A study to investigate how promotional techniques influence consumer buying decisions in the context of two contrasting events: “Love Saves the Day” and “Bristol International Balloon Fiesta”.

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I. Signed Statement

I declare this dissertation is my own work and I have correctly acknowledged the work of others. This study is in accordance with Cardiff Metropolitan University guidance on good academic conduct (how to avoid plagiarism and other assessment irregularities).

Signed ………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Chloe Elizabeth Phillips (ST20059398)
II. Abstract

Promotion is the voice of any company or event sending out a brand message loud and clear to its audience (Mishra, 2015). Successful events need to incorporate promotional activities into their practice ensuring their consumers are updated. To create successful promotion, the marketing department must identify their target market. In doing so, this will guarantee that the promotion is reached by a wide proportion of attendees making the promotion worthwhile. The quality of promotion reflects either positively or negatively on the overall event, illustrating how crucial it is for promotion to be done properly.

This study aims to investigate how promotional techniques influence consumer buying decisions in the context of two contrasting events; “Love Saves the Day” and “Bristol International Balloon Fiesta”. Primary research has been conducted in the forms of focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research was chosen due to being more effective to the study. The participants varied from around the UK enabling the researcher to access a wide array of opinions. Secondary research was used to give the reader an understanding of the current promotional activities for these two events, and how their consumers communicate with them.

Throughout the results, analysis and discussion chapter of this study an abundance of themes occurred creating controversy and confirmation of the literature review. It became apparent that the strongest form of promotion was through the use of social media. A high percentage of the participants agreed they would pay attention to social media posts rather than printed media. The study focuses on market segmentation and the importance of event managers recognising the segments.

The researcher indicates that both events have different ways in which they could promote more sufficiently to achieve greater outcomes increasing their brand reputation. This is portrayed within the conclusion and recommendations sector at the end of the study.

Conclusively, this study investigates how both events use promotional activities to persuade consumers to purchase their tickets. The study establishes truthful opinions from guests on whether the promotion is successful or needs updating to encourage sales and interest.
III. Acknowledgements

I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation for those who have helped me throughout my university degree. Most importantly to thank the individuals who have supported me throughout completing this study, without their constant help and positivity this dissertation would not have been accomplished.

Firstly, the main person who has helped and supported me from day one is my dissertation supervisor, Stephen Moore. Stephen has been my favourite lecturer since I started at university, due to his teaching style, patience and on-going support. His main aim throughout his work is to ensure each of his students achieves the best possible grade and without his time and guidance, I wouldn’t be achieving the grades I have done throughout my degree. I will be forever grateful for the support, guidance and time he has spent on me throughout my university degree, and I wouldn’t be where I am today without him, thank you Steve.

Secondly, I would like to thank my primary research participants for using their spare time to complete my research collection. I respect and appreciate the honest opinions and views they have given me to include in my study, and my dissertation would not be as strong without their contribution. They have supported me in achieving my overall aim of this study.

Lastly, my parents, family, friends and boyfriend have been completely amazing throughout my university degree. Without each one of you, I wouldn’t be sat here today writing these acknowledgements. Thank you for believing in me, supporting me and motivating me every day. I will repay you the favour, one day. I would not be who I am today, if it wasn’t for all of you believing in me. Thank you.
IV. Abbreviations

**BIBF** - Bristol International Balloon Fiesta

**LSTD** - Love Saves the Day

**WOM** - Word of Mouth

**JICNARS** - Joint Industry Committee for National Readership Surveys

**FG1** - Focus Group 1

**FG2** - Focus Group 2
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
1.1 Introduction

Events are central to our culture. Increases in leisure time and discretionary spending have led to a proliferation of public events, celebrations and entertainment. Government now support and promote events as part of their strategies for economic development, nation building and destination marketing (Bodwin, Allen, and Harris 2012).

The Chambers Dictionary (1998:560) defines an event as:

“…anything which happens; result; any incidence or occurrence esp. a memorable one; contingency or possibility of occurrence; an item in a programme (of sports, etc.).

1.2 The Event Industry

According to Booker from Event Bite, (2016) the events sector is worth £42.3 billion to the UK economy, with over 25,000 businesses within the industry. Event attendees spend £65,943 annually in registration fees, and the top 10 UK event agencies turnover more than £3.5 billion. The growth and success within the industry demonstrates why the researcher is interested in identifying the effectiveness of promotional activities to businesses.

1.3 Promotion

Promotion plays a large part in the success of events. Within marketing, there are many ways marketers can promote their events to gain consumer interest and brand image. Kotler, Bowen, and Makens, (2013:74):

“promotion means activities that communicate the merits of the product and persuade target customers to buy it”.


Within Event Management most promotion involves an incentive, known as sales promotion, broadly classified as either immediate or delayed. Event marketers use promotion to help generate trade or encourage repeat purchase (Percy and Resenbaum-Elliot, 2012:197).

Promotion is a marketing technique used to gain competitive advantage. According to Pek, (2016):

“In the thriving events industry, new players are jumping onto the bandwagon every day, offering fresher ideas or lower prices- you snooze, you lose”.

The financial success of an organisation is dependent on their marketing and promotional campaign.

Promotion can be achieved in several ways, depending on what is being promoted, whether it is a product, service or an event. **Figure One** is the event marketing promotional mix, and demonstrates the different activities marketers use to promote (Preston and Hoyle, 2012:77). Whichever strategy the marketer chooses to implement, it must be communicated to the prospective customers, either in person or through the media (Morgan, 2996:207).
1.4 The Research Process

The researcher will base this study on two contrasting events: “Love Saves the Day” and “Bristol International Balloon Fiesta”. Both event organisers identify the elements of the relationship between target market and promotion, due to the importance of delivering an effective message to their buying audience (Root, 2016). This is called Market Segmentation, every event attendee has individual needs, preferences, resources and behaviours that event managers need to consider. It is virtually impossible to cater for every consumer’s individual characteristics. Marketers group customers in market segments by common variables (Reckiles, 2015). Segmented groups enable marketers to promote effectively on a personal level.

“The more detailed the knowledge of each customer’s requirements, the closer the organisation can get to a customised offering, creating greater satisfaction and long-term customer relationships” (Wood, 2004) cited in (Tum, Norton, and Wright 2006:51).
Love Saves the Day is a weekend music festival held in Bristol. According to LSTD, (2016):

“The event aims to combine the best of Bristol’s thriving underground with pioneering artists from across the globe, showcasing a huge variety of different genres and music styles in one amazing space’.

Over a four year period the festival has developed from a one-day event held in Bristol’s Castle Park, to a weekend duration accommodated by Eastville Park.

In comparison Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, an event occurring annually since 1979, is Europe’s largest annual meeting of over 150 Hot Air Balloons from across the globe, which can only be seen in Bristol. Held over four days in August at Ashton Court Estate, the event is free, with charges made only for on-site parking. As well as hot air balloons, the event has many great trade stands, fairground rides and entertainments (Visit Bristol, 2017).

1.5 Rationale

The rationale behind this study is to investigate, using a case study approach, how promotional techniques influence consumer buying decisions in the context of two contrasting events; “Love Saves the Day” and “Bristol International Balloon Fiesta”. The researcher has a keen interest in the event and marketing industry, which is expanding rapidly year on year.
1.6 Research Outline and Processes

The aim of this study is to investigate the promotional strategies used in the event industry, concentrating on the two case studies, identifying the similarities and differences in promotional techniques, which are most successful, and which areas need improvement. The researcher aims to classify how promotional techniques influence consumer buying decisions, by investigating the promotional techniques used in both events, and identifying whether it is promotion that entices people to purchase tickets, or whether other factors affect their decision.

To investigate the project, the researcher will create semi-structured interviews and distribute them to acquaintances; stakeholders who have attended both events to collect relevant data. The questions asked will focus on the specific promotional methods employed by the events. Once all interviews are complete, the researcher will analyse and evaluate the findings, to gain an understanding of stakeholder’s opinions on the promotional aspects of the events.

The researcher will also conduct their research using a discussion based focus group approach. The use of focus groups will promote a ‘casual’ sense of debate, allowing chosen participants to be honest about their thoughts regarding the events and their promotion. Rather than asking them specific questions, the researcher will observe the conversation, take notes on pertinent findings and incorporate them within the study.

The results of the primary research will allow the researcher to understand the suitability of types of promotional activities to different types of events, and analyse ‘event goers’ perception of whether promotion is an important aspect for an events
marketing team. Additionally, recommendations will be offered regarding how the two events might improve the effectiveness of their promotional activities.

1.7 Study Aim and Research Objectives

This study’s aim is to investigate how promotional techniques, influence consumer buying decisions in the context of two contrasting events; “Love Saves the Day” and “Bristol International Balloon Fiesta”.

The study’s objectives are as follows:

1. To critically review the current literature relating to promotional techniques and applications in the context of events.
2. To undertake primary research data collection with customer groups targeted by the two contrasting events with the intention of identifying similarities and differences in the promotional techniques employed.
3. To review and analyse the primary data, presenting the results using a variety of formats.
4. To consolidate the research findings by achieving an understanding of the suitability of promotional activities for different types of events.
5. To offer recommendations on how the two events can improve the effectiveness of their promotional activities.

