

CHAPTER 2: THE PROMOTIONAL MIX

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Consumers are exposed to thousands of marketing communication messages every day. Organisations compete heavily for the attention and custom of the consumer through their advertising. Marketing communication attempts to provide information to the consumer about the organisation's products and service offerings. The various methods of communicating with the consumer need to be in agreement to deliver a holistic and effective message that will satisfy both organisational and consumer needs.

The objective of the message is to persuade the audience to purchase the product or service. Therefore, the consumer needs to be receptive to the message and to be able to interpret it in such a way that the intent to purchase is established (Koekemoer, 2004a:135). For this to be effective, marketers have to be able to develop messages that will reach and convince the designated target market. Various promotional tools are at the disposal of the marketer to reach the targeted consumer. Advertising is one of the most commonly used tools, and will consequently be the focus of this study.

Females employed as characters (or models) in advertising messages, serve as a point of reference or a source of identification for the target audience, which is usually the female consumer. Featuring a female character that is representative of the target market enhances the probability that the audience will identify with the character and find the advertising message trustworthy. Women are major contributors to not only household decision-making, but also to organisational consumption decisions (Barletta, 2006:3). This makes them a very important target market.

The portrayal of female characters in advertising messages is of particular importance to this study. The characters in the advertisement need to be relevant to the target consumer and should add to the effectiveness of the persuasive power of the advertising message. The portrayal of characters is an important visual (non-verbal) element of the advertising message. This study investigates the roles portrayed by female characters (models) in advertising messages.

The chapter is structured as follows: the elements of the marketing strategy of the organisation, including the product, its pricing, distribution and promotional strategies are briefly described. Thereafter the promotional strategy, which encompasses the organisation's integration of marketing communications or promotional elements, will be delineated. As communication is the backbone of promotion, the communication model will also be discussed in some detail.

The nature and the role of advertising as part of the promotional mix, as well as important advertising media, will be discussed. Particular emphasis will be placed on magazines and television as advertising media, as these are the focus of the study. As advertising is aimed at particular targeted consumers, the chapter will conclude with a description of consumer behaviour and consumer decision-making.

2.2 THE MARKETING MIX

Modern marketing is aimed at creating long-term relationships with consumers. The premise is that satisfied customers will keep returning to use the organisation's offerings and will provide positive feedback to other people. For this reason the American Marketing Association (AMA) revised the definition for marketing to reflect the importance of customer relationships. According to the AMA (in Belch & Belch, 2007:8), marketing is a function in the organisation and a system aimed at developing, communicating and providing value to consumers. It should be focused on managing customer relations in ways that will be beneficial to the organisation and to its stakeholders. Stakeholders include employees, distribution channel members, customers, the media, government and several special-interest groups (Clow & Baack, 2010:381).

This means that the organisation will aim to reach certain objectives through a well-constructed marketing strategy. Successfully implementing marketing strategies requires a thorough understanding of the fundamentals of communication, as well as careful consideration and integration of the different elements in the marketing mix.

2.2.1 Elements of the marketing mix

The four Ps are the major elements of the marketing mix of the organisation and form the basis of any marketing strategy. The four Ps are product, price, place (distribution) and promotion, as is practically illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 The marketing mix



The elements of the marketing mix are combined to create a marketing strategy that will lead to the achievement of the organisation's objectives. If services are included in the marketing strategy, the four Ps are extended to seven. This is then known as the extended or services marketing mix (Kasper, Van Helsdingen & Gabbott, 2006:465). The extended marketing mix includes the service elements (another 3 Ps) of people, processes and physical evidence.

This study will include both product and service advertisements, as females are featured as characters in advertisements for various products and/or services. Each of the marketing mix elements will now be discussed, as they pertain to the study.

2.2.1.1 *Product*

A product is a bundle of need-satisfying features that is exchanged, generally for a monetary price. It encompasses both the tangible aspects, such as the packaging, quality and brand, as well as the intangible attributes. The intangible features include the product style, image and the reputation of the manufacturer (Connett, 2004:7; Lamb, Hair,

McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche, 2008:206). The product concept identifies five product levels, namely: the core, the basic, the expected, the augmented and the potential product.

The core product refers to the fundamental need that is satisfied by using the product, such as refreshment when buying a beverage. It is extended to the basic product, which is the tangible product that provides the core benefit, namely the actual soft-drink in a specific flavour. The third product level is the expected product, which refers to the specific features that the consumer expects to obtain when buying the product. A soft-drink purchaser will expect a cool, refreshing drink.

The fourth product level is the augmented product, which encompasses the added benefits that exceed the consumer's expectations. Organisations achieve this by adding additional, unique features to the expected product that will differentiate it from those of their competitors. A soft-drink manufacturer, for example, may add vitamins to its beverage. The final product level is the potential product that embodies all the adaptations and improvements that may occur in the product in the future (Lamb *et al.*, 2008:207).

Products are categorised in several ways. One classification refers to durability, where durable products have a long life span, such as refrigerators. Non-durable products have short life spans and include perishables like foodstuff. Another classification differentiates between consumer and industrial or business products. Consumer products are used by final consumers for their own consumption, while business goods are used for business purposes, like raw materials and equipment (Groucutt, 2005:176).

For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on consumer products. Consumer product classifications centre on the behaviour of consumers when purchases are made. Ferrell and Hartline (2008:189) identify four categories:

- Convenience products are goods that require little effort from the consumer and are routinely bought, like candy or bread. Convenience goods are divided into staples, impulse wares and emergency goods. Staples are habitually bought products that are widely available and accessible, while impulse purchases are unplanned and are usually made without any search effort. Emergency products are bought when a crisis

occurs that requires the consumer to immediately act to solve an urgent problem, such as emergency medication.

- Shopping products are goods on which consumers will spend more time and effort in searching for and purchasing, such as appliances. Shopping goods are generally more expensive than convenience products and are not widely distributed. This means that the consumer also puts some effort into finding a retailer. Lamb *et al.* (2008:209) distinguish between homogeneous and heterogeneous shopping goods. Homogeneous products are seen as being similar by the consumer. Here, little differentiation between features is perceived, such as household appliances, which are often demonstrated by female characters in advertisements. Heterogeneous goods are distinguishable based on their distinctive attributes, and the choice is made difficult by large variations in perceived quality and style. Furniture is included in this category.
- Speciality products require a lot of shopping effort and the consumer is willing to search extensively to find the unique item. Typical examples include luxury vehicles like *Rolls-Royces* or expensive, exclusive jewellery.
- Unsought products include goods of which the consumer is not aware, like new products or goods that the consumer does not consider buying unless a pressing need arises. *1st for Women* insurance, which is aimed specifically at women, is a good example of an unsought service.

All product classifications are advertised in a variety of media. The more expensive and unique the product, the more exclusive its advertising practices. Specialty jewellery, for instance, is generally advertised in exclusive media. Consumer goods are widely marketed and advertisements for such products will be included in this study. In a study conducted by Bolliger (2008:49) on computer technology advertisements, women were portrayed as users in 25.3 per cent of the advertisements where a consumption activity was depicted.

The packaging and labelling of the product also serve as marketing communication tools. Packaging has transcended the traditional functions of protection and convenient storage to providing the marketer with an additional avenue to communicate brand advantages and differentiate the product from competing substitutes. Lamb *et al.* (2008:226) distinguish between persuasive and informative labelling. Persuasive labelling contains a

promotional focus, whereas informative labelling aims to provide ways of use or nutritional information to aid in the product choice.

The brand of the product is clearly marked on the packaging. It functions as a differentiation tool and the brand symbol is the signal that distinguishes the product from those of the competing brands. The brand symbol is the visual representation of the brand name, like the three-pointed star of *Mercedes-Benz*. Brand names are the part of the brand that can be verbalised, such as the name *Coca-Cola*. Brand names conjure up images of brand identity, which is closely related to brand personality. Brand personality refers to the human features attached to a specific brand (Wells *et al.*, 2006:140).

Branding identifies products, encourages loyalty and aids new product introductions. A strong brand has high brand equity, which means that it has high value (Arens *et al.*, 2011:212). Brand equity is very important to the marketer and provides a competitive edge in terms of superior differentiation. Apart from its significance as a differentiation tool, branding also entitles the organisation to charge a premium price if its brand is highly valued.

Various consumer product categories that are advertised using female characters will be content analysed in this study.

2.2.1.2 Price

The price of the product offering comprises the selling value of the product and the profitability level of the price. Advertising is the main vehicle used to inform the target consumer about the price (Wells *et al.*, 2006:45). The price communicates meaning to the target market and it can be used as a differentiation tool. Pricing also has psychological meaning for the consumer, as a high price is often equated with high quality in the absence of other information about the product (Connett, 2004:9).

A recent South African study on females' shopping behaviour as regards apparel indicated that price was the second most important criterion when purchasing clothes (North, De Vos & Kotzé, 2003:50). Advertising also has an impact on the pricing of a product or

service. According to O'Guinn *et al.*, (2009:33), advertising creates cost savings for the consumer in terms of reduced shopping efforts. Advertisements provide the consumer with enough information to lessen the time spent searching.

In view of the fact that price is not the focus of this study, further discussion on the topic is not provided.

2.2.1.3 Place (distribution)

The distribution of the product includes all the channels followed in transferring the product to the final consumer. The process ensures that the product will reach the target market in the appropriate place, at the right time and at the right cost (Connett, 2004:10). Various intermediaries or resellers may be involved in the process of distribution. Of importance to advertising is the distance between the point of origin (the manufacturer) and the final consumer.

In a direct channel there are no resellers or channel members, and the product is distributed to the consumer directly (Groucutt, 2005:274). Companies such as *Verimark* and *Glomail* use direct marketing; and their advertisements include telephone numbers or website information that may be used by the consumer to order the product. In the current study, advertisements for direct selling will also be included in the analysis. Indirect marketing is the form of distribution seen most often, as the retail shops commonly frequented by consumers are generally at the end of a channel of resellers (distribution channel).

For the reason that distribution is not the focus of this study, further discussion is not provided.

2.2.1.4 Promotion

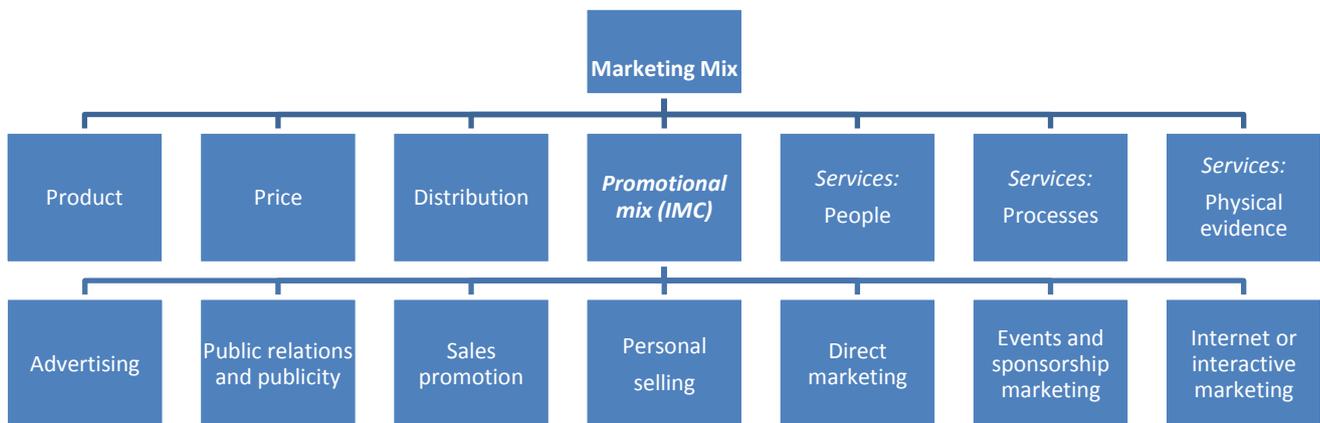
The promotion element of the marketing mix of the organisation includes all the relevant "activities, materials, and media used by a marketer to inform and remind prospective

customers about a particular product offering” (Connett, 2004:11). The goal of promotion is to persuade the target consumer to buy or consume the product offering.

The promotional element of the marketing mix is also referred to as the marketing communication or promotional mix, and includes various communication methods and activities aimed at the target consumer. The integration of the promotional elements is called integrated marketing communications, or IMC. A detailed discussion of the promotional element will be provided in Section 2.3.3 of this chapter.

