BRANDING TELEVISION

Catherine Johnson

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FOR ROB

ABBREVIATIONS

A&E	Arts & Entertainment
ABC	American Broadcasting Company
BARB	Broadcasters' Audience Research Board
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDB	British Digital Broadcasting
BFI	British Film Institute
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
DBS	direct broadcast satellite
DOG(s)	digital on-screen graphic(s)
DTB	digital terrestrial broadcasting
DTN	Digital Television Network
DVD	digital versatile disk
DVR	digital video recorder
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
GPO	General Post Office
GPS	global positioning system
HBO	Home Box Office
HBOIP	HBO Independent Productions
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority
ID(s)	ident(s)
IPP(s)	in programme pointer(s)
ITC	Independent Television Commission
ITV	Independent Television
LWT	London Weekend Television
MTV	Music Television
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NFC	National Football Conference
NFL	National Football League
NTL	National Transcommunications Limited
PSB(s)	public service broadcasting
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
S-DMB	satellite digital multimedia broadcasting

The WB	Warner Bros TV
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
UHF	ultra-high frequency
UK	United Kingdom
UNM	United News and Media
UPN	United Paramount Network
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
US/ A	United States/ of America
VCR	videocassette recorder
VH1	Video Hits One
VHS	video home system
VOD	video on demand
WASE	Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment
WGA	Writers Guild of America

INTRODUCTION – BUT TELEVISION'S NOT SOAP!

Approaching television branding

In 2009 Channel 4 produced a trailer for its on-demand service 4oD. In the advert a young man entered a convenience store whose shelves were filled with popular Channel 4 programmes represented as branded consumer goods. Working-class comedy drama *Shameless* (2004–) appeared as a four-pack of lager, cooking show *Come Dine with Me* (2005–) as flour, teen drama *Skins* (2007–) as Pot Noodle, and older shows such as *Brookside* (1982–2003) and *Vic Reeves' Big Night Out* (1990–91) as frozen produce. The advert made explicit the dramatic changes that television had undergone over the previous three decades. Once a broadcast medium dominated by a handful of national channels broadcasting linear schedules into the home, by 2009 there were hundreds of channels and, if you did not want to watch a programme when it was broadcast, you could download it and watch it later on your computer or portable media device. The positioning of television programmes as branded consumer products in this trailer for one of these new on-demand services is perhaps unsurprising given the emergence of branding as a strategy to respond to the challenges and complexities of this new television landscape. John Thornton Caldwell has argued that '"Branding" has emerged as a central concern of the television industry in the age of digital convergence' (2004: 305), while Rogers *et al.* (2002: 48) claim that the new 'digital era' of television 'must be considered the age of brand marketing'. Television corporations now have brand strategies and television channels are being constructed with brand identities that are conveyed through logos, slogans and trailers. Even programmes are now being constructed as brands designed to encourage audience loyalty and engagement with the text beyond the act of television viewing.

However, despite the proclamations that television has entered a 'world full of brands' (Ellis 2000: 165), the adoption of branding by the television industries is by no means straightforward or uncontested. If we return to the 4oD trailer, it is striking that, even though an awning with the URL 'Channel4.com' does fall open as the man leaves the shop at the end of the advert, the store that contains all these branded programmes is simply named 'Convenience'. If television programmes are branded here, the new television service being promoted is not a branded supermarket chain, but a generic (and slightly down-at-heel) local convenience store or corner shop. In some ways this mirrors Simone Murray's (2005: 422) argument that media conglomerates have attempted to shift public perception of them from being a 'household brand' to being a 'house of brands' in order to obscure increasingly concentrated ties of ownership. Here, Channel 4 situates itself as a local, small and accessible business, rather than a large corporate branded supermarket chain. Yet the 4oD trailer also reveals an anxiety about how branding should be applied to television in the digital era. Sanjay Nazerali (former marketing director for MTV Europe) argues that there is little evidence to justify the money spent on branding channels and that television has specific attributes that make branding less useful than in the consumer goods industries: 'Television channels aren't really products. Our consumers aren't really consumers – they're viewers. They don't directly pay for us (except in rare pay-per-view cases), don't watch us (they watch our programmes) and they don't use us to describe themselves.' (Nazerali 2003: 30). While the television programme, therefore, seems relatively open to being recast as a branded consumer good within an on-demand environment, 'television' itself seems resistant to the logics of branding. If the digital era of television is the 'age of brand marketing', we need to ask what is being branded here, and how. Indeed, despite the increasingly widespread references to branding in both the industry press and academia, the uses and meanings of 'television branding' are often taken for granted. A central aim of this book is to correct this by offering a sustained examination of how and why branding has been used by the television industries in the USA and the UK.

