supports PH’s belief that “newspapers are decreasing” in today’s business environment. This can also be supported by the 43% decline in ‘number of copies of newspapers sold per day’ since 2001, found in the research undertaken by the Media Briefing (2014). Furthermore, Kotler and Scheff (1997) say that less than 10% of exposed persons will actually read the whole advert. From the secondary and primary data collected combined it can be concluded that reading newspapers is becoming less popular and marketeers have recognised this and use alternative promotion techniques.

### 4.7.4 Outdoor

85% of the total participants have been exposed to outdoor promotion produced by the Hippodrome. This technique received the second highest exposure results, as shown in the comparison graph *(Figure 16)*. Participants who don’t attend have been exposed to 10% less outdoor promotion produced by the Hippodrome. It is likely that the results are almost even because all the participants live in Bristol so they have a fairly even chance of being exposed to outdoor promotion. Furthermore, participants were recruited from inside the Box Office or from the city centre so that
made it likely that they are often around the city centre, therefore have a high chance of being near outdoor promotion materials.

PS said that the billboards outside the theatre “always make it clear what they have got coming” and that is how she’s “most aware of what’s going on there”. From this, it appears that regardless of their short exposure time (Kenneth and Donald 2013), billboards are effective promotional tools.

PI said that bus advertisements (transit – Fill, 2009) acted as a trigger to remind her to buy Mary Poppins tickets. PT talks about how the Hippodrome features the “star of the show or celebrity cast” on bus advertisements to attract audience’s attention. For example, pop-star Alexandra Burke featured in January 2016’s The Bodyguard and its promotion campaign. This refers to the ‘creative execution’ stage of Masterson and Pickton’s Advertising Essentials Cycle (2014) (Figure 4) where creative approaches are used to attract an audience’s attention in hope to develop an interest in the product. Hill et al (2003:viii) reinforce that “creativity is at the heart of arts marketing”.

No participants mentioned street furniture advertisement, such as digital panels or multi-service columns, however the researcher predicts that participants classified these as billboards because they were not aware of the correct terminology.

4.7.5 Face-to-Face

Face-to-face promotion is regarded by Fill and McKee (2012) as a traditional communicating tool and Armstrong et al. reinforce that building relationships with customers is a key marketing process (2015). Only 15% of the total participants have experienced face-to-face promotion by the Hippodrome: 10% were aged 51-60 (both who attend) and 5% were aged 18-30 (who don’t attend). As stated in the literature review, Hutchinson et al (2005) suggest that for street promotion to be successful, teams should promote where the target market can be found. The Hippodrome evidently practice this as PH has seen Bristol Hippodrome staff “giving out promotional items” at “the Bristol Harbour Festival and Balloon Fiesta” and PP said
she has “seen staff promoting outside handing out leaflets”, of which are local areas where the target market can be found.

4.7.6 Buzz Marketing (Word of Mouth)
It is evident that the Hippodrome uses Matorin’s (2007) three stages to buzz marketing successfully (inoculation, incubation and infection) as 100% of the total participants have been exposed to word of mouth regarding the Hippodrome, making it the most common form of promotion that participants have been exposed to. These high results can be supported by Kenneth and Donald (2013:285), who believe word of mouth to be one of the “fastest growing areas in alternative marketing”.

50% of the total participants mentioned that they discuss the Hippodrome with family and despite not attending, PS says he “always hears really good stuff”, similarly PT says she has “heard very good feedback”. All responses regarding word of mouth were extremely positive. These results combined with the 60% majority from question 4.9 (most influential promotion method) it is clear that word of mouth is a crucial contributor to the theatre’s success.

4.7.7 Website
According to Ryan (2010), an organisation’s website is the most important element to an organisation’s digital marketing strategy as it is the shop window to the digital world, however only 35% of the total participants have visited the Hippodrome’s website.

PH said he doesn't think much of the Hippodrome’s website as it “it hard to use and doesn’t seem very user friendly” plus he mentions that there is a booking fee, which customers can avoid when buying tickets directly from the Box Office. Chaffey and Smith (2008) say that if an organisation’s website is unattractive then they are unlikely to succeed – PH’s feedback regarding the website was negative therefore it is likely that others share the same opinions.
4.7.8 Social Media

PH believes that “new electronic media is taking over” – this agrees with Albertazzi and Cobley (2010) who believe that social media is increasingly becoming a central part of peoples lives, however only 10% of the total participants have visited the Hippodrome’s social media page(s), regardless of 85% of them being social media users (Figure 18). Social media usage is looked at in more detail later in this chapter.

From this question it can be concluded that those who visit the Hippodrome have been exposed to more promotional materials than those who don’t attend (with the exception of radio advertisement). This is likely because they are paying more attention because they have an interest in the products (AIDA Model – Masterson and Pickton, 2014)

4.8 Which promotional method have you been most exposed to?

The researcher asked this question exclusively to attending participants. Only three techniques were mentioned by participants as being most exposed to. The researcher has noted the number of mentions each technique received:

Seasonal brochure: 7
Word of mouth: 4
Outdoor advertisements: 4

As previously cited, Ryan (2014) states that print media is experiencing increasing pressure due to the influence of technology, however the results from this question suggest that regardless of this, the brochure is still a valuable marketing tool which reaches wide audiences and market segments in today’s modern business environment (Armstrong et al, 2012). Kenneth and Donald (2013:285) regard word of mouth as one of the “fastest growing areas in alternative marketing”: this received joint-second highest amount of mentions (with outdoor advertisement) as being most exposed to so it is evident that word of mouth is fast growing. Kenneth
and Donald (2013:239) also state that “pedestrians might only get a quick look” at outdoor advertisements however the Hippodrome have evidently positioned theirs in places with potential for high exposure.

### 4.9 Which promotional method is most influential on you?

![Figure 17](image)

This question was only asked to participants who currently attend the Hippodrome. In the Introduction, the researcher predicted that digital media would have a strong and increasing influence on Bristol Hippodrome patrons, however no digital methods were mentioned in response to this question.

A 60% majority of participants believe that word of mouth is the most influential promotional technique, for example PE said that “word of mouth would persuade me to buy tickets the most”. The researcher found this especially interesting because word of mouth is not a paid promotional material owned by the Hippodrome – it is free and is generated by members of the public who share information they are passionate about. As previously mentioned, Masterson and Pickton (2014:334) believe word of mouth is “one of the most powerful ways to transmit a message”
and it is evident the Bristol Hippodrome achieve this. Interestingly, all participants who regarded word as mouth as the most influential promotion tool are aged 31-40 or 51-60. This suggests that older patrons are more influenced than younger patrons by what their friends and family say don’t require visual aids in order to be influenced.

Kotler and Scheff (1997:352) regard a brochure as the most “effective direct mail piece for performing arts” and the data collected from this question suggests that the Hippodrome successfully expose their audiences to it: 20% of participants said they were most influenced by the Hippodrome’s brochure. PA said she is most influenced by the brochure and “looks forward to receiving and reading it”, furthermore PH stated that he “relies on the brochure” to retrieve information regarding performances. Both of these participants are aged 51-60, therefore this suggests that older customers are more influenced by traditional methods for arts marketing. Kotler and Scheff (1997) say that the brochure must persuade readers and it is evident that the Hippodrome’s brochure achieves this.