1.8 Chapter Review

In this chapter, the researcher has introduced the research topic and identified the research processes to be used throughout the study. The rationale for the study has also been explained and the aim and objectives of the study have been stated. The research project now continues by reviewing relevant literature; books, journals and electronic sources.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will discuss the theoretical framework that will enable the researcher to analyse the promotional techniques which influence consumer buying decisions in the context of two events. “Love Saves the Day” (LSTD) and “Bristol International Balloon Fiesta” (BBIF).

The researcher will include a summary of the history of both events and sections describing, evaluating, clarifying and summarising literature used.

Blanchard and Wilson (2008) suggest a literature review should encompass;

“A theoretical base for the research and help the researcher determine the nature of the research. Works which are irrelevant should be discarded and those which are peripheral should be looked at critically”.

2.2 History of Bristol

Bristol is a city, unitary authority area and county in South West England. With a population of about 449,300 it is the largest city in the South West. Bristol is one of Great Britain’s ten ‘Core Cities’ and the population is expected to reach half a million by 2027 (Bristol City Council, 2008).

It is important for the reader to appreciate the key differences between BIBF and LSTD. In reviewing the literature, the researcher has discovered the following information about the two events.

2.3 Bristol International Balloon Fiesta (BIBF)

Bristol Balloon Fiesta, (2016) states;

“The Bristol International Balloon Fiesta is Europe’s largest annual meeting of hot air balloons, attracting
The BIBF was devised in 1979, in a pub in Bristol. Don Cameron, owner of Cameron Balloons the world’s largest balloon manufacturer and his friends, came up with the novel idea of staging a small hot air balloon festival in the city. Their vision was a fiesta funded by local commercial sponsorship, providing a platform for companies to promote themselves whilst producing a spectacular free show for the public. This is a founding principle still maintained to this day. Just 27 hot air balloons took part in the first Fiesta at Ashton Court, which made 117 flights over the city. Staged by the Bristol Junior Chamber of Commerce & Shipping, the event attracted a few thousand spectators at a time when public balloon events were few and far between. The following year, more balloons took part and 50,000 people attended the event (BBC 2002).

2017 will be the Fiesta’s 39th year and is the UK’s most famous hot air balloon festival attracting approximately 500,000 visitors. AirXcite Ltd, (2016) state how:

“...the fiesta continues to grow year on year with people travelling far and wide to see hot air balloons of spectacular shapes and sizes from all over the world”.

2.4 Love Saves the Day (LSTD)

LSTD is different to any other festival. It is an accumulation of years of experience spent in clubs, in fields, at festivals, on dancefloors, and in front of stages across the United Kingdom and beyond (LSTD 2016). Therefore, the team behind LSTD know exactly what it takes to make an event a success. As regular festival goers, they have learnt what works, what doesn’t, what festival attendees want and don’t want. They
believe having this understanding and knowledge has paid dividends in organising a fantastic and memorable festival experience.

The LSTD festival began as a one-day event in Castle Park back in 2012. Wiki Festivals, (2013) states “LSTD festival capacitates 5,000 attendees in 2013”. Fast-forward 6 years, the events popularity meant LSTD had to move to a larger location, allowing a bigger audience to attend. The Bristol Post, (2015) stated how LSTD are:

“...upping their game with a new home and a bigger, better festival”. Over 12,000 tickets for each day were sold in 2016, this figure is predicted to grow further in 2017 due to the increase reputation of the event”.

LSTD has a history of organising a variety of events including; the Secret Garden Party, In Motion Series, See No Evil and Global Gathering. It aims to combine the best of Bristol’s thriving underground with pioneering artists from across the globe, showcasing a huge variety of different genres and musical styles in one amazing space (LSTD, 2016).

2.5 Definition of Marketing Terminology

It is important in a study that focuses on promotional techniques that definitions of key marketing terms are defined. These must include a consideration of the importance of market segmentation.

2.6 Definition of Marketing

“Marketing is a business function which utilities a range of well-developed management techniques but, it is also, and perhaps more importantly, an overall business philosophy which should permeate the entire business (Lancaster and Reyonds, 2004:1).
2.7 Definition of Market Segmentation

“Any markets consist of many types of customers, products and needs. The marketer must determine which segments offer the best opportunities” (Armstrong, Kotler and Harker 2012:55).

2.8 Market Segmentation applied to LSTD and Bristol International Balloon Fiesta

The managers for both events will face the process of dividing the market into distinct groups of buyers with different needs, characteristics or behaviours.

Events should consider their target markets needs to ensure they gain interest and create a buzz for events. This is evident as Kotler and Keller, (2008:248) suggest:

“Segment marketing offers key benefits over mass marketing. Companies can often better design, price, disclose and deliver the product or service and can fine-tune the marketing program and activities to better reflect competitors’ marketing”.

2.9 Bases of Market Segmentation

Figure 2 illustrates the basis for market segmentation based on consumers’ geographic, demographic and psychographic groupings.

It is important in the literature review to review what is understood by each different type of segmentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bases of Segmentation</th>
<th>Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographic Segmentation</td>
<td>Region, size of city, density &amp; climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Segmentation</td>
<td>Age, gender, family size, income, occupation, religion, race &amp; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychographic Segmentation</td>
<td>Lifestyle, personality &amp; social class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2: Segmentation Adapted from Strydom, Jooste and Cant, (2000:107)*
2.10 Geographic Segmentation

According to Strydom, (2005:65) the oldest form of market segmentation is to group consumers to their geographical location; provinces, cities or towns. Applying this to the case studies, both events are located in Bristol, due to its suitability and accessibility. The events’ location ensures that the marketers can reach their geographic segments through local newspapers, magazines and radio stations, guaranteeing that advertising and promotion is distributed around the South West.

For example, the annual BIBF uses BCFM 93.2 radio station to promote and advertise the event, allowing people to keep up to date with information regarding the upcoming event. This creates awareness of the event and entices people to attend.

HEART FM radio station also work in conjunction with BIBF. The radio station broadcasts BIBF content throughout Bristol and Somerset. Not only do they advertise for the event, they also attend and sponsor the weekend, putting on entertainment to elevate social status amongst attendees. HEART FM, (2016) state how they provided prizes for the ‘Cash Drop Final’ competition. This gave members of the public the opportunity to place a flag next to where they thought HEART FMs parachutist would land. The person with the closest flag won £1000 to spend at Flip Out Bristol, a trampoline arena in Longwell Green.

In contrast, the LSTD has minimal geographical broadcasting throughout Bristol, due to the differentiation in demand for the event. The researcher believes the main reason for the diversity in geographically advertisement is the significant contrast in the target market’s characteristics.

The researcher conducted secondary research to identify how LSTD promote the event. Research revealed the festival is not supported by any Bristol based radio
stations, despite being a musically orientated festival. The researcher believes LSTD have missed an important opportunity to expand their consumer base.

The researcher argues LSTD need to consider radio advertisements to support expansion and growth within their event. According to the Communications LLC, (2010):

“Radios variety of formats allows you to pinpoint your advertising on the station or stations that best match your customer’s interest.”.

Radio is an active media reflecting active society. Providing information regarding the event, (what it is, where it is, when it is etc.) radio is an active medium which can stir emotion, create demand and sell a product or service. The event industry is a competitive environment which demands an active promotional medium. It should be evident which organisation is using their marketing more effectively by results achieved.

2.11 Demographic Segmentation

Demographic segmentation is the most common approach to market segmentation. It identifies demographic variables such as age, gender, income, occupation, education, household size, life style and the stage in the family life cycle. Needham et al., (1999:32) states that marketers use this segmentation for three reasons:

1. They are easy to identify and measure;
2. They are associated with the sale of many products and services;
3. They describe the audiences of advertising media, so that media buyers and others can easily pinpoint the desired market.
2.12 Segmenting by Age

Age segmentation is used by many organisations, especially when it comes to events regulated by law:

“Marketers use variety of terms to refer to different age groups. Examples include; new-borns, infants, young children, tweens, teens, young adults, baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and seniors” (Lamb et al., 2008:209).

Both events have contrasting age segmentation to consider; for example, BIBF targets all ages, ensuring the venue is safe, secure and where everyone is responsible for their own actions. LSTD is available to all age groups, but anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

LSTD’s attendees are mostly aged over 18, due to the event involving heavy music, dancing and alcohol. BIBF in comparison is family oriented, popular with all ages. When advertising material is produced, it is important the promotion implies the intended age brackets so that potential guests are informed.

2.13 Segmentation by Income

Another way to segment the market is based on income. A useful quote is provided by Kolb, (2006)

“A company will design a product at a price that is attractive to consumers at a specific income level. Consumer goods marketers also use income segmentation when designing promotion, because it would make no sense to target consumers with a promotional message for a product they can’t afford” (Kolb, 2006:115).
This segmentation is only applicable to LSTD. BIBF is a free of charge event. Therefore, its target market's income is irrelevant.

Contrastingly, the LSTD marketing team are required to identify their target markets income, and base ticket price on what consumers can afford or are willing to pay. SEE TICKETS, (2016) sell the events tickets. The cheapest prices range from £27.50 for Saturday Admission, £38.50 for Sunday admission or £82.50 for weekend admission. Due to the monetary value of tickets, the LSTD marketing department need to promote effectively to guarantee ticket purchases. LSTD could use the JICNARS (Joint Industry Council for National Readership Surveys) approach for their promotional activities.