What Is branding?

Celia Lury (2004) argues that the role of branding in contemporary industrialized societies can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century, when branding began to be used by soap manufacturers as a means of product differentiation. The branding of soap through packaging was a strategy designed to convey a set of attributes that distinguished the branded soap from other generic soap products. Effectively, consumers were not simply buying soap, but were purchasing a set of attributes created by the packaging of the soap. As such, the brand conveyed certain qualities to the consumer and acted as a guarantee of the origin of the product, providing product differentiation and offering reliability and enhanced consumer loyalty. These early examples of branding were intended to enable the producer to circumvent the retailer and speak directly to the consumer, although soon enough retail outlets began to emerge as brands in themselves, sometimes with their own branded products.[1]

Broader shifts within the retail industries over the second half of the twentieth century altered the ways in which branding was used and increased the importance of branding as an industrial strategy. Lury notes that in the post-war period, marketing became increasingly integrated into production, legitimated by the development of marketing science and consumer research and the rise of self-service outlets (such as supermarkets) in which the product needed to speak directly to the consumer (2004: 22–23). Marketing is particularly concerned with communicating directly with the consumer, and the integration of marketing into the production process therefore altered the understanding of the relationship between producers and consumers. Emphasis shifted towards designing and marketing products based on research into the experiences of the consumer. The design and style of the product became as important as its functionality as a way of communicating the value and identity of the product to the consumer (see Lury 2004: 24–25). The function of branding in this new environment shifted from simply indicating product origin and inviting consumer loyalty, to communicating shared values between producer, product and consumer. The purchase of a branded product, therefore, did not simply provide reliability, but also became a way in which the consumer adopted the values conveyed through the brand. For example, if I were to purchase a Nike trainer, I would not simply be getting a reliable piece of footwear; I would also be buying into a set of values about individuality, determination, dynamism and cool conveyed by the brand. Hence, branding emerged as a means of managing the complex relationships between the consumer, the product purchased and the producer (and sometimes retailer) of that product.

Adam Arvidsson argues that the development of these new marketing practices was tied to the emergence of electronic media and, in particular, television (2006: 23–25). Television and other electronic media provided a means through which consumers could learn about the symbolic and use value of new products (Jansson 2002: 10). At the same time, and particularly over the 1950s and 1960s, the use of consumer goods to construct social relationships and identities became more visible, whether in the development of youth cultures or the pressures on the suburban family to 'keep up with the Joneses'. Arvidsson argues that media culture fills consumer goods with meanings that have the potential to 'enable their user to think him- or herself different' (2006: 39). However, as the increased mediatization of consumption placed more emphasis on the symbolic dimensions of consumer goods and their productive uses by consumers, it also opened up the meanings associated with products to contestation. As a consequence, constructing and maintaining a 'brand image' that communicated the symbolic dimensions of the product became more central to the marketing of consumer goods.