The place of the promotional mix in the organisation’s marketing mix is depicted in Figure 2.2. In the figure, the three service elements of the extended marketing mix are also included.

Figure 2.2 The promotional mix (in the marketing mix)



Source: Adapted from Clow and Baack (2010:33); Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:12) and Belch and Belch (2007:17).

Various authors agree that the promotional mix includes the elements of advertising, public relations, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing, events and sponsorship marketing, as well as Internet/interactive marketing (Belch & Belch, 2007:17; Connett, 2004:6; O’Guinn *et al.*, 2009:11; Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:12). Additional elements that are specifically noted by certain authors include database marketing (Clow & Baack, 2010:33), packaging and customer service (Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:12), while

O'Guinn *et al.* (2009:11) list blogs, pod casting, branded entertainment and influencer marketing as aspects that are commonly referred to as promotional tools.

For the purposes of this chapter, the focus will be on the elements most often agreed upon. These are depicted in Figure 2.2. The promotional element of the marketing mix will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.3.

2.2.1.5 The extended marketing mix for services

In service marketing, academics favour adding three additional Ps to the traditional marketing mix (Groucutt, 2005:159; Kasper *et al.*, 2006:465). To deliver good service and provide value to customers, the marketing mix elements need to be consistent with the organisation's strategy. People, processes and physical evidence make up the additional three Ps in service marketing (refer to Figure 2.2).

a. People

The customers and employees of an organisation represent the people element of the service marketing mix. As stated in Section 2.2, the aim of modern marketing is relationship-building. In order to build long-term, profitable relationships with customers, the organisation needs to ascertain that the contact its employees have with customers is favourable and meets service expectations (Kasper *et al.*, 2006:374).

b. Processes

The activities that play a supporting role in delivering a service are the service processes (Groucutt, 2005:162). These include facilitating systems such as automated pay points or bar code scanners that ease the purchase process and enhance the customer's service experience.

c. Physical evidence

The physicality of service delivery refers to the tangibles in the service delivery environment. Kasper *et al.* (2006:391) identify three aspects that relate to the environment

where the service is delivered, namely atmospherics, physical layout and tangibles. The aspects that relate to the atmosphere of the service environment include music and lighting, the actual placing of physical layouts and the concrete factors, like signage and documents. In this way, a restaurant that wants to attract mothers with children will have a clearly marked play area and a fun, relaxed atmosphere.

The marketing strategy forms the basis upon which the promotional mix is built. The promotional strategy needs to be co-ordinated with the overall marketing strategy (Belch & Belch, 2007:9). Thus, the elements of the promotional mix are combined to form a promotional strategy that links to the marketing strategy of the organisation.

2.3 PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY

As was mentioned previously, an integration of the various tools available to the promotional manager is vital to reaching the organisation's marketing objectives. Various academics have diverse opinions on the terminology and importance of the promotional element of marketing. This will be discussed in Section 2.3.1. The communication process follows in Section 2.3.2, and the elements of the promotional mix are addressed in Section 2.3.3. As the focus of this study is advertising, the other promotional mix elements will not be discussed in any great detail.

2.3.1 Perspectives on promotion

What has been referred to as the elements of promotion in Section 2.2, is categorised in various manners by different sources. The marketing function of promotion is often referred to as integrated marketing communications (IMC), or the marketing communications mix. The terms are often used interchangeably and are sometimes considered to be two different aspects of marketing. Reid, Luxton and Mavondo (2005:11) state that there is significant ambiguity regarding the definition of the IMC concept. In this section, the various definitions and terms will, therefore, be examined.

Duncan (in Connett, 2004:3) defines IMC as a “cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders...” by strategically controlling the marketing communication process. Connett (2004:11) does not differentiate clearly between the IMC mix and the marketing communication mix. This is also called the promotional mix. Arens *et al.* (2011:701) hold that IMC is a process of developing and strengthening uniformly beneficial relationships with various stakeholders. This is done by creating a strategic plan of communications that will enable “constructive contact with the organisation/brand through a variety of media.”

Belch and Belch (2007:15) refer to the elements of the promotional mix as tools that are used in IMC in order to communicate with the relevant audiences. The definition provided for IMC is the process utilised to develop strategic “brand communication programmes” that will satisfy important internal and external stakeholders (Belch & Belch, 2007:11). The term marketing communications is favoured by Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:9). It is defined as a “collective term for all the various types of planned messages used to build a brand.” Similarly, marketing communications is identified as an “umbrella term” by Kitchen, Brignell, Li and Jones (2004:21), and IMC is called upon to synergise the communication mix elements.

O’Guinn *et al.* (2009:36) argue that the focus of IMC, which is communication, should move to brands. This is why the promotional elements are classified as integrated brand promotion (IBP). For Kitchen *et al.* (2004:22) IMC had long transformed from a communication process to a process concerned with branding and management. Similarly, Madhavaram, Badrinarayanan and McDonald (2005:69) agree that IMC has developed into an important part of the organisation’s brand strategy.

Merely combining the promotional mix elements is not enough for a synergised marketing communication effort (Belch & Belch, 2007:11; Kitchen *et al.*, 2004:21). This calls for a strategic rather than a tactical view and requires measurable programmes aimed at relationship-building. As there are so many communication avenues available to marketers, the importance of integration becomes quite clear. The organisation that wishes to implement true IMC will need to evolve from merely using various

communication methods to actually integrating all communication into a co-ordinated whole that will satisfy organisational and stakeholder needs. A major advantage of properly implemented IMC is the fact that integration leads quite naturally to synergy (Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:15).

Synergy in marketing communication means that the individual parts of the communication mix will be more effective when integrated than when used separately. Other benefits of integration include brand differentiation through customer focus, as well as developing and maintaining brand equity (Belch & Belch, 2007:15; Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:15). When the organisation's brands are distinguishable from competing brands (differentiation) and its brands are valued (equity), the organisation has a distinct competitive edge.

From the above mentioned discussion, the following points emerge as universal:

- Communication is crucial for developing relationships.
- Integration or synergy of the elements in the promotional mix is important.
- Marketing communication focuses on building brands.

For the purpose of this study, the term IMC will be used to indicate the strategically integrated and synergised utilisation of the promotional mix elements in order to build relationships. The promotional mix is crucial in the IMC process, as it refers to the different avenues available for communicating with target consumers. The term marketing communication is used interchangeably for the marketing mix element of promotion.

Promotion is more than just the use of several communication-based activities. All forms of the promotional mix should be planned and implemented in a manner that will satisfy organisational objectives (Percy in Kitchen, 2005:75). The changing environment has played an important role in the growth of IMC, as consumers are exposed to advances in technology and changes in the social environment. These changes impact on consumer purchasing patterns, as well as the manner in which they receive and interpret marketing information: for instance, the growth of online retailing.

The advent of the Internet has opened up a world of possibilities and convenience for shoppers. The consumer can now sit in the comfort of his or her home and browse through literally millions of websites selling a myriad of solutions to consumers' problems. Not only does this impact on the search patterns of the consumer, but also on the purchasing method, as many companies offer online retailing. Additionally, the consumer saves time when shopping online (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:480).

This logically provides new opportunities for marketers, as the avenue of online advertising and selling is a road that still offers many exciting and often challenging new ways to effectively reach the target customer. As for communication, many organisations attempt to personalise this otherwise impersonal channel by customising websites to reflect individual consumer's needs and interests. An example is the Internet retailer *Kalahari.net* that allows customers to indicate their preferences for books and music. This is then reflected in personalised e-mail newsletters.

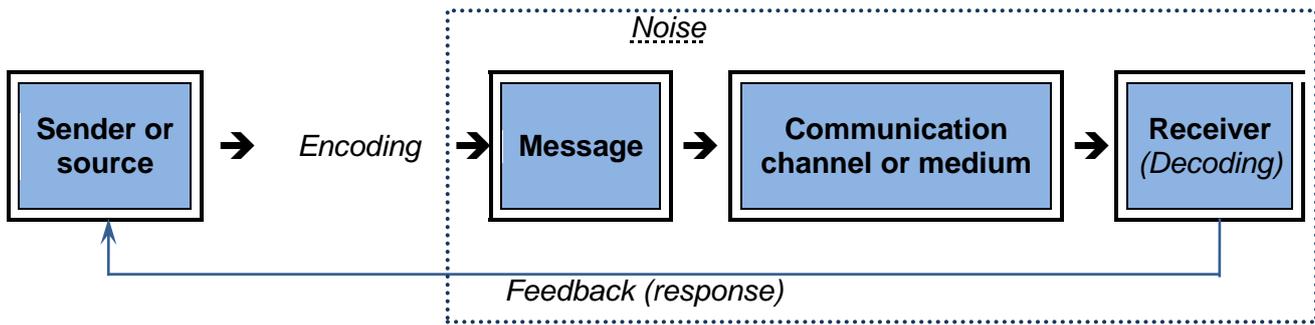
Duncan (in Kitchen, 2005:64) asserts that "communication is the foundation of all human relationships", identifying communication as a fundamental principle of marketing promotion. For this reason, the communication process will be examined in Section 2.3.2.

2.3.2 The communication model

As was seen in the previous section, advertising's main aim is to communicate to a target audience. The marketing communication process entails the development of a specific message aimed at a specific target audience, like women. This message is sent through a specific channel, such as a magazine advertisement or a television commercial.

A model of the marketing communication process is presented in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3 The marketing communication process



Source: Adapted from Arens *et al.* (2011:10); Belch and Belch (2007:139); and Ouwensloot and Duncan (2008:70).

Figure 2.3 shows that the communication process consists of various elements, namely the sender or the source of the message, the message itself, and the communication channel or medium that is used to relay the message, and finally, the receiver of the message. The sender encodes the message and the receiver decodes it. Feedback is then provided from the receiver back to the sender in response to the message. The communication process may be interrupted or hampered by noise, which may distort the intended meaning of the message.

For example, *Nike* (source) advertises new running shoes for women (target audience) in the *Runner's World* magazine (channel). The advertisements for other brands of running shoes in the same magazine are seen to be “noise”, as they attract attention away from *Nike's* message.

Any communication from the organisation's side aimed at a specific audience is deemed to be part of marketing communication. The marketing communication process includes all the aspects of integrated marketing communication, as described previously. Each of the elements of communication is therefore applicable to marketing communication and will now be discussed from a marketing perspective.

2.3.2.1 The sender

The sender or source of the message is the organisation that initiates the sharing of information about a brand or the organisation (Belch & Belch, 2007:139; Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:71). The aim is that the receiver will ultimately interpret the information in

the message as intended by the sender. It is essential to use symbols and verbal cues that are relevant and identifiable to the receiver. In marketing to women, for instance, it is important that the organisation sending the advertising message use symbols (for example female characters) to which the target audience can relate and with which it can identify. This study will evaluate *inter alia* the roles portrayed by such characters in advertisements and commercials.

Arens *et al.* (2011:11) identify three source dimensions which are specific to advertising. Firstly, the sponsor is the party responsible for communicating the message to the target audience. Secondly, the author is the creative person or group that actually creates the advertisements for the sponsor. Lastly, there exists within the textual component of the advertising message, a spokesperson or persona that represents the sponsor of the message. The persona (character) is the source dimension that is the main focus of the current study.

According to Belch and Belch (2007:166), the source is multifaceted and consists of direct and indirect sources. A direct source is the spokesperson that endorses or demonstrates the product. Using celebrity endorsers in advertising is an example of direct sources, and the current study will determine the incidence of female celebrities in advertisements. Indirect sources include characters that are used to draw attention to the advertisement. When no identifiable direct or indirect source is utilised, the organisation sending the advertising message is considered to be the source.

It is crucial that the sender of the message be deemed believable. Kelman (in Belch & Belch, 2007:166) identified three attributes of source effectiveness, namely credibility, attractiveness and power.

a. Credibility

The extent to which the receiver views the sender as possessing the relevant expertise and trustworthiness is called source credibility (Shimp, 2010:252). If the source is perceived to be credible, the audience will be more likely to accept the message of the advertisement as true. Trustworthiness and expertise are two aspects that indicate high source credibility.