**2.14 JICNARS**

According to, Drumond, Ensor and Ashford, (2010:62):

“In the UK JICNARS classification of social class has become a common tool to categorise an individual’s social class. JICNARS approach is heavily dependent upon income and occupation as the key factors which are used in determining its six major social groupings”.

"In the UK JICNARS classification of social class has become a common tool to categorise an individual’s social class. JICNARS approach is heavily dependent upon income and occupation as the key factors which are used in determining its six major social groupings”.
Illustrated below is the JICNARS Category Scale Grader Figure Three which businesses use in their marketing practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Grade</th>
<th>Social Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Upper middle-class</td>
<td>High Managerial, administrative or professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Lower middle-class</td>
<td>Supervisory or clerical, managerial, administrative or professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Skilled working class</td>
<td>Skilled manual workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Working class</td>
<td>Semi and unskilled manual workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Those at lowest</td>
<td>State pensioners or widows (no other earner), casual or lowest grade workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure Three- JICNARS Category Scale Grader: Image Source- Gulsin and Profile, (2016)

LSTD could potentially carry out primary research; sending out questionnaires, conducting surveys, organising interviews or focus groups. This market research would ensure potential customer needs are met, allowing the business to set achievable targets for growth, sales and further developments. This will allow well-informed market decisions about events and effective strategies to be developed (Flatword Solutions, 2016).

The researcher will conduct primary research to collect information from reliable sources regarding how much they believe the ticket for the festival is worth. Investigation of this area is important to an event's financial viability.

Research sourced from the Festival Awards Market Report, (2013:22) exemplifies that 55% of event visitors said they felt the prices were reasonable and 16% believed they
offered good value for money. However, 29% felt they were over-priced. These opinions could be based on income levels, or based on the quality and enjoyment the event provided to individuals.

2.15 Psychographic Segmentation

Life Style

Market segmentation also involves an individual’s personality and self-concept as these are reflected in their lifestyle. Lamb, Hair and McDaniel, (1998:168) suggest:

“A lifestyle is a mode of living, as identified by a person’s activities, interests, and opinions. Psychographics is the analytical technique used to examine consumer’s lifestyles and to categorize consumers”.

Psychographic segmentation is personal to the individual. If used correctly, it can be extremely effective for organisations and their promotional techniques. Wright, (2006:379) argues that consumers often behave un-predictably in demonstrating loyalty to one brand over another. He states that individuals might be innovators with one category of product, but not another. This is equally applicable to events, resulting in consumers saying one thing, and doing another.

Carrying out psychographic research into target markets’ personality and life-style has helped with these problems where more conventional research into segmentation has failed. This allows marketers to better define and explain the market by providing a more defined profile.

In summary, the more the event managers know and understand about their target market, the more effectively they can communicate and market to them (Plummer, 1974:33).
2.16 Definition of Promotional Techniques

LSTD and Bristol International Balloon Fiesta both use a variety of direct or indirect promotional techniques to advertise their business’. The researcher will use applicable promotional techniques, to make a clear comparison of both events practices. In accordance with Stone, (2001:96) “promotional techniques are essential to communicate with potential customers”.

2.17 Direct Promotional Techniques

Direct marketing is important, as the aim of creating promotional techniques is to send customers targeted marketing messages.

“Direct promotional techniques are described as ‘personal’ and the communication techniques are focused on creating a relationship with each client” (GB3 Group 2016).

The researcher believes if LSTD conduct direct marketing, it will support them in the growth and adaptation of their business. This agrees with Nee, (2016) as he states:

“Direct marketing helps organisations build a list of new potential customers by compiling a database of customers who are likely to buy the product or service”.

BIBF use direct marketing to communicate with their existing customers to promote their event, create repeat business or upsell. They stay in contact with their consumers through radio advertisements and the use of social media platforms. BIBF have their own Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages, updated frequently to create a story and buzz for their events. The social marketers responsible, post pictures, videos, reviews, articles, competitions and more as this medium allows information to be transferred quicker. According to Coop, 2016:
“In the past, marketers faced the challenge of ensuring their content reached customers in the shortest possible time”.

2.18 Twitter

Twitter is a social media platform, with an average of 317 million monthly active users in 2016 (Statista 2017).

“Twitter and ‘tweeting’, is about broadcasting daily short burst messages to the world, with the hope that your messages are useful and interesting to someone” (Gil, 2016).

Twitter’s main unique selling point is its accessibility, enabling connection between buyer and seller. For example, if a consumer has feedback, whether it be a question or complaint, Twitter allows the individual to post their enquiry for the business to respond to.

Blumenfield, 2015 states:

“…these days’ fans and followers expect to be able to reach “those in charge” via Twitter and have their questions and problems addressed promptly”.

To summarise, connecting with consumers will support the businesses to improve the quality of their product, service and customer experience. This will aid growth and consumer retention. This is apparent as Kusinitz 2016 research proves that;

“92% of marketers agreed that social media is important for their business, up from 86% in 2013”.

Research shows that BIBF have 27,500 followers (Figure 5), whereas LSTD only have 9,881 (Figure 4). This quote demonstrates the difference in consumer radius and percentage between events. If you compare their official websites, both have a
direct link to social media pages. This allows consumers to connect easily with the businesses in a trustworthy online environment.

Figure Four and Five- LSTD & BIBF Twitter Pages

Nee (2016) illustrates direct marketing has quick production and turnaround timescales. He states:

“Commercial printers offer fast turnaround time to get direct mail out to customers. An email can also be created very quickly and sent out to customers”.

If event attendees provide the event websites with their personal contact email, the event managers can communicate directly with their consumers updating them on event information/promotions. This allows event managers control over the specific message they are conveying.
To enable LSTD to grow as a business, consideration of their promotional investment requires attention. The researcher recommends LSTD thoroughly plan their advertisement as direct marketing can be cost effective when attempting to reach individual consumers.

### 2.19 In-Direct Promotional Techniques

Conversely, businesses can use in-direct promotional approaches within advertising. GB3 Group, (2016) state that in-direct promotion is:

> “Non-personal and is based on mass communication, the message in identical for a high number of potential customers- (advertising, public relations and sales promotions).”

Indirect promotion is used when marketers want to sell to a wide range of consumers, without bombarding or approaching them personally. This style of promotion is more subtle than its direct counterpart, and potential consumers can choose whether they want to visualise it.

Both BIBF and LSTD use in-direct marketing through social media. In this instance, the platforms are used to advertise and entice potential consumers to become interested in the event.

According to Jones, (2013):

> “In-direct promotion allows organisations to build a rapport with potential customers by not shoving pushy sales pitches on them when they are interacting with you”.

Another form of in-direct promotion is when businesses use ‘Independent Sales Representatives’ within their ticket selling regime, highlighted by Kokemuller, (2016):
“By using independent reps, businesses can limit the amount of sales staff they employ. It also reduces the cost for items such as travel and office management”.

As shown in Figure 6, LSTD use this technique by offering a reward for tickets sold to encourage individuals to persuade their friends and family to attend events.

Research shows LSTD’s event organisers rely on these independent representatives to promote their event, commonly using their social media platforms to create awareness they are working in conjunction with the event. People like to purchase tickets through their trusted friends, rather than through an external, potentially unreliable website.

This technique best demonstrates the difference in promotional ethos between both events. LSTD’s event is purely arranged to make profit on tickets, whereas BIBF’s unique selling point is the event being free of charge.

![Figure Six- LSTD Sales Representatives](image)

**LOVE SAVES THE DAY**

*Become part of the team, help us sell tickets to our event and earn rewards!*

**Being a ticket sales rep is easy - sell tickets via a personalised link and we’ll reward you.**

1. Register or log in
2. Access your personal Rep Portal
3. Share your link with your friends on social media, via email or on your own website
4. Build up your sales to earn rewards

[Sign Up]
2.20 Word of Mouth (WOM)

Another element used within both events marketing is communication by Word of Mouth (WOM). Arndt (1967) and Koenig (1985) cited in Social Media Marketing in Tourism and Hospitality, Minazzi, (2014:21) define WOM as:

“An oral, person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communication whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial, regarding a brand, product or service”.

The events industry widely uses consumer WOM communication as it is trusted and free of charge. Stern, (1994) views WOM:

“As a different form of advertising due to it being independent, and not paid by the company”.

For this reason, Bateson and Hoffman 1999, Ogden 2001 quotes “WOM is considered genuine and more credible by customers”.

Further, Keller and Libai, (2009) cited from the article ‘What drives immediate and ongoing word of mouth?’ Berger and Schwartz, (2011:869) state “social talk generates more than 3.3 billion brand impressions each day”.

The researcher, believes that BIBF is extremely popular due to the amount of WOM communication; verbally, orally and through digital social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Blogs- such as trip advisor and RA Reviews) Marketing Made Simple, (2016).

“Digital communication can involve conversations or one-way electronic communication. Although less powerful than personal communications, they allow a message to travel quickly over long distances”.

2.21 Examples sourced from Trip Advisor for BIBF and LSTD:

Valentina, (2016) stated:

“It’s a must! Incredible experience, so full of happiness and joy. You need to try it to believe it. I would go back every August to feel all of those emotions again”.