However, for branding to be successful, these symbolic dimensions added to the product have to be accepted by the consumer. Thus, branding depends on interactivity, two-way communication, between the consumer and producer. Yet this interactivity is not open or equal. Rather, branding attempts to shape, control and/or manage the values attributed to products and, through this, the uses to which the product is put. Branding is therefore much more than simply an element of design and packaging added to a product. Rather, the brand needs to be understood as a 'new media object' (Lury 2004: 6): a form of mediated and dynamic communication that constantly frames and reframes the relationships between producers, products and consumers. As Lury argues, 'the account of activities of the marketers ... does not adequately describe the brand' (2004: 51). Indeed, Lury argues that accounting for the activities of all of the different constituencies that might engage with the interface of the brand (designers, marketers, producers, consumers) would not adequately describe the brand because it would fail to acknowledge the brand as 'a complex, indeterminate or open object' (ibid.). While it might not be possible to pinpoint a specific determining definition of a brand, however, we can trace the different and changing ways in which the brand functions as an interface within culture in order to understand how it operates as a cultural artefact.

Yet, if television was central in the development of the branding of consumer goods, what about the branding of television itself? One of the difficulties with applying branding to television is the nature of television as a medium. Sylvia M. Chan-Olmsted argues that 'On the surface, ... branding and brand management notions ... appear to be not as applicable to the broadcasting industry due to the diverse and continuous nature of its product (programming) and lack of specific product attributes as well as easily identifiable product logos' (2001: 78). Broadcast television produces programmes that are ordered and transmitted as a schedule through television channels by specific broadcasters. Essentially what is provided is the *experience* of watching television. Within the consumer goods industries branding emerged to manage the relationships between the producer, product and consumer. In the television industry the channel that aggregates the consumer's experience of the television programme adds an additional layer to the relationships between producer, product and viewer. While in the consumer goods industry it is the product (and occasionally the corporation) that is branded, within the television industry the product is potentially both the television programme and the channel (or other service/medium) through which that programme is viewed. As such, we can think of three areas where branding might be adopted by television broadcasters: corporations, channels/services and programmes.[2]

Practices associated with branding have been used in the USA and UK from the start of television broadcasting in each of these areas. The BBC adopted a coat of arms shortly after receiving its first Royal Charter in 1927 that symbolized its public purpose and acted as a form of corporate branding. It utilized the colours associated with the three non-English national regions of the UK (blue for Scotland, red for Wales and green for Northern Ireland) and depicted two eagles with bugles around their necks between a shield

with a globe and stars to symbolize the breadth of the corporation's public broadcasting. Along the bottom of the coat of arms is the motto: 'nation shall speak peace unto nation', exemplifying the national purpose upon which the BBC's charter was based. Films designed to communicate the work of the BBC to the public were also produced in this period, such as the General Post Office Film Unit's impressionistic documentary *The Voice of Britain* (1935) and the BBC-produced promotional film *This is the BBC* (1959), which followed the corporation's activities for a day.

It was not until the early 1950s that the BBC developed a logo specifically for its television service. Indeed, the use of logos for television channels only really emerged in the UK in 1955, when the arrival of ITV provided competition for the BBC's television service for the first time. ITV was made up of a number of regional companies which used idents (short films transmitted in between programmes that animated their channel logos) to distinguish their services. In the USA, the national networks and local stations also developed channel logos (referred to as station IDs) to distinguish themselves from their rivals.[3] However, the characteristics of the television industries in the USA and the UK at this time limited the usefulness of channel branding. In the USA from the mid-1950s to the mid-1980s the national networks had an oligopoly on broadcasting. The networks endeavoured to attract undifferentiated mass audiences and it was common practice for a network to imitate the programming innovations of its rivals. Any brand identity that was too specific or too defined could potentially alienate viewers, and so branding functioned primarily as a shorthand device for indicating the general identity of a network. Similarly, the same period in the UK was characterized by a duopoly between the BBC and ITV, both regulated by a similar public service remit. Within the US network oligopoly and UK duopoly there was little competition between television channels, and so little value in conceiving of and promoting the television channel as a branded product. In this context, branding emerged primarily as the adoption of channel logos that functioned to differentiate and distinguish each channel.[4]

The public service ethos behind British television at this time also militated against the adoption of branding as a cultural form that emerged within the marketplace (Lury 2004: 4). The associations of branding and marketing with the promotion of products within a marketplace to enhance profits pulls against the public service ethos of broadcasting as a social good provided by broadcasters as trustees of the airwaves. Indeed, the negative associations of branding with marketization even extended to the US networks. John Thornton Caldwell argues that the networks promoted themselves to the US government as caretakers of the airwaves as part of a strategic move to protect the government-sanctioned network oligopoly.[5]

