

***Sensoriality in the Upside Down:  
The Construction of the Senses through Cross-Mediality and  
Spatiality in Stranger Things Advertising***

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# ***Sensoriality in the Upside Down:***

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the contemporary advertising and entertainment landscape, creating deeply immersive and engaging experiences is crucial. This research explores the integration of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality in the marketing campaigns of the Netflix series '*Stranger Things*'. The rapid evolution of digital marketing has led to increasingly sophisticated advertising strategies, making it crucial to understand how these campaigns engage audiences on multiple sensory levels. This study aims to answer the research question of how immersive advertising can blur the boundaries between reality and fiction to create deeply immersive experiences. The central research question guiding this investigation is, "How is sensoriality constructed through cross-mediality and spatiality in *Stranger Things* advertising?" To answer this question, the study examines four main campaigns: '*Stranger Things: The Experience*', '*Lyft Partnership - Strange Mode*', the 2022 Out-of-Home (OOH) campaign and the '*Global Rift Takeover*' campaign. Each campaign is analysed through a qualitative lens, employing visual analysis and sensory ethnography to capture the intricate ways in which these marketing strategies engage the senses and create a cohesive narrative experience.

The results reveal that these campaigns effectively utilise sensory and spatial elements to evoke 80s nostalgia, create immersive environments and blur the line between reality and fiction. The use of neon lights, 80s music and themed foods such as Eggo waffles and Scoops Ahoy ice cream, along with the detailed recreation of iconic locations from the series, help create a deeply immersive and emotionally resonant experience for the audience. The research concludes that integrating sensory and spatial elements into cross-media campaigns significantly increases audience engagement, turning passive viewers into active participants. This study contributes to the broader field of media and creative industries by highlighting the importance of multisensory and spatial strategies in contemporary advertising. It suggests that future campaigns should continue to explore these elements to create more engaging and memorable experiences.

**KEYWORDS:** Sensoriality, Spatiality, Cross-Mediality, Experiential Marketing, Embodiment

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## 1. Introduction

In a time when advertisements transcend traditional boundaries to create immersive experiences, the captivating appeal of Netflix's *Stranger Things* campaigns invites us to explore the dynamic world of cross-media advertising. Despite the show's widespread praise and nostalgic appeal, academic investigation into the intricate sensory and spatial aspects of its advertising is limited. Past studies have focused on the nostalgia evoked by the show's 1980s backdrop, but little attention has been given to the sensory experiences intertwined with its narrative (Dodd, 2021, p.133-135; Griffith, 2022, p. 4-8). To introduce the context of *Stranger Things*, it is essential to understand its cultural and narrative background. "*Stranger Things*" is a sci-fi horror series created by the Duffer brothers that debuted on Netflix in July 2016. Set in the 1980s in the fictional town of Hawkins, Indiana, the series begins with the disappearance of a young boy named Will Byers. Will's search unleashes a series of supernatural events, including the emergence of a parallel dimension known as the Upside Down and a girl with psychokinetic abilities named Eleven. The series cleverly combines elements of 1980s pop culture, government conspiracies and heartfelt teenage stories to create a nostalgic yet exciting and eerie narrative. It explores themes of friendship, family and community as the residents of Hawkins unite to combat otherworldly threats. "*Stranger Things*" has had a significant cultural impact, appreciated for its engaging characters, intriguing storyline and effective blend of genres (Reddy, 2020). The Netflix show has not only captivated audiences with its compelling narrative and rich themes but has also become a case study of effective and innovative marketing strategies, given its attribution of having "spawn an entire industry" (Ortega, 2022). The series features numerous brands, including Cadillac, Chevrolet, Casio, 7-Eleven, Nike, Adidas, Schwinn and Burger King. The significant marketing impact of the series is reflected in its reach increase, with over 40 million households tuning in to season three during the premiere to a staggering 286 million hours viewed for the season four premiere, accounting for "the biggest premiere weekend ever for a Netflix original series" (Cerullo, 2019; Andreeva, 2022). According to Netflix, this large audience translated into an advertising value of approximately \$15 million for over 100 brands featured in episodes in the first three days of the season's release (Cerullo, 2019). For example, Coca-Cola benefited from approximately \$1.5 million in product placement value. The cultural impact not only pertained to brands, it also resurfaced pop culture songs from the 1980s. Underlining the broad cultural influence of '*Stranger Things*' beyond television, the character Max Mayfield's favourite song, Kate Bush's 'Running Up That Hill', rose to the top of the iTunes chart 37 years after its initial release, after being featured on the '*Stranger Things 4*' soundtrack (Andreeva, 2022). The series exploits nostalgic marketing by collaborating with 1980s brands, such as Eggo waffles, Coca-Cola, that have become iconic within the show's fandom, as evidenced by Eggo's retro-

style advertising campaign in 2019 (Griffith, 2022, p. 3). Its transmedia storytelling expands the narrative beyond the television screen through interactive experiences, comics, novels and immersive theatre shows such as the Secret Cinema event in 2019, increasing audience engagement (Bayley, 2020, p. 63). Furthermore, the strategic use of social media and viral marketing has generated considerable buzz and interaction, while extensive merchandising offers fans tangible connections to the '*Stranger Things*' universe. Strategic partnerships with major events and platforms, such as Comic-Con and Universal Studios, further amplify the show's reach and immersive experience. These innovative marketing efforts have created a multi-faceted and immersive experience, cementing '*Stranger Things*' as a cultural phenomenon.

The choice of this topic is motivated by a personal affinity with '*Stranger Things*', one of my favourite TV series. Since its release, the series has been for me an ideal escape into an imaginary world that seamlessly blends fantasy, horror and a compelling teenage narrative. My admiration for '*Stranger Things*' began with the first season as I was captivated by its nostalgic elements. Watching the series with my parents, I witnessed their fascination with references to the 1980s, including music, fashion, films and iconic objects such as the Walkman. Their nostalgic connection to these elements reinforced my appreciation for the series' ability to evoke a past era. Furthermore, my interest extended to the innovative marketing campaigns employed by Netflix to maintain audience engagement between seasons. The interactive and immersive strategies used in these campaigns seemed particularly fascinating to me. No other series seemed to engage the audience so deeply, using physical spaces and interactive elements to make viewers feel an active part of the narrative. This unique marketing approach not only kept interest alive but also enhanced the overall viewing experience. These factors prompted me to explore the topic more and led me to conduct a research on the intersection of sensory engagement, spatiality and cross-media strategies within '*Stranger Things*' advertising campaigns.

My research, titled "Sensoriality in the Upside Down: The Construction of the Senses through Cross-Mediality and Spatiality in *Stranger Things* Advertising," aims to discuss the strategies that elevate these cross-media advertising efforts from simple promotions to engaging sensory encounters. By examining the spatial and sensory components within four different campaigns, it aims to fill the gap in scholarly discussions about the transformative power of such immersive advertising techniques. The choice of this topic is driven by the desire to understand how *Stranger Things*, as a cultural phenomenon, leverages sensory and spatial elements to create deeply immersive experiences. The show's nostalgic appeal, combined with its innovative marketing strategies, makes it an interesting case study for examining the intersection of sensory marketing, spatial design and cross-media strategies. To achieve these goals, this research analyses four major

'*Stranger Things*' campaigns: '*Stranger Things: The Experience*', 'Lyft Partnership - Strange Mode', the 2022 Out-of-Home (OOH) campaign and the 'Global Rift Takeover' campaign. Each of these campaigns offers unique insights into the use of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media. *Stranger Things: The Experience* showcased an experiential storyline developed by the show's creators. This campaign allowed participants to fully engage with the show's universe, offering a multi-sensory adventure that blurred the boundaries between fiction and reality (Taylor, 2022). The 'Lyft Partnership - Strange Mode' campaign exemplified cross-media and experiential advertising by transforming ordinary car journeys into haunted encounters reminiscent of '*Stranger Things*' (Nivethika, 2022). The 2022 Out-of-Home (OOH) campaign integrated experiential marketing with billboards around the world, displaying highly sensory experiences. This campaign used vivid imagery and interactive elements to engage audiences, turning public spaces into extensions of the '*Stranger Things*' narrative (Nivethika, 2022). Finally, the 'Global Rift Takeover' campaign used coordinates and red slots to create immersive experiences in iconic locations such as the Empire State Building. This campaign offered a multi-sensory spectacle related to the '*Stranger Things*' narrative, capturing the audience and drawing them into the series' universe through elaborate and strategically placed installations (Bennett, 2022).