The trustworthiness of a source relates to how believable the source is perceived to be. Endorsers are often used as spokespeople in advertisements, due to their perceived expertise in a particular field. In this way, female celebrities are often used as spokespersons for beauty products. Celebrity endorsers are most effective when they are seen as believable, likeable and as a match for the product (Clow & Baack, 2010:213). For example, *Revlon* has been using actress Halle Berry for years to advertise their cosmetics. She is deemed a credible character as she is beautiful; and *Revlon* wishes to be seen as a promoter of beauty through its products.

b. Attractiveness

The attractiveness of the source has an impact on the ability of the audience to identify with the source. Shimp (2010:253) refers to three aspects of importance in source attractiveness, namely physical attractiveness, respect and similarity. Physically attractive spokespersons are generally considered to be more effective sources. Therefore, most advertisements contain characters that are physically attractive, even for products that are not related in any way to physical beauty.

Respect reflects the admiration for the spokesperson's skills or other attributes, and similarity refers to the characteristics of the spokesperson that match with the target audience. Belch and Belch (2007:170) add that the source needs to be likeable and familiar. Likeability indicates positive affection, while familiarity refers to how recognisable the source is to the target audience. Cosmetics giant *Elizabeth Arden* uses Academy Award-winner Catherine Zeta-Jones in advertising *Elizabeth Arden* cosmetics and perfume. The popularity of a star like Catherine Zeta-Jones enhances her likeability; and she is therefore a good spokesperson for the brand.

Likeability is often boosted by the use of decorative characters. In the analysis of advertisements for the study, the depiction of women as decorative characters will be closely examined.

c. Power

The ability of the source to provide rewards or punishments for the receiver is known as source power. This is very difficult to apply in non-personal communication, such as advertising (Belch & Belch, 2007:178). It can be applied indirectly by using a spokesperson that is seen to possess authority on a particular topic. Phemelo Motene, actress and former star in the South African soap opera *Generations*, is featured as a spokesperson by *Sofn'free* hair products.

2.3.2.2 Encoding

Encoding is the process of developing a message about the brand or organisation. This entails formulating the message by using words and symbols that will convey particular information. Therefore, encoding puts the message idea into verbal (words) and visual (pictures) format. Koekemoer (2004a:43) states that a person's knowledge, previous experiences, emotions - as well as attitudes – all have an impact on one's encoding capability. Advertisers use these factors, as well as consumer information, such as values and usage patterns to encode effective marketing messages.

The encoded message needs to obtain an intended response from the target audience. The preferred response is obtained if the message contains suitable cues and symbols that will provide the intended meaning. Words, pictures and sound can be used to convey the intentions of the marketer. Printed advertising is limited to printed words and visuals, whereas broadcast advertising includes sound as well (Wells *et al.*, 2006:259). Television commercials offer the most options, as advertisers can use visuals, sounds and words to reach their target audience.

Female characters are depicted in advertisements as visual symbols. The way the character is portrayed: for instance, her clothes, attitude, facial expression and what she is doing, will all play a role in how the target audience interprets the message. The advertiser therefore needs to take care in selecting the most suitable character, in order for the message to be interpreted as it was intended to be understood (Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:73).

2.3.2.3 The message

The aim of the encoding process is to develop a message that relays the information that the sender wants to provide to the target audience. This information is communicated through a combination of specific words, illustrations, symbols, activities and/or events that will have the desired effect on the receiver (Koekemoer, 2004a:44). The character in the message is important, as he or she needs to portray an image that will connect with the target audience.

The message and the character, as symbols, are created - bearing in mind the attitudes, emotions and motives of the target audience (Arens *et al.*, 2011:12). For example, in an advertisement for a diet drink, the female character should obviously look thin and healthy, as the advertiser intends the audience to connect with the image and relate to what it symbolises, namely that consuming the drink will enhance one's health and weight-loss. The message needs to be translated into a format that will be suitable to the medium or communication channel through which the message will be relayed.

2.3.2.4 The channel or medium

The method used to transport the message from the sender to the receiver is called the message channel, and is also referred to as the medium. Belch and Belch (2007:141) categorise two broad levels of message channels, namely personal and non-personal types.

Personal channels include any channel that entails face-to-face communication, such as a selling situation, where the salesperson is face-to-face with the prospective customer. Word-of-mouth (WOM) is a persuasive form of social communication that represents an influential information source. As marketers are aware of this, they often target sources of influence within a community. The use of celebrity role models as spokespeople in advertisements often aims at stimulating positive WOM.

Communication channels that convey a message in the absence of interpersonal contact between the sender and receiver are non-personal channels. These are also referred to as mass media because of their ability to carry the message at low cost to scores of people in

one instance (Koekemoer, 2004a:68). The two main types of mass media are broadcast (television and radio) and print (newspaper, magazines and outdoor media).

Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:73) classify traditional, as well as non-traditional media, used in marketing communication. Traditional channels may be used to convey advertising messages. These include the following: television, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, mail and outdoor media. Non-traditional media include advertising on buildings, electronic billboards in sport arenas, faxes and kiosks. Product placements in films and television shows, as well as product packaging, are also used to communicate meaning to the target market. The image that the channel carries also plays a role in the effectiveness of the message.

In the current study the focus is on television and magazines as advertising message channels (or media). The different types of media that pertain to the current study will be discussed in Section 2.4.2.

2.3.2.5 *The receiver*

The organisation sends out its advertising message to reach a particular audience. The persons with whom the sender shares the advertising message, and who have considerable potential to react agreeably to the information provided, are referred to as the target audience or receiver (Belch & Belch, 2007:142; Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:74).

The receiver decodes the information provided by the sender or source. The decoding process entails interpreting the meaning of the message. Decoding falls within the realm of the experience of the receiver, and is thus heavily impacted by it. For the communication to be effective, the message has to be interpreted (decoded) to provide the same meaning as was originally implied by the sender. Various characteristics of the receiving audience need to be taken into consideration.

The demographics and psychographics, as well as the field of experience of the audience, will all impact on the decoding process. The area where the experience of the sender and the receiver overlap is called common ground; and it is this area of overlap that enhances the effectiveness of the message (Belch & Belch, 2007:142). For example, an

advertisement for anti-ageing cosmetics aimed at middle-aged females will be interpreted more effectively by such women than it would by ladies of less than 25 years of age. Older women will have had some experience of such products, and will fall into the age range that is the focus of the product advertisement. Therefore the portrayal of an older female in such an advertisement will enable more effective decoding of the intended message.

After decoding the advertising message, the receiver responds in a particular way. Koekemoer (2004a:48) asserts that the response may take various forms, such as the acceptance of a brand image, the development of solid positioning or to elicit affect or emotion from the target consumer. Changes in attitude - and an actual shift from buying intention to action - may also be the results of acceptance of the advertising message.

2.3.2.6 Noise

Noise in the communication process includes all factors that may distract one's attention from the message or may distort the reception thereof. Ouwensloot and Duncan (2008:73) state that noise can be physical or psychological in nature. Physical noise includes distortions in the message reproduction, sound or visuals, as well as bad timing of the message delivery. Physical distractions (for example sounds) in the communication environment, as well as competing messages, are also noise factors.

In marketing communication, inconsistent brand messages and incompatibility with receivers' fields of experience are typified as psychological noise. If the target audience is satisfied with a competing brand or does not trust the source of the message, the communication will also be disturbed by psychological noise. A common noise factor is advertising clutter (Clow & Baack, 2010:32). Clutter is competing advertising messages that contend for the attention of the audience.

The total number of advertisements in each medium will be noted in the study, as this will provide an idea of the extent of clutter in each magazine and on each television channel.

2.3.2.7 Feedback (response)

The reaction of the audience after receiving the message is known as the response. Feedback is the part of the response that is communicated back to the sender. This may take the form of immediate, observable feedback, such as redeemed promotions (for instance coupons), requests for information, increased sales and orders. Feedback may also be delayed or non-observable, as is the case with developing brand awareness, image building or attitude changes (Belch & Belch, 2007:142; Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:76).

Feedback is valuable to the marketer, as it enables the organisation to determine whether the advertising message has achieved its aim.

The importance of communication as part of the marketing communication strategy of the organisation is clear. The promotional mix elements available to the organisation to communicate with its target consumers are described in the next section as they pertain to this study.

2.3.3 The elements of the promotional mix

As was stated in Section 2.2, the universally agreed-upon elements of the promotional mix include advertising, public relations, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing, events sponsorship marketing and Internet/interactive marketing (Belch & Belch, 2007:17; Connett, 2004:6; O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:11; Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:12). These elements are briefly discussed in this section, and particular focus will be placed on advertising, as it is the main focus of the study.

2.3.3.1 Public relations/publicity

Public relations (PR) is a management function aimed at managing the relationships and communication between the organisation and various public groups to establish common goodwill and maintain the good reputation of the organisation (Arens *et al.*, 2011:708; Belch & Belch, 2007:23). The tool used in public relations is communication, and it is used

to reach internal and external stakeholders in a manner that will enhance the organisation's overall marketing strategy.

Public relations have several functions in the IMC mix (Clow & Baack, 2010:381; Skinner, 2004:403):

- Research to determine the current views or status of corporate reputation, corporate social responsibility and programme implementation.
- Planning the problem-solving process in collaboration with identified role players and stakeholders.
- Organising, writing and editing media releases and other correspondence, as well as liaising with the media. This includes developing activities aimed at image-building and damage-control.
- Producing presentations and corporate advertisements, among others.
- The management of PR and training of personnel involved in public appearances.

Public relations also have various activities that enable building and maintaining the positive reputation of the organisation. Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:313) identify six PR activities:

- Publicity, which is a subdivision of public relations and is generated when newsworthy items are published without charge in mass media, such as broadcast or print media (Arens *et al.*, 2011:708).
- Media relations which have to deal with disseminating information.
- Corporate communication which focuses on the identity and reputation of the organisation, as well as the advising of top management.
- Employee relations, which can also be a division of internal marketing or internal communication plans.
- Financial or investor relations.
- Crisis management.

The importance of effective communication in PR is clear, as it impacts on not only customers, but also on other stakeholders too.

2.3.3.2 Sales promotion

Sales promotions are often confused with advertising as they often use advertisements to create awareness of the particular promotional offer. They are characterised by the provision of some form of reward for a particular behaviour; they change the perception of the value of the offering. Sales promotion is defined as all marketing actions focusing on eliciting an immediate response from the target market by offering value incentives to members of the distribution channel and/or the final consumer (Arens *et al.*, 2011:616; Belch & Belch, 2007:22; Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:10). Therefore, the main aim is to acquire a specific response to the offer from the target audience.

Divided into trade and consumer promotions, sales promotions attempt to turn positive attitudes into behavioural responses, such as product trials, repeat purchases and increased product usage (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:563). Trade promotions focus on distribution channel members. These promotions may include contests, trade allowances, point-of-purchase displays, training programmes, trade shows and co-operative advertising.

Promotions aimed at consumers include a wide variety of incentives, such as samples, coupons, premiums and bonus packs. Other consumer promotions incorporate contests, refunds or rebates, price-offs and loyalty programmes (Belch & Belch, 2007:508; Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:347). Consumer promotions are commonly advertised in the general media, and samples regularly form part of the advertisement. For example, in women's magazines, samples of anti-wrinkle cream can be attached to the page bearing the advertisement for the cream. Advertisements of this sort will be included in the sample for the current study.

2.3.3.3 Personal selling

This part of the promotional mix is defined by Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:12) as person-to-person communication where the sales representative "... uncovers and satisfies the needs of a customer to the mutual benefit of both." Personal selling brings the customer to the organisation, and in most cases the consumer is interested in buying. The personal selling process leads the consumer through the details of the product offering and aims at closing with an actual sale of the product.

Not all products are suited to personal selling, for example convenience products. However, complex expensive products (shopping or exclusive goods) usually require personal sales assistants, as do industrial products (Belch & Belch, 2007:575). In many instances the consumer will require more information before making a good purchase decision; and one of the sources the consumer will possibly consult may be the salesperson.

A customer is often drawn to the retail point through seeing advertising in the media. With complex products and services, the information needs of the consumer cannot be satisfied through an advertisement alone. The advertisement stimulates the consumer's interest and leads him/her to contact the organisation for more information, thereby generating a lead for the salesperson (Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:373). Direct response advertising is particularly fitting for this purpose, as it induces a buying decision.

2.3.3.4 Direct marketing

The practice of direct marketing is an interactive marketing system that utilises a variety of media to elicit a response from a database of target customers (Arens *et al.*, 2011:596; Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:11). The media used in direct marketing include direct mail, telephone, broadcast, printed media and the Internet. The interactive nature of direct marketing enables it to be an integration of advertising, selling, buying and distribution.