> Early on the networks exploited one side of their dualistic identity (lobbying for trusteeship with regulators), even though they

effectively and simultaneously sold themselves to viewers (as branded producers of entertainment). This tension between branding and trusteeship has existed in American network television from the start.
(Caldwell 2004: 306)

The ephemeral nature of broadcasting also militated against the adoption of programme branding. Much early television was produced and transmitted live, and so did not exist separately from its broadcast on a television channel. Even when broadcasters adopted recording technologies over the 1950s and 1960s, a significant proportion of television production (particularly in the UK) was as-live, and the BBC famously wiped vast swathes of its own archives in the 1960s and 1970s (see Fiddy 2001). The trade in rights to television programmes from the 1940s and (from the mid-1950s) the trade in programmes on film (and later on videotape) did construct the programme itself as a product that could be branded (see Johnson 2009 and Santo 2010).[6] However, at this time such practices were not central to the television industries in the USA and UK whose primary source of revenue was the sale of spot advertising (or the licence fee in the case of the BBC).

Therefore, although it is possible to identify practices associated with branding from the 1940s to the 1970s, and although this is the period within which branding emerges as key to the consumer goods industries in the USA and the UK, the nature of broadcast television and the industries within which it was produced worked against the adoption of television branding. Yet, by the mid-1990s the trade press in the USA and the UK were proclaiming branding as essential to the television industry. The first two parts of this book will examine in detail the reasons why branding was adopted in the USA and the UK from the 1980s. In doing so, it will examine the impact of the deregulation and marketization of television, the rise of new technologies that displaced broadcasting as the central experience of television and the emergence of branding as a broader cultural strategy that extended well beyond the consumer goods industries into areas of public life.

Television history and periodization

The changes that have taken place in the US and UK television industries since the late 1970s raise the thorny problem of periodization. To what extent is it possible to argue that over the 1980s television entered a new and distinct period in its history? There are a number of different models for understanding the periodic shifts in television history. John Ellis (2000) argues that television has developed over three distinct eras: those of scarcity, availability and plenty. In the era of scarcity television developed as a key component of consumer society, but was characterized by a relatively small number of channels and broadcasters. The growth of satellite and cable in the late 1970s and early 1980s ushered in a new era of availability, in

which television services were expanded. This expansion was intensified in the era of plenty that emerged at the end of the 1990s when digital technologies vastly increased viewers' choices and the old model of broadcasting came under threat.

If Ellis's model highlights the gradually increasing channels and platforms through which television has been distributed, Rogers, Epstein and Reeves's (2002) model of TVI, TVII and TVIII (developed in relation to US television and largely corresponding to Ellis's periodizations) focuses on how television is funded and distributed. In the era of TVI, the three-network oligopoly dominated the production, distribution and transmission of television programmes. Television was a mass medium funded through the sale of advertising based on total audience ratings. Over the 1970s certain demographics started to emerge as particularly valuable for advertisers and broadcasters (such as the youth market). The turn towards demographics was accentuated with the emergence of cable and satellite television over the 1980s as significant competition for the networks, partly as a consequence of deregulation. This ushered in the era of TVII in which the network oligopoly was broken and new niche cable networks introduced demographics as core to the ways in which advertisers paid for airtime. However, Rogers *et al.* argue that the eras of TVI and TVII were both characterized by the dominance of second-order commodity relations in which most television was paid for indirectly by consumption of the products advertised on air. They argue that the era of TVIII, from the late 1990s, can be characterized by the emergence of first-order commodity relations in which viewers can pay directly for television, either through premium subscription channels or through new on-demand services.