The remaining participants were most influenced by outdoor advertisements (10%) or TV adverts (10%). PC said billboards “trigger her mind about a show”, however in contrast PF said that TV advertisements are more influential on her than billboards because she is more “surprised” to see a TV advert for the Hippodrome because they are less common, therefore pays more attention. Both of these participants are aged 18-30 therefore the results suggest that younger customers are more influenced by visual promotion materials.
4.10 Do you think your non-attendance at the Bristol Hippodrome is due to not being exposed to many promotional methods?

This question was included in the interview with participants who don’t attend to discover if their non-attendance is due to little exposure to the Hippodrome’s promotion materials or due to other factors. From the results, the researcher has established that participants’ non-attendance is due to the following factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason For Non-Attendance</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>PK, PL, PP and PQ mention “personal preference” or “choice” as reasons for not attending the Hippodrome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not first choice of entertainment</td>
<td>PM said “it’s just not my first choice of entertainment” and PN said he would “rather go to music events and festivals during free time”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to go to theatre in London</td>
<td>PO said if a London West-End show was on tour to Bristol this would “prick my ears and make me more likely to attend”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laziness</td>
<td>PQ said it is down to “laziness” that she she is not aware of the shows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>PR says his non-attendance is “partially due to money” and PS said “I don’t have much money to spend on going to the theatre”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1*
The responses show that non-attendance is not due to poor promotion or lack of exposure to promotion materials. For example, PS said “I would go if there was a show that I really wanted to see” and PP said she would attend if “there’s something on that interests me”. Regarding promotion, PR said “I don’t think an increase in promotion would increase my attendance” and PL said “I don’t think I would be swayed by the promotional methods” – suggesting that the Hippodrome’s promotional choices do not affect their decision to attend or not.

4.11 Do you use social media? If so, what formats?

![Figure 18](image)

Participants from both groups were asked this question. The Hippodrome only use Facebook, Twitter and Instagram so the researcher excluded any other forms of social media that were mentioned from the graph. The results show that 90% of participants who attend the Hippodrome use Facebook, 50% use Twitter and 70%
use Instagram. Only 10% of participants do not use any form of social media. Out of the participants who don’t attend, 80% are Facebook users and 70% use Twitter and 70% use Instagram. 85% of total participants are social media users.

10% more participants who attend the Hippodrome use Facebook than those who don’t attend, however 20% more participants who don’t attend use Twitter than those who do attend. 70% of both groups use Instagram equally. In 2011 Carroll and Romano stated that Facebook had over 500 million users (which today would be even more) so it is no surprise that Facebook is the most popular social media site used out of the total participants. The results are fairly evenly distributed however participants who don’t attend use 10% more social media (overall) than those who do attend. This may be because the ‘don’t attend’ sample group were of younger age categories and there were no 51-60 year olds. Therefore, the results show that social media is used by younger audiences.
4.12 Do you ‘like’ the Bristol Hippodrome on Facebook or follow them on Twitter or Instagram?

![Graph showing Facebook and Instagram usage](image)

**Figure 19**

This question was asked to both attendees and non-attendees. Regardless that 90% of the participants who do attend the Hippodrome are Facebook users, only 10% have ‘liked’ the Bristol Hippodrome on Facebook. Similarly, 80% of those who don’t attend are Facebook users however 0% ‘like’ the Hippodrome on Facebook. None of the participants from either sample group follow the Hippodrome on either Twitter or Instagram, regardless of 50% and 70% being Twitter users and 70% being Instagram users.

PH believes that “new electronic media is taking over”. This compliments Albertazzi and Copley (2010), who believe that social media is increasingly becoming a central part of peoples lives. PR says she has seen “a lot of people ‘check in’ or post a photo on social media when they visit the Hippodrome” however, only 5% of the total
participants follow the Bristol Hippodrome on a form of social media. This can suggest that the Bristol Hippodrome need to increase their presence on social media in order to capture audience’s attention. Mangold and Faulds (2009) recognised that social media has a strong influence at all stages of the consumer decision-making process. With this in mind, if the Hippodrome received more attention on its social media pages then it is likely that their ticket sales would increase.

4.13 Would you still visit the Bristol Hippodrome if they did not use social media as a form of promotion?

![Figure 20](image.png)

This question was asked to participants who attend because it has been recognised that social media is a growing phenomenon and an effective way to communicate with target markets in the modern business environment (Baines et al, 2012). None of the participants hesitated when answering this question: 100% said they would still visit the Hippodrome if they did not use social media as a form of promotion and as stated in the previous question, the majority of participants don’t follow the
Bristol Hippodrome on social media anyway. PD said “the reasons I go are not because I have seen social media advertisement”, suggesting that she is motivated or influenced by other factors. PF said “it’s quite a traditional thing to go to the theatre so you don’t really need the internet”, implying perhaps only traditional promotion is required. These results are interesting as today there is an increased need to ‘stay connected’ as society has entered a ‘multi-screen generation’ (Anonymous, 2011), however attendees of the Hippodrome are not concerned about social media promotion.

4.14 Do you think the Bristol Hippodrome needs to promote in order to fill their seats?

This question was asked to both groups of participants. Only one participant out of both groups (PD – attendee) said the Hippodrome would “probably would fill their seats even if they didn’t promote” as he believes “theatre is part of tradition”. PB says he “would probably still go without promotion” which suggests that his motivations to attend do not concern promotion.

The remaining participants agreed that the Hippodrome needs to promote “to an extent” (PK) to “get the message out” (PB) and “raise awareness about the different shows” (PN) because “otherwise no one would know what’s going on” (PM). Results show that participants believe promotion is also essential because otherwise people would “stick to only the shows they already know” (PS). PO raises the question “how would they fill their seats otherwise?” and PC reinforces that the Hippodrome “need to promote to attract people that wouldn’t go to the theatre as part of their normal routine”.

Although it may not be promotion that motivates participants to attend, overall it can be concluded that promotion is required in order for the Hippodrome to succeed as a business and they “can’t just rely on being sold out every show” (PH).
4.15 Do you think if the Bristol Hippodrome promoted more then you would attend?

This question was asked to participants who currently don’t attend the Hippodrome to see if they would attend if the Hippodrome engaged in further promotion. There were contrasting responses to this question:

PL said “I don’t think it would make a difference” if the Hippodrome promoted more, furthermore PR said “I don’t think further promotion would make a huge difference to my attendance”.

On the other hand, PM stated “I probably would have been more if there was more advertising”, PS said “I think I would attend more if I was aware of what was on” and PT suggested “maybe if I was more aware of advertisement I would be more inclined to go”.

From the results it can be concluded that the Hippodrome would gain some attendees if they engaged in further promotion however this may pose the risk of over-promoting and becoming pushy or annoying which might lead to losing customers. For example, PK says she will “back off from anything” that’s in her face. As previously mentioned, Ryan (2014:179) states that “unsophisticated mass-marketing techniques” can destroy a business’s credibility so the Hippodrome must be careful when considering additional promotion.
4.16 Do you think there are any further promotional methods that the Bristol Hippodrome could partake in to attract audiences?