The relevance of this research goes beyond theoretical enquiry, offering valuable insights into the evolving nature of advertising strategies and their impact on audience engagement. In the contemporary advertising landscape, scholars have noted a resurgence of physical advertising, marking a move away from conventional digital-centric approaches and signalling a shift towards more experiential forms of promotion (Moorman et al., 2022; Deuze, 2016). This shift underlines the need for a deeper understanding of how spatial and sensory elements are employed by brands in innovative ways to capture audiences and shape brand perception. The exploration of immersive and sensory advertising experiences offers a viable alternative in a world oversaturated by digital noise. Successful campaigns could redefine the way individuals interact with advertisements, turning them into engaging and memorable experiences. The academic relevance of this research lies in its potential to enrich our understanding of how advertising strategies adapt to evolving media landscapes, particularly with regard to sensory approaches. By critically examining the effectiveness of spatial experiences and cross-media campaigns, this study contributes to the broader discourse on the interconnection between sensory marketing, spatiality and urban spaces. It also elucidates the psychological and sociological mechanisms at play, offering insights into the evolving nature of consumer engagement.

To investigate these goals, this research poses the central question: How is sensoriality constructed through cross-mediality and spatiality in *Stranger Things* advertising?

To further explore this question, the study is guided by three sub-questions:

1. How do *Stranger Things* campaigns actively engage the senses of the audience?
2. How do spatial design, environmental factors, and bodily engagement intersect in *Stranger Things* campaigns?
3. How does the integration of cross-media strategies in *Stranger Things* campaigns amplify the sensory and spatial engagement of the audience?

The objective of this research is to analyse the specific mechanisms through which *Stranger Things* campaigns create immersive and engaging experiences for the audience. By answering these questions, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the transformative capacity of immersive advertising strategies, thus enriching both academic research and industry practice in the field of marketing and advertising.

The research presents a comprehensive analysis of the *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns, focusing on how they utilise sensory and spatial elements to create immersive experiences. The study will explore the ways in which these campaigns engage the senses, the role of spatial design and environmental factors, and the integration of cross-media strategies. In doing so, it will offer a nuanced understanding of the effectiveness of these strategies in capturing audience attention and creating memorable brand experiences. Furthermore, this research will critically evaluate the theories and methods used to analyse these campaigns, providing a solid framework for future studies in the field. It will also discuss the implications of these findings for the creative and media industries in general, highlighting the importance of sensory and spatial engagement in contemporary advertising.

In summary, this study seeks to explore the intersection of sensory marketing, spatial design and cross-media strategies through the lens of *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns. The aim is to discuss the strategies behind their success, offering valuable insights for both academia and industry. By examining how these campaigns engage the senses and blur the boundaries between reality and fiction, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the transformative power of immersive advertising.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

This research is based on an integrated theoretical framework that examines the multifaceted dimensions of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media. For the section on sensoriality, I explore three key dimensions: the senses as mediators, the senses in a sociological context and the embodied dimension. These three core concepts build on each other, with the embodied nature of human experience acting as a common thread. By examining the interplay between these three interconnected dimensions, this research provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the transformative potential of immersive advertising strategies. Similarly, the section on spatiality will explore three dimensions: the general concept of spatiality, the embodied dimension, and the relevance of spatiality for advertising. Finally, the cross-mediality section will explore in which ways sensoriality and spatiality are integrated across different mediums, particularly in the context of immersive advertising.

### **2.1 Sensoriality**

Sensoriality refers to the multifaceted realm of sensory experiences, perceptions and interactions that individuals have with their environment. It encompasses the activation and engagement of the five primary senses - sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell - and the embodied dimension of these sensory encounters. At the core of sensoriality is the dynamic interaction between the senses, the body and the surrounding world. Founded on theories of embodiment, sensoriality recognises that sensory experiences are not merely passive inputs, but actively shape our sense of self, our understanding of the environment and our overall experience. The concept of sensoriality thus integrates the physiological processes of sensation with the cognitive and phenomenological aspects of perception. It recognises that the senses do not operate in isolation, but are inextricably linked to the embodied nature of human existence and the socio-cultural contexts that give meaning to sensory experiences.

To grasp the concept of sensoriality it's crucial to have a basic understanding of what we mean by 'senses'. Essentially, the senses are the tools our bodies use to perceive and respond to both internal and external stimuli ('Sense', 2024). These include functions like sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Vision allows us to see and differentiate shapes, colours, and movement, enabling us to navigate and interpret the visual aspects of our environment. Audition, our sense of hearing, enables us to perceive sound vibrations, interpreting them as speech, music, or other auditory signals, which are essential for communication and auditory awareness. Olfaction, our sense of smell, allows us to detect various odours, playing a significant role in taste and memory. Gustation, or our sense of taste, helps us distinguish flavours such as sweet, sour, salty, and bitter, contributing

to our dietary choices and enjoyment of food. Lastly, tactition encompasses our sense of touch, including the perception of pressure, temperature, texture, and pain, which is vital for physical interaction with our surroundings and for protecting our bodies from harm. In addition to these traditional senses, newer senses like proprioception, which is the awareness of body position and movement without visual cues and thermoception, understood as sensitivity to temperature changes, are also recognized (Tuthill & Azim, 2018, p. R194; Dhaka et al., 2006, p. 154). Previous research has noted that the senses are located between the physical and the cognitive realms, emphasising the intricate interaction between the senses and the lack of a vocabulary to express the nuances of sensory experiences, leading to metaphorical applications of one sense to another (Bendix, 2005, p. 3). This is important because the senses are not isolated but deeply interconnected, contributing to a holistic perception of the world. This interconnection is fundamental to cognitive processes and the understanding of complex stimuli (Cazeaux, 2002, p. 3). Sensory integration helps us make sense of our environment, as demonstrated by the way touch and sight work together to identify objects. The senses play a crucial role as mediators between meaning and materiality, embodying an ambiguous status that straddles the interface between body and mind, and between subjective and objective realities. This research will draw upon theories linked to the senses, particularly focusing on Elisabeth Hsü's (2008, p.433) examination of the social nature of perception and David Howes' (2013, p. 8) understanding of the senses in a societal context.

It is important to foreground the concept of perception, especially building upon the idea of sensation. Perception involves the awareness or understanding of sensory information received through the senses, it is the process by which the brain interprets sensory stimuli to give them meaning and context (Krishna, 2011, p. 334). The step before this sensory interpretation involves sensation, "when the stimulus impinges upon the receptor cells of a sensory organ—it is biochemical (and neurological) in nature" (Krishna, 2011, p. 334). Sensation is the initial detection of stimuli by sensory receptors, such as light hitting the retina or sound waves vibrating the eardrum, it is neutral and objective. Sensory receptors located in the eyes, ears, skin and other sense organs detect physical stimuli such as light, sound waves and pressure. Perception, on the other hand, is the awareness or understanding that arises from sensory information. It involves the interpretation and creation of meaning that occurs after the initial sensory stimulation. Perception is therefore more subjective in nature and is influenced by factors external and internal to the receiver of the stimuli, such as past experiences, expectations and cultural background. This subjectivity of perception makes it the subject of various discussions in philosophy, psychology and metaphysics, often referred to as the complex "puzzles of perception" (Pautz, 2021, p.13). To make the distinction clearer, sensation can be seen as the raw data input from the environment, like the pixels of a digital

image, while perception is the processing and interpretation of that data to form a coherent image. For example, sensation allows us to detect the various wavelengths of light, while perception allows us to see and recognise a rainbow. The distinction between these two stages is fundamental to understanding how we interact with the environment and how our brain constructs our experience of reality (Ben-Ze'ev, 1984, pp. 328).

