

# The new era of product placement

By [Kevin Lew](#)

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In this "new normal" that we are going through, we are all having to stay at home. Foodie fans are having fun exploring new creative ways to cook for our loved ones, in our own kitchens. The old adage is very true these days - what do you do for fun?...we bake!



Photo by [Edgar Castrejon](#) on [Unsplash](#).

With social media being filled with banana bread recipes and "what's for dinner" posts, we have become a nation of novice chefs. As we stay home and watch more TV, we can get inspired from a variety of TV shows such as *Britain's Best Home Cook*, *Come Dine With Me SA*, *The Great British Bake Off*, and not to mention the Food Network that offers inspiration 24/7.

Imagine then if we could somehow get our brands in the faces of these foodie consumers in a subtle way, becoming top-of-mind, and encouraging them to use our products now and then into the future. Product placement is a great way to do this! We recently partnered with Siba Mtongana's new TV show, *Siba's Bites*, on the Food Network and integrated a client's product offering into the show by getting Siba to use them as she showed off her innovative cooking ideas.



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As with many traditional product placement campaigns, there was a lot of planning, long lead times, and logistical issues in getting products couriered to the filming location – in this case, all over the world! This was a successful sponsorship campaign and the product integration allowed our client's brand to become a part of the programming content, giving them loads of exposure, and ensuring that consumers couldn't miss our communication.

But there are other solutions to explore beyond traditional product placement. The digital age has brought with it many solutions that can help products get integrated into media content. Two of these options currently available are Foodies of South Africa and Whisper Media.

- Foodies of South Africa is the largest local foodie network on social media. They create great quality content across their social channels, using a variety of recipes and products. They use client products very subtly yet effectively, showcasing the products in an entertaining environment that inspires consumers to put the brand on their shopping list. This content can even be hosted on the clients' digital channels as well.
- Whisper Media is an innovative media company helps to put any brand on TV... even if they don't have the budget normally needed for TV advertising. The brand doesn't even need a TV commercial! Whisper Media is able to digitally insert a brand into local TV content, post-production. No massive budget required, no long lead times, and no logistics of trying to get product delivered to the producers! Imagine you are watching *The Queen* on Mzansi Magic or *Generations* on SABC 1, and in the background, there is a billboard, or a branded bus, or a storefront, or even a TV screen showing the brand. Or in a scene where the actors are having a coffee break, a branded coffee mug is being used. This is all done digitally, but in a subtle way that the viewer wouldn't know that it isn't real. This cost-effective and clever marketing tool can assist advertisers in getting their brands onto the biggest screen in the home at a fraction of the cost of a traditional product placement campaign. Whisper Media is being integrated into Telmar so we will be able to measure campaign performance as we would a standard TV commercial, measuring ratings, CPPs, reach and frequency.

So, hopefully, this has given you some food for thought and may the "new normal" be a time to explore innovative, and fun ways to talk to your consumers!

## ABOUT KEVIN LEVY

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