Direct marketing is to be seen as a type of advertising, because regardless of the medium used, the direct-response offering is presented in the form of an advertisement. Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:394) refer to direct-response advertising as a message that is communicated through a mass medium, and which requires a direct response from the audience. This format enables a higher level of interactivity than is offered by traditional mass-media advertising.

For example, Internet advertising offers click-through links that enable the consumer to click on an advertisement of interest; this will, in turn, take him/her to the website of the offering. Usually the product can then be ordered and paid for online. This also provides the considerable advantage of convenience.

Direct marketing delivers advertising that is accountable and has added value, because it builds awareness, as well as generating actual sales. It stimulates two-way communication since the consumer is able to respond directly to the message provided by the organisation. Furthermore, it allows the organisation to measure responses and thus evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:626).

2.3.3.5 Events and sponsorship marketing

Many companies are placing increased importance on sponsorships, and are reaping the rewards. Sponsorship marketing occurs when an event receives financial support from an organisation (the sponsor) and in return provides the opportunity to the sponsor to associate itself with the event. This, in turn, generates publicity for the sponsor (Shimp, 2010:562). It is a scenario that places the marketer in the same environment as the consumer, such as a sporting event, and makes the message of the organisation more relevant and credible.

SPAR, a South African retailer, sponsors various women's sporting events in South Africa, including hockey, netball and the *SPAR* Women's Challenge Series, a series of annual 10km running events hosted in various parts of the country. Its association with these sports events leads to a perception among consumers that *SPAR* cares about women's

sports. Apart from the advantage this brings, sponsorships also provide several other benefits (Koekemoer, 2004b:457). These include, among others, niche marketing flexibility, enhanced brand equity and cost-effective media coverage.

Like all the tools in the promotional mix, sponsorship activities also need to be integrated with the other elements of the organisation's promotions, and serve the higher purpose of reaching general communication objectives.

2.3.3.6 Internet/interactive media

Since its origin in September 1969, the Internet has revolutionised marketing and advertising (Belch & Belch, 2007:469; O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:527). The Internet is the most prominent interactive medium today. Interactivity refers to the ability of an organisation to link and connect with its customers. The Internet is a channel that lends itself to a myriad of communication objectives ranging from creating awareness to the actual selling of the product. This activity is referred to as e-commerce. *Kalahari.net* is an example of a website that offers e-commerce of a wide variety of products, as diverse as books and jewellery.

Apart from its value as a direct selling tool, the Internet is also a versatile medium for sales promotions, personal selling and public relations (Belch & Belch, 2007:479-482). As a selling tool, the Internet allows the customer access to a huge amount of specific product information without the consumer having to enter a store and talk with a salesperson. The convenience of e-commerce is thus a major advantage of the Internet.

According to Ouwensloot and Duncan (2008:231), the latest generation of interactive media is m-commerce (mobile commerce). This includes mobile and wireless communications. It allows an organisation to communicate with the customer while the customer is on the move. *Vodacom* cellular network company uses Multimedia Messaging Services (MMS) to send promotions directly to *Vodacom* customers' cell phones. The message usually includes a link to the related website, which the customer can then access via the cell phone's Internet browser.

Marketers may also use e-mail to send messages to target customers. The consumer generally has the option to choose whether or not he or she would like to receive marketing communication e-mails from the organisation. This occurs when a person registers on a website, and in the process is required to indicate permission to receive marketing messages (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:530). The Internet also provides ample opportunities for advertisers. The different forms and features of Internet advertising are elaborated upon in Section 2.4.2.4. This will be done as part of the discussion on advertising.

2.3.3.7 Advertising

Advertising, as part of the promotional strategy, needs to deliver a message to the target market that will lead to a favourable reaction. Its main aim is to motivate the audience to take the next step of action. As the focus of the study is on the imagery of females in advertisements, advertising will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.4.

2.4 ADVERTISING

The role of advertising in the promotional mix of the organisation was clearly depicted in Figure 2.2. The focus of the study is on magazine advertisements and television commercials that feature female characters. This section provides an in-depth look at the nature of advertising within the marketing and promotional realms.

2.4.1 Perspectives on advertising

To understand the importance of advertising and to determine how to use it effectively in order to reach the target audience, an understanding of the concept, objectives, functions, roles and classification of advertising is necessary.

2.4.1.1 Advertising defined

As mentioned in the previous section, advertising is a very important component of the organisation's communications strategy. Wells *et al.* (2006:5) describe advertising as a form of persuasive communication that is paid for and that makes use of the mass media to reach target audiences. Contemporary advertising is the persuasive, "structured and composed non-personal communication of information" about product offerings; and it is paid for by the organisation (Arens *et al.*, 2011:8). Advertising, therefore, aims to communicate specific information to a particular target audience in order to persuade the audience to react in a particular manner.

Another definition for advertising has been provided by Koekemoer (2004a:65), namely that advertising is a way of announcing what the organisation wants to sell (the attributes and advantages of its products). Its primary aim is to encourage potential consumers to react positively to the propositions of the organisation. Mass media advertising, such as television commercials, targets large audiences with a relatively universal message.

For the purpose of this study, the following definition will be used for advertising: advertising is a paid, structured and non-personal form of marketing communication by an identified sponsor. It is designed to reach a specific target audience with a persuasive message about a product, service or idea. The purpose is to elicit a favourable response from the target audience.

2.4.1.2 The objectives and functions of advertising

In order for an advertisement to be effective, it needs to have a purpose, namely to affect the consumer in some way. This purpose is clarified through the advertisement's specific objectives. Wells *et al.* (2006:19) suggest that advertising objectives work in two areas, namely on the consumer and on the organisation's side. The consumer wants information that will attract his attention and interest and which can be stored in his memory, whereas the organisation wants to reach its overall objectives. Additionally, the advertisement has its own specific objectives related to affecting the consumer through communication.

Advertising objectives have to meet certain criteria in order to be suitable to the needs of the organisation's communication plans (Shimp, 2010:162). They need to be specific statements of *who* must achieve *what* by *when*. Objectives must also be formulated in quantitative terms so that changes can be specifically measured. These written objectives have to be reachable and consistent with the overall promotional plan of the organisation.

a. Advertising objectives

The primary aim of advertising is to achieve an effect on consumers, usually to spur them into action. According to Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:130), marketers use consumer response models as a basis for setting advertising objectives, because the impact of advertising on consumers follows a relatively predictable pattern. This pattern is known as the hierarchy-of-effects, or AIDA model.

The AIDA model refers to attention, interest, desire and action. It is a series of steps the target audience takes to reach the point at which it will react to the organisation's message. Belch and Belch (2007:200) hold that consumers move from awareness to action via cognitive, affective and behavioural routes.

Cognition refers to the rational response to the information in the advertisement, whereas the affective response refers to the desires, feelings and significance attached to the interpretation of the message (Wells *et al.*, 2006:106). For example, a female consumer sees an advertisement for an anti-ageing serum. Rationally, the message proclaims a 30 per cent reduction in fine lines within a week. The emotional response from the consumer may be: "I would love to look younger like that!" The behavioural response is to try out or purchase the product, and this relates to the action stage in the AIDA model.

Some academics extend the AIDA model by adding additional consumer responses (Koekemoer, 2004a:77-78; Wells *et al.*, 2006:103). Responses go through stages that include a perceptual process (exposure and attention), comprehension, acceptance, persuasion, retention and behaviour. In the final stage, the consumer reacts, and the action may be the changing of an unfavourable attitude, retaining information or ultimately to purchase. The desired reaction depends on the objective that the organisation formulated for the particular advertisement.

b. The functions of advertising

Effective communication is crucial to the organisation, and advertising is an important tool which may be used to gain communication success. Advertising executes several important communication functions in order to attain the organisation's promotional aims. To this end, advertising endeavours to provide information to the target market about the organisation's brands, and to influence consumers to try the product. Furthermore, advertising keeps reminding the consumer of the brand, thus increasing its salience and the possibility that it will be chosen when a purchase need arises (Shimp, 2010:189). This may also stimulate repeat purchases.

Advertising sets the brand apart through differentiation and builds brand value and customer loyalty to the brand (Arens *et al.*, 2011:34). The value of the organisation's brands is increased through advertising, as advertising has the power to impact on the consumer's perceptions and attitudes towards the brand. Increased advertising expenditure is linked to an increase in the perceived quality of brands (Shimp, 2010:190). Finally, advertising, as part of the promotional toolbox, needs to support the other promotional elements of the organisation. It should be integrated fully with the rest of the promotional and marketing mix of the organisation in order for the organisation to reach its goals.

2.4.1.3 The roles of advertising

The original role of advertising was to provide an identity for the manufacturer of a product. Advertising practice grew as industrialisation and technology progressed, leading to advertising evolving more roles. These roles impact not only on the organisation, but also on society as a whole.

Advertising is used to create demand for the organisation's offerings. This is achieved through hard-sell and soft-sell techniques. Hard selling aims to persuade the target market, whereas soft selling focuses on image-building. Wells *et al.* (2006:7) assert that advertising plays marketing, communication, economic and societal roles.

The marketing role of advertising refers to its place in the marketing process, namely as part of the promotional plan. This includes its role in the developing of brand image and brand equity. It is important to remember that the brand is not the product, as products change and new ones can be developed under the same brand. A brand consists of both rational and emotional components, and advertising must be able to communicate both aspects in its messages (Belch & Belch, 2007:267). In this way the marketer of anti-ageing creams will provide rational cues (statistics on effective reduction of lines), as well as the emotional appeal of feeling younger as a result of appearing more youthful.

Advertising's communication role relates to it being a method of mass communication since it forms an important part of the communication mix of the organisation. In good economic times advertising finds its creative apex. Under favourable economic conditions consumers will be more likely to compare brands based on factors other than price. This, in turn, leads to advertising becoming more vibrant and communicating the differentiation of the brand, rather than the price alone (Wells *et al.*, 2006:8).

As a societal force, advertising provides information, reflects trends, relays role characters and teaches the consumer about new products. This may have adverse effects, as some academics assert that advertising portrayals may perpetuate negative or stereotypical roles, such as the woman as a sex object (Bailey, 2006:99; Serra & Burnett, 2007:147). The current study will *inter alia* determine the most popular female role portrayals in advertisements. This will hopefully provide a view of the stereotypes portrayed by South African advertisers.

2.4.1.4 Classifications of advertising

Belch and Belch (2007:19), Koekemoer (2004a:68) and Wells *et al.* (2006:17) describe some of the different classifications of advertising. Four primary criteria are used to classify advertising, namely purpose, target audience, geographic area and the medium used.

a. Advertising by purpose

- Primary- versus selective-demand advertising: primary-demand advertising is aimed at creating demand for a specific industry or general product class. An example is when

the South African pork industry advertises pork as a healthy and versatile meat alternative. Selective-demand advertising focuses on stimulating demand for a particular organisation's offerings, such as the advertising of a specific brand, for example, *Enterprise's* Crumbed Pork range.

- Brand advertising: the focus of brand advertising is to create a demand for a specific brand in the minds of the consumers, by extensively communicating the advantages of the particular brand. An example is the cosmetics company *Revlon* listing the long-wearing properties of its *ColorStay* lipstick range.
- Institutional image advertising: this is also referred to as corporate advertising; it is advertising used by the organisation to establish its corporate identity. It focuses on communicating the organisation's image and philosophy. For example, the *Industrial Development Corporation* advertises its values and image on television.
- Non-profit advertising: this is also referred to as non-commercial advertising, and it consists of advertisements by non-profit organisations aimed at obtaining customers, members, volunteers or donations. For example, the *Unica School for Autism* advertises its annual Christmas market, which is a fundraising initiative. Non-profit advertising fall outside the focus areas of this study.
- Public service advertising: this is also referred to as public service announcements (PSAs). These advertising messages are generally sponsored by advertising professionals and the media in which the advertisements are run. The aim is to create public awareness for various good causes, such as campaigns aimed at creating awareness in the fight against HIV/AIDS, or to promote charitable causes. Public service announcements fall outside the focus areas of this study.
- Direct-response advertising: this uses any advertising medium to attempt to stimulate immediate sales. It enables the consumer to respond to a call for action and the product to be delivered directly to the customer. Companies such as *Verimark* and *Glomail* use this approach.
- Retail advertising: this focuses on encouraging customers to frequent a particular (usually local) retailer, like *Pick n Pay*. Retail advertising is aimed at increasing store traffic. Retailers, such as *Pick n Pay*, often advertise in-store special offers to attract consumers to the store.

b. Advertising by geographic area

- National advertising: this includes advertising on a nationwide scale by large organisations to inform or remind the target market of the organisation and its benefits, or to reinforce its image. This includes brand advertising.
- International advertising: this is used by multinational companies to advertise their multinational brands to both trade members, as well as to end-consumers. For example, *Coca-Cola* advertises its various brands internationally across all the media.
- Local advertising: this is also referred to as retail advertising; it encourages the support of a local retailer.