Amy O, (2016) also left a review:

“Amazing, absolutely stunning! Nothing around like it, and its free!! Just a brilliant experience loved it!

Lastly, Ian, (2016) experience of the Balloon Fiesta is as follows:

“Fantastic Day spent at the Fiesta, the Balloon ascent was amazing! Colours were fabulous, the fiesta was packed out all day, we took picnic, the kids loved it and the dog was worn out. Will definitely go next year”.

There are a high percentage of reviews available online for individuals from all around the world to read prior to attending the event. Neziri, (2016) states:

“TripAdvisor, as we know it is the travel industry’s top dog, it is the most important platform which influences the decision-making process”.

If individuals are wary of attending an event, they can check the WOM reviews on Trip Advisor to make up their mind.

BIBF have are over 6,000 reviews for their event, which are frequently posted/updated each year. The most common review is positive. The website not only provides reviews on individual’s experiences, but also enables people to post advice on what and what not to do (e.g. prime times to attend, whether to take self-cater, what attire
to wear etc.). Sites such as Trip Advisor support many events. Their reviews persuade people to visit the event based on positive personal experience.

Contrastingly, the researcher identified that there are no reviews regarding LSTD. This clearly demonstrates that LSTD is an event on a much smaller scale, not only in size, but in brand reputation and event awareness. LSTD could argue and state that they have operated for a shorter time in comparison to BIBF. However, the researcher believes if the festival is “different to any other festival” Skiddle, (2016) then attendees would be broadcasting their experience, and persuading others to attend.

2.25 Definition of Sponsorship

The researcher will now discuss the importance of sponsorship in relation to both events promotion levels and success rates.

“Sponsorship is the material support of an event by an unrelated partner. It is a good way of increasing brand awareness, which helps generate consumer preference and to foster brand loyalty” (Business Case Studies, 1995).

Sponsorship is a form of promotion and advertising which donor companies use to:

“Get their name out there on the market, viewed positively as a participating member of their community” (Grimsley, 2003).

2.23 BIBF’s Sponsorships and Partners

BIBF have a variety of sponsors and partners for their event, as the Fiesta can provide access to a wider audience. Their official website shares their statistics on their social
media audiences (e.g. Facebook 2.2 million, Twitter 2.1 million and print and broadcast media at 33 million).

2.24 Bristol Waste

The Fiesta has a ‘Titled Partner’, Bristol Waste which works in partnership with the event to promote recycling waste within the Bristol area. Bristol Waste Company are “Bristol’s local recycling waste collection and street cleaning company” BWC, (2017).

The BIBF/Bristol Waste partnership helps to:

‘…celebrate the amount of waste successfully recycled at the event each year, and encourage the good work going at home” (BWC, 2016).

Recycling is seen as important due to environmental factors. If a business or event support and promote environmentally friendly practices, this pleases consumers as they know the event is doing all they can to support the local community and environment. Therefore, the researcher believes the Fiesta chose such a strong partner to ‘title’ with to gain consumer agreement and endorsement.

The Fiesta quote that the “500,000 people that visited the event last year did an amazing job. 86% of the rubbish from the site was recycled”. Their message is if individuals can recycle correctly at an event, they could do so at home, thus saving Bristol money. Throughout the event, Bristol Waste give advice and guidance on how to recycle correctly, by providing signs around the venue about separating bottles, cans and paper as well as, plastic and cardboard.

Due to BIBF allowing Bristol Waste to work in partnership with their event, Bristol Waste are able to promote themselves. Tracey Morgan, managing director of Bristol Waste commented:
“Waste is a share responsibility and Bristol Waste is committed to playing its part but we do need the support of all Bristol citizens.”

They attend and promote through the Fiesta, due to the large audience they can reach.

For BIBF, working with Bristol Waste is a strong selling point. This is evidenced, by the focus of their official website promoting Bristol Waste’s sponsorship. One of the first things seen when visiting the site, are the bold quotes in the header “in partnership with Bristol Waste, Thursday 10th-Sunday 13th August 2017”.

2.25 Official Partners- Bristol Energy

BIBF also have ‘Official Partners’ consisting of Bristol Energy, St Austell Brewery and Thatcher’s. Bristol Energy offer prize draws and competitions during the event to promote their business encouraging members of Bristol to sign up to their energy saving company. In 2016 Bristol Energy organised a prize draw where the winner received ‘Free Energy for a year’. Competition entries were only valid at the Fiesta’s Bristol Energy stand. If the question on the competition entry was correctly answered, it would be entered into the prize draw. This competition got people talking about the business and encouraged individuals to visit the stand.

2.26 Official Charity- Great Western Ambulance

BIBF ‘recognise the importance of contributing to their local communities” and support one official charity partner every year. In 2014 and 2015, £18,000 was raised for Bristol’s Hospitals and raffle prizes were provided for fundraising projects in the locality of the Fiesta. The charity partner for 2016 and 2017 is the Great Western Air Ambulance who will use the event to raise funds through the half a million visitors the Fiesta attracts. They quote how they are;
“Aiming to raise £25,000 over the weekend- which is what it costs to keep their helicopter operational for four days”.

Their helicopter will be on site, with the Critical Care Team performing demonstrations to entertain and educate the crowds GWAA, 2016.

Noticeably, BIBF use sponsorship to their advantage creating a positive reputation to promote environmentally friendly beliefs. The researcher feels confident that this will enable them to find sponsorship through a wider range of external organisations and charities in the future. Additional promotion from these sources helps to make the event successful.

2.27 LSTD Sponsorship

When the researcher started to conduct secondary research into LSTD sponsorship, it was apparent that this event does not focus on supporting external businesses. LSTD’s official website has no recollection of their support to outsourced businesses, so this questions whether the event occurs annually purely to make a profit. Comparing both official websites, it is clear that BIBF is regularly updated and more established. The researcher believes this is solely due to the target market characteristics of LSTD who use Twitter and Facebook for event promotion and information updates rather than their official website.
The researcher took this into consideration, analysing Twitter posts, to see if they work in conjunction with other organisations and noticed that LSTD do support and sponsor ‘Energy Revolution’ (Figure Seven); LSTD believe that “it is important to give something back when buying your LSTD tickets”. When guests purchased tickets through the LSTD website, they could choose to donate to Energy Revolution at the checkout. Last year, LSTD raised £375.50, which turned 24,324 miles of audience travel to their event into clean renewable energy. This reflects positively on LSTD demonstrating that, like the Bristol Balloon Fiesta, they are willing to support environmentally based organisations. The researcher recommends that LSTD promote such support on their official website to reach a wider range of audience, that may result in extra individuals attending or supporting the event.

LSTD also support local businesses within Bristol, using their Twitter page to ‘re-tweet’ external organisations to reinforce their backing. By doing this, LSTD expect to be supported in return by having their event promoted through these organisations’ social media platforms. When businesses support one another, this generates awareness attracting new customers to each firm.

Both events show similarity in the use of external suppliers. Bristol Balloon Fiesta have 9 official suppliers: Pukka, Flo Gas, Sky Burst The Firework Co, Heart Radio Station and Ryans Audio. LSTD support unique independent brands to trade their products
throughout the weekend. LSTD are open to having new traders attend the festival each year and their official website has a ‘Trader Application Form’. By involving additional businesses heightens event awareness.

Secondary research through LSTD’s Twitter page identified that the event allows individuals to volunteer to ‘get in free and raise money for charity’. Working in conjunction with ‘My Cause UK’, a volunteering organisation, LSTD allow individuals to gain work experience in different festivals, whilst raising money for charity. A tweet from My Cause UK was subsequently posted onto LSTD’s twitter page, reaching a wide range of potential guests. The Twitter post included a web link to the official site, allowing them to source further information and apply.

Volunteering at events is an opportunity for many individuals. LSTD evidently believe posting via their social media platforms is an effective promotional tool.

2.28 Chapter Overview

This chapter has focused on literature within the chosen study topic, providing an understanding of both events’ promotional activities.

The next section, the methodology, will explain how the researcher has decided to carry out research into participants opinion of published secondary data contained within the literature review.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY
3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter, the *Methodology*, builds on the researcher’s source literature to discuss and rationalise the choice of methods used. The purpose of this chapter is to give an experienced reader enough information to replicate the study, and understand the importance of primary research to the thesis.

In agreement with Fisher and Buglear, (2010:50)

> “Methodology is the study of methods and it raises all sorts of philosophical questions about what is possible for researchers to know and how valid their claims to knowledge may be”

The researcher will use this chapter to structure the research, identifying how the major parts of the research project’s sample measures and methods of assessment work together to address the central research questions in the study (Joel, 2016).

3.2 Qualitative versus Quantitative

Within the study, the researcher had two options of research methods; qualitative or quantitative research. The choice was dependent on which one better enabled project goals. According to RC, (2017) “Each approach has different theoretical goals for answering specific research questions”.

> “Qualitative and Quantitative Research have philosophical roots in naturalistic and the positivistic philosophies” Newman and Benz, (1998:2).
3.3 Quantitative Research

Researchers may use quantitative research to quantify the problem by generating numerical data, or data that can be transformed into applicable statistics. It is commonly used to generalise results from a larger population, and formulates facts and uncovers patterns in research (Wyse, 2011).