The final question from interviews with both groups allowed the researcher to gather information regarding participant’s suggestions for any further promotional activity. The following suggestions were mentioned:

4.16.1 Tailor marketing campaigns to specific audiences

When designing promotional campaigns, the Hippodrome must ensure their target segment is distinct, accessible, measurable and profitable Kotler and Armstrong (2009) as making decisions without identifying the potential buyers would be a misuse of time (Christopher and Woodruff, 2004).

PC suggested “going in to an old people’s home for something that would appeal to the elderly”, for example The Glenn Miller Story (starring Tommy Steele). Three participants suggested targeting primary schools as an audience because “some children aren’t used to going to the theatre” (PB) as it may not be part of their families’ routine. PE suggested the Hippodrome marketing staff should “go in to schools to use face-to-face promotion” during an assembly or “leave leaflets in their reception area”. Additionally, PS suggested the Hippodrome should “send posters out to schools”. Using these methods to promote educational productions such as Romeo and Juliet for older school children, or young children’s entertainment shows (e.g. Peppa Pig Live) for nursery age children would bring large groups of audiences in, creating revenue for the Hippodrome.

Direct marketing to specific segments using face-to-face promotion in a location where the target feels comfortable (e.g. children in schools or university students at their union) aids relationship marketing (Kotler et al., 2010) and has the advantage that it is personal therefore potential customers may be more influenced to purchase tickets.
4.16.2 Social media

In total, 5 participants suggested that the Hippodrome should use more social media as a marketing platform: PQ says that “right now social media is the best option” for promotion. PT (aged 18-30) suggests the Hippodrome should undergo a “bigger focus on promotion via social media to interact with younger age groups” as she says “if there were more promotional methods focused on social media I think I’d be more likely to attend”. Pew Research Center (2015) state that 90% of young adults aged 18 to 29 use social media compared with 35% of all those 65 and older, therefore social media would be a great medium to communicate with younger generations. However, PI (aged 31-40) raises a strong argument:

“younger customers are more likely to use social media which is really effective however they don’t have £80 to spend on a theatre ticket”.

This poses the question: should the Hippodrome be focusing on targeting young customers when it is more likely that they cannot afford tickets? Social media is free to use however if the Hippodrome proceeds to further social media campaigning than they currently do, there is the risk of becoming too ‘pushy’ and ‘clogging up’ people’s newsfeeds. This may have a negative effect on the theatre as PR believes the Hippodrome would do better “not to over promote”.

4.16.3 Sales Promotion

PP suggested that the Hippodrome should offer “discount vouchers in the town centre when they hand out leaflets doing face-to-face promotion”. Using sales promotion offers *communication, incentive and invitation* (Kotler and Scheff, 1997) and would work well to promote a new show or production (Masterson and Pickton, 2014).

4.16.4 Local Identity

PH says the Hippodrome would benefit from having more “local identity” on their website because at the moment it is very corporate based (ATG). As previously
stated, PH says that the website is not user friendly, therefore the Hippodrome should invest in making it more attractive so that potential customers are not put off by the website as it is their digital shop window (Ryan, 2010).

4.16.5 Brochure Accessibility
The Hippodrome currently places its brochure in attractions around Bristol, such as the Aquarium and @Bristol, as they have a reciprocal arrangement to display each other’s brochures. However, PK suggested that “putting the brochure around more venues in Bristol” may attract more audiences and PM also shared this view. To expand their markets, the Hippodrome could place its brochure in more outlets, such as bars, libraries, cafes and on board buses in Bristol.

4.17 Chapter Review
This chapter provides the results, analysis and discussion for the primary research undertaken, satisfying aims 2, 3 and 4 of the study. Data is presented in reader-friendly graphs and themes have been highlighted. The researcher has linked the key findings from the primary data collection with the literature throughout the analysis, providing an overview of what has been achieved. The final chapter will conclude the study.
Chapter 5

Conclusion &

Recommendations
5.0 Chapter Overview

The final chapter summarises the research findings and establishes whether or not the aim and objectives, set in section 1.6, have been achieved. Within this chapter the researcher will also reflect on her personal research journey, discuss the directions for potential future research and offer recommendations for the Bristol Hippodrome’s promotional activities.

5.1 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study was to discover which promotional methods used by the Bristol Hippodrome are most influential on current customers and whether non-attendance is due to poor promotion or other factors. Five objectives were set to achieve this aim. The researcher has provided evidence of how each objective has been achieved:

1. To critically review the current literature relating to promotional applications with a specific focus on theatres.

Chapter 2 provides a review of literature relating to marketing with a specific focus on promotion, satisfying the first objective. The researcher pinpointed her review on both traditional and modern promotion techniques that are used by theatres today, evaluating their strengths, weaknesses and popularity as a marketing medium in today’s business environment. The purpose of the literature review was to build background knowledge on the topic that could then be referenced once the researcher had conducted her own research around the topic. The researcher ensured secondary resources were current as marketing is a fast-growing concept where literature becomes quickly outdated. A variety of secondary resources were used to achieve this aim, as detailed in section 3.1.1.
2. To undertake primary research data collection with customers who currently attend shows and performances at the Bristol Hippodrome to learn which promotional techniques have caused or influenced them to visit the theatre.

To achieve this objective, the researcher conducted interviews with 10 participants who currently attend the Bristol Hippodrome. The purpose of executing primary research with attendees of the Bristol Hippodrome was to discover which promotional materials they are most influenced by. The Methodology chapter states the approach and methods that were used to undertake the primary research and the ethical issues surrounding it.

3. To undertake primary research data collection with people in Bristol who don’t currently attend shows and performances at the Bristol Hippodrome. The intention is to discover whether their non-attendance is due to the types of promotional techniques used by the Bristol Hippodrome or due to other factors.

Similarly, the researcher conducted 10 interviews with participants who currently don’t attend performances at the Bristol Hippodrome to satisfy the third aim. The researcher felt it was necessary to perform interviews with this opposing sample group to discover if their non-attendance is due to poor promotion or other factors and whether or not they would be influenced by further promotion. From this, the researcher could draw conclusions and determine the strength of promotion materials produced by the Hippodrome. The approach, methods and the ethical issues surrounding the data collection are explained in Chapter 3 and copies of both the interview questions can be found in Appendix 5.
4. To present the primary data using a variety of formats and to review, analyse and discuss the results, identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the promotional techniques used by the Bristol Hippodrome.

Following on from primary data collection, the fourth aim was satisfied in Chapter 4 where the researcher presented, analysed and discussed the findings from the interviews. Including both closed and complex style questions in interviews with both sample groups allowed the researcher to display the findings in various manors, which avoided repetition for readers. Closed questions were presented in easy-read colour coordinated bar graphs and pie charts and descriptive data collected from complex questions was presented through the use of quotations provided by the participants. Thematic and content analysis were used to discuss and analyse the results, as stated in the Methodology chapter. When analysing the results, the researcher referred back to the literature review, checking for similarities or differences in the findings.

5. To consolidate the research findings by offering recommendations for future improvements to the Bristol Hippodrome’s promotional activities.

Chapter 5 (5.4) offers recommendations for future improvements to the Hippodrome’s promotional activities based on the findings from the research. To assist the recommendations, the researcher asked both groups of participants whether they think there are any further promotional methods that the Bristol Hippodrome could partake in to attract audiences (4.16).
5.2 Key Findings

The researcher has summarised the key findings of the study:

- **Word of mouth** had the highest exposure rate out of any promotional method (100% of total participants).