While the eras of TVI, TVII and TVIII usefully outline key changes to US television, a perhaps more descriptive way of periodizing the same shifts is that adopted by Amanda Lotz, who describes these changes as a move from the 'network era' (late-1950s to mid-1980s), to a period of 'multi-channel transition' (mid-1980s to mid-2000s), into the 'post-network era' that began in the mid-2000s. As with Rogers *et al.*, Lotz sees continuities between the network era and the period from the mid-1980s onwards when the network oligopoly was challenged. However, she argues that from the mid-2000s a new era has begun to emerge in which 'different industrial practices are becoming dominant and replacing those of the network era' (2007a: 7–8). One difficulty with the models of both Rogers *et al.* and Lotz is that they are based solely on the US context and so cannot account for a key shift in most public service contexts, which is the emergence of the first non-public service channels in the 1980s and 1990s. By contrast, Ellis' model tends to flatten out nationally specific developments in television while drawing largely from British public service broadcasting.

One of the ways in which this book attempts to avoid being too parochial on the one hand or too generalist on the other is to adopt a comparative approach. Focusing on the USA and the UK enables comparison between two different models of organizing and funding television – commercial and public service – from two nations with advanced television industries. There are some limitations with this approach, not least the Western-centric focus of looking solely at the USA and the UK. Yet, there are some benefits in that these two industries faced a very similar set of changes over the 1980s and 1990s. They therefore offer useful cases for comparing the impact of these changes in commercial and public service contexts. This is particularly important for a study of branding in television because branding, as we have seen, is associated with the increasing conflation of consumerism and marketization. As a consequence, while the adoption of branding might seem a logical strategy in the commercially competitive environment of US television, it is potentially more problematic for the UK's public service broadcasters. This raises the question of what functions branding might serve in the different contexts of US and UK television and the extent to which branding strategies can be used to serve commercial and/or public service aims.

The difficulty for such an approach is to develop a historical model that enables comparison between the UK and US contexts while simultaneously allowing exploration of the national specificities of each industry. It is for this reason that I have chosen to adopt a fourth model in circulation within histories of television that argues for the development of television through three eras: broadcast, cable/satellite, and digital. The primary reason for choosing this terminology lays with the focus in this book on the television industries, and specifically television broadcasters, themselves. Thus, while Ellis' model of scarcity, availability and plenty usefully describes many of the changes outlined here, the terminology reveals his driving interest in the social function and place of television. By contrast, the focus of this book is on examining how and why television broadcasters in the USA and UK have adopted a particular industrial strategy – branding. Although this will involve examining brands as new media objects (as argued above), this book is particularly interested in asking why the television industries in each context adopted this particular strategy at this particular moment in history and what this might tell us about how the television industry and the products and services that they produce are changing.

However, in adopting periodizations drawn from technological shifts (the move from television as a medium of broadcasting to the rise of cable, satellite and then digital technologies), the intention is not to posit a technologically determinist understanding of the historical development of television. Technology does not determine historical change, because the socio-cultural and industrial significance of any technology is shaped by policy, market conditions and broader social and cultural factors. Yet, at the same time, television is a technology and its historical development has been fundamentally affected by technological developments. Indeed, attempts to delineate the specificity of television are always bound by an understanding

of the technological possibilities (or limits) of the medium (see Carroll 2003). While, therefore, television is a cultural medium of communication, it is also, essentially, a piece of technology. As such, this book uses the broadcast, cable/satellite and digital eras to refer to the political, industrial and socio-cultural factors shaping the changes brought about by the adoption of new technologies that altered the nature of television and the industries that produce it.

A key reason for my emphasis on the technological basis of television as a medium lies in my hypothesis that the fundamental shift that began in the 1980s was the gradual challenge to the centrality of broadcasting to our understanding of television as a medium. As argued above, from its introduction (in the 1930s in the UK, the 1940s in the USA and later across much of the rest of the world), television was conceptualized as a medium of broadcasting.[7] This has shaped the ways in which television has been studied, regulated, produced and consumed. The challenge to broadcasting began in the 1980s with the increasing dominance of cable television in the USA and the emergence of satellite as competition to the public service broadcasters in the UK. As will be explored in more depth in the first two parts of this book, cable and satellite undermine some of the fundamental assumptions about television as a broadcast medium: that television cannot be paid for at the point of reception, that television is a medium of the masses, that television is a national medium. These challenges are amplified with the emergence of digital television. By 2010 television was no longer the set in the corner of the living room broadcasting an ephemeral linear schedule to an undifferentiated mass audience. The emergence of new platforms and technologies that allow viewers to download programmes on demand and circumvent the traditional channels and broadcasters seems to threaten the future of television altogether. While the range of academic publications exploring the 'end of television' have usefully challenged the extent to which these changes will be the death knell of broadcasting, in the digital era broadcasting is no longer adequate as a way of describing television.[8]