The researcher decided the quantitative method would not be suitable to the strategy of interviewing less people, whilst gaining in-depth personal information from a smaller, targeted sample group. Secondary research identified that quantitative research suits studies involving the compilation of data in large amounts.

“… adherents of quantitative studies sometimes prefer studies that focus on rather large numbers of people, schools, cities or political constituencies so that broadly inclusive generalizations can be drawn from the research results” (Thomas and Brudaker, 2002:12).

3.4 Qualitative Research

Horn, (2012:6) state that Qualitative research:

“Assumes that areas being researched are ‘rich’ and context-based, and require exploration to uncover the nature of a thing or a process. The outputs from qualitative research tend to be rich account of participant’s views or emergent theory-driven categories of behaviour”.

The researcher identified that using the Qualitative approach would enable the study’s aims and objectives to be met more successfully in comparison to the numerical quantitative approach. The researcher’s primary research approach and anticipated results did not meet the requirements for quantitative data collection.
3.5 Research Methods Chosen

The researchers main aim was to source as many critical thoughts and opinions from participants to support the findings. This would provide a stronger argument and generate results to answer the study’s objectives.

3.6 Why Primary Research?

Primary Research is critical to the researcher’s study as secondary data will not provide a complete solution to a research problem and need to be augmented by primary data, Lomas, (2010:66)

“Existing secondary data may not be obtainable, or may be incomplete or unreliable- or it may have been collected for an entirely different purpose”.

The researcher needed to generate original primary data. Conducting Primary Research heightens the level of accuracy within results. By sourcing original information, likelihood of incorporating false, inaccurate or misunderstood data is reduced. Use of external information or statistics can be a concern (Chawla and Sondhi, 2011:89).

3.7 Focus Groups

The researcher believed that conducting a qualitative research approach such as focus groups would create the identification of ‘unstructured, spontaneous responses, reflecting genuine opinions, ideas and feelings under the topic in discussion’. In comparison to quantitative data which is:
“Predominantly used as a synonym for any data collection technique, (such as a questionnaire) or data analysis procedure (such as graphs or statistics) that generates or uses numerical data” (Saunders et al, 2009:151).

The selection of the researcher’s focus group, aims to achieve a clear understanding of participants’ opinion of the promotional activities surrounding BIBF and LSTD. From the results, the researcher hopes to confirm or disagree with the intent of promotional source literature, together with supporting commentary surrounding the breadth of opinion.

Two focus groups of 4-5 individuals took place allowing the researcher to obtain:

“Respondent’s impressions, interpretation and opinions, as the members spoke about the event and the concept. The moderator played a vital role in steering the discussions in a manner that would draw out the information sought, and keeping the members on track” (Sekaran, 2003:220).

3.8 Advantages of Focus Groups

- Quick and cheap;
- Direct interaction with participants;
- Opportunity to obtain large and rich amounts of data;
- React and build upon responses;
- Flexible;
- User-friendly and easy to understand.

Steward and Shamdasani, (2014:45)
3.9 Disadvantages of Focus Groups

- Respondents fear of embarrassment;
- Effect of dominant personalities;
- Effect of moderator;
- Inconclusive results.

Wiid et al., (2010:91)

The researcher used focus groups to create an opportunity to listen to people and learn from them by creating a line of communication by instigating a discussion that merged participants interests and required outcomes of the study (Morgan, 1998:11).

3.10 Semi-Structured Interviews

An additional primary research method used by the researcher's is semi-structured interviews. Five individuals were interviewed aged 18-30 to identify a range of opinions to obtain an understanding of what event attendees think of promotion.

“Semi-structured interviews are designed to have several interviewer questions prepared in advance but such prepared questions are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions of the interviewer cannot be planned in advance but must be improvised in a careful theorized way” Wengraf, (2001:5).

Interviews allow people to talk freely, expand upon answers and even change the theme of the interview (Currie, 2005:100).
3.11 Advantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

- Large amount of detail generated;
- Flexible and sensitive;
- Reliable and easy to analyse.

HWB Wales, (2017)

3.12 Disadvantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

- Time Consuming;
- Difficult to obtain reliable data on attitudes, opinions and values;
- Difficult to compare each respondent’s results because each interview is unique.

Create and QuayumA, (2012)

3.13 Participation and Consent Form

The age range of participants was strategically planned to ensure a diverse range of opinions from different demographics. Additionally, the individuals were from different geographical locations to understand the power of promotion within different cities.

Before conducting the primary research, participants read an information sheet (Appendix Three and Six) regarding the purpose of the primary research and signed a consent form (Appendix Four and Seven) confirming their willingness to take part in the study. Primary research was held at the researcher’s university and voice recorded.
3.14 Reliability, Validity, Triangulation and Repeatability

The researcher understands the importance of using triangulation to ensure valid and reliable results. This will be applied and demonstrated throughout this study.

3.15 Reliability

It was important to the researcher that the readers trust the study’s results by producing and demonstrating valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015:237).

Litwin et al., (1995:5) states:

“Within any set of data you collect, there will be some amount of error. Naturally, you want to minimize this error so that the data provide a more accurate reflection of the truth”.

The researcher will endeavour to provide consistent results using the best quality data available from a variety of sources. According to Carmines and Zeller, (1979) the tendency towards consistency found in repeated measurements is referred to as reliability.

Within the researcher’s focus groups, she ensured the questions and answers were accurate and replicable. The reliability of focus groups can be called into question; would another focus group, of similar but different people, give similar answers? (Flom, 2015). To overcome this possible drawback, the researcher thoroughly prepared before running the focus group, by providing the participants with specific, consistent instructions and questions.
The semi-structured interviews by their nature were open ended, allowing interviewees to express their views and opinions. The main aim of conducting these interviews was to gage individual's thoughts. To aid consistency the researcher followed a structured framework that facilitated reliable results.

3.16 Validity and Triangulation

Gardner, (2011:233) states:

“Validity is central to any assessment. It’s about the purpose of the assessment, whether the form of the assessment is fit for purpose, and whether it achieves its purpose. Validity includes how the results of an assessment are interpreted and used”.

There are a variety of means to ensure validity is achieved throughout primary research. The researcher ensured moderation was rigorous and ensured representative sample groups were sourced. In-line with Statistics Solutions, (2017) the researcher will further promote validity by remaining neutral whilst eliciting as much candid information from the research participants as possible.

To guarantee reliable, valid and repeatable results were obtained by the primary research, the reader used the process of Triangulation. This means the more methods carried out, the more reliable and accurate the findings. McMurray, Pace, and Scott, (2004:263) define Triangulation as:

“...the use of several different research techniques in the same study to confirm and very data gathered in different ways”.

Theory triangulation is based on using multiple theories and perspectives to interpret and explain the data (Hair and Celsi, 2015:289). Although the researcher only
conducted qualitative research, two contrasting methods were used. Using a focus group together with semi-structured interviews. By using a variety of methods, it became apparent that the researcher’s study was enhanced.

### 3.17 Repeatability

Repeatability was used by the researcher to ensure that measurement conditions remained consistent. Taylor and Kuyatt, (2011) define it as:

> "Closeness of the agreement between the results of successive measurements of the same measure and carried out under the same conditions of the measurement".

The researcher ensured repeatability by assuming the role of moderator within all sessions. Sessions were held in the same location, with the same questions and measuring techniques.

### 3.18 Ethics

Prior to conducting any primary research, the researcher completed an Ethical Application Form (Appendix One) which must be accepted by the University before research can begin. Approval can be granted at supervisory/departmental level or may require scrutiny by the University’s research committee (Biggam, 2014:75). Donnelly, Dallat and Fitzmaurice, (2011:113) state:

> “... ethics are not an ‘add on’ but rather an integral part of the research process, it is imperative that they are given due consideration from the beginning of the research project".
To ensure the researcher, the university or the participants were not at risk, research data was not collected until academic approval was granted.

No ethical implications arose within the researcher’s application form, as nobody under the age of 18 was included and a mix of genders and ages were sought to generate a wide range of responses and prevent any issues arising.

3.19 Chapter Overview

This chapter has given the reader an overview of the different types of approaches available to the researcher and the reasoning behind the ones chosen. The advantages and disadvantages of approaches have been discussed to highlight the considerations made prior to collecting data.

The primary research was conducted satisfactorily and the data collected, provided the researcher with relevant information for incorporation into the study. The researcher felt that the semi-structured interviews provided an environment to ask ‘follow-on questions’ from those originally planned. This provided a rich data set to add to the analysis.

The researcher thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the primary research aspects of the study. In hindsight, the researcher would have liked to contact the organisations themselves to seek further information regarding their promotion. However, the information gathered remains reliable and valid and is sufficient to reach the study’s aims and objectives.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
4.1 Introduction

To provide a coherent presentation of the process discussion and results, the researcher has decided to combine these chapters. This is an appropriate method endorsed by Greetham, (2014):

“When we talk about the structure of a piece of writing we’re talking about the thinking that went into it: whether it is organised logically, whether the connections between our ideas are consistently developed and, of course, whether we have signposted these connections so our readers can see them clearly”.