Understanding the distinction between sensation and perception is crucial to exploring how these processes go beyond simple physiological functions and encompass the broader social and cultural contexts that shape our sensory experiences. Hsü's (2008, p.433) analysis challenges conventional understandings by asserting that sensory experiences are not mere physiological processes but are profoundly influenced by social interactions. Hsü (2008, p.433) opposes the idea that sensations are isolated and individual phenomena, arguing instead that they are fundamentally co-constructed within broader social and cultural contexts. This perspective shifts the focus from a purely biological view of the senses, highlighting how sensory perceptions are inextricably linked to the social world in which they are embedded. By highlighting the social nature of sensory experiences, the author provides a nuanced framework for examining how the senses are not just passive receptors of stimuli, but active sites of meaning-making that are deeply intertwined with the dynamics of human sociality (Hsü, 2008, p.437). Building on this idea, David Howes extends the discussion by pointing out that "perception is informed not only by the personal meaning a particular sensation has for us, but also by the social values it carries" (2013, p. 1). Both Howes (2013) and Hsü (2008) emphasise that sensory experiences are not universal or innate, but are filtered through cultural norms, values and practices. For example, different cultures prioritise and interpret sensory experiences, such as smells, tastes or textures, in different ways depending on their linguistic and cultural framework. This is in line with Hsü's assertion that individuals perceive sensations that are socially and culturally shaped. Howes (2013, p.4) further explores the cultural context of sensory experiences, noting that cultures differ in their emphasis on the various senses and the meanings they attach to sensory acts. For example, in the West the sun is traditionally seen as a source of light, while in other cultures it may be perceived differently, affecting people's perceptions at a fundamental level. This difference emphasises the cultural construction of sensory experiences, supporting Hsü's thesis that sensory experiences are deeply embedded in social contexts. For example, the smell of certain foods may evoke nostalgic responses in one social context, but disgusting ones in another, depending on the cultural associations and norms surrounding that smell. Furthermore, Howes points out that society regulates sensory experiences through norms and restrictions, establishing which senses should be used in particular contexts. This regulation reflects power dynamics and broader social structures, revealing the political implications of sensory

perception. Issues such as nationalism, gender equality and the treatment of minority groups are intertwined with sensory practices and metaphors, illustrating the political dimensions of sensory experiences (Howes, 2013, p.6-7). By integrating the perspectives of Hsü and Howes, it becomes clear that the study of the senses in society transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries. This interdisciplinary exploration includes anthropology, history, sociology, geography, urban studies, archaeology, art history, literature and media studies. This comprehensive approach provides a better understanding of how sensory experiences are socially and culturally constructed, regulated and politicised, highlighting the active role of the senses in meaning-making and social interaction. Integrating these insights, it becomes evident that the concept of sensoriality is deeply rooted in both the physiological processes of sensation and the socio-cultural contexts that shape perception.

When talking about sensory stimuli, sensation and perception, it is interesting to note a further dimension to this framework: the embodied dimension. Embodiment stands for the idea that the body is not just a container for the mind, but an integral part of how individuals perceive, interact and make sense of the world (Longo et al., 2008, p.979). It emphasises the inseparable connection between body, mind and environment in shaping human experience and cognition (Krishna, 2011, p. 344). The phenomenon of embodiment has been a subject of study in various disciplines, notably art appreciation, where embodiment plays a significant role in how individuals engage with and interpret artistic expressions, with somatic experiences informing their understanding and appreciation of art (Joy & Sherry, 2003, p. 261). Previous theories argued that “bodies move, sense, touch, smell, taste, and act in conjunction with thought and speech within a space, for people experience themselves simultaneously *in* and *as* their bodies” (Csordas, 1994 as cited in Joy & Sherry, 2003, p. 261). When factoring in the senses, embodiment theory emphasises that our sensory experiences are not just passive inputs, but actively contribute to our sense of self and understanding of the world around us (Longo et al., 2008, p.980). This is relevant because it emphasises the integral role that sensory experiences play in shaping our identity and interactions. By recognising that sensory inputs are actively interpreted and integrated with our cognitive and emotional states, we can better understand how individuals navigate and make sense of their environments. This perspective highlights the dynamic and interactive nature of human perception, which is fundamental to fields such as marketing and design where creating meaningful and engaging sensory experiences can have a significant impact on user engagement and satisfaction.

Just as embodiment theory reveals how sensory experiences shape our engagement with art, sensory marketing exploits these principles to enhance consumers' interactions with brands. Transitioning to the world of sensory marketing, we explore into the profound impact of sensory engagement on consumer perceptions and behaviours. Sensory marketing, as Krishna (2011, p.333)

defines it, harnesses the power of the senses to shape consumers' sensory experiences and, consequently, their interactions with brands. By appealing to fundamental senses such as sight, touch, taste, smell, and hearing, sensory marketing creates immersive and impactful consumer experiences. Sensory marketing goes beyond engaging consumers on a superficial level; it seeks to create deep, memorable experiences that forge strong emotional connections between consumers and brands. These sensory triggers go beyond mere physiological responses, evoking emotions, shaping brand personalities, and enhancing the perceived quality of products. In essence, sensory marketing capitalises on the multisensory nature of human perception to forge deeper connections between consumers and brands. Sensory marketing strategies aim to evoke embodied experiences that resonate with consumers on a visceral level, similar to the concept of aesthetic embodiment in art. By designing sensory cues that trigger bodily sensations and emotional responses, marketers create a deeper, more personal connection between consumers and brands. For example, the tactile sensation of holding a well-designed product can evoke feelings of satisfaction and quality, while the scent of a shop can evoke memories and emotions that enhance the shopping experience (Van Rompay et al., 2012, p. 920). These strategies are based on the realisation that sensory experiences are deeply linked to our emotions and physical states. Research has shown that sensory inputs can activate specific emotional and cognitive responses, making them powerful tools for creating brand associations (Elder & Krishna, 2010, p. 755). For example, the use of specific colours and lighting in a retail environment can influence the mood and perception of the space, making it seem more welcoming or luxurious (Spence et al., 2014, p.473). Similarly, auditory cues, such as background music, can enhance the atmosphere and influence consumers' behaviour, such as the pace of their movements and time spent in the shop (Milliman, 1982, p.90). Furthermore, sensory marketing recognises that consumers' embodied experiences are influenced by their cultural and social contexts. Sensory cues are therefore designed to align with cultural expectations and preferences, enhancing their effectiveness. For example, flavours and scents used in products and advertising campaigns are often adapted to the cultural background of the target audience, ensuring that the sensory experience is familiar and appealing (Schmitt, 1999, p.60-61). This cultural attunement enhances the embodied experience, making it more resonant and impactful.

In summary, sensoriality encompasses the complex interplay between sensory experiences, embodiment and socio-cultural contexts, revealing how sensory inputs shape our perception and interaction with the world. By integrating physiological, cognitive and cultural dimensions, this framework emphasises the active role of the senses in the construction of meaning and experience.

## 2.2 Spatiality

The focus on embodied sensoriality emphasises the importance of spatiality in shaping these sensory experiences, highlighting how physical and digital environments further influence our perceptions and interactions. Just as the previous section highlighted the connection between the senses and embodiment as the foundation of sensoriality, the concept of space and embodiment come together to form the dimension of spatiality. Cresswell and Hoskins (2008, p.394) define place as having both tangible materiality, represented by physical structures such as built environments, and a more abstract realm of meaning. In the context of advertising structures, the tangible aspects include the built environment, while the less tangible elements involve advertisements that contribute to the sense of place through their meanings (Cronin, 2006, p.617). The latter will be of the utmost importance in my analysis of *Stranger Things'* outdoor advertising campaigns. When thinking about space and advertising, it is impossible to separate the relationship it has with the individual and the body.

Building on the perception of the world through the body – as discussed as embodiment above – this concept highlights the crucial role of our physical sensations, movements, and sensory experiences in shaping our interactions and perceptions of the environment. Embodiment is closely related to space, as our bodily experiences are shaped by the spaces we inhabit and move through. Embodiment theory argues that the body is not just a vessel for the mind, but an integral part of how individuals perceive, interact and make sense of their environment (Longo et al., 2008, p.979; Krishna, 2011, p.344). This embodied dimension is particularly important when considering the role of space and place in shaping sensory experiences. Our bodily interactions with the physical environment, built structures and the social meanings associated with certain spaces profoundly influence how we engage with and interpret the world through our senses (Joy & Sherry, 2003, p.275).