The study incorporates both national and local advertising.

c. Advertising by target audience

- Business-to-business advertising (B-to-B): this entails advertising from one business aimed at another organisation (Belch & Belch, 2007:19). Three categories exist within B-to-B advertising, namely industrial, professional and trade advertising.
 - Industrial advertising focuses on the person that makes purchase decisions on industrial goods and business services for the organisation.
 - Professional advertising aims to influence professionals, such as doctors or lawyers to consume or recommend the consumption of the organisation's products or services.
 - Trade advertising is targeted at distribution channel members to persuade them to market the advertiser's product to the end-consumer.
- Consumer advertising: this type of advertising focuses on the individual that purchases the product for his/her own or another person's consumption (for example gifts). Brand, national, local, retail and direct-action advertising all fall under consumer advertising.

This study focuses on various forms of consumer advertising, specifically concentrating on product advertising that includes female characters and excludes B-to-B advertising.

d. Advertising by the medium used

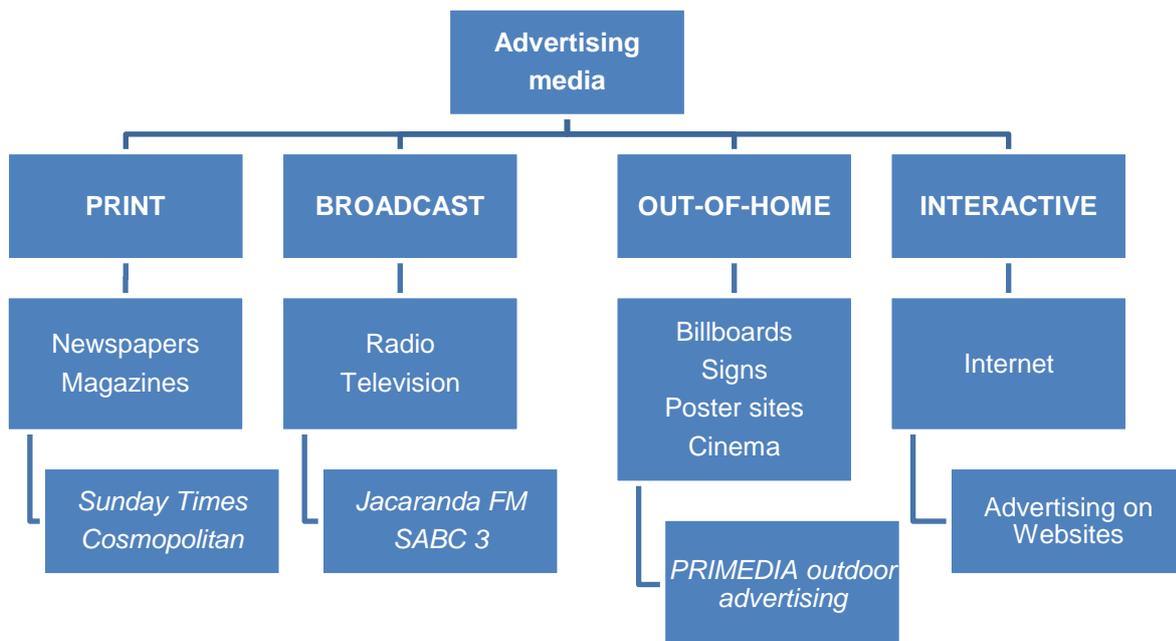
Advertising can also be categorised by the medium used to communicate the organisation’s message. Media include above-the-line media (print, broadcast and outdoor), and below-the-line media (including sales promotions, direct and Internet marketing). As print and broadcast media are important parts of this study, these will be described in more detail in Section 2.4.2.

2.4.2 Advertising media

Advertisements are placed in a number of different media or communication channels. The media comprise the different methods of communication used to convey advertising messages. Within the classification of media types are several specific broadcast programmes or publications in which the advertisements are placed. These are called media vehicles (Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:206; Shimp, 2010:318).

Figure 2.4 provides an overview of the classifications of advertising media.

Figure 2.4 Advertising media

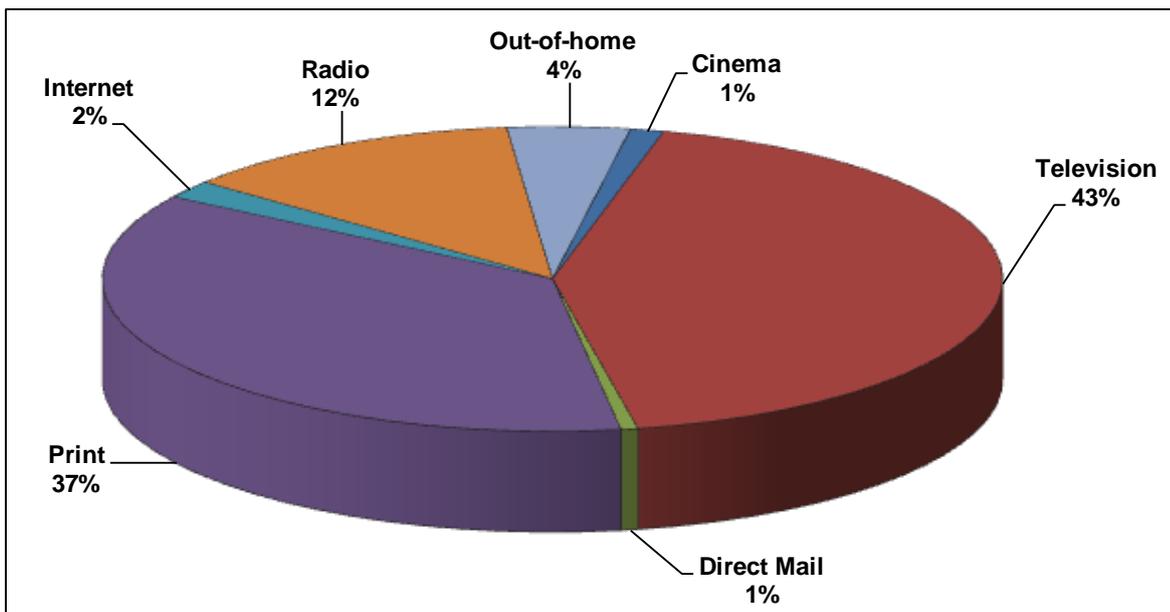


Source: Adapted from Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:206); and Koekemoer (2004a:199).

Advertising channels include the broad categories of print, broadcast, outdoor and interactive media. In the current study print and broadcast media will be focused on, in particular, popular magazines and selected television channels.

The various media have their share of advertising expenditure. Figure 2.5 provides a pie chart of the South African advertising expenditure percentages in 2009.

Figure 2.5 Advertising expenditure in 2009



Source: Adapted from Koenderman (2010:16)

In South Africa advertisers make use of all available avenues to reach their target markets with suitable advertising messages. In 2009 South Africa's variety of media included 92 television channels; 137 radio stations; 21 daily and 27 major weekly newspapers; 660 consumer magazines and newspapers; 735 business-related printed media; 470 community newspapers and magazines, and in excess of 12 billion¹ webpages (Koenderman, 2010:16).

Table 2.1 provides a summary of the South African population's access to the wide variety of available media in 2009.

¹ This estimate is for 2008; Koenderman (2010:16) estimates a range between 25.4 billion and 1 trillion since 2008.

Table 2.1 South African population's access to media

Media	Media frequency	Total Access %
Newspapers	Dailies	28.6
	Weeklies	35.2
Total newspapers		63.8
Magazines	Weeklies	24
	Fortnightlies	14
	Monthlies	36.2
	Alternate monthlies	9.3
Total magazines		83.5
Cinema	Past three months	10
Radio	Last seven days	90
TV	Last seven days	85.3
Internet	Accessed last four weeks	11
Outdoor (last four weeks)	Billboards	85.9
	In-store	91.2
	Bus shelters	57.6
	Taxi's/minibuses	84.4
	Trailer ads	60.6

Source: Adapted from Koenderman (2010:15)

From Table 2.1 the high rate of exposure to magazines and television, which are the focus of the study, becomes immediately clear. As there is such a wide variety of communication channels available to advertisers, a closer look at the various media is required. Every medium has several advantages and disadvantages, and it is the responsibility of the marketer to establish which medium and vehicle will be most suited to the objectives of the organisation's advertising (Clow & Baack, 2010:234).

The advantages and disadvantages of the media are generally classified along the following aspects: geographic coverage, flexibility, audience interest, copy format/length, buying procedures and lead times (period of time between production and publishing), life span, clutter (competitive messages), reproduction quality, costs, direct-response features (such as inclusion of coupons), and audience interest. In the following sections, the various media are described, with particular focus on magazines and television, as these are the focus of the study.

2.4.2.1 Print media

This study focuses on advertising in print media, specifically magazines. Print media's ability to include detailed information is a distinct advantage, particularly when advertising complex products such as computers. Arens *et al.* (2011:140) define print media as "any commercially published, printed medium ...that sells advertising space."

Print media are high-involved media, which means that they require active left-brain activity (reading) from the consumer. Therefore, advertisers using print media need to take special care to attract the attention of the reader, as these advertisements demand more than a cursory glance for their effective interpretation. Figure 2.4 indicates that print media include newspapers and magazines.

a. Newspapers

Of the South African population 63.8 per cent have access to newspapers, thereby exposing a large group of consumers to advertising in the medium (refer to Table 2.1). Newspapers are available in daily and weekly formats, and aim to provide timely news items and other information. Because of this, newspapers are credible sources with the added advantage of high audience interest (Wells *et al.*, 2006:219). Advertisements placed in newspapers are seen as plausible for these reasons.

Further advantages to using newspapers include high coverage, geographic and production flexibility, detailed copy, cumulative volume discounts and low costs (Clow & Baack, 2010:253). Newspapers are also suitable for direct-response appeals; they have short lead times and high one-time reach capabilities.

The fact that newspapers are generally not kept and read again (therefore having a short life span) is a large disadvantage to the medium. Other weaknesses are clutter, poor printing quality and low selectivity (Arens *et al.*, 2011:470). The selective nature of newspapers' readership provides challenges for reaching a wide audience. Newspapers are also showing a declining readership, partly due to competition from the Internet, as it is a convenient means for retrieving news and other information quickly.

b. Magazines

According to the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF)'s All Media and Products Survey (AMPS) figures, there were 98 commercially available magazines in South Africa in 2009 (SAARF, 2009a). Koenderman (2010:15) indicates that 83.5 per cent of South African consumers had access to magazines in 2009. Magazines are categorised according to their frequency, namely: weekly, fortnightly, monthly, alternate monthly and quarterly publications; and also according to their audience (consumer, business, trade and professional magazines).

Magazines as advertising media have several strengths, such as specific segmentation due to the selective nature of magazines; targeted audience interest and creative possibilities (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:498). The high quality of printing in magazines enables the advertiser to create full-colour advertisements that attract attention. Magazines are often regarded as expertise sources of specific information (for example fashion magazines for beauty and fashion). This fact lends credibility to advertisements that are placed in this medium. Therefore, advertisements for beauty products that are placed in fashion magazines are deemed to be highly credible to their target audience.

Magazine advertising provides opportunities for high information content, and thus ample occasions for creativity (Belch & Belch, 2007:383). Verbal and visual cues are used to great effect. For example, an advertisement for a new lipstick can illustrate the various colours, as well as provide verbal information on the long-lasting effect of the lipstick. Advertisements in magazines have long life spans as readers tend to keep magazines. Often a particular issue will have multiple readers, and this generates numerous advertising exposures.