4.2 Primary Research—Qualitative research

The researcher used a qualitative data collection approach, using focus groups and semi-structured interviews. The researcher argues that:

“If you want to understand people’s motivations, their reasons, their actions and the context for their beliefs and actions in an in-depth way, qualitative research is the best” (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994).

It is interesting to note that Myers, (2008:5) suggests that there are key benefits to using qualitative research.

“One of the key benefits of qualitative research is that it allows a researcher to see and understand the context within which decisions and actions take place. It is often the case that human decisions and actions can only be understood in the context- it is the context that helps to ‘explain’ why someone acted as they did. This context is best understood by talking to people”
4.3 Focus Group Results

The researcher provided the focus group with a quotation on promotion:

“Promotion is the publicising of a product, organisation, or venture used to increase sales or public awareness” (English Oxford Dictionary, 2017).

The participants were then asked whether they agreed with the quote to ensure they understood the topic area. All participants agreed with the statement.

There are several key themes that emerged from the primary research and these are discussed within the next few pages.

4.4 Key theme 1- Electronic Media vs Printed Media

One of the researcher's aims was to identify the differences between electronic media and printed media by understanding which form participants rely on and notice more. The contributors were asked:

“If you saw a business promoting their event using printed or electronica media, which would you pay attention to, or would you completely ignore it?”

The researcher believed that most of the responses would identify the strength of electronic media in comparison to printed media. (Kusinitz, 2016) states:

“92% of marketers agreed that electronic media is important for businesses, up from 86% in 2013”

The results agreed; Focus Group 1 (FG1) and Focus Group 2 (FG2) believed electronic media is more effective in comparison to printed. This is evident as Beth (FG2) quotes:
“I think electronically promoted events are hyped up, so you see who is going, and see who is interested in going. Posters are also more than likely to be black and white because lots would have been printed off, so you just take a brief look and don’t remember it”.

This evidence demonstrates that these specific participants notice promotions via electronic media such as social media sites, as Molly (FG2) mentioned:

“There is always more information electronically on social media pages, whereas posters only offer a small amount of information”.

These responses confirm the researcher’s previous analysis of literature both LSTD and BIBF have social media platforms in which they advertise frequently to promote their events.

On the other hand, it is evident that everyone holds their own preferences in how they choose to source information regarding events. As Niasha (FG2) states:

“It depends where the printed media posters are as well, because at venues and gigs there are always posters on what is happening within that venue. I would more than likely look at them because it relates to what I enjoy music-wise”.

This suggests, people who attend events, are more likely to notice posters promoting future events. Niasha’s opinion disagrees with the majority opinion and the literature review regarding social media. Deb and Steve (FG1) also mention how they would happily look at printed media such as leaflets and flyers.

Joseph, (2007) portrays an assumption that printed media can be expensive and not as effective in comparison to social media:

“Printed media allows unlimited exposure; prospects have potential exposure to print ads at virtually any time. A magazine
Therefore, there is controversy over the strength of electronic media vs printed media and is dependent on personal preference.

### 4.5 Key Theme 2- Size and Scale of Event

The next question the researcher asked is whether her participants feel that the size/popularity of an event is dependent on how much promotion they carry out. All participants stated that the more promotion carried out, the larger the event should be. Dave (FG1) stated that:

“It is proven that the more you advertise the more people come”.

Deb (FG1) also mentions:

“When an event is starting up, the more promotion you do, the more popular it is going to be”.

There is a clear difference in the size of both BIBF and LSTD, due to BIBF having 27,500 thousand followers, whereas LSTD only have 9,881 thousand. Demonstrating BIBF may be a bigger, well known event, due the number of followers on social media. Secondary research also illustrates that the bigger the event, the more time needs to be spent on promoting. According to Bousquet, (2014):

“If you are planning a larger event that requires a larger investment of time and money, you want to start marketing way ahead of time”.

This is something that LSTD carry out. They offer an early-bird campaign that tries to sell tickets at a reduced price for signing up early.

An additional response from Joe (FG1) and Molly (FG2) was:
“We’ve been to LSTD in the past, where three years ago the event was nowhere near as popular as it is now because of the advertisement”.

Showing that promotion is a powerful marketing tool to gain competitive advantage and customer interest. Joe commented:

“I think events should promote every time just in case they are doing something different to previous years”.

Thus, highlighting that promotion should be an ongoing activity, to keep attendees updated on what the event is offering each year.

The following response established that reputation can outweigh promotion power. For example, Beth (FG2) stated:

“If you have been going to an event for years, you are more likely to carry on going because you know that you enjoy it. You wouldn’t rely on looking for promotion or advertisement on the event because you already know about it”.

Molly feels that if an event has previously been experienced positively, the event will be popular. Therefore, if somebody has had a positive experience at an event, this could persuade them to attend future events.

4.6 Key Theme 3- Geographical Location

The researcher aimed to establish whether promotion is affected by geographical location. The literature review stated:

“The oldest form of market segmentation is to group customers according to their geographical location”.

This supposition does correspond with the responses the researcher received. For example, a question to analyse what sources of promotion are successful was:

“How did you hear about BIBF, and what made you initially think about attending?”

However, Niasha (FG2) responded

“I haven’t heard of the event, I think it is not very local to me as I am from down South”.

Dissimilarly, due to Dave (FG1) being from Bristol he had “heard radio recordings about it”. The researcher asked Dave which specific radio station he heard the advertisement on. Dave stated it was “Heart FM”. This refers to the literature, as HEART FM sponsor BIBF. This response indicates radio advertisements are effective.

On the subject of Geographical Segmentation, the question was asked:

“What persuaded you to attend BIBF, was it their promotion or persuasion through WOM?”

Dave was influenced to attend by hash tagging ‘BRISTOL’ into Instagram. By doing so he:

“Became aware of the buzz BIBF generates between locals and tourists”.

This verifies, BIBF is an important event for Bristol. The city is associated with the fiesta which benefits the event by gaining interested consumers. Similarly, Deb’s response defined how influential location can be for events. She mentioned her curiosity to see what BIBF was like because she had never been and was embarrassed as she had never been. It appears that it is unusual if you haven’t
attended BIBF and you live in the city because supposedly ‘everyone’ knows about it. This will be demonstrated further later in this chapter.

**4.7 Key Theme 4- Word of Mouth (WOM)**

There were a variety of responses to the previous question. The most common one was using Word of Mouth (WOM). Most participants agreed that WOM is the strongest form of promotion. In fact, Steve, Dave and Deb (FG1) and Molly and Beth (FG2) attended both events solely because of WOM from family and friends. Beth said:

“I don’t think I would have known about the event if it wasn’t through my friends, as I haven’t seen any advertisements for either events”.

The researcher carried out market research on WOM within the literature, and found the following:

“…all events rely largely on WOM communication through their consumers, due to the advertisement source being free of charge” (Phillips, 2017).

Thus, confirming that the literature agrees with the primary data sourced.

**4.8 Key Theme 5- Facebook and Twitter**

The researcher wanted to understand whether individuals rely on Facebook and Twitter to hear about events. The questioner asked:

“Would you like a Facebook page, or follow a Twitter page to keep you updated with upcoming events?”

There were similarities between the individual’s opinions. FG2 liked a Facebook page to source information about events they were interested in. Niasha quotes:
“I think both social media platforms are the best way of event businesses getting things across, so I am most likely to like both pages to keep up to date”.

Deb similarly suggests:

“I would like a Facebook page as it offers suggestions on other similar events that are going on, that I would not have heard about otherwise”.

The literature states both events have a large following on social media. This demonstrates that the social media platforms used are successful and effective in interesting and attracting people. Steve made the point that “he doesn’t use Facebook”, which verifies why additional promotional techniques are still important. For example, according to Target Study, (2017) “printed media are for those who are not used to handling electronic media”.

4.9 Key Theme 6- Target Market

The researcher studied the literature for both events to identify whether the events promote differently to meet their target audiences. It was apparent through secondary research that LSTD promote using social media, as the majority of their audience is young. The younger generation are avid users of social media. If LSTD were to promote more through social media they would gain greater interest. BIBF is attractive to a wider variety of ages and should use a wider variety of promotional methods.

The researcher asked participants for their opinions regarding this theme, by asking:

“Do promotional teams have to promote differently dependent on the age of their target market?”. 
Dave (FG1) thought they did:

“LSTD need to target a younger target market. This means for them all of their advertising should be social media orientated”.

Deb (FG1) and Niasha (FG2) discussed how BIBF’s main target market are families, who would not necessarily rely on social media.

Deb and Steve argue that radio and newspaper ads are the main form of promotion for BIBF, and Molly thinks “you wouldn’t look at LSTD’s promotional materials and think that it is suitable for children”. This demonstrates both promotional departments successfully promote to their target markets.

**4.10 Key Theme 7- Sponsorships and Charities**

The researcher justified the importance of sponsorships to the Events Industry, and wanted to know if her participants were aware of LSTD and BIBF’s sponsors and their links to the local community. This would identify if they promote partnerships effectively.

Grimsley, (2003) suggests that:

“Businesses promote to get their name out there on the market viewed positively as a participating member of their community”

The participants were asked:

“Are you more likely to attend if the event helps out with the local economy?”

