



Media Release
Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

Release Date: 9th March 2011

BAI ANNOUNCES DECISION TO PERMIT PAID PRODUCT PLACEMENT ON IRISH TELEVISION

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (“BAI”) has today (9th March) announced the decision to permit paid product placement on Irish television. The change is one of a number to be included in the BAI’s revised General and Children’s Commercial Communications Codes. The revised Codes will be published in the coming weeks and will take effect from **Monday 2nd May 2011**. The changes have been made following consideration of submissions received on foot of a public consultation completed last January.

Commenting on the changes to be introduced, BAI Chief Executive Michael O’Keeffe said, “The way in which Irish audiences watch television is changing and it is therefore appropriate that the BAI updates its rules to permit paid product placement. At the same time, paid product placement must be strongly regulated to ensure that the integrity and independence of programmes and programme makers is maintained. It is for this reason that paid product placement will be prohibited in a range of programmes and will only be acceptable when it complies with a broad range of rules intended to protect the interests of the audiences”.

Summary of decisions

Paid Product Placement

The BAI has decided to:

- Permit paid product placement in the following programme genres: films (cinema releases and films made for television), sport, dramas (excluding docu-dramas) and light entertainment programmes (excluding certain types of talk/chat shows);
- Permit paid product placement on all television services i.e. community, commercial and public service broadcasters;
- Permit sponsors of television programmes to place their products and services in programmes that they sponsor, except in the case of children’s programmes.

Restrictions:

The BAI has decided to:

- Prohibit paid product placement in all other programme genres, including children's programmes and talk/chat shows containing more than 20% of news and current affairs content on a regular basis;
- Apply the general and specific rules of the BAI's commercial communications codes to all product placement arrangements.

Audience Notification

The BAI has decided to:

- Require broadcasters to comply with additional obligations relating to the manner in which audiences are notified that a programme they are watching contains product placement. Broadcasters are currently required to display a logo containing the letters PP before, and during, programmes containing product placement. They must also list in the end credits the names of companies that have provided products and services included in a programme.
- They will now be required to include a written announcement before such programmes and to promote to audiences, on- and off-air, the measures it uses to notify audiences that a programme contains product placement.

-ENDS-

Media Queries

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Note to Editors:

Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

The objectives of the BAI, as set out in Section 25(1) of the 2009 Act are:

- to ensure that the number and categories of broadcasting services made available in the State best serve the needs of the people of the island of Ireland, bearing in mind their languages and traditions and their religious, ethical and cultural diversity;
- to ensure that the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution especially those relating to rightful liberty of expression, are upheld, and;
- to provide for open and pluralistic broadcasting services.

The BAI incorporates work previously undertaken by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland (BCI) and the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (BCC).