Previous studies have investigated the intersection between embodiment and spatial aspects, particularly in the context of emerging 'digital spaces' and technology integration. In the context of senses and embodiment, experience refers to the holistic interaction between sensory stimuli and the body, leading to meaningful and often emotionally charged perceptions and responses. Kirby's (2023, p.2) research on the articulation of space in contemporary cinema provides valuable insights into this interaction. Kirby explores the concept of 'composite spaces', which refer to environments in which digital and material elements intersect and coexist, creating a mixed or layered spatial experience. As Kirby (2023, p.1) notes, "in everyday life, millions of users inhabit hybrid or composite spaces in which the digital, often incorporated through ubiquitous mobile devices such as the smartphone, complements and/or augments material and embodied spaces".

This notion of composite spaces is particularly relevant when considering the evolving landscape of advertising, where the boundaries between the digital and physical realms are increasingly blurred. Much like the cinematic experiences examined by Kirby, advertising campaigns today often unfold across a spectrum of digital and physical spaces, creating a layered, embodied engagement for consumers. The concept of embodiment is further explored in the work of De Vaujany et al. (2019, p.211), who discuss the importance of embodied experiences and materiality in understanding institutional dynamics and organisational practices. They highlight how physical actions and sensory experiences contribute to the construction of institutional logic and legitimacy claims. For example, De Vaujany et al. (2019, p.208) note how "campus tours provide embodied experiences of universities' intangible activities. They constitute an opportunity for stakeholders to learn about an organisation through sensory experiences such as seeing, touching, smelling". The physicality of the campus environment, including buildings, classrooms and green spaces, plays a crucial role in conveying the history, values and culture of the institution to visitors. Bringing these perspectives together, we see that both cinema and organisational contexts emphasise the importance of composite spaces and embodied experiences. In advertising, the integration of digital and physical elements can create composite spaces that foster embodied experiences for consumers. For example, *Stranger Things: The Experience* mixes virtual and tangible elements, allowing participants to engage with the show's narrative through an immersive, multi-sensory encounter. By navigating these composite spaces, consumers can develop a deeper, embodied understanding of the brand and its associated meanings. Thus, research by Kirby (2023) and De Vaujany et al. (2019) collectively emphasise the importance of embodied experiences in both digital and physical environments. The interplay between digital augmentation and physical embodiment is key to creating meaningful consumer engagement, whether in cinema, organisational environments or advertising.

When investigating the larger context of spatiality and embodiment, it is worth noting DuFour's (2022) research. Here, spatiality is approached through a phenomenological lens that integrates the philosophical insights of Edmund Husserl with ethnographic research methodologies. DuFour's exploration of spatiality involves an in-depth investigation of the phenomenology of space and embodiment, drawing on Husserl's theories and extending them to lived bodily experiences, intersubjective interactions and cultural practices (DuFour, 2022, p.2). Central to DuFour's (2022) conceptualisation of spatiality is the embodied nature of spatial experience. He emphasises how our physical bodies shape and mediate our interactions with space, highlighting how bodily sensations, movements and perceptions influence our understanding of spatial environments. As DuFour (2022, p.2) notes, "In this sense descriptions of spatiality are inherently descriptions of lived bodily experience. The body's corporeity is thus to be understood in its expressivity and affectivity, as

constitutive of its spatiality". This notion of corporeality, or the embodied nature of human existence, emphasises the importance of the body in shaping our experiences, perceptions and interactions with the world around us, meaning that our physical bodies are integral to our existence and consciousness (DuFour, 2022, p. 52-53). In the context of spatiality, corporeality plays a significant role in how we perceive and navigate space. Our body movements, proprioception (awareness of our body position in space) and kinesthetic senses contribute to our spatial awareness and understanding of our physical environment (DuFour, 2022, p. 75-76).

When considering the implications of spatiality for advertising and marketing, the intersection between physical and digital environments becomes particularly salient. As Rose (2022, p.140) discussed in the context of digitally mediated cities, the experience of embodiment is reconfigured through the integration of new media technologies. This 'doubly digital' quality of media experiences, in which bodies simultaneously occupy physical and virtual spaces, gives rise to new forms of 'digital embodiment' - where the line between physical bodies and digital environments becomes blurry (Rose, 2022, p.140-141). An example of this reconfiguration of embodiment and space can be seen in the use of augmented reality (AR) applications in urban environments. AR technology projects digital information onto the physical world, creating a mixed experience for users as they navigate city streets interacting with virtual elements projected onto their surroundings. For example, they may see virtual signs, historical information or interactive artwork displayed on buildings and landmarks as they move around the city. This fusion of digital and physical, in which individuals engage with tangible and intangible aspects of the environment, highlights the composite nature of contemporary spatial experiences.

Turning the attention to the specific dimension of advertising, it is quite rare these days to not think of campaigns in the digital or print realm, such as social media posts, television commercials, or online video advertisements. However, despite the propagation of these digital mediums, outdoor advertising (OOH) has maintained its significance within the industry, withstanding the rise of mass printing, the advent of commercial television and radio, and the substantial growth of online display and search advertising (Taylor et al., 2006, p.21). Nevertheless, OOH advertising has also received various criticisms, such as its perceived intrusiveness and incongruity, especially in historically significant urban settings (Koeck & Warnaby, 2014, p.1403). This enduring presence of outdoor advertising can be attributed to its unique ability to engage consumers in a tangible, embodied manner. Unlike the often-fleeting nature of digital advertisements, outdoor advertising is embedded within the physical spaces and built environments that individuals navigate daily. This spatial integration allows for a more persistent and immersive sensory experience, as consumers encounter these advertisements not just as visual stimuli, but as

part of the multisensory fabric of their lived environment. Moreover, the increasing sophistication of outdoor advertising, particularly in urban settings, has led to a diversification of experiential marketing activities that go beyond traditional billboard displays. As Koeck and Warnaby (2014, p.1416) note, the term "advertising" may now be deemed too limited, as the range of spatial interventions and immersive experiences unfolding within urban spaces continues to expand.

Ultimately, the intersection of digital spaces, embodiment, and advertising highlights the importance of considering the sensorial and spatial dimensions of consumer experiences. As advertising campaigns increasingly transcend traditional boundaries, understanding how individuals physically and cognitively engage with these composite environments can provide valuable insights into the construction of brand meaning and the effectiveness of marketing strategies. Understanding spatiality emphasises the integral role that physical and digital environments play in shaping sensory experiences. This multifaceted interaction between space, body and sensory perception highlights the need to consider spatial dimensions in advertising strategies.

### **2.3 Cross Mediality**

The focus on spatiality, which is intertwined with sensoriality and embodiment, naturally leads us to explore the role of cross-mediality. Examining how these intertwined elements are exploited across different media platforms further clarifies the immersive power of contemporary advertising campaigns. The concept of cross-media refers to the integration and coordination of multiple media platforms and formats to create a cohesive and interconnected communication experience. This approach transcends traditional boundaries by seamlessly incorporating a diverse range of media elements, including Internet, video, film, television, mobile devices, print and radio (Davidson, 2010, p.6). Cross-media is deeply linked to the concept of sensoriality, enabling a multisensory experience through different media. Through cross-mediality, an object or theme can be perceived through various senses in different media, enhancing the depth and richness of the sensory experience. This interconnected sensory engagement not only amplifies the overall experience but also strengthens the emotional and cognitive impact on the audience. In terms of spatiality, cross-mediality acts as a bridge between digital and physical spaces, seamlessly integrating the two to create a cohesive spatial experience. It allows physical environments to be extended to digital platforms and vice versa, enriching the overall spatial experience. For example, a physical event or installation can be complemented by digital content accessible via mobile devices or online platforms, creating a layered and immersive spatial experience that transcends the limitations of a single medium. By fusing sensoriality and spatiality, cross-media becomes productive for this thesis as it demonstrates how contemporary advertising campaigns can create holistic and immersive

experiences. By combining sensoriality and spatiality, cross-mediality demonstrates how contemporary advertising campaigns can create holistic and immersive experiences.