Joe (FG1) is aware that BIBF sponsor Great Western Ambulance. Joe was asked where he found this information. His response was via the radio, identifying that BIBF
are promoting sponsorship effectively by broadcasting this information. Dave also added:

“I have also heard them on the radio discussing giving money to charities and I have read it in articles before”

The researcher noticed that no participant mentioned anything regarding LSTD’s sponsorship or help towards charities. This implies that LSTD might benefit from involvement with charity partnerships.

The researcher recognised from the start of her study that LSTD’s promotion is social media dependent. Their Twitter page was analysed to identify if they have any sponsors. The only source found was a tweet made by an LSTD employee stating how funds were raised for Energy Revolution through their online booking service.

LSTD are not promoting sufficiently to increase a positive brand reputation. The researcher strongly believes this element should be the focus of improvement, as participant’s responses show more interest when events promote services and charities.

4.11 Key Theme 8- Reviews/Trip Advisor

Within this section, the researcher examines the importance of WOM and how important it is in the promotional world. A popular site where WOM is used is Trip Advisor where both positive and negative reviews are regarded as honest and trustworthy.

The researcher aimed to identify whether individuals religiously use this source of promotion, by understanding whether consumers’ experiences can influence or prevent attendance at events. Research showed that BIBF had a large number of reviews whilst LSTD had none. To see whether the reviews are valuable to BIBF
(positive and negative) or if the lack of LSTD reviews is more advantageous as consumers cannot be dissuaded from attending, the question was asked:

“If you hadn’t attended these events before - would you look up about their reputation and reviews by reading articles on TripAdvisor?”

A variety of diverse responses were received. Deb, Steve and Dave were positive regarding Trip Advisor. Deb mentioned:

“I always like to read reviews, for example BIBF for information about the parking, and advice on what things you need to bring”

Beth and Molly (FG2) agree with Deb’s statement as people write honest opinions on TripAdvisor. This indicates that Trip Advisor is perceived to provide honest, factual promotion.

Some participants disagreed. Elenya believes “You mould an idea about what an event is like for yourself”, which links to Niasha’s opinion. She argues that:

“I wouldn’t go out of my way to look up about an event because if I don’t know about it, I feel as though it is their responsibility to get it known. If it is a good event, then they would be clever enough to spend money on promoting it effectively”.

LSTD would appear to believe their reputation is already appreciated by their consumers, and are therefore not required to encourage people to generate their own opinions of the event.

4.12 Key Theme 9- Sales Representatives

This study has identified similarities and differences in the use of promotion between events. One of the main differences documented how LSTD use a high percentage of
direct promotion. A technique practiced by LSTD was using Independent Sales Representatives. The literature states:

“LSTD use this technique as they believe offering a reward for tickets sold will encourage individuals to persuade their friends and family to attend the events”.

The researcher appreciates why LSTD are fond of this strategy, as they can easily introduce themselves to thousands of people via social media sites, reaching their target audience. The researcher aims to identify whether the individuals who sign up as representatives, think the rewards received are worth the time devoted to the promotion. The question to delegates was:

“If you were attending LSTD, would you ever consider becoming an independent sales representative, by selling your own tickets to gain commission from ticket sales?”

This question received similar answers across both focus groups, with all but one individual stating they would not consider becoming a sales representative. Representative statements were:

“I’d feel uncomfortable”, “I wouldn’t want to bother people, they may be busy” and “I don’t like the thought of communicating and approaching people I do not know”.

This provides an indication that the role of a Sales Representative may not be as common as LSTD says. However, Molly who did not conform to the majority view said:

“My friends and I are festival people, and if I knew I could guarantee selling numerous amount of tickets through my friends, if the outcome was worth it, then yes I would consider it”
Most opinions were that a sales representation was a negative type of promotion. This may create an assumption that LSTD might be struggling with ticket sales as they appear to need external sources to promote the festival.

BIBF do not need to introduce this promotional technique into their business, as their event is free of charge, therefore sales representatives are not needed. This demonstrates how different both events are, as LSTD evidently profit focussed, whereas BIBF aim to provide pleasure and satisfaction to the public for free.

4.13 Interview Similarities and Differences

The following paragraphs review the key themes emerging from the focus group data collection regarding the similarities and dissimilarities that came out of the semi-structured interview research.

4.14 Key Theme 1- Promotion Persuasion and Word of Mouth

The researcher planned to identify whether promotional material is the main reason why individuals are aware of either BIBF or LSTD. To answer this, participants were asked:

“How did you hear about both events?”

For BIBF the expected answer was; social media posts, posters, radio adverts, etc. However, most of the group all said they only know about the events through word of mouth. Joe, Sam, Cara mentioned “I just know about it; everyone speaks about it all year round”. As well as Rhianne who states:

“Everyone in Bristol knows about the event, I have been every year for years upon years.”
These responses provide evidence that geographically, if you are from Bristol, you ‘should’ know about the event. This matches focus group data.

Cerys mentioned that LSTD promoters in Bristol made her aware of the event. She also stated that her friends heard about it through social media, then kept on recognising it. The results show how different LSTD’s promotional style is in comparison to BIBF, as they utilise Sales Promoters and Representatives in targeted locations around Bristol, rather than relying on social media. The researcher had previously identified that BIBF have many more social media followers than LSTD, which is probably why LSTD focus more on other forms of promotion. LSTD’s promotional strategy appears to be effective, as Cerys would not have known about the event if it wasn’t for LSTD promoters.

4.15 Key Theme 2 - Ticketing

As stated previously, BIBF is free to attend, whereas LSTD requires payment. The researcher aimed to examine the interviewees opinion of the ticketing aspects of the LSTD event.

For LSTD, all interviewees told the researcher they purchase their tickets through the official LSTD website, due to its trustworthy and simple nature.

The researcher also wanted to identify whether interviewees had been granted any discounts by LSTD to persuade them to purchase tickets. The respondents had been offered early-bird discounts. The negative of this ticketing technique, is that there is a risk that they will not like the bands, whose line-up does not come out until 2 months prior to the event. Cara revealed that:

“You can get some money off if you purchased your ticket through a sales promoter, but it only takes a couple of pounds off- so I don’t bother.”
Ultimately, the ratio of those who know about LSTD sales representatives is minimal. LSTD may need to reconsider this promotional technique, or offer more to the consumer through sales representatives.

4.16 Key Theme 3- Target Market/JICNARS

Cerys believes it would be a good incentive if LSTD offer student discount to their consumers. This links back to LSTD’s target market, being the younger generation. When event managers consider the JICNARS, they can efficiently meet the needs and demands of their targeted audience. According to Posted and Pettinger, (2016) “generally students have lower incomes, therefore they are more sensitive to changes in price”. As the researcher stated:

“LSTD could potentially carry out primary research, such as sending out questionnaires, conducting surveys or simply organising interviews or focus groups to ask their consumers personally, how much they are willing to spend for the festival ticket”.

This would enable a successful personal business incentive for all consumers, reflecting positively on the event, creating strong brand image with students.

This is evident as Accounts Executive Sharma, (2015) quotes:

“Offering potential customers discounts on purchases is a way to quickly draw people into your event. Discounts don’t only help your guests; they also help your business. From increased sales, to improved reputation”.

As BIBF do not require a ticket for entry they cannot incorporate student discount. However, to keep up to date with current and future events, pop up stalls could offer a student discount to individuals for food and drink.
4.17 Key Theme 4- Bristol Balloon Fiesta- Charities/Sponsorship

BIBF is associated with helping the local community and giving smaller businesses within Bristol the chance to promote their trade within the event.

The researcher asked a question to gage perception of whether BIBF’s sponsors are valued and appreciated by consumers:

“Do you find it appealing that BIBF sponsor charities, and offer external businesses to promote at the event?”.

It became apparent that each interviewee felt positively about BIBF sponsoring charities. Joe states:

“I think it’s very attractive, because not all events like to help additional causes, it promotes a positive reputation for the event”.

Similarly, Rhianne feels that BIBF using sponsorships and charities is “their main selling point”.

Sam also approves of BIBF’s support and mentions how she enjoys finding out about different businesses and charities, and believes it’s one of the fiesta’s main attractions.

However, Cara stated:

“Yes, I like it, but I wouldn’t only attend the event because of it, as so many businesses out there help charities nowadays, it’s kind of the norm”.

The responses illustrate the importance and effectiveness of BIBF’s sponsoring and consideration of the local community. BIBF are evidently aware of the benefits they foresee when sponsoring. This is borne out by Jagger, (2015):

“Sponsorship creates and cultivates credibility, which allows businesses to build trust and establish rapport
with customers and prospects, resulting in changing the way brands are perceived”.

The researcher attempted to establish whether LSTD’s sponsorship approach is as strong or advantageous as BIBF’s. This comparison will demonstrate the difference in the events’ values and promotional strategies.

The researcher asked participants:

“Do you think that LSTD should develop and work in conjunction with other events/businesses?”

Half the interviewees believed LSTD to be a successful event as it is and didn’t need external charities or sponsors as evidenced by Clara:

“Their advertisements are trustworthy, as the event offers exactly what the promotion promises. LSTD do not need to work with anyone else as they are their own event, and it is good enough how it is”.

Joe also agreed:

“The event has good reputation already, meaning they don’t need to seek support from other organisations”.