- The Hippodrome’s social media pages had the lowest exposure rate of all the promotional methods (10% of total participants), regardless of 85% of participants using at least one form of social media.

- **Word of mouth** was the most influential form of promotion on current attendees: a cost-free form of promotion that is not actually owned by the Hippodrome. Should the Hippodrome be forking out large amounts of money to promote when their most effective method is cost-free?

- The responses showed that non-attendance is not due to poor promotion or lack of exposure to promotion materials, but other factors such as:
  - Not their first choice of entertainment
  - Prefer to go to the theatre in London
  - Laziness
  - Perceived as too expensive

- A proportion of current non-attendees would visit the Hippodrome if it promoted more. However, it was reinforced that over-promoting would discourage participants to attend.

- Regardless of the increasing popularity of social media as a marketing platform in today’s business environment, 100% of current attendees would still visit the Hippodrome if it didn’t use social media to promote, suggesting that theatre is regarded as a traditional activity and modern technology needn’t interfere.
5.3 Limitations

A low sample size did not truly represent all tastes; however, it would have been too time consuming for the researcher to undertake a more quantitative approach. As this dissertation follows a case study approach, the research only specifically applies to one theatre. To make the study more reliable, the researcher could have conducted a similar study elsewhere had more time been available.

5.4 Evaluation and Recommendations

The results showed that traditional promotional methods have a stronger influence than modern. This project will of use for the Hippodrome’s marketing team as it can identify and interpret the opinions of both existing patrons and potential customers. It may also be of use to other theatres wanting to improve their promotional mix, as they can see which promotional materials customer’s are most influenced by.

Based on suggestions from participants, the researcher has provided recommendations that the Hippodrome could use when updating their plans for promotion to strengthen potential customers’ AIDA process (Masterson and Pickton, 2014).

- **Tailor marketing campaigns to specific target audiences**
  - Face-to-face visits to primary schools.
  - Each audience has different needs therefore market research must be carried out in order to learn the most effective way(s) to address them (Armstrong et al, 2012).

- **Sales promotion**
  - Offering discount vouchers to move new or existing customers “closer to a purchase decision” (Masterson and Pickton, 2014:320).

- **Increase local identity on website**
  - Reduce the level of ATG ‘corporate’ features and increase Bristol identity.
Create a more user-friendly ‘digital shop window’ (Ryan, 2010).

- **Brochure accessibility**
  - Put brochure in more outlets around Bristol to bring in new customers (including online).

### 5.5 Personal Reflection of the Research Journey
The researcher has reflected on her research journey as Cameron (2008:58) states that reflective practice is “crucial to professional development”. The researcher has enjoyed the dissertation journey and believes she has gained new and developed existing skills as a result of completing the project. For example, writing a dissertation has tested her ability to work independently and balance multiple assignments simultaneously. From carrying out a project which involved conducting primary data collection, the researcher now better understands the nature of academic research and critical analysis and is aware of the pitfalls in research design. The researcher chose a realistic number of participants to interview and overall, her time management was efficient, aided by setting targets that were specific, manageable and ultimately achievable.

### 5.6 Chapter Review
The Conclusions and Recommendations chapter has explored and reviewed the relationship between the literature review, the data collected and the aims and objectives whilst providing a summary that concludes the the dissertation. The research journey has been reflected on, limitations have been stated and recommendations have been highlighted.

The role of theatre marketing has developed considerably since the 1980’s, when only traditional methods such as posters, leaflets and telephone calls were used (Fraser, 2004) and Gibbons (2005:157) stresses that “the relationship between art and advertising now seems richer and more complex than ever”. It can be concluded from the research that promotion is a key factor that the Bristol Hippodrome needs to develop and progress in order to maximise seat occupancy. However, there are
other factors that influence theatre attendance that also need to be considered by
the Bristol Hippodrome. The researcher hopes that her windings will assist the
theatre to use promotional techniques more effectively.
Reference List


Kaden, R.J. (2006). Guerrilla marketing research: Marketing research techniques that can help any business make more money. GB, Kogan Page Ltd.


Media Briefing, (2014). ‘Fifth of all UK newspaper readers only use mobile devices to access content’. [Online] (Accessed 03/01/2016) Available at:


Seric, M., Gil-Saura, I. and Ruiz-Molina, M. (2014) How can integrated marketing communications and advanced technology influence the creation of...


## Appendix 1 – Bristol Hippodrome / Promotional Mix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotional Activity</th>
<th>Who is Exposed</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
<th>Element of Promotional Mix</th>
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<tr>
<td>TV advert</td>
<td>Regional audience</td>
<td>Reaches a wide audience, Visual and audio</td>
<td>Very expensive</td>
<td>Advertising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billboard</td>
<td>Locals in and around Bristol</td>
<td>Eye-catching and in your face</td>
<td>Expensive</td>
<td>Advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio and newspaper</td>
<td>Regional audience</td>
<td>Reaches a wide audience, Expensive, Radio only uses audio, Newspaper only uses visual</td>
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<td>Public relations, Advertising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Print on bus</td>
<td>People in and around Bristol</td>
<td>Eye-catching, High impact</td>
<td>Expensive</td>
<td>Advertising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face / Street Promotion</td>
<td>People in Bristol</td>
<td>Personal, Opportunity to dress up as characters</td>
<td>Need willing members of staff</td>
<td>Personal selling, Sales promotion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word of Mouth</td>
<td>Local, national and global audience</td>
<td>Free form of promotion, Very quick to spread</td>
<td>Negative word of mouth may spread</td>
<td>Personal selling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website &amp; Social Media</td>
<td>Global audience</td>
<td>Can offer last minute deals, Cheap, Modern</td>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Direct marketing, Sales promotion</td>
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<td>Mailings List</td>
<td>Previous customers, ATG members</td>
<td>Targets only people who are interested in theatre</td>
<td>Post – costly, Can be annoying if done too often</td>
<td>Personal selling, Direct marketing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brochure</td>
<td>Email – free</td>
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# Appendix 2 - Ethics Documentation

## CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

**APPLICATION SUMMARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name: Alice Kennedy</th>
<th>Student Number: ST20042711</th>
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<tr>
<td>Module Name: Dissertation</td>
<td>Module Number: HLT6009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme Name: Events Management</td>
<td>Supervisor Name: Stephen Moore</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>To be completed by student and supervisor before submission to Ethics Approval Panel</th>
<th>Student Signature;</th>
<th>Supervisor Signature;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application for ethics approval</td>
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<td>Participant information sheet</td>
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First Submission [X] Resubmission [ ]

Date: 16/11/15

---

**For use by the devolved ethics approval panel:**

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<tr>
<th>Panel Members</th>
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<tr>
<td>Module leader:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor:</td>
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Date: 25/11/15 Date of Reassessment:

**Outcome:**

- Project Approved [ ]
- Project Approved in Principle [ ]
- Application not ready/ incomplete [ ] (Decision deferred)

Reference number: 2015DO223

Comments for projects not fully approved:

- [Insert letter of confirmation if no research.]
- [Insert location and recruitment process of participants in A3.]
- [Insert age over 18 years in D1.5.]