The core of cross-media communication is the ability to tell stories and engage audiences through various media formats. As Davidson (2010, p.6) explains, cross-media "typically involves storytelling that transcends various media formats, creating a cohesive narrative that engages audiences across multiple channels". This narrative integration is facilitated by advances in digital technology, which have enabled more seamless connectivity and interactivity between different media platforms (Davidson, 2010, p.4). Complementing Davidson's insights, Jenkins (2006, p. 95-96) introduces the concept of 'transmedia storytelling', in which the integral elements of a narrative are systematically distributed across multiple distribution channels to create a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Jenkins argues that each medium contributes uniquely to the story, providing distinct perspectives and enriching the overall narrative (2006, p. 95-96). One of the key aspects of cross-media is the emphasis on audience engagement and interactivity. Cross-media experiences are designed to provide audiences with a sense of choice and personalisation, allowing them to actively participate in the narrative and discover content through various media formats (Davidson, 2010, p.5). As the author argues, "cross-media communications is a complex integration of experiences across multiple media that encourages our interactivity" (Davidson, 2010, p.5).

Bolter and Grusin (1999) further elaborate on this concept with their theory of 'remediation', which describes how new media readapt and incorporate old media forms. This process of remediation enhances interactivity by allowing audiences to experience a narrative through familiar and emerging media, creating a layered and engaging engagement (Bolter & Grusin, 1999, p. 45). This interactivity can manifest itself in the form of branching storylines, interactive elements and opportunities for the audience to explore and engage with the narrative across different media platforms. The diversity of media formats, from traditional broadcast and print to digital and interactive channels, allows creators to reach audiences in personalised ways and tailor the narrative experience to the unique strengths of each platform. Furthermore, Evans (2019) emphasises the importance of user-generated content in cross-media strategies, in which the audience not only consumes but also contributes to the narrative. This participatory culture fosters a deeper connection between the audience and the content, making the experience more engaging and personalised (Evans, 2019, p. 34). By seamlessly integrating multiple media forms and fostering audience engagement, cross-media communication aims to create a cohesive and engaging experience that transcends the boundaries of individual media channels. This integration not only enhances the sensory and spatial dimensions of the experience but also enriches the narrative by enabling multiple perspectives and modes of interaction.

When reflecting on the cross-media landscape, it becomes clear that the integration of different media forms creates immersive experiences that engage multiple senses, similar to how we perceive and interact with the world in our daily lives. Previous studies have discussed the implications of cross-media approaches in understanding the relationship between media and sensory experiences, highlighting the importance of considering the sensory dimensions of how we perceive and engage with media (Pink, 2015). The concept of cross-media communication inherently implies the creation of narratives that span multiple media platforms, inviting multi-sensory engagement. As Pink (2015, p.6) notes, "the material and intangible, experiential and aesthetic qualities of media invite us to attend analytically to the senses" (p. 6). This includes the tactility of touchscreens, the visuality of camera phones and the immateriality of digital images, prompting us to consider how our embodied and perceptual engagement with media technologies shapes our experiences (Pink, 2015, p. 6). Pink (2015, p. 6) points out that "these qualities and forms of embodied and perceptual engagement with the hardware and software of new media technologies do not make our experience of digital media 'more' sensory than that of old media. However, new ways of touching, looking and moving with digital media [...] have alerted us to the sensoriality of our embodied and affective engagements with media in new ways". By employing the principles of cross-media communication, creators can design immersive experiences that transcend physical spaces and engage audiences through multiple senses. The integration of sensory elements across media not only enriches the overall experience but also increases the emotional and cognitive impact on the audience. Cross-media is therefore a powerful tool for creating compelling and engaging narratives that resonate at a sensory level.

In cross-media communication, the spatial aspect plays a crucial role in enhancing the immersive experience. The concept of space in cross-media communication goes beyond physical locations and includes virtual spaces and digital environments. Kirby's (2023, p.2) research on "layered composite spaces" highlights the importance of navigating these mixed environments, which require "the ability to distribute one's subjectivity across different perceptual channels and the ability to multiply across spaces and networks while maintaining a cohesive sense of bodily and subjective integrity". Cross-mediality employs spatial theory and practice theory to understand how people interact with media in various environments, emphasising the integration of physical and digital spaces. Davidson (2010, p.96) notes that 'environmental media' uses physical space and surroundings to communicate experiences, often incorporating mobile technologies and links to merchandising. This interaction emphasises the strategic use of space in cross-media to enhance engagement and immersion. By orchestrating multi-sensory, multi-modal experiences in physical and digital environments, cross-media communication creates embodied experiences for audiences.

This strategic integration enables brands to foster deeper connections with consumers through engaging storytelling that transcends the boundaries of traditional media. The interplay between the spatial dimensions of cross-media experiences, in which audiences engage with brand narratives through embodied interactions in physical and digital spaces, exemplifies cross-media as a holistic framework for understanding immersive advertising strategies.

Based on this understanding, the integration of cross-media into advertising and marketing strategies becomes evident. Cross-media advertising crosses traditional boundaries by seamlessly integrating different media forms, including Internet, video, film, TV, mobile devices, print and radio (Davidson, 2010, p.6). This approach facilitates the transfer of key content elements into various marketing campaigns by effectively exploiting storytelling and aesthetics across different media platforms. This integration not only enhances brand consistency but also creates a cohesive storytelling experience for the audience. For example, the marketing strategies of *Stranger Things* cleverly utilise cross-mediality to create engaging and immersive campaigns. This approach effectively combines different media forms, exploiting the show's narrative and aesthetics across various platforms. The synergistic effect generated by combining different media forms amplifies the persuasive impact of cross-media advertising (Naik & Raman, 2003 cited in Vandenberg et al., 2015, p.745). By exploring the interplay between the show's narrative elements and their adaptation in marketing campaigns, it becomes clear how Netflix strategically uses cross-media to engage audiences and extend the reach of the *Stranger Things* brand beyond entertainment into the world of marketing.

In conclusion, this research integrates the theoretical concepts of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media to understand their role in contemporary advertising strategies. Sensoriality explores how sensory experiences and embodied interactions shape our understanding of and engagement with the environment. Spatiality emphasises the influence of physical and digital environments on these sensory experiences, highlighting the interplay between space, embodiment and perception. Cross-media connects these concepts by integrating multiple media platforms to create cohesive and immersive experiences. This approach enhances sensory and spatial engagement, allowing advertisements to create holistic narratives that resonate across multiple channels. Combining these perspectives, this research provides a comprehensive framework for analysing the transformative potential of *Stranger Things'* immersive advertising. It demonstrates how contemporary campaigns can create deep, immersive experiences by strategically exploiting the interplay between sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media, offering new insights for both academic research and practical application in marketing and media studies.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Description and Justification of Methods

This research adopted a qualitative approach due to its exploratory nature, focusing on the intricate dimensions of multisensory storytelling, spatial experience, and marketing strategies within *Stranger Things* campaigns. The central research question that guided this study was "How is sensoriality constructed through cross-media and spatiality in *Stranger Things* advertising?". Qualitative methods are pivotal for gaining deeper insights into how individuals attribute significance to their surroundings (Flick, 2018, p.8). Employing a mixed methods approach, this study integrated visual analysis and sensory ethnography. The reasoning for using mixed methods, in particular visual analysis and sensory ethnography, stems from the richness and complexity of the data set. The advertising samples collected are highly innovative and show advanced techniques of cross-media integration and multi-sensory engagement. A simple visual analysis alone would not have been sufficient to capture the full depth and nuance of these materials. By incorporating sensory ethnography, this research added a deeper level of understanding, enabling a more complete and holistic exploration of how these campaigns engage the senses and spaces to create immersive experiences. This approach not only enriched the analysis but allowed the study to contribute innovative insights into the field of advertising research.

Visual analysis is a method used to systematically examine and interpret the visual elements of various media. It involves examining aspects such as composition, colour, texture, lighting and spatial arrangement to understand visual construction and its implications (Rose, 2001, p.17,39). In this study, the visual analysis focused on four advertising campaigns, examining the visual and sensory elements of images, videos, out-of-home (OOH) advertising and social media content within *Stranger Things* campaigns. Visual analysis proved to be suitable for this study because it provided a structured approach to understanding how visual elements contribute to the overall narrative and impact of advertising campaigns. By dissecting these elements, I gained key insights into how *Stranger Things* campaigns construct meaning and visually engage audiences (Schroeder, 2006, p.26). This method proved effective in identifying patterns, themes and aesthetic strategies that are crucial to understanding the visual storytelling techniques used. The visual analysis component involved a systematic examination of the selected advertising campaigns. This included collecting visual materials from different media platforms and analysing the composition, colour schemes, textures, lighting and spatial arrangement of these materials. Through this analysis, I interpreted the aesthetic and design elements to understand their contribution to the overall impact of the campaign. The process involved documenting and coding visual elements to identify recurring

themes and patterns, providing a detailed understanding of the visual strategies used, given the “open-ended nature of the inquiry” (Banks, 2007, p.60).