The popularity of magazines yields high advertising and other information clutter, which is a major drawback (Arens *et al.*, 2011:458). A preliminary perusal of a popular South African magazine, *YOU* magazine, indicated that 24 per cent of the total pages consisted of advertisements. The long lead times of magazines offer low flexibility since advertising in magazines is expensive. Another disadvantage is that magazine advertising has low mass reach and frequency, as they are not published on a daily basis (Belch & Belch, 2007:329; Clow & Baack, 2010:251; Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:209).

The current study focuses on the leading weekly and monthly consumer magazines, according to the AMPS figures and excludes television guides and retail magazines. The magazines that will be used in the study feature female characters in a variety of advertisements. All full-page and double-page advertisements that feature female characters in the magazine's sample will be analysed.

2.4.2.2 Broadcast media

The broadcasting media transmit audio and/or visual stimuli electronically (Wells *et al.*, 2006:243). Broadcasting media include radio advertisements and television commercials, and combined they take the largest share of South African advertising expenditure annually, namely 55.3 per cent in 2009 (refer to Figure 2.5). The popularity of the broadcasting media is not surprising when bearing in mind their high intrusive value; this is a distinct advantage over the printed media as those are only suitable for static images and the printed word. Radio and television allow for sound and - in television's case - for moving images.

a. Radio

A wide variety of radio stations are available to advertisers. In South Africa, there were 137 radio stations that were broadcasting in 2009, and the expenditure on this medium was 12.4 per cent of the total advertising expenditure in 2009 (Koenderman, 2010:16). Radio advertising lends itself to creatively engaging the consumer, since the audience members use their imagination to fill in visuals based on the auditory cues given in the message. Radio stations are differentiated by geographic area (national or local), content and music, making this a valuable medium for advertising which is focused on local conditions and for using music in advertising that relates to that which is favoured by the station.

Advantages of radio advertising include low advertising costs, flexibility and high audience segmentation. These allow for specific targeting (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:515). For example, *5FM* is a station that plays contemporary music and is aimed primarily at the youth. An advertiser interested in reaching teenagers can advertise on *5FM* and use contemporary, upbeat music in the advertisements. Additional strengths of radio as an advertising

medium are that it allows for high advertisement frequency, local coverage and it is mobile. This increases its exposure.

The short exposure time, short-lived messages and high clutter of radio advertising are disadvantages. Unlike television, radio does not lend itself to visuals and is limited to audio, which decreases its attention-grabbing capabilities (Arens *et al.*, 2011:512). Radio also has low reach; and duplication often occurs between related stations. For example, sister radio stations (such as *Jacaranda FM* and *OFM*) may have duplicate advertisements.

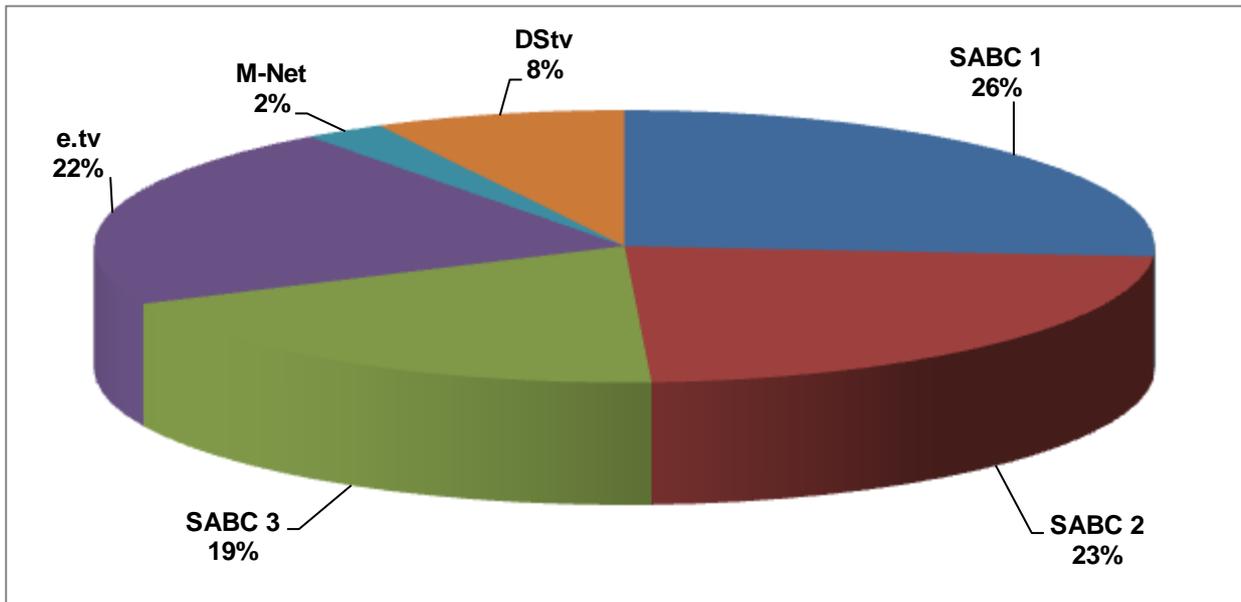
b. Television

Television is often said to be the ultimate advertising medium, as it allows for the creative use of visuals, sound and movement in developing messages. In South Africa, television channels are divided into free-to-air channels; analogue/digital pay channels; and digital satellite pay channels. In total, there were 92 television channels available in 2009 (Koenderman, 2010:16).

SABC 1, 2, 3 and *e.tv* are the free-to-air stations, and these are the broadcasters with the lion's share of South African viewership. *M-Net*, the analogue channel, and the satellite pay station *DStv*, have noticeably less viewers due to the costs associated with acquiring these channels.

Figure 2.6 indicates the viewership of the different television channels.

Figure 2.6 Viewership of television channels



Source: Adapted from Koenderman (2010:18)

Figure 2.6 shows that most of the population do not watch the pay channels, and for this reason the pay stations will be excluded from this study. The free-to-air channels possess a combined share of 90 per cent of the total viewership.

Television as an advertising medium has several strengths, of which the most beneficial is the practically limitless creative possibilities due to the use of sight, sound and motion (Arens *et al.*, 2011:495). This characteristic creates high intrusion value and allows for great attention-attracting capabilities. Additionally, television advertising has high reach and mass coverage; for example, in South Africa 85.3 per cent of the population have access to television (refer to Table 2.1).

Although television commercials have relatively low cost per contact, the cost per commercial is very high. Another drawback of television advertising is that exposures are limited because viewers tend to switch channels during commercial breaks. Low recall and selectivity, coupled with major clutter, also decrease the effectiveness of commercials (Clow & Baack, 2010:243). Similar to radio, the other broadcasting medium, television, also has advertising with a short message life.

In the current study, the roles portrayed by adult women in commercials televised on *SABC 1, 2, 3* and *e.tv* - on selected days during prime time (between 18:00 and 22:00) - will be analysed (refer to Chapter 1).

2.4.2.3 Out-of-home media

Outdoor advertising channels encompass a very diverse variety of possible vehicles. They range from complex, large billboards to product placements in films. South African out-of-home media include billboards, signs, posters, as well as cinema advertising (refer to Table 2.1). Various authors have differing opinions on the place of cinema advertising in the media mix. Wells *et al.* (2006:262) categorise it under the broadcasting media and Shimp (2010:436) classifies it as other media. Koekemoer (2004a:199), Belch and Belch (2007:415) and Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:217) categorise it as outdoor media.

The current study supports the latter viewpoint, since cinema or theatre advertising occurs outside the consumer's individual space, namely his/her home.

a. Cinema and product placements

Cinema advertising possesses all the benefits of television advertising, with the added advantage of a captive audience. Unlike television, cinema advertisements are inescapably watched as the audience cannot switch channels, and there is much less clutter. The public's access and use of cinema is, however, very low (10%) when compared with television at 85.3 per cent (Koenderman, 2010:15). Additionally, targeting is mostly limited to film types (Ouwersloot & Duncan, 2008:217).

Product placements are paid exposures of the organisation's brand in entertainment vehicles, such as films and television programmes (Wells *et al.*, 2006:263). For example, the female lead in a film may use an *Apple* laptop to send instant messages to her romantic interest.

b. Billboards and similar out-of-home media

The most identifiable source of outdoor media is billboards. They have a very high exposure rate as they are in the public domain and thus accessible to most of the South African population (85.9% - refer to Table 2.1). Transit posters (trailer advertisements) and signs share billboards' strengths and weaknesses. These are displayed in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Strengths and weaknesses of out-of-home media

Strengths	Weaknesses
Broad reach Geographic selectivity High attention-grabbing High frequency Local accessibility Low cost per impression	Brief message Clutter Little segmentation Short exposure time

Source: Adapted from Belch and Belch (2007:329); Clow and Baack (2010:249); Ouwensloot and Duncan (2008:209).

c. Non-traditional media

Apart from billboards and cinema, out-of-home media also include various vehicles as diverse as hot-air balloons and painted buses and cars. Many organisations use cars painted with the organisation's logo and colours. Similarly, public restroom advertising and in-store media (such as banners) attract attention. According to Koenderman (2010:15), in-store advertising has the highest degree of accessibility of all media (91.2%) in South Africa. Non-traditional outdoor media are also suitable to guerrilla marketing, when a specific niche market is being targeted.

2.4.2.4 Interactive media

The Internet is the epitome of interactivity. It allows the consumer to interact with the advertising message, for example, by clicking on an advertisement which then takes the user directly to the website of the organisation, where - in many instances - a purchase can be made. The Internet is estimated to consist of over 1 trillion websites and advertising

expenditure on Internet advertising reached R468.9 million in 2009 (Koenderman, 2010:16).

Despite the Internet's fast growth, only 11 per cent of the South African population access the Internet regularly (refer to Table 2.1). This segment, however, includes the higher LSM groups (LSM 7 and higher) and is thus also a viable channel for advertisers (SAARF, 2009c:54).

a. *Types of Internet advertisements*

Various kinds of Internet advertising exist. Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008:241) and Belch and Belch (2007:476) have identified the following types:

- Banner advertisements are the most frequently used Internet advertisements, and consist of a short message on another organisation's website. When the consumer clicks on the banner advertisement, he/she is linked directly through to the sponsor's website. Banner advertisements need to attract attention quickly and effectively so as to remain pertinent among all the clutter on a webpage.
- Interstitials are similar to banner advertisements, except that interstitials pop-up on the screen in a separate window and need the actual attention of the computer user to delete them. They have higher intrusive value than a banner advertisement and have a better recall rate (Belch & Belch, 2007:477).
- Pop-ups and pop-unders either pop-up on the computer screen when a site is accessed or when a site is exited (pop-unders). The effectiveness of these types of advertisements is debatable, as many Internet users employ pop-up screeners, which will remove or block the advertisements.

The Internet has the advantage of audience interest, as people are specifically focused on a particular website. It is a cost-effective, customisable and flexible medium and the responses are measurable. Additionally, short lead times and simple segmentation add to its attractiveness. Conversely, it is hard to retain the viewer's attention, as people can easily leave the website and access another quickly. Click-through rates are declining, as are responses to banner advertisements (Clow & Baack, 2010:277). Also, the low costs are negated by low intrusion values and short life spans.

The advertising media, as described in Section 2.4, are combined in various manners to form an integrated communication media mix that will serve the objectives of the organisation and communicate effectively with its target markets. The audience members of the advertising messages have specific characteristics that impact on the perception and interpretation of the organisation's advertising claims.

In the current study, the focus is on women in advertisements, and as women in advertisements are generally used as characters to whom female consumers can relate, consumers and their buying behaviour and patterns will need to be understood. In Section 2.5, an overview of the factors that impact on the consumer, as well as the consumers' decision-making processes and the link with advertising, will be further discussed.

2.5 THE ROLE OF ADVERTISING IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The target market of the organisation consists of individual consumers, each with his/her unique features that influence the purchase decisions. To understand how the organisation can communicate more effectively with its consumers and the role that advertising plays in consumer decision-making, a solid understanding of consumer behaviour is necessary (Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:89).

2.5.1 Definition and importance of consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour is literally how people act as consumers or users of products and services. Blackwell *et al.* (2006:4) define consumer behaviour as the actions consumers engage in when they acquire, use and dispose of products or services. It encompasses all of the factors that impact directly or indirectly on the process of making consumer decisions.