The original to be retained by the module leader and a copy given to the student.
When undertaking a research or enterprise project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

If the project requires ethics approval from an external agency (e.g., NHS), you will not need to seek additional ethics approval from Cardiff Met. You should however complete Part One of this form and attach a copy of your ethics letter(s) of approval in order that your School has a record of the project.

The document Ethics application guidance notes will help you complete this form. It is available from the Cardiff Met website. The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents, please consult your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator. Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to the appropriate person(s) in your School or Unit.

PLEASE NOTE:
Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

PART ONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of applicant:</th>
<th>Alice Kennedy</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor (if student project):</td>
<td>Stephen Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School / Unit:</td>
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<td>Student number (if applicable):</td>
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<td>Programme enrolled on (if applicable):</td>
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<td>Project Title:</td>
<td>A study to assess the promotional methods that are most influential on customers who visit UK theatres. A case study on the Bristol</td>
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<td>Expected start date of data collection:</td>
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<td>Approximate duration of data collection:</td>
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<td>Funding Body (if applicable):</td>
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<td>Other researcher(s) working on the project:</td>
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<td>Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?</td>
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<td>Will the study involve taking samples of human origin from participants?</td>
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Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:

| Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain | No |
| Laboratory based, not involving human | No |
participants or human tissue samples
Practice based not involving human participants (e.g. curatorial, practice audit) No
Compulsory projects in professional practice (e.g. Initial Teacher Education) No
A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS) No

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. No further information regarding your project is required. If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form.

In no more than 150 words, give a non-technical summary of the project
The study will explore the different types of promotional tools used in theatre marketing, concentrating on the Bristol Hippodrome as a case study. The literature review (secondary research) frames the topic in question, looking at the history of theatre, theatre marketing, the marketing mix and promotion. The primary research aims to discover which promotional tools, (such as brochures, social media, traditional marketing, etc.) used by the Bristol Hippodrome are most influential. The primary research will identify which promotional tools are most successful when targeted at regular theatre patrons, and why non-patrons don’t attend the theatre and whether their non-attendance is due to the types of promotional methods the Bristol Hippodrome uses. These findings will be used to make recommendations on how the Bristol Hippodrome could improve their promotion for the future. The findings may also be of benefit to other theatre marketing managers.

DECLARATION:
I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

STUDENTS: I confirm that I will not disseminate any material produced as a result of this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

Signature of the applicant: Date:

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY
Name of supervisor: Date:

Signature of supervisor:
Research Ethics Committee use only

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Project reference number: Click here to enter text.

Name: Click here to enter text. Date: Click here to enter a date.

Signature:

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant: Click here to enter text.

PART TWO

A RESEARCH DESIGN

A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project? No

A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used⁴

N/A

A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project

A qualitative approach will be used to carry out the primary research for this project. Semi-structured interviews have been chosen as the method of data collection because they will allow the researcher to find out specific information from open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews allow the participants to express their opinions on the topic therefore giving the researcher qualitative information. Semi-structured interviews are informal so participants should comfortable in participating.

The sample of people will be 20. There will be 10 semi-structured interviews with people who currently visit the Bristol Hippodrome, and 10 semi-structured interviews with people who live in Bristol who don’t currently visit the Bristol Hippodrome. This number of participants has been decided because it is enough to provide valid results and to give the researcher useful and sufficient data. The participants will vary in age, gender and will have different preferences of genres of shows performed at the Bristol Hippodrome. The participants will be recruited based on people using the box office in the Bristol Hippodrome and people who are walking outside the Bristol Hippodrome who will be invited by the researcher to go inside in order to undertake the research. This will provide the researcher

⁴ An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here
with reliable and valid results that can be used to inform the write-up of this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications?</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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**B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE**

B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?

Modules at university such as ‘Branding and Advertising’ and ‘Event Project Management’ have required the researcher to carry out market research. This involved using survey monkey to construct online questionnaires.

**B2 Student project only**

What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?

PhD

**C POTENTIAL RISKS**

C1 What potential risks do you foresee?

Semi-structured interviews:
- My own safety when undertaking the semi-structured interviews in both the Box Office area of the theatre and outside of the theatre.
- Sensitive approaches when asking questions.
- Giving the university a bad name.
- Data protection of interviewees.

C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?

- The researcher will ensure all interviews take place in the theatre during daylight hours.
- The researcher will inform a close friend or relative where she is when undertaking the interviews.
- The researcher will be understanding and sympathetic towards the participant.
- The researcher will be careful with how questions are worded
- The participant will be given a participant information sheet and consent form so that they are aware of what the interview will involve.
- All data will be kept confidential and will be destroyed once the project has been completed.

**Appendix 3 Participation Information Sheet**
Semi-Structured interviews

A study to assess the promotional methods that are most influential on customers who visit UK theatres. A case study on the Bristol Hippodrome.

Project overview
The aim of this study is to investigate the different promotional techniques currently used by the Bristol Hippodrome, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in each technique employed, and then to offer recommendations for improvements to the promotional activities used by the Bristol Hippodrome.

Why you have been asked to take part
You have been asked to take part in this project as you fit the criteria of being an attendee to the Bristol Hippodrome. You are aged 18 years of age or over. During the interview, you will be asked about the promotional methods used by the Bristol Hippodrome and if you were/are influenced by any.

OR
You have been asked to take part in this project as you fit the criteria of being a person who lives in Bristol but does not attend the Bristol Hippodrome. You are aged 18 years of age or over. During the interview, you will be asked why you don’t attend the Bristol Hippodrome and whether this is due to the promotional methods they use.

Are there any risks?
There are no significant risks involved with this project. However, the researcher gives the participants full rights to not answer any questions which they feel uncomfortable with, and / or to withdraw themselves at any time.

How we protect your privacy
Your personal details (e.g. signature on consent form) will be kept in secure locations.
At the end of the project, all consent forms and recordings of interviews will be destroyed. You are also reminded that you do not have to discuss anything which you may feel uncomfortable discussing.

YOU WILL BE OFFERED A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

If you require any further information about this project, please contact:

Alice Kennedy, Cardiff Metropolitan University
St20042711@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk

Appendix 4 – Participant Consent Form
Cardiff Metropolitan University
Alice Kennedy
ST20042711

A study to assess the promotional methods that are most influential on customers who visit UK theatres. A case study on the Bristol Hippodrome.