On the other hand, sensory ethnography is an ethnographic method that focuses on understanding how sensory experiences shape and are shaped by social and cultural contexts. It involves immersion in the environment and capturing embodied sensory encounters, such as auditory, tactile and spatial components (Pink, 2009, p.28). Sensory ethnography enriched this research because it provided a deeper and more holistic understanding of how sensoriality is experienced in the context of *Stranger Things* marketing campaigns. While visual analysis offered insights into explicit visual elements, sensory ethnography captured implicit and embodied experiences, providing a richer data set that included the emotional and cultural impacts of sensory engagement (Howes, 2003, cited in Pink, 2009, p.23,29). This method allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the multisensory dimensions of the campaigns. The sensory ethnography component consisted of immersing in Netflix's marketing strategies for *Stranger Things*, focusing in particular on spatial and sensory experiences. This method captured sensory encounters, such as sounds, textures and spatial arrangements, through both first-hand and second-hand visual materials (Pink et al., 2016, p.52).

As a researcher I was aware that ethnographic analysis is heavily reliant on the physically immersive involvement of the research in the environment that is being investigated, nevertheless, the method is evolving within a digital landscape (Coffey, 2018, p.3). Pink et al. (2016, p.3) have argued that, “as new technologies offer new ways of engaging with emergent research environments, our actual practices as ethnographers also shift”. Given the digital nature of my research, I was largely reliant on second-hand visual materials, i.e. videos and photographs of the campaigns, which were heavily charged with sensoriality and affective energy. By taking into consideration some of the principles of digital ethnography, such as multiplicity (acknowledging the diverse nature of digital environments and experiences), non-digital-centric-ness (taking a non-media-centric approach to study digital media), openness (being open to exploring the intangible aspects of digital ethnography research, such as the relationship between digital, sensory, atmospheric, and material elements), reflexivity of the researcher and unorthodox (embracing unconventional and innovative approaches), I successfully employed sensory ethnography within this digital landscape (Pink et al., 2016, p.3, 8-14). I foregrounded the researcher’s bodily experience, which sensory ethnography facilitates, even when working with secondary digital content, paying close attention to the sensorily embodied experience of the research. Just as Pink et al. (2016, p.50-52) have stated, various experiences, including embodied, affective, hallucinatory, and sensory ones, can be researched in relation to digital media.

The combination of visual analysis and sensory ethnography was employed to increase the validity and comprehensiveness of the study. Visual analysis provided a structured examination of explicit visual elements, while sensory ethnography dealt into implicit and embodied experiences. This mixed approach enriched the dataset, allowing for a holistic analysis of visual and sensory impacts and deepening the understanding of the marketing approach. By integrating these methods, my research addressed the complexity of multisensory storytelling and spatial experience in a way that single-method approaches could not.

### 3.2 Case Study

In recent years, marketing campaigns for TV shows and films have become increasingly creative, exploiting a wide range of innovative strategies to capture the audience's attention and increase engagement. *Stranger Things*, created by the Duffer brothers, not only captured the hearts and minds of audiences around the world with its compelling narrative and nostalgic 1980s setting but also set new benchmarks in innovative marketing. The success of these campaigns could be attributed to their ability to extend the narrative beyond the screen, creating immersive, multi-sensory experiences that resonate deeply with audiences (Hazel, 2024). Since the show's debut, numerous campaigns have been launched, each highlighting different aspects of the series through various advertising methods. This study focuses on four specific campaigns, spanning from 2017 to September 2023, that exemplify the show's approach to sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media. These campaigns are: *Stranger Things: The Experience*, the Lyft Partnership '*Strange Mode*', the 2022 OOH campaign and the Global Rift Takeover campaign. Each campaign offered unique insights into sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality. The '*Stranger Things: The Experience*' campaign immersed fans in a narrative in which they unlocked secret powers to save Hawkins in 1980, creating an experiential storyline developed by the show's creators (Taylor, 2022). The partnership with Lyft exemplified cross-mediality and experiential advertising, transforming car rides into haunted encounters in *Stranger Things*, employing flickering lights and an acting driver, and concluding with an Eggo prize (Nivethika, 2022). The 2022 OOH campaign integrated experiential marketing, with billboards around the world displaying some heavily charged sensorial experiences (Nivethika, 2022). The Global Rift Takeover campaign kicked off a global fan event, using coordinates and red slits to create immersive experiences in iconic locations such as the Empire State Building, offering a multisensory spectacle tied to the *Stranger Things* narrative (Bennett, 2022). These four campaigns were selected because they represent a diverse range of collaborations and engagement strategies that reflect the global appeal of *Stranger Things* and its ability to open up different types of experiences for fans. The '*Stranger Things: The Experience*' and the Global Rift Takeover campaigns

focused on creating spatial and immersive experiences for fans, especially through social media, while the partnership with Lyft exemplified a brand collaboration that transformed everyday experiences. The OOH 2022 campaign leveraged traditional outdoor advertising space to engage fans locally and globally. By including campaigns from 2017 to 2023, this sample offered a mix of recent initiatives alongside an earlier partnership, allowing me to examine how the show's marketing strategies had evolved over time while maintaining a cohesive sensory and spatial approach. Collectively, these campaigns offered a rich dataset to explore the dynamic interplay between sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media in contemporary advertising.

### **3.3 Proposed Sample & Sampling Strategy**

To meticulously analyse the sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media of *Stranger Things*' marketing campaigns, I used a purposive sampling strategy. Purposive sampling is a non-probabilistic sampling technique that allows the researcher to make judgements about which cases best meet the research objectives (Andrade, 2020, p.87; Campbell et al., 2020, p.654). As Andrade (2020, p. 87) explained, "a purposive sample is the one whose characteristics are defined for a purpose that is relevant to the study". In the context of this research, my aim was to fully understand the unique and impactful strategies employed in the selected *Stranger Things* campaigns, which were central to the exploration of key theoretical concepts. The rationale and power of purposive sampling, as Emmel (2013, p.3) notes, "rests on the in-depth study of information-rich cases, towards learning a great deal about the research question and the issues considered by the researchers to be of central importance". By deliberately selecting *Stranger Things* campaigns that exemplify the interplay of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality, this research provided information-rich insights that were compelling to the intended audience. As Emmel (2013, p. 2) suggested, "the purpose of purposeful sampling is to select information-rich cases that best provide insight into the research questions and will convince the audience of the research". In this case, the *Stranger Things* campaigns were chosen because they are widely recognised for their innovative and engaging marketing strategies, making them particularly relevant and information-rich for the investigation of the theoretical concepts underlying this study. Furthermore, Campbell et al. (2020, p. 654) pointed out that "purposive sampling strategies move away from any random form of sampling and are strategies to make sure that specific kinds of cases of those that could possibly be included are part of the final sample in the research study". By deliberately selecting *Stranger Things* campaigns, this research ensured that the cases included were the most relevant and representative for answering the research questions. It is important to note, however, that the more targeted the sample, the more limited the external validity may be (Andrade, 2020, p. 88). Nonetheless, the depth and richness of the insights gained

from the purposive sampling of the data taken from the four *Stranger Things* campaigns overcame potential limitations in terms of generalisability, as the primary objective of this research was to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the interplay between sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality in contemporary advertising.