This book is therefore centrally concerned with exploring this fundamental change in the very nature of television as a medium, arguing that branding, as a key industrial shift over the period, offers a useful lens for examining the changes that threaten to undermine our conceptualization of this once-familiar technology. However, it is important to raise a number of caveats here. First, it is worth returning to the issue of periodization. The emergence of cable, satellite and digital technologies is significantly different in the US and UK contexts. This is particularly the case with cable and satellite. In the USA, cable began to offer competition to the broadcast networks over the 1980s. By contrast, in the UK it was not until the very end of the 1980s that satellite services emerged to compete with the terrestrial channels, and cable has taken far longer to develop as a mature industry. Furthermore, the development of satellite and cable in the UK had the additional significance of introducing television services not regulated under a public service remit for the first time. In many ways then, the most significant aspect of the emergence of satellite and cable in the UK was the broader political context that threatened public service broadcasting, rather than the actual competition for viewers that these new services presented. Similarly, while the new cable channels in the USA did threaten the network oligopoly, it is arguably the emergence of large media conglomerates that brought the networks and cable channels under the same corporation that has had the most impact on the television industry. Therefore, although we can usefully distinguish a broadcast, cable/satellite and digital era in each context, they are not necessarily temporally the same. In the USA, the cable/satellite era begins in the 1980s, but needs to be understood within the context of a history of cable extending back to the 1940s. In the UK, the cable/satellite era only begins in the late 1980s, but the impact of the political shifts that brought about this technological change need to be traced back over the 1980s.

Not only, therefore, are these periodizations nationally specific, they also need to be understood as fluid analytical constructions rather than fixed temporal schema. Indeed, one of the difficulties in writing about the present is being unable to step back and gain a critical perspective on the changes that are taking place around us. This makes it far harder to pinpoint key moments of change when it is impossible to know the full significance or impact of that change. Central then to the approach taken within this book is the argument that, to understand the present, we need to take a historical approach in order to trace the significance of the changes that have taken place to television. While this book focuses primarily on the period from the 1980s to 2010, when broadcasting as a dominant model for television came under threat, there is the need for further historical work that traces the historical precedents for the changes witnessed in television over the past 30 years and challenges the dominant assumptions about the broadcast era of television. It is hoped that this book will be a spur to such work.

Branding and television

These differences in the development of television have shaped the structure of this book. Parts I and II focus on the changes in the US and UK television industries in order to examine why branding emerges as an industrial strategy over the cable/satellite and digital eras. Chapter 1 traces the development of branding over the cable/satellite era in the USA, exploring the emergence of channel branding within the cable industry in the early 1980s and tracing its adoption by the US networks over the 1980s and 1990s. Chapter 2 then focuses more specifically on the digital era (from the late-1990s) and the particular problems and issues that this has raised about the use of branding within the US television industry. Part II then shifts focus from the USA to the UK. Chapter 3 focuses on the more commercial companies within

British broadcasting and examines their adoption of branding from the 1980s to the 2000s. Chapter 4 then looks more specifically at the challenges faced by the UK's public service broadcasters within a hostile political climate and with the introduction of non-public service commercial television for the first time. This chapter will address the specific debates raised by the use of branding within a public service context and ask whether the adoption of branding is indicative of the marketization of public service broadcasting in the UK. The first two parts of this book offer a detailed account of the development of US and UK television from the 1980s to 2010 and the (often varied and complex) ways in which branding was adopted by broadcasters within each industry over this period.