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

1. I agree to the interview being audio recorded

2. I agree to the use of anonymized quotes in publications

Signature of Participant ___________________________ Date __________

Name of person taking consent ___________________________ Date __________

Signature of person taking consent ___________________________

Appendix 5 – Interview Questions
Semi-structured interview for participants who DO visit the Bristol Hippodrome:

1. What is your age and gender?
2. What is the most recent show or production you watched at the Bristol Hippodrome?
3. How many years have you lived in Bristol for?
4. Do you receive the Bristol Hippodrome’s seasonal brochure and updates by either email or post? Have you ever read the brochure?
5. Do you receive the Bristol Hippodrome’s seasonal brochure and/or updates by either email or post?
6. Which promotional methods out of the following have you come in to contact with?
   - TV advert
   - Billboard (48 sheet)
   - Radio
   - Newspaper
   - Face-to-face promotion
   - Word of mouth
   - Digital marketing and social media
7. Of these (if any), which promotional method have you been most exposed to?
8. Of these, which promotional method is most influential on you?
9. Do you use social media? If so, what formats?
10. If so, do you ‘like’ the Bristol Hippodrome on Facebook or follow them on Twitter or Instagram?
11. Would you still visit the Bristol Hippodrome if they didn’t use social media as a form of promotion?
12. Do you think the Bristol Hippodrome need to promote to fill their seats?
13. Do you think there are any further promotional methods that the Bristol Hippodrome could partake in to attract audiences?
Semi-structured interview for participants who DON’T visit the Bristol Hippodrome:

1. What is your age and gender?
2. How many years have you lived in Bristol for?
3. Are you aware of the Bristol Hippodrome?
4. Do you receive the Bristol Hippodrome’s seasonal brochure and updates by either email or post? Have you ever read the brochure?
5. Have you ever been exposed to any promotional methods out of the following?
   - TV advert
   - Billboard (48 sheet)
   - Radio
   - Newspaper
   - Face-to-face promotion
   - Word of mouth
   - Digital marketing and social media
6. Do you think your non-attendance to the Bristol Hippodrome is due to not being exposed to many promotional methods?
7. Do you use social media? If so, what formats?
8. If so, do you ‘like’ the Bristol Hippodrome on Facebook or follow them on Twitter or Instagram?
9. Do you think the Bristol Hippodrome need to promote to fill their seats?
10. Do you think if the Bristol Hippodrome promoted more then you would attend?
11. Do you think there are any further promotional methods that the Bristol Hippodrome could partake in to attract audiences?

Appendix 6 - Letter to Participating Organisation
Dear Box Office Manager,

I am currently in my final year of university studying for a degree in Events Management. For the completion of my study, I am required to complete a Dissertation, involving primary data collection.

The study which I have chosen to undertake is “A study to assess the promotional methods that are most influential on customers who visit UK theatres. A case study on the Bristol Hippodrome”. The aim of the study is to discover which promotional methods used by the Bristol Hippodrome are most influential on current patrons and whether non-attendance is due to poor promotion or other factors. I will investigate the different promotional techniques currently used by the Bristol Hippodrome, evaluating the strengths and weakness in of each technique employed then to offer recommendations for improvements to the promotional activities used.

I would like to hold short interviews with 10 customers and 10 non-attendees inside the Box Office to find out if and how they are influenced by the Hippodrome’s promotion. I have attached a copy of the interview questions. All information collected from interviews will be kept entirely confidential with methods advised by the university being strictly adhered to. I look forward to your response.

Thank You

Student Name: Alice Kennedy Tel: 07814040630

Student at Cardiff Metropolitan University Email: st20042711@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk
Appendix 7 - Interview Transcript with Attending Patrons
(Interviews with non-attendees were also transcribed)

1. **What is your age and gender?**
   
   Participant A: Female, 51-60  
   Participant B: Male, 51-60  
   Participant C: Female, 18-30  
   Participant D: Female, 31-40  
   Participant E: Female, 31-40  
   Participant F: Female, 18-30  
   Participant G: Female, 51-60  
   Participant H: Male, 51-60  
   Participant I: Female, 31-40  
   Participant J: Female, 31-40

2. **What is the most recent show or production you watched at the Bristol Hippodrome?**

   Participant A: “The pantomime - Snow White and the Seven Dwarves in December 2015”
   Participant B: “Mary Poppins in Summer 2015”
   Participant C: “The Sound of Music in Summer 2015”.
   Participant D: “The Full Monty, in 2015 probably June time”
   Participant E: “Mary Poppins”
   Participant F: “Sound of music last year some time”
   Participant G: “The pantomime at Christmas – Snow White”
   Participant H: “The Bodyguard the musical, last week”
   Participant I: “About a month or two ago I watched Snow White and the 7 dwarves”
   Participant J: “The panto”

3. **How many years have you lived in Bristol for?**

   Participant A: “51 years – all my life”
   Participant B: “All my life”
Participant C: “20 – all my life”
Participant D: “21 years”
Participant E: “48 my whole life”
Participant F: “My whole life – 20”
Participant G: “All my life”
Participant H: “Nearly 40 years since I moved to Bristol”.
Participant I: “About 20”
Participant J: “All my life”

4. **Roughly how many times have you attended the Bristol Hippodrome in your lifetime?**

Participant A: “Thinking about that, I think maybe 60 times, something like that. I’m quite old aren’t I! 50-60 times, you know”
Participant B: “I must have gone, gosh, I would say three times a year for the last 30 years, so that would be 90, I would say about 120 times – something like that, a lot!”
Participant C: “I reckon about 50.”
Participant D: “Around 20 times.”
Participant E: “I’d say roughly around 50”
Participant F: “Probably around 7 or 8 times”
Participant G: “I would say approximately 80 times, perhaps more”
Participant H: “Quite a lot because I’m a member – that encourages me to go quite regularly. ‘The ATG card’. I probably go 2-3 times a month but it depends what’s on and how long the shows are on for, but very regularly.
Participant I: “A lot – probably maybe 3 times a year every year since ive lived here so about 60”
Participant J: “Less than 20”

5. **Do you receive the Bristol Hippodrome’s seasonal brochure and/or updates by either email or post?**

Participant A: “Yeah I get their brochure via post but not email. I don’t think I’ve ever given them my e-mail address actually. I quite like to have a
brochure in front of me however I wouldn’t be against having e-mail updates. I always read the brochure cover to cover – its nice and colourful”

Participant B: “Yes I receive the brochure via mail joint with my wife but nothing via email.”

Participant C: “My family receives the brochure via post and I don’t receive anything via email. I always read the brochure.”

Participant D: “No, neither”

Participant E: “By post yes but not email”

Participant F: “No im not on either of those. But I have read the brochure before by picking it up before a show. I always like reading their brochures I think they’re cool.”

Participant G: “Just by post yes”.

Participant H: “Yes I do because as a member that’s one of the things you get – regular brochures, priority and emails for priority booking periods”.

Participant I: “No I don’t get any emails but in the post I get a brochure probably twice a year with everything that’s available to watch. I definitely have a look at what’s coming up because I do enjoy going to the theatre so I like having stuff booked in.”

Participant J: “No I don’t receive either but ive read the brochure from picking it up at a show”

6. Which promotional methods out of the following have you come in to contact with?

TV:

Participant A: “TV advert for the snow white pantomime”.

Participant B: “Yes”

Participant C: “Yes I have, not loads but I have seen one before for the pantomime”

Participant D: “Yes, I think for one of the pantomimes”

Participant E: “No”

Participant F: “Yes I have, recently for the Christmas pantomime”

Participant G: “Yes”
Participant H: “Yes on the bigger shows – I think there was one for the Bodyguard recently and definitely for the pantomime at Christmas”

Participant I: “Yeah ive seen them quite a lot especially within the last year. Ive really noticed them more and they’re on during prime times between programmes so I see them quite a lot. Ive definitely seen one for Snow White, I think I saw one for Mary Poppins as well which I actually went and saw and I think there was a Jersey Boys one which was last year and I think I saw one the other day for Billy Elliot which is coming soon”

Participant J: “Yes for the panto”

Billboard

Participant A: I’m not sure about a billboard – I’m sure I must have have seen one but can’t think where. There’s one above the Hippodrome, isn’t there? Does that count? I’ve seen that when I drive past.