For this research, I employed a platform-specific sampling strategy for each campaign. The digital platforms chosen for this study include YouTube, Instagram, Twitter (formerly known as X) and the Clio Awards website. These platforms were selected for their ability to provide diverse and rich visual, auditory and experiential data relevant to the *Stranger Things* campaigns. The selection of specific digital platforms for data collection was also strategically aligned with the research objectives. Rather than viewing the digital sphere as separate from the offline world, this study recognises that the two work in relation to each other, with social media acting as an “expansion of daily life” and an “amplifier” of experiences (Nau et al., 2022, p.22). This perspective was crucial for the investigation of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality, as it recognised the blurred boundaries between physical and digital environments. Social media, in particular, has become a predominantly visual medium, with "many kinds of visual data [being] encountered as a matter of daily routine, such that interaction with the world is significantly visually shaped, from political engagement, to entertainment, to social relationships and self-understanding" (Hand, 2022, p.185). Given the centrality of visual analysis in this research, the purposeful sampling of social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter and YouTube proved to be a strategic choice. The choice of these platforms is further justified by their ability to "extend and intensify" various forms of visuality, which aligns with the sensory ethnographic approach used in this study (Hand, 2022, p.185). YouTube, as a "modern media powerhouse" and “the world's most popular video-sharing site”, provided access to a wealth of engaging video content that offered valuable insights into the sensory and spatial dimensions of *Stranger Things* campaigns (Alexa, 2021 cited in Khan & Malik, 2022, p.651). Similarly, the "huge collection of personal data (e.g. videos, images and captions)" on Instagram made it a rich source of visual material for research (Laestadius & Witt, 2022, p.582). The global reach and high user activity on these social media platforms further supported their selection for purposeful sampling. With Twitter boasting 550 million monthly active users and Instagram reaching 2 billion, these digital spaces have become an integral part of many individuals' daily lives, capturing a wide range of sensory and spatial experiences (Dean, 2024a; Dean, 2024b). Laestadius & Witt (2022, p.582) argue that “any domain of modern life that can be captured visually is likely to be present on Instagram, making it suitable for researchers from a wide breadth of fields and disciplines”. For example, the official @strangerthingstv Instagram account has a following of just below 20 million users and #strangerthings has over 15 million posts. This aligned with the research

aim to explore how *Stranger Things* campaigns engage consumers through embodied, multi-sensory and cross-media experiences. Additionally, the targeted inclusion of the Clio Awards website, a platform renowned for celebrating creative excellence in advertising, provided access to industry-recognised campaigns that have been lauded for their innovative and impactful strategies (About Clio | Clios, 2024). This data source complemented social media materials, offering a more curated and authoritative perspective on *Stranger Things*' marketing efforts. By strategically selecting these digital platforms for data collection, this research was able to access a diverse and information-rich set of visual, auditory and experiential materials that could be thoroughly analysed through the lenses of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-media. The purposive nature of this sampling approach ensured that the cases included were the most relevant and representative for answering the research questions while acknowledging limitations in terms of external validity.

When collecting data for the *Stranger Things* marketing campaigns, I opted for a manual approach to sampling across platforms. This decision was dictated by the advantages associated with manual data collection, as it allows for "greater familiarity with the data" and the creation of "small manual samples [that] can be adapted much more finely to answer specific research questions" (Laestadius & Witt, 2022, p.585, p. 587). Given the focus of this research on the interplay between sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality, I was not looking to accumulate large datasets, but rather to collect specific audiovisual materials that exemplified key features of the *Stranger Things* campaigns. The manual sampling approach allowed me to carefully curate the data to provide the most relevant and informative insights to answer the research questions. For the '*Stranger Things: The Experience*' campaign, I gathered data from both YouTube and Instagram. On YouTube, I began by searching for the official trailer, which provided the perspective of the campaign organisers. I then searched "*Stranger Things* the experience walkthrough" to find two organic walkthrough videos that captured the sensory and spatial dimensions of the immersive event from the participants' perspective (Caliboss Nelson, 2022; Eldon's Excursions, 2022; Fever 2023). In selecting the Instagram data, I focused on the official account @strangerthings.experience, choosing 7 posts and 5 videos from the last two years that seemed particularly sensory-charged and visually representative of the spatial elements of the campaign. In addition, I searched for the hashtag #strangerthingsexperience, which Laestadius and Witt (2022, p. 588) identified as "the most frequent entry point in Instagram search", and selected 7 posts and 5 videos that aligned with the research objectives. A similar approach was taken for Lyft's partnership campaign, where I collected YouTube videos, including the official trailer and a user-generated walkthrough, found by searching 'Lyft *Stranger Things*', as well as the 10 most recent Instagram posts with the hashtag #lyftstrangemode, including a video from user @whitneyeveport (Lyft, 2017; Dan Tabor, 2017; Whitney Port-Rosenman, 2017). This allowed

me to capture both the brand perspective and the embodied experiences of the audience. For the 2022 out-of-home (OOH) campaign, I gathered audiovisual data from YouTube, searching terms such as 'Stranger Things billboard London pop-up' and 'Stranger Things OOH advertising' to find two walkthrough videos and visual recordings of the experiential billboards (Blonstein, 2023; Wayout Group, 2023). I also collected images of 8 OOH billboards from X by searching for "Stranger Things billboard" (Hawkins, do you copy?, 2022; Netflix UK & Ireland, 2022; Stranger News, 2021). Additional images of one of the billboards were found when searching on Google 'Stranger Things outdoor billboard'. Lastly, for the Global Rift Takeover campaign, I searched YouTube for terms such as 'Global Rift Takeover Stranger Things 4', 'Global Rift Takeover' and 'Global Rift Takeover fans' to collect a combination of 3 official trailers and 2 user-generated recordings of the event from around the world (Stranger Things, 2022; Netflix India, 2022; AP Archive, 2022; Abhishek Singh, 2022; Co w Krakowie, 2022; Netflix Italia, 2022). I also collected visual data from the official *Stranger Things* Netflix Instagram, including the official carousel post with the coordinates and 6 images of the rift on the Instagram account, and from the Clio Awards website (Stranger Things Netflix, 2022; Clio Awards 2023). Overall, this purposive sampling approach produced a diverse dataset comprising 40 visual social media posts, 10 Instagram reels, 16 photos and OOH advertisements, and approximately 90 minutes of audio-visual recordings from YouTube. This rich and customised collection of materials allowed for a broad analysis of the *Stranger Things* campaigns through the lenses of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality.

### **3.4 Operationalization**

Upon completion of data collection, the concepts of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality were operationalized through visual and sensory ethnographic analyses. The operationalisation was grounded in the theoretical framework established in the earlier chapters.

The section on sensoriality, informed by the works of Pink (2009; 2015) and Howes (2003), provided insights into how sensory experiences and embodied interactions shape our perception and engagement with the environment. To operationalize sensoriality, I have looked for elements related to the senses. I have done so by identifying sensory stimuli, and looking out for elements in the audio-visual materials that engage the senses, such as visual imagery, sounds, music, narration, textures, colours, lighting, and spatial arrangements. More specifically, colour palettes, image and video compositions, visual effects such as special lighting, motion graphics, or digital enhancements that added depth and dimension to the imagery (see Tables 1 and 2). Additionally, I will investigate how individuals physically engage with the advertising environment, observing gestures, movements, and bodily responses that indicate emotional or sensory engagement with the

campaigns. Furthermore, where individuals were featured in audio-visual data, I examined the facial expressions, body language, and gestures of characters portrayed in the visuals. All of these elements have proven key in revealing sensory patterns in the four campaigns. To provide an example, I noticed a visual pattern in the campaign data of flashing lights and darkness to disorient and create suspense in the audience, which fell under the recurring element of examining the use of light and shadows to evoke atmosphere in the campaigns, falling under the overarching aspect of lighting (see Table 1). Furthermore, in terms of auditory stimuli, I also discovered a pattern element of identifying sounds, music, and narration which engaged the senses, for example, the use of 80s music, as well as the recurring *Stranger Things* theme song (see Table 2).

Spatiality, drawing from the research of Kirby (2023) and Davidson (2010), explored the influence of physical and digital environments on these sensory experiences, highlighting the interplay between space, embodiment, and perception. To operationalize spatiality, I have investigated how the physical environment within the audio-visual materials of the collected *Stranger Things* campaigns contributed to the creation of a sense of place and atmosphere. This involved identifying tangible material aspects, such as built structures like billboards and posters, analysing the use of symmetry, balance, and framing techniques, while also exploring the abstract realm of meaning conveyed by the advertisements. Moreover, I have analysed the urban spaces chosen by Netflix for each specific campaign and examined the visual representation of these spaces in relation to the overall advertising narrative. This multifaceted approach provided me with comprehensive insights into how spatial elements were utilised to immerse viewers in the world of *Stranger Things* and evoke a sense of place within the advertising space. To provide an example, I identified a pattern of narrow spaces and detailed recreations of the show's locations throughout the campaigns, falling under the recurring element of physical environments creating a sense of place and atmosphere, under the overarching aspect of spatial design (see Table 2).