However, in order to examine brands as new media objects, it is necessary to look beyond branding as a feature of the industries that produce television to examine it as a feature of the texts of television themselves, which is the aim of Part III of this book. While textual studies of television have tended to focus on the programme, Chapter 5 examines channel and service brands by analysing the interstitial spaces between programmes (both on air and online) to explore how they function to manage the relationships between producers, viewers and the different texts and platforms that now encompass television as a medium. By contrast, Chapter 6 focuses on programme brands, arguing that branding theory can help us to analyse the extended texts of television that now co-exist across a range of media. Branding emerges as a strategy for the US and UK television industries over a period of significant change, when the very nature of television as a broadcast medium comes under threat. The final chapter returns to some of the issues raised here about applying branding to television in order to develop a theorization of television branding.

Methodologically, this book combines analysis of primary sources such as industry, trade and press documents, audio-visual materials and interviews, with critical interrogation of secondary historical and theoretical texts drawn from the fields of television and film studies, media, management, cultural studies and sociology. Some interviews with industry personnel have been undertaken to gain insight into the processes of brand creation, but the research focuses on primary sources such as annual reports, trade magazines, print and multimedia texts, as these are the means through which brand strategies are constructed, conveyed and explained publicly and they provide the best evidence of *how* television industries have used branding. In doing so, this book aims to further our understanding of the changes wrought by the adoption of cable, satellite and digital technologies and to offer a critical theorization of the uses of branding by television broadcasters. Just as branding emerges as a tool for the television industries to manage the new landscape of the digital era, this book argues that examining the uses of branding within television can help us to understand the ways in which the television industries and the nature of television itself as a medium have changed over the past 30 years.

Notes

1 See Celia Lury (2004: 18–28) for a history of branding from the mid-nineteenth century when, she argues, 'branding becomes a visible force in the organisation of production in industrialised countries' (2004: 18–19).

2 While this book focuses on the adoption of branding by television broadcasters, brand strategies extend to other aspects of the television industry, such as production companies and stars. There is certainly the need for further work that considers how branding functions more widely across the television industry and how these brands interact with the corporate, channel/service and programme brands of broadcasters examined here.

3 See Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of the history of channel idents and station IDs.

4 One difference between the USA and the UK is that the public service remits of the UK broadcasters did contribute to the construction of more distinct identities. For example, ITV has been commonly associated with populist programming (largely because it was funded by advertising and despite the fact that it was regulated by the same public service remit as the BBC), whereas the BBC has at times been seen as both avuncular and staid (occasioning the feminized moniker 'Auntie').

5 The attempts by the networks to construct a corporate identity as trustees of the airwaves could, ironically, be seen as a form of corporate branding in itself. Indeed, Chapter 4 will complicate the negative association of branding with marketization through an examination of branding by the UK public service broadcasters, Channel 4 and the BBC.

6 In its negotiations around the sale of rights to its programming in the 1940s and 1950s the BBC was adopting practices akin to brand management, such as attempting to control the uses and meanings attributed to its programming in order to protect its corporate image (Johnson 2009). Avi Santo has examined the licensing and merchandising of the television series, *Batman* (ABC, 1965–67) and *The Green Hornet* (ABC, 1966), which were managed as cross-media brands (Santo 2010). Paul Grainge argues that Disney's development of television series for ABC in the 1950s could also be understood as an early example of brand marketing in the television industry (2008: 44).

7 This is not to argue that television was simply a medium of broadcasting in this period. Indeed, one of the interesting consequences of the changes that have taken place to television over the past 30 years is that the new ideas emerging about television have provided television historians with new models with which to challenge our assumptions about television's past. My own work on the trade in rights at the BBC in the 1940s and 1950s stemmed largely from work on the increasing significance of rights in the contemporary television industry and the need to question how new these practices actually were (see Johnson 2009).

8 See for example, Graeme Turner and Jinna Tay (2009) and Lynn Spigel and Jan Olsson (2004).

Part I

BRANDING AND THE US TELEVISION INDUSTRY