Participant B: “No I haven’t seen a billboard”.

Participant C: “Yes I’ve seen one at the Mall Cribbs Causeway shopping centre”

Participant D: “in town yes I think”

Participant E: “Yes”

Participant F: “Yes ive seen loads of them around Bristol”.

Participant G: “Yes”

Participant H: “Yes I think when you’re driving around you see them and also at the train station they have big posters put up”

Participant I: “On the bus stops they always have them but expect for outside the Hippodrome I haven’t ever seen big billboards. Loads of bus stops, especially in the centre of town.”

Participant J: “Yes ive seen billboards at the mall for the panto. Ive seen adverts on buses”

Radio

Participant A: “No I haven’t heard a radio advert”

Participant B: “No ive never heard a radio advert”.
Participant C: “Yes I think I have, I don’t know if it was for the pantomime or a different show, but I have heard one and I remember being shocked because I had never heard one before and haven’t heard one since.”

Participant D: “No, but I don’t listen to the local radio, only radio 1”

Participant E: “No”

Participant F: “Yes”

Participant G: “Yes”

Participant H: “Probably but I don’t listen to much radio but I think they do some”

Participant I: “Yeah I think I did for the pantomime but nothing else”

Participant J: “I don’t really listen to the radio”

**Newspaper**

Participant A: “Nope I haven’t seen a newspaper advert but yes I do read newspapers”

Participant B: “No I haven’t but yes I do read newspapers”

Participant C: “No, but I don’t read the newspaper”

Participant D: “Yes I have seen a newspaper advert for the Hippodrome”.

Participant E: “Yes”

Participant F: “No but that’s just because of my age. I don’t read the newspaper”.

Participant G: “Yes”

Participant H: “Yes there used to be a lot more than there is now – I think they use other forms of advertising now”.

Participant I: “I don’t really read the newspaper so I can’t really comment”

Participant J: “No”

**Face-to-Face Promotion**

Participant A: “No I haven’t experienced face-to-face promotion.”

Participant B: “Nope”

Participant C: “No”

Participant D: “No I don’t think I have”
Participant E: “No never”  
Participant F: “No I haven’t”  
Participant G: “Yes I have at the Mall”  
Participant H: “Yes I remember last summer I was at the Bristol Harbour Festival and the Balloon Fiesta and there was a stand there and they were giving out promotional items. I don’t think they were selling tickets there – they were handing out flyers but I think they do go to some bigger companies sometimes and shopping malls (ive seen them at the mall) with a laptop taking bookings”  
Participant I: “No I haven’t”  
Participant J: “No I don’t think so”  

Word of Mouth  
Participant A: “Yes, if somebody says it’s a good show I’m more likely to go. Word of Mouth is quite a strong method for me. Because I go to book club people will say ‘oh I went to see so-and-so, like somebody I know went to see the ballet show (I’ve forgotten the name), she said that was amazing and things like that people say are really good and it makes me want to go”.  
Participant B: “Yes I get a lot of information about the shows from talking about them with friends and family”.  
Participant C: “Yes definitely. I talk about shows with my family a lot. We look at the brochure and decide what we want to see next”  
Participant D: “Yes I do talk about shows”  
Participant E: “Definitely yes”  
Participant F: “Yeh especially when I was younger and I used to do drama I used to hear a lot about what was going on at the Hippodrome because it was my hobby – that was when I heard the most about it but not quite so much any more.”  
Participant G: “Yes”  
Participant H: “Yes I think again some of the bigger shows have word of mouth purely because more people know about them. It is important for some shows”
Participant I: “Yeah well one of my friends Dad works at the Box Office. We always went and saw shows regularly before that, but now we get discount on the tickets so we’re more likely to go, and if it’s a show that maybe I haven’t seen, me and my parents will go because we can get cheaper tickets. My whole family is really in to the theatre so my nan might be like ‘oh have you seen that Billy Elliot is coming in 6 months time – we should get tickets’. My uncle takes my little cousins a lot and we go with them so going to the theatre is quite a big thing in my family”

Participant J: “Yes definitely with friends and family. I talk about it and hear things about it, especially as im a hair dresser”

Digital Marketing and Social Media

Participant A: “No but I think this is because of my age group. I go on Facebook but have never been on the Hippodrome’s page. I’ve been on their website numerous times to book tickets”.

Participant B: “I’ve used the Hippodrome website to look and have a browse but not purchase tickets. I haven’t been on any of their social media pages”

Participant C: “No I haven’t been on their website or social media pages”

Participant D: “Yes I’ve been on the website, and I think I’ve been on their Facebook”

Participant E: “Yes I’ve been on the website, but not on any of their social media pages”

Participant F: “No I haven’t been on their websites or social media pages”.

Participant G: “No I haven’t been on their website or social media”

Participant H: “Yes I’ve been on their website but I don’t think much of it. Its very hard to use – it doesn’t seem very user friendly. Its good for getting information but not for booking tickets, and also you actually have to pay a booking fee so I prefer to go in to the box office and buy my tickets there and you don’t have to pay booking fees. Yes I look at their Facebook page to see what’s happening but I don’t interact on it – I use it as a source of information”

Participant I: “No I haven’t been on either”
Participant J: “Yes, I’ve been on the website to browse and book tickets but not on their social media pages.”

7. Of these (if any), which promotional method have you been most exposed to?
   
   Participant A: “Definitely the brochure.”
   Participant B: “I would certainly say word of mouth, discussing with friends, and the brochure.”
   Participant C: “Probably primarily word of mouth and then second to that would be billboards.”
   Participant D: “Word of mouth.”
   Participant E: “Receiving the brochure by post I would say, although an email would probably be great. I’m automatically on the mailing list but I wouldn’t be averse to emailing.”
   Participant F: “Probably the billboards, I see a lot of them when I’m in town. They kind of flash them everywhere, but other than that probably brochures.”
   Participant G: “The brochure.”
   Participant H: “Probably the brochure that comes out 3 or 4 times a year and more increasingly emails are the most regular things. Newspaper is decreasing and email is increasing – the new electronic media is taking over.”
   Participant I: “Probably the brochure or the bus advertisements – I think they’re really effective, for example I saw Mary Poppins before Christmas and that was because I had seen loads of adverts and I kept thinking ‘oh I really want to see it actually’ so the adverts reminded me to get tickets.”
   Participant J: “Word of mouth definitely and probably the outdoor promotion.”

8. Of these, which promotional method is most influential on you?
   
   Participant A: “My favourite is the brochure, I’m definitely influenced the most by it and I look forward to getting it in the post and reading it.”
   Participant B: “Word of mouth would be the most influential on me I would say.”
Participant C: “I think the billboard would be most influential on me and make me want to buy tickets because it triggers my mind about a show and because my family are very in to musical theatre its more about seeing billboards of shows I’ll know I’ll enjoy rather than what other people think about them (word of mouth)”.

Participant D: “Probably word of mouth I think I hear about shows a lot more. If you go one time, you can get the programme and see what’s coming for the rest of the year and then people will talk about it like ‘have you heard this is coming’ so I think word of mouth is influential.”

Participant E: “Word of mouth would persuade me to buy tickets the most”.