Finally, the section on cross-mediality, which is based on the insights of Jenkins (2006) and Bolter and Grusin (1999), examined how these elements were integrated across media platforms, demonstrating the holistic and interconnected nature of these concepts in the creation of impactful advertising strategies. Cross-mediality was therefore operationalized by examining how elements within the audio-visual materials mediate from the show to various campaign aspects. This includes identifying motifs, symbols, or characters from the *Stranger Things* narrative represented across media platforms and analysing how Netflix integrates these elements into its advertising strategies. These cross-medial elements have proven key in revealing new dimensions within the four campaigns. For example, there were recurring elements such as Eggo waffles and props that were seen on the show and were physically tangible in the campaigns (see Tables 1 and 2).

Overall, this multifaceted approach provided comprehensive insights into how sensory stimuli, spatial elements, and cross-media integration were utilised to immerse viewers in the world of *Stranger Things* and evoke a cohesive experience within the advertising space. The following tables illustrate an example of data analysis for each method, showing the main aspects researched, along with more specific elements and some examples.

**Table 1**

*Visual Analysis*

<b>VISUAL ANALYSIS</b>		
<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Colour Palettes</b>	Identify dominant colours and their emotional impact.	Red and blue lights in lab scenes create tension and urgency.
<b>Lighting</b>	Examine use of light and shadows to evoke atmosphere.	Flashing lights and darkness to disorient and create suspense.
<b>Image Composition</b>	Analyse symmetry, balance, and framing techniques.	Framing characters in the centre to highlight their importance.
<b>Special Visual Effects</b>	Look for digital enhancements that add depth and dimension.	Static visuals and noise on monitors to create disorientation.
<b>Recognizable Elements</b>	Identify characters, props, and spaces from the show.	Eleven appearing on screens, Eggo waffles, Byers' living room setup.

**Table 2**

*Sensory ethnography*

<b>SENSORY ETHNOGRAPHY</b>		
<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Auditory Stimuli</b>	Identify sounds, music, and narration that engage the senses.	80s music in the arcade, <i>Stranger Things</i> theme music.
<b>Tactile Engagement</b>	Observe interactions with physical objects and textures.	Touching slimy walls in the Upside Down tunnel, handling props.

<b>Emotional and Psychological Engagement</b>	Note expressions and body language indicating emotional responses.	Visitors showing shock or awe, smiling, and laughter.
<b>Spatial Design</b>	Analyse how physical environments create a sense of place and atmosphere.	Narrow tunnels to create claustrophobia, detailed recreations of Hawkins Lab.
<b>Interactive Elements</b>	Look for activities that require visitor participation.	Freezing locking mechanisms with hand gestures, playing arcade games.
<b>Food and Drink (Taste)</b>	Note themed food and drinks that engage the sense of taste.	Demogorgon cocktail, Eggo waffles at Scoops Ahoy.
<b>Visual and Auditory Disruption</b>	Observe use of elements that disrupt senses, like flashing lights and static.	Alarms and flashing lights in lab scenes, static noises on screens.

### 3.5 Validity and Reliability

It is worth noting that “for qualitative researchers, the identification, selection, and organization of visual materials always involves negotiating complex issues of sample, representation, authenticity and ‘exhaustiveness’” (Hand, 2022, p.188). Therefore, it was imperative to ensure the validity and reliability of this research. To ensure the validity of my research, I employed triangulation, a method that increases credibility by converging results from multiple sources or types of data (Tracy, 2010, p.843). This approach strengthens the robustness of the conclusions when consistency is observed between different aspects of the study. Despite the advantages of visual analysis and ethnography in providing insights, I recognized the potential limitation of a relatively small sample, as well as the predominantly digital nature of the collected data. To remedy this, the inclusion of interviews and participant observation could offer additional perspectives, enriching the assessment of campaign success beyond the visual and digital ethnographic dimensions. Furthermore, when dealing with reliability in research, one of the main challenges encountered when collecting social media data was assessing the saturation of data for the research. As Corbin and Strauss (2008, cited in Hollingshead et al., 2022, p.85) “saturation occurs when the conceptual categories are sufficiently understood and varied, such that no new properties, dimensions, or relationships to other concepts would be revealed by further data collection”. Therefore, I reached saturation after adequately assessing whether my sub-questions relating to sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality were sufficiently explored and answered. Moreover, when

analysing social media data it was vital to consider the ethical implications of such use in my research. Considering that the social media data employed in my research is publicly available, referring to “data that can be obtained and used without login information and is freely available for [...] researchers to use”, my research did not encounter substantial issues in user privacy concerns (Jacobson and Gruzd, 2020 in Jacobson & Gorea, 2022, p.704). It is also worth noting that the topic of my research does not feature any sensitive discourses, dealing mostly with entertainment purposes.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data analysis of this research involved two distinct analyses: visual analysis and sensory ethnography. This integrated methodology is based on the understanding that visual research is based on the knowledge that image production emerges from the complex relationships between people and technologies. As Pink (2020, p.526) points out, researchers need to recognise the different relationships between images and other textual forms, recognising that the analysis and representation of visual data is a collaborative and situated process. This approach emphasises that the research encounter itself shapes the production of images, requiring researchers to be attentive to the contextual factors that influence the creation and interpretation of visual materials. Importantly, “vision involves more than just looking at images, and visual practices need to be situated as part of multisensory perception” (Pink, 2020, p.524). Visual images must be understood in relation to the other senses, as “it has long been recognised that visual methods are not simply visual” (Pink, 2013 cited in Pink, 2020, p.524). This recognition of the multisensory nature of visual research was a key factor in the integration of sensory ethnography into data analysis for this research. A multisensory approach went a step further, firstly by recognising the interaction between visual stimuli and the other senses, emphasising the multi-sensoriality inherent in images. Secondly, adopting a reflexive approach required awareness of the culturally and personally formed sensory categories used by the researcher (Pink, 2020, p.526).

For the visual analysis, I systematically examined the aesthetic and design elements across images, videos, and social media posts, identifying recurring patterns and themes. This process revealed strategies used by Netflix to engage viewers visually. In the sensory ethnography analysis, I collected fieldnotes from observing the audio-visual material and identified common findings in terms of sensoriality, spatiality, and cross-mediality. This process aligned with Pink's (2009, p.103) emphasis on conducting a multimodal analysis of sensory data, where I considered not only visual and auditory aspects but also tactile, olfactory, and kinesthetic dimensions of sensory experiences. By examining how different senses interacted and contributed to meaning-making, I gained a more

comprehensive understanding of the sensory world depicted in the *Stranger Things* campaigns. Additionally, I integrated Tracy's (2010, p.843) notion of thick description, providing detailed and rich accounts that captured the nuances, complexities, and cultural meanings associated with sensory stimuli. This approach ensured that the sensory experiences within the campaigns were conveyed with depth and richness, enhancing the analysis of sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality in contemporary advertising.

By combining visual analysis and sensory ethnography, this data analysis provided a multifaceted and holistic approach to the examination of the *Stranger Things* marketing campaigns, employing the strengths of visual and sensory perspectives to analyse the intricate interplay between sensoriality, spatiality and cross-mediality.

## 4. Results

After presenting the methodology behind this research, the reasoning behind the research decisions and the theoretical framework, this chapter will present the key results of the study. The results of this study reveal the intricate ways in which *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns construct sensoriality through cross-mediality and spatiality. By examining these campaigns, three key themes emerge: reimagining 80s nostalgia, constructing immersive experiences, and the interplay between fantasy and reality. These will be discussed in the following sections.

### 4.1: Reimagining the 80s: Nostalgia and Cross-Mediality in *Stranger Things* Advertising

The first finding of this study highlights the role of nostalgia, specifically for the 1980's, in *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns. In this section, I argue that the analysed *Stranger Things* campaigns use a blend of aesthetics, sound and taste elements to evoke a mediated nostalgia