Another definition states that in the field of consumer behaviour, individuals and businesses are studied, as well as the manner in which they choose, consume and dispose of various marketing offerings aimed at satisfying needs (Hawkins &

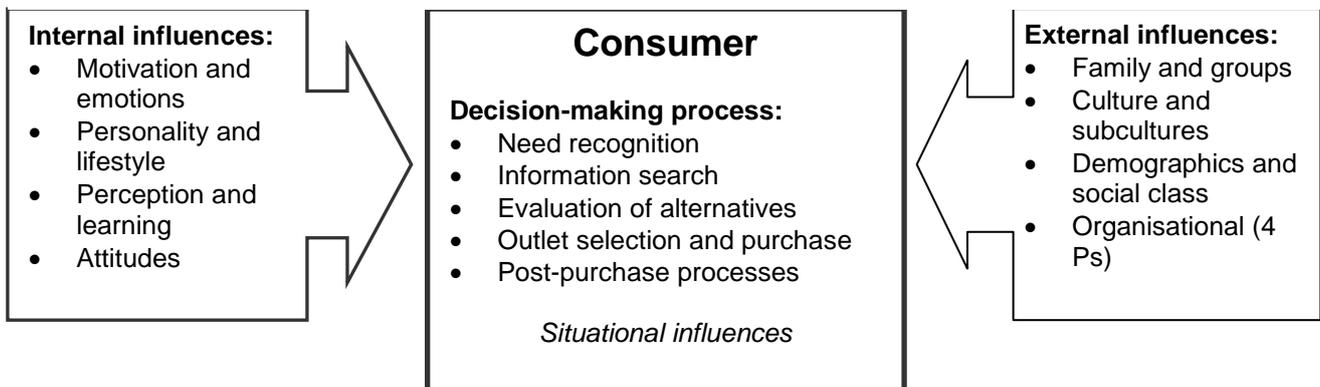
Mothersbaugh, 2010:6). The key is that specific needs exist in consumers, and that the organisation aims to meet these needs by offering products or service solutions to meet these problems.

For the purpose of this study, consumer behaviour is defined as the actions that consumers perform in their attempts to satisfy identified consumption needs by purchasing, using and disposing of products, services or ideas that suit the requirements of the consumer. Inherent in the definition is the consumer's decision-making process. This takes the consumer from the identification of a specific need or problem to the consumption and disposal of the used product and its packaging.

2.5.2 A model of consumer behaviour

The consumer is impacted by both internal and external factors, and consumer decision-making occurs within a particular situation. In Figure 2.7, a model of consumer behaviour is presented.

Figure 2.7 Model of consumer behaviour



Source: Adapted from Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:16); Blackwell *et al.* (2006:5) and Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010:2-3).

Figure 2.7 indicates that the internal factors include everything personal (or individual) to the consumer, as well as those external factors that are part of general society (such as family and culture), in addition to the factors within the organisation's realm of influence (namely its marketing efforts). The organisation cannot control the individual or the socio-cultural factors, but it can influence the individual through its marketing efforts. Additional

to the specific internal and external influences, the consumer operates within a framework of situational influences that impact on his/her decision-making.

2.5.3 The consumer's decision-making process

Consumers progress through several stages before they reach a decision on what to buy. The complexity and depth of the process depends on the importance of the purchase. Purchase importance is impacted by the consumer's involvement in the decision. Some purchases are more complex and require more involvement, such as buying computers or a house (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:161). Simple purchases, such as buying convenience goods call for less involvement, and the process will be shorter, with less information being sought, since less information is needed.

Figure 2.7 shows that the consumer decision-making process commences with a need that is identified by the consumer. The consumer then goes on an information search to find alternatives that may satisfy the need. When suitable alternatives have been found, they are evaluated, an outlet is chosen and the product is bought. After the purchase, the consumer experiences a number of post-purchase processes.

a. Need recognition

Need or problem recognition occurs when the consumer becomes aware of an unsatisfied need or a consumption problem. Advertisements can play a role in need awareness. For example, a woman sees an advertisement for *L'Oreal* hair colour in the *Fair Lady* magazine. In the advertisement, the spokesperson is actress Andie McDowell, and she is quoted: "It's the colour that invigorates me!" The advertisement leads to the consumer wondering if her hair colour may need invigorating. The need recognition process involves a discrepancy or a gap between the consumer's desired and actual states (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:102).

The actual state is the position the consumer finds herself in at the moment, such as the woman's hair colour that needs rejuvenation. The desired state is where the consumer would like to be, namely she would prefer to have a glossy, vibrant hair colour. Therefore,

a gap exists between the two states, leading to a problem being recognised in that she needs to buy a suitable hair colour.

Problem recognition can be generic, whereby the general product category is the focus (she needs hair colour) or specific, where a particular brand is targeted (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:508). The *L'Oreal* example is typical of an advertisement targeting specific problem recognition, as it focuses on the brand, *L'Oreal*. Marketers can influence need recognition by advertising brands that are suitable for solving particular consumption problems.

After the consumer has identified the need, the search for information commences.

b. Information search

In the information search stage of consumer decision-making, the consumer first looks for information internally (memory), and if no solution can be found internally, an external search occurs (Blythe, 2008:263). In searching the memory, the consumer seeks information that has been gained through previous purchase decisions or past searches. If the memory delivers no viable solution to the problem, the consumer will look for information from outside sources. For example: a woman's favourite pair of shoes breaks a heel. If she previously had heels fixed, she will have the information for a shoe repair service in her memory. If not, she might phone a friend who, she remembers, has had such an experience. Alternatively, she may look for a service provider in the *Yellow Pages* directory.

External sources include marketing and non-marketing sources. These may be personal or impersonal. Consumers see information from personal sources as being more credible - since these will usually not benefit from positive advice regarding a specific brand. Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010:240) refer to such sources as opinion leaders and these are people that are trusted by the consumer to provide unbiased and knowledgeable advice on a purchase. In the previous example, the woman's friend could play the role of an opinion leader.

Family members and friends are personal sources that are generally used since the consumer would find them credible (Peter & Olson, 2010:198), whereas impersonal sources refer to marketing efforts, such as advertisements, product packaging, catalogues and websites. Many consumers use the Internet to find information for a planned purchase. Blackwell *et al.* (2006:114) mention the Internet as being the most powerful current influence on consumer search behaviour. Its convenience and speed of use make it an excellent tool for pre-purchase searches.

After the search, the consumer has several alternatives or product options that could serve to satisfy the identified need.

c. Evaluation

The identified alternatives from the pre-purchase search are evaluated according to specific criteria. The product options are divided into brands that the consumer likes, called the evoked or consideration set, brands that are not liked (the inept set), and those that the consumer is indifferent towards, namely the inert set (Neal, Quester & Pettigrew, 2007:96). Consumer purchase decisions are usually made from the brands in the evoked set. The consumer evaluates the evoked brands based on certain evaluative criteria, such as price, quality, style, or various other features that are important to the consumer.

In this way, a woman looking for a new car may want an environmentally friendly vehicle, with lots of storage space and a service maintenance plan. Each criterion will have a level of performance, such as a three-year maintenance plan. Based on the criteria and performance levels, she will make a decision among the brands that have these features.

Advertising enables the consumer to make decisions because it provides such information. For example, an advertisement for *Renault Twingo* in *Cosmopolitan* magazine provides the female consumer with all the information she needs based on her criteria, as it states that the car has a three-year service plan, an environmentally friendly “eco²” engine and 11 storage compartments. After the options have been evaluated a purchase decision is then made.

d. Outlet selection and purchase

When the consumer has chosen a brand, the outlet needs to be chosen. Usually the brand decision occurs before the retailer is chosen, but in some cases, the outlet is chosen before or simultaneously with the purchase decision (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:583). If the traditional route is followed, a woman wanting to buy a car may go to a *McCarthy* dealership where she will request the vehicle on which she has already decided. Or, if her search was completed online, she may have found and ordered the vehicle via the website, thereby choosing both brand and outlet simultaneously.

Outlets may be store-based, such as a car dealership, or non-store based, such as online car retailers. The choice of an outlet is impacted by various factors (Neal *et al.*, 2007:157). Location, image, product variety, services and store brands are some of the features of retailers that play a role in outlet selection. Some situational factors, such as time availability will also impact on the consumer's decision. A person that is in a hurry for example, will choose a store in the vicinity rather than travel to another one that may be preferred under other more normal circumstances.

The image of the store is related to the manner in which it is promoted. Image advertising creates an expectation in the mind of the consumer and impacts on the perception that the consumer holds of the store. For example, if *Pick n Pay* positions itself as a low cost, good quality food store, the consumer will visit the store when buying monthly groceries, as the perception is that value for money will be obtained there.

e. Post-purchase processes

After the purchase has been made, the consumer goes through post-purchase processes. This includes evaluation of the wisdom of the decision, as well as the actual purchase action. After a purchase has been made, conflict often occurs when the consumer thinks about the positives of the product alternatives that were rejected. The conflicting thoughts are called post-purchase cognitive dissonance (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:264). For example, a woman struggles to choose between two pairs of similarly attractive shoes. After buying one of the pairs, she wonders whether she should have chosen the other pair.

Many consumers handle this feeling of uncertainty by finding support of the decision by speaking to other satisfied customers or by finding information, such as advertisements that enhance the benefits of the brand purchased. Consumers may also decrease the importance of the purchase decision and thereby also the level of dissonance (Blythe, 2008:328).

If the consumer doubts the purchase action or feels guilty about making a purchase, post-purchase guilt may well arise. The consumer feels that the money spent on the purchase could have been spent more wisely on something else, or perhaps that the purchase was too indulgent. Advertisers often counter this by providing appeals that rationalise the indulgent behaviour, such as *L'Oreal's* slogan that states: "You're worth it!"

During the post-purchase phase, the consumer also determines the level of satisfaction with the purchase. The evaluation of product performance is a function of symbolic, instrumental and affective performance (Neal *et al.*, 2007:198-199). Symbolic performance deals with the image-enhancing capabilities of the product. The image of a luxury car, for example, has high symbolic performance.

Instrumental performance is the actual functioning of the product (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:635). If a car runs smoothly and has good fuel consumption, its instrumental performance is rated well. The emotional wellbeing or positive feelings gained from possessing or using a particular product will tend to exemplify its affective performance. In this way, owning a luxury vehicle will boost the emotions of the consumer.

When a consumer makes a purchase, certain expectations exist as to the performance of the product on the various performance criteria. If the criteria are met, the consumer will be satisfied. If not, dissatisfaction results. In those cases where the consumer is dissatisfied, the chances are good that the product will not be bought again. The consumer may also tell others about the bad experience, creating negative WOM. A consumer who is dissatisfied is more likely to speak of the negative experience than is one who has had a positive purchase encounter (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:543).

When the consumer's expectations are exceeded, the result is a delighted consumer. Delighted consumers provide positive WOM about the brand, and serve as impromptu

advertisers for the organisation. They also tend to become brand loyal, which is something companies strive to attain.

The consumer makes consumption decisions within a specific situational framework. Situational influences are not strictly part of the decision-making process, but can have an impact on the buying decision. These influences will be discussed next.

f. *Situational influences*

Situational variances also play a role in the consumer's decision-making process. The advertiser needs to carefully evaluate the strategies followed in each scenario in order to communicate effectively under any circumstance.

According to Blackwell *et al.* (2006:94) and Neal *et al.* (2007:41), the consumer is impacted by various situational influences:

- Physical surroundings including the store atmosphere, product differentiation, colours and sounds. These combine to influence the consumer. Gymnasiums, for instance, play fast-paced music during peak times to encourage customer turnover in the gymnasium.
- Time availability or the temporal perspective refers to the impact of time on the actions of the consumer. For example, a consumer will not be interested in buying winter clothes in the middle of the summer season.
- Social influences include other people present in the consumption situation. Many mothers who go shopping with small children can attest to the impact of this factor on their buying patterns.
- Task definition or purchase reason refers to why people are buying something. If the consumer is looking for a gift, more effort will be put into the decision than when buying for one's own use.
- Mood or antecedent states of the consumer are the temporary characteristics of a person that will not last. Moods and physical conditions are temporary in nature and impact on consumer behaviour. Women consumers, for instance, often admit to indulging in "retail therapy" when they are feeling depressed or unhappy.

The situational influences impact on the consumer throughout the decision-making process and are therefore important to marketers (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:474). Advertisers need to be aware of these influences that affect consumer actions in order to find a way to effectively communicate with the consumer under different circumstances and in various situations.