Participant F: “Probably a TV advert because I’m not really taking notice when I see a billboard I mean I’ll go past it but I wont actually take it in but when I’m sat in front of the TV and a show is advertised, I actually think oh yeah I’ll go and see that.”

Participant G: “Brochure and word of mouth are the main two”

Participant H: “I’m quite old so I do rely on the brochure quite a lot but emails also are very important to me”.

Participant I: “Probably word of mouth because in my family it’s a big thing – we will all go together so when I see a show I will ring up my Dad and be like ‘oh Dad did you know so and so is coming we should go’ and then we will all go together as a family occasion”

Participant J: “Probably word of mouth, hearing if a show is good”

9. Do you use social media? If so, what formats?

Participant A: “I use Facebook and Instagram but I’ve never seen anything about the Hippodrome on any of those. I don’t use twitter.”

Participant B: “I use social media a bit, just Facebook.”

Participant C: “Yes I use all the main ones really so Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat”

Participant D: “Yes, facebook, twitter, Instagram – all the main ones”

Participant E: “Yes, Facebook, Instagram and twitter”

Participant F: “Yes, Facebook Twitter and Instagram, all the main ones”.
Participant G: “No I don’t” 

Participant H: “I’m signed up to Facebook but just to look at other pages and to get information – I don’t interact with anyone. I don’t use any other forms of social media”.

Participant I: “Yes, pretty much all social media – Facebook Twitter, Instagram”

Participant J: “Facebook and Instagram”

10. If so, do you ‘like’ the Bristol Hippodrome on Facebook or follow them on Twitter or Instagram?

Participant A: “No I don’t follow them on any social media”.

Participant B: “No I don’t like them on Facebook”.

Participant C: “No I don’t like them or follow them on any social media”

Participant D: “I like them on Facebook but not twitter or Instagram”

Participant E: “No I don’t actually! I do follow the Colston Hall – rivals! Maybe I shall start”.

Participant F: “No I don’t like or follow them but I don’t follow that many people anyway”.

Participant G: “No”

Participant H: “I probably would like Facebook if I was a sort of person to interact but I don’t bother because I just use it to look at and as a source for information and to see what other people are saying.”

Participant I: “No I don’t actually, none – ive never thought to”

Participant J: “No not on any but I probably should do”

11. Would you still visit the Bristol Hippodrome if they didn’t use social media as a form of promotion?

Participant A: “Yes because I don’t follow the Hippodrome anyway.”

Participant B: “Yes definitely”.

Participant C: “Yes”

Participant D: “Yes the reasons I go are not because I have seen social media advertisement”
Participant E: “Yes”  
Participant F: “Yes I would because I think its quite a traditional thing to go to the theatre so you don’t really need the internet”.  
Participant G: “Yes because I don’t use it”  
Participant H: “Definitely yes because they have so many good shows on and such a variety”.
Participant I: “Yeah”  
Participant J: “Yes I would, it doesn’t make a difference for me”

12. Do you think the Bristol Hippodrome need to promote to fill their seats?  
Participant A: “Generally the ones I’ve been to tend to be popular and the seats have been mainly full but I know there are shows that they don’t always fill the seats which might need promoting a bit more.  
Participant B: “I think they do to get the message out, especially for some shows more than others.”  
Participant C: “I do think they need to promote to attract people that wouldn’t go to the theatre as part of their normal routine”  
Participant D: “I feel like theatres the sort of thing where they probably would fill their seats even if they didn’t promote that much because I doubt a lot of older people use social media or I don’t know. I think theatre is part of tradition and you just hear about the shows.”  
Participant E: “Yes I think they do need to promote”  
Participant F: “They definitely need to promote, especially nowadays when you can just go to the cinema and watch a film. Now its more of a treat to go to the theatre because its more expensive.”  
Participant G: “I think it obviously helps them to promote their seats for the shows”  
Participant H: “I think they do need to promote most of the time because they have such a variety of shows to suit all tastes, I suppose they target their promotional activities to suit the target audience. But there’s so many different sorts of shows, they can’t just rely on being sold out every show.”
Participant I: “I think they do need to promote. I’ve never seen any social media advertisements for the Hippodrome but I still regularly go. But I definitely think they need to keep going with telling people what shows are coming. The hippodrome does generally, every time I’ve been to a show I think its good. I think the people who buy the tickets are affluent 31-70 year old people who probably don’t use social media that much and are just regulars – they get the brochures because they’ve had it for 20 years”

Participant J: “I guess promoting does sell more seats but I do think word of mouth is effective”

13. Do you think there are any further promotional methods that the Bristol Hippodrome could partake in to attract audiences?

Participant A: “I feel generally like I know what’s going on at the Hippodrome. They do offers for groups of children and scouts etc. already – that’s the sort of things I would be interested in hearing more about.”

Participant B: “I might look at an email I suppose but I think because it’s such a well-known long established venue, people are just aware of it really as a regular circle of events. I would probably still go even without promotion because I know its there and I’ve always gone and I automatically want to always see what’s on”

Participant C: “Maybe if it’s a show they know is targeted to a certain age group. So for example something that would appeal to the elderly, maybe going in to an old people’s home or if its something that children would enjoy such as the pantomime, perhaps going in to schools to use face to face promotion to target specific groups”

Participant D: “Maybe they could try and be bigger on social media, I’m not sure if they have Instagram – I didn’t know they had it – to get younger audiences or try and advertise in different types of newspapers or even magazines and maybe on the TV because I haven’t seen that much on the TV”.

Participant E: “if they want to attract the younger audiences maybe target schools and primary schools. Some children aren’t used to going to the
theatre so the Hippodrome could perhaps go in during an assembly to promote or leave leaflets in their reception area.”

**Participant F:** “I feel like the actors that they use within the shows make a massive difference on who goes and watches, like when its Christmas and they get a good actor in to do the pantomimes its always heaving. But other than that maybe be a bit more out there with the social media because I haven’t seen it much and I’m quite on it with my social media, so if I haven’t seen it then a lot of people my age might not have seen it.”

**Participant G:** “I think they are quite successful. They often have full houses at shows”.

**Participant H:** “I don’t really know how the Hippodrome works but a lot of it is very corporate and seems to come from their head office, ATG, more and more they seem to be putting out promotional stuff from their own local offices especially electronically and taking more of a local initiative. I think that’s good because if you look at their website its very corporate and doesn’t have much local identify and I think they could benefit from that. I look at other theatre websites within the ATG group and I do think they all look quite boring and the same really and they need more local interest”.

**Participant I:** “I think it’s a hard one because if you’re a younger customer, you’re more likely to use social media, which is obviously really effective, they don’t have the money to spend £80 on a ticket to go to the theatre. I mean it might be worth a try (more social media promotion) but I feel like they’re quite effective already. With the Bristol Hippodrome, when I was looking to buy my friend a present for her landmark birthday, the good tickets for the Hippodrome were about £80 and I looked at the London theatre tickets and there are a lot more deals in London so I could get the same ticket for the same show but the London version of it, which is obviously the optimum version, for about £20-30 cheaper and then travel wise I could get a train or a coach to London for £10 there and back so I’d prefer to spend my money going to London to make a day of it and watch the proper original show than watch it in Bristol.” **Participant J:** “Yes, for kids they could go in to schools or soft plays to attract younger audiences.”
Appendix 8 - Turnitin Summary Sheet