These results show LSTD is appreciated without offering sponsorship by their target audience without being overtly community friendly. The following quote by Hillier, (2012) may explain this:

“More than half of all donations to charities now come from over 60’s, compared with just over a third 30 years ago. The over-60s are now more than twice as likely to give to charity as the under-30s”.

However, Rhianne, Cerys and Sam stated how if LSTD trade with others
“It will make the event more interesting by offering more services” and “increase brand awareness, and heighten the attractiveness”.

Focusing on the events’ expected outcomes, it is clear that BIBF’s main priorities lie with creating a closer community. Whereas, LSTD’s main outcome is to generate profit.

4.18 Key Theme 5- Psychographic Segmentation

The research has shown how important psychographic segmentation is within promotional marketing. As Strydom, (2005:72) states:

“…psychographic segmentation enables marketers to develop the marketing strategy for specific target markets”.

Individuals have diverse personalities and preferences with regards to events. Event managers take this into account, promoting to ensure the advertising meets the target audience’s psychographic segmentation. The events target a different demographic, in terms of personality and lifestyle. The researcher asked participants what the difference in events are. Rhianne’s response was:

“BIBF is a more chilled event, where you can do your own thing, you can choose when you want to go. Whereas LSTD is a set structure, you must get there at a specific time, and you have a set itinerary of when people are going to be performing”.

BIBF offers a wide array of activities, to meet a variety of personalities, whereas LSTD only offer a specific genre of music, appealing to a targeted group of individuals.
4.19 Focus Groups and Semi-Structured Interviews Similarities and Differences

Both elements of primary research identified relevant information. The researcher felt the qualitative primary research approach worked efficiently. The following paragraphs analyse the similarities and differences between the focus groups and semi-structured interview results.

4.20 Similarities

Electronic media is used predominately in comparison to printed media. The literature review exemplifies this assumption, discussing the power of social media in relation to BIBF and LSTD. Secondary research identifies that:

"Electronic media is more informative than printed media as its replaced them with better and fast flowing news and information" (Jobin, 2017).

When comparing the focus groups and semi-structured interview results the researcher identified that most participants believed electronic media is more effective than printed. This question was the only question that a high ratio of the participants all agreed on, which proved the robustness of electronic media.

An additional key theme that identified large similarities is the effectiveness of WOM. Within the focus groups and interviews, most individuals expressed that they only attend the events due to the persuasion of WOM from family and friends.

4.21 Differences

The first difference is whether attendees psychographic or geographical segmentation is influential to their purchasing decision. Evidently both events are in Bristol. The results from the individuals who live in Bristol suggested that they attend the events
because it is local to them. Whereas those who live outside the area, state how they are aware of the event due to WOM from like-minded acquaintances.

The participants from Bristol all mentioned how although BIBF is one of Bristol’s main attractions they would be unlikely to attend if it was situated elsewhere. This became evident as Deb, a Bristol resident from the focus group stated how she felt “embarrassed” that she hadn’t attended BIBF. This acknowledges how influential a geographical location can be towards an event and an individual.

4.22 Chapter Review

In this chapter, the researcher has considered in detail the two contrasting sets of data collection. She has identified the key themes that emerged in both the face to face interviews and focus groups. The key themes, analysed in terms of similarities and differences conclude this chapter.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Chapter Overview

Within this chapter, the researcher will draw together the various findings she has discussed within the literature, and gathered throughout the results. These will be linked back to the aims and objectives of the study, with a summary of whether they have been achieved. Lastly, recommendations for future improvement and identification on any study limitations will be discussed.

5.2 Summary of findings versus objectives

Study Aim

The aim of this study was to investigate how promotional techniques influence consumer buying decisions in the context of two contrasting events; “Love Saves the Day” and “Bristol International Balloon Fiesta”. This was achieved by analysing the different promotional techniques both events use, and analysing whether they are effective from consumer viewpoint. The researcher also explains the consumers buying decisions, by identifying what persuades them to attend the events.

5.3 Objectives

Each objective of the study is discussed and referenced to a chapter:

5.3.1: To critically review the current literature relating to promotional techniques and applications in the context of events.

As stated within the literature review, (chapter 2) the reader has identified the current promotional techniques used by both events. The forms of promotion used by events have been researched and analysed and has identified the most common source of promotion is social media. The researcher then conducted further research to
understand whether this promotional technique is effective through analysing statistics, and identifying whether there has been an increase in social media usage.

5.3.2: To undertake the primary research data collection with customer groups targeted by two contrasting events; “LSTD” and “BIBF with the intention of identifying similarities and differences in the promotional techniques employed.

The researcher applied numerous promotional techniques to both events and discussed their benefits. Both secondary and primary research was undertaken to gain representative opinion on how effective the promotional aspects are, from people who attend the events. The data the researcher gained from the primary research supported the researcher’s discussion surrounding similarities and differences between opinions provided and the events themselves.

5.3.3: To review and analyse the primary data, presenting the results using a variety of formats.

The primary research solely used a qualitative approach. Therefore, it was not necessary for the researcher to use a variety of formats to present the work. To achieve objective 3 the researcher analysed her results from both focus group and semi-structured interviews and discussed different key themes occurring within the results.

5.3.4: To consolidate the research findings by achieving an understanding of the suitability of differing types of promotional activities for different types of events.

The researcher understood the importance of conducting original research rather than trusting data from external sources. Throughout the study objective 4 has been accomplished, as the researcher has given the reader an explanation of how different
types of events use differing promotional techniques dependent on their target audience.

5.3.5: To offer recommendations as to how the two events can improve the effectiveness of the promotional activities employed.

When the researcher compared both events it became apparent that LSTD focus on their promotion more than BIBF. However, the Literature Review and Results, Analysis and Discussion Chapters both established that this is because BIBF has been operating for a longer time in comparison to LSTD, resulting in greater notoriety and brand image.

5.4 Further Research

The researcher believes that the study could be taken further by using the method of analysis to study festivals in different parts of the UK. This could identify whether Bristol events equate with other events in different locations.

5.5 Contributions of the Research

The researcher believes the method used by this study could help both LSTD and BIBF understand how effective their current promotion strategies are, by capturing opinions from their current consumers, enabling them to identify potential weaknesses.

5.6 Personal Reflection on the Research Journey

The researcher has enjoyed all aspects of this assignment, in particular the challenge of completing her own study and conducting the primary research. It was a learning curve for the researcher as she had never planned, organised and carried out either a focus group or semi-structured interview before. However, in doing so, her
knowledge regarding promotion has increased and she has gained an array of skills that will guide her in her future studies within Events Management.

The researcher was not familiar with the diversity in available research methods to use at the beginning of her university degree. Her knowledge only lay with basic primary and secondary research. However, undertaking this study has made her confident in undertaking any research method.

The researcher attended all research skills lectures, and volunteered for workshops to help improve her referencing skills. Due to never using the Harvard Referencing system before, the researcher wanted to ensure she was referencing everything in the correct format to avoid any plagiarism issues potentially arising.

5.7 Recommendations

The researcher is of the opinion that events always have room for improvement and development, especially within promotional area to keep up with current attitudes and trends.

1. (5.7.1) **BIBF to introduce social media activity within their promotion.**

**Reasoning:** 80% of the participants across both primary research elements notice LSTD’s social media activity, and have never seen BIBF promote through Facebook or Twitter. Cara from interview 4 mentioned how BIBF “need to promote more through social media, rather than relying on word of mouth”.

2. (5.7.2) **For BIBF to adopt an admission by ticket only policy.**

**Reasoning:** Deb (FG1) recommended this, as she believes it promotes a safer event. Event managers will know the exact number of attendees to expect, allowing them to
hire an appropriate number of stewards and first aiders. This would prevent any overcrowding issues from occurring.

3. **(5.7.3) For both events to organise competitions for their consumers through promotion.**

**Reasoning:** The primary research identified that consumers are interested in entering competitions to win beneficial outcomes. To create relationships with the events customers, arranging competitions or prize draws will excite the guests, and create a conversation between friends.

4. **(5.7.4) For LSTD to acquire a sponsorship to increase brand image.**

**Reasoning:** LSTD promotional literature does not mention working in conjunction with local businesses or charities. Primary research showed that individuals are more likely to attend an event if cooperation with these organisations is promoted.

5. **(5.7.5) For both events to incorporate pricing strategies within their promotion.**

**Reasoning:** Due to both events attracting a large population of the younger generation, both events could offer discounts to meet the needs of their target market more effectively. For example, most younger individuals study, therefore their disposable income is lower in comparison to someone whom works full time. Therefore, to increase brand reputation they could promote pricing strategies or offers to show they consider their consumer’s characteristics.

**5.8 Chapter Review**

This study has expressed the importance of promotion, and how it can influence the consumer buying decision. “Without promotion, something terrible happens… nothing”
(Barnum, 2011). Business cannot survive without promotion, as promotion is about keeping consumers updated on upcoming events. The researcher identified throughout the study that once an event is established, promotion is less of a focus. The study analyses the power of word of mouth promotion, in comparison to written forms of promotion. Every individual has their own background, opinions and needs, therefore both events need to consider the differentiation of market segments when promoting to ensure effective promotion. Lastly, it is evident that the events in focus use promotion, however the study has highlighted areas for improvement. The researcher hopes that this study, the discussion, analysis and results may support the events to understand exactly what their consumers require with regards to promotion.
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