Depictions of situational influences, such as the social surroundings are often used in advertisements. For example, restaurant advertisements may feature a group of friends having dinner.

Apart from the situational influences on consumption behaviour, there are several factors that are specific to the individual consumer. These will also impact on the decision-making process.

2.5.4 Internal determinants of consumer behaviour

Factors in the psyche of the consumer play a large role in determining the manner in which the consumer will act in the marketplace. The internal or individual influences are outside the control of the organisation, but it can attempt to affect the consumer's behaviour via suitable advertising messages. The internal factors that impact on consumer behaviour are briefly discussed, as they pertain to this study.

a. *Motivation and emotions*

Consumer motivation refers to the reasons why people behave in a particular way. Neal *et al.* (2007:300) define motivation as “the energising force that activates or triggers behaviour and provides purpose, direction and drive to that behaviour.” Many academics use the terms “motives” and “needs” interchangeably to indicate similar concepts (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:290; Blythe, 2008:32). Correspondingly, various classifications of needs or motivations exist.

The classification provided by Blackwell *et al.* (2006:290) will be used, as it incorporates the theories of marketers, as well as those of psychologists. The categories include

physiological needs (such as food), safety and health-related needs and the strong need for affection and relationships. Security is of particular interest in South Africa, as crime rates are high. Many security companies use this need as a basis for advertising messages, such as the advertisements for *Maxidor* security gates that feature a woman being chased by an attacker. She runs into her house and slams the *Maxidor* gate in his face.

The affection need is evident in the advertising of perfumes for both males and females, where the visual part of the advertisement often depicts a loving couple. In the current study, females portrayed in such situations will be classified as being in the romantic role. Similarly, restaurants and sporting events often use portrayals of groups of friends having fun, depicting the female character in a social role.

The need for financial security and social image needs are also important consumer needs (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:292). These relate to social class and are often used by companies selling retirement plans or investment packages. When advertisers are aware of consumer motives, they can create advertising messages that relate to the needs and even arouse less obvious needs.

Apart from the consumer's motives, purchase decisions are also influenced by the consumer's emotions. Emotions are the feelings that consumers have regarding specific concepts, ideas, products or other entities. Feelings are relatively uncontrollable and difficult to predict. Marketers use emotions extensively in advertising, as emotional content in advertisements will usually increase the attention-attraction ability of the message (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:381). Product categories, such as perfume, use emotional appeal to great effect.

b. Personality and lifestyle

Consumer personality consists of all the lasting characteristics of the individual that impact on behaviour. People have various traits or features that combine to form a unique personality. People who enjoy adventure sports and daring activities are referred to as adventurous; people who want to be the centre of attention have extroverted personalities.

Marketing theorists maintain that people choose brands which reflect their personalities (Neal *et al.*, 2007:316; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:133). The concept of brand personality means that consumers attach human characteristics to a brand. *McDonald's*, for example, is seen as friendly, and this is reinforced through the advertising of the brand.

Blackwell *et al.* (2006:290) refer to lifestyle as the manner in which consumers live and use their time and finances. Lifestyle is an outward expression of people's interests and opinions and the activities in which they engage. In advertising, lifestyle depictions are used to engage target consumers who relate to the illustrated lifestyle. For example, an advertisement for women's running shoes in the *Runner's World* magazine is clearly aimed at female runners.

c. Perception and learning

The perception process comprises the stages through which the consumer progresses when exposed to marketing stimuli to where the message is interpreted and committed to memory (Arens *et al.*, 2011:160; Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:278). Perception commences with the exposure to a stimulus, such as an advertisement in a magazine that the consumer is reading. If the advertisement attracts the attention of the consumer, interpretation follows. This will be dependent on the meaning that the reader assigns to the verbal and visual cues in the advertising message. Effective interpretation requires that the consumer should understand the message as it was intended by the advertiser (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2009:167).

The perceptual process is important to advertisers as it impacts on the effectiveness of the marketing message. If marketers can provide effective, attention-attracting advertising messages, the likelihood of the consumer responding favourably to the message is increased. Using characters that attract attention is one way of achieving this objective. The current study will therefore examine the characters depicted in advertisements.

The conclusion of the perceptual process is the commitment of messages to memory. At first the message goes to the short-term memory; and then it is transferred to the long-term memory, from where it can be recalled at a later stage. Repetition enhances retention

of information, which is the reason for the repetitive nature of advertising (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:203).

The consumer retains information through learning, a process defined by Arens *et al.* (2011:163) as a change in the cognitive processes or behavioural patterns that comprise the outcome of a reinforced experience. Consumers learn about products and organisations via cognitive (problem-solving) thinking and/or conditioning (experimentation) processes (Ouwensloot & Duncan, 2008:108).

To aid the learning processes, a cosmetics marketer may supply samples of make-up to women through a women's magazine, thereby stimulating learning through experimentation. Learning links to consumer motivations and attitudes (Arens *et al.*, 2011:165).

d. Attitudes

Consumer attitudes are learned favourable or unfavourable responses to a particular object, idea or brand. According to Peter and Olson (2010:128), these may be defined as people's "overall evaluation of a concept". This may, in practice, be an object or a particular type of behaviour. Attitudes are established through learning processes; and advertising can influence the formation and changing of attitudes. Hawkins & Mothersbaugh (2010:392) identify three components of attitudes, namely affective, cognitive and behavioural. These components tend to be in agreement; therefore all three components will generally be either favourable or unfavourable.

The affective component refers to the feelings associated with the object or idea, for example, a woman who is brand loyal towards *Coca-Cola*, will feel positive towards (like) the brand. Similarly, she will think it is a refreshing soft drink, which is her cognitive component, the beliefs she has about the brand. Her positive feelings and thoughts about *Coca-Cola* will translate to favourable behaviour in that she will always buy *Coca-Cola* when she is thirsty.

Advertisers attempt to change negative attitudes toward a brand by influencing the attitude components (Neal *et al.*, 2007:346). Generally marketers focus on the cognitive

component by providing information that may change the existing unfavourable beliefs. Strategies include adjusting beliefs about brand attributes, adding a new belief, or transferring the importance of attributes to favourably reflect those that are relevant in the brand.

Marketers wanting to change the affective component may focus on increasing the feelings towards the advertising message, as this may extend to the brand itself. To change behaviour, many marketers introduce trials by providing product samples or test periods. The rationale is that the action (trial) will have favourable results. These, in turn, will lead to the consumer purchasing the brand (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:403).

The internal determinants of consumer behaviour are supplemented by the external factors that impact on the consumer.

2.5.5 External determinants of consumer behaviour

The external factors that influence consumers include socio-cultural and organisational influences. This is the only area where the organisation can directly influence the decision-making process, namely through its marketing efforts (the four Ps). As advertising is part of the promotional element of the marketing mix, the link between advertising and consumer behaviour is also discussed in this section.

Socio-cultural influences include those of families and groups, cultures and subcultures, as well as demographics and social class.

a. Family and groups

The family is defined as a group of people residing together who share relational ties via blood, marriage or adoption (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:326). The family lifecycle impacts on family purchases and the family members play different roles in the decision-making processes of the family. Family decision-making roles are often portrayed in advertisements aimed at families, such as family restaurants. For instance, the mother may ask that the family order a take-away dinner so that she may have the night off,

thereby initiating the use of take-aways. *KFC* used this approach when promoting their “Mom’s night off” special offer.

Groups include households, which are people living together with no family connections. Reference groups are groups of people that have a significant impact on an individual’s consumption decisions (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:522). Typical examples of using reference groups in advertising are detergent commercials, where one woman will provide advice to another about the stain-removal properties of a specific brand.

b. Culture and subcultures

Culture is the combination of values, beliefs, ideas and symbols shared by the members of a national society (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010:42). Its impact on individual consumer actions can be linked to the societal norms required of the individual for acceptable behaviour. For example, many advertisements for the 2010 Soccer World Cup in South Africa featured typical South African culture portrayals.

Subcultures are smaller identifiable groups within a national culture. These can be divided into those that are based on nationality, religion, geographical area, ethnicity, age, occupation, social class and gender (Schiffman & Kanuk 2007:423). Advertisers use subcultural depictions in advertisements, such as the *Kulula.com* advertisements that portray people from Port Elizabeth (who are seen as very friendly), visiting Gauteng where there is a more stand-offish subculture.

c. Demographics and social class

Demographics can be defined as the characteristics of a population, such as its age, occupation and income profile (Blythe, 2008:368). It plays a role in segmentation and marketing mix decisions. For example, cosmetics are aimed at females in particular age groups, and product lines range from relatively cheap to very expensive for the high-income groups.

Social class is the division of society into groups with homogeneous social status, a hierarchy where members of one class have more or less status than the other classes.

Wells *et al.* (2006:129) link social class to factors such as income, occupation, family prestige and educational qualifications. Marketers use social class descriptors in advertisement portrayals for products aimed at specific social classes. In this way, *Standard Bank's Achiever Banking* package was advertised by showing a wide variety of people accessing a private club that used to be the domain of wealthy older people, as illustrated by a wealthy older woman in the advertisement.

Consumers connect with brands that use advertising portrayals to which they can relate. Marketers use the socio-cultural determinants of consumer behaviour in segmentation and to create applicable advertising depictions. The organisation's marketing mix is used to influence the consumer.

d. Organisational influences (the four Ps)

The organisation uses the marketing mix to provide need-satisfying products at a price and in a place where the target market can easily access them. The product offering is promoted through advertising messages. The marketing mix consists of product, price, distribution and promotion. These elements were described in Section 2.2. Advertising, as a part of promotion, impacts strongly on consumer behaviour.

e. Advertising and consumer behaviour

Wells *et al.* (2006:145) assert that there is a link between the consumer decision-making process and advertising. Advertising impacts on the consumer by providing information on which the consumer can make a purchase decision. Wells *et al.* (2006:145) refer to the following roles that advertising play in some of the stages of the consumer decision-making process, illustrated in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 The role that advertising play in the consumer decision-making process

Consumer decision-making process	Advertising's role
Need recognition	Arouse or stimulate the need
Pre-purchase information search	Provide information
Alternative evaluation	Distinguishes between alternatives' features
Post-purchase evaluation	Reduces dissonance

Source: Integrated from Wells *et al.* (2006:145).

Advertising makes consumers aware of alternatives that will serve a need or solve a problem. It also provides the consumer with information on various features of the product and where it may be purchased. In some cases, price information is also provided. Image advertising differentiates the organisation's brands and positions them relative to competing brands. The aim is to set the brand apart in the mind of the consumer so that it will be seen as superior to any competing alternatives.

Marketers are aware of the fact that consumers might suffer from cognitive dissonance; and advertising can decrease dissonance and assure the consumer that they have made the best purchase decision (Neal *et al.*, 2007:190). Advertising reinforces the positive emotions of a purchaser and aims to negate any dissonance and post-purchase guilt.

In conclusion, several factors impact on the behaviour of consumers, including individual and external determinants. The organisation can only control the marketing aspects of its own offerings in order to affect the consumer. Most advertising featuring females is aimed at women consumers, and is therefore important to the current study.

2.6 SUMMARY

The primary focus of this chapter has been on the theory of marketing communications, which was contextualised by commencing with a brief overview of the marketing strategy of the organisation. This was followed by establishing the role and place of promotion in the marketing mix. The promotional element of the marketing mix consists of various means that are applied to reach the communication objectives. As communication is crucial in promotion, the process of communication has been elaborated on at some length.

The explanation of the promotional element included discussions on the tools used by marketers in developing the promotional mix, namely advertising, public relations, sales promotions, personal selling, direct marketing, events and sponsorship marketing, in addition to Internet marketing. Advertising, which is the focus of the study, has been described in detail, including the objectives, functions, roles and classification thereof.

The channel or medium through which the advertising message is sent is crucial to advertising effectiveness, and warranted a closer investigation. The different advertising media available to marketers have all been examined, namely print, broadcasting, outdoor and interactive media. A detailed discussion of magazines and television as advertising media was provided as these are important to the current study.

The last section of the chapter featured an overview of consumer behaviour. The consumer's decision-making process and the influencing factors on consumer behaviour were discussed. The link between advertising and consumer behaviour was also examined.

In Chapter 3, the creative process of advertisements and commercials will be discussed. A description of the various types of characters used in advertising, as well as character selection will be given. The roles and depictions of female characters in advertising will also be described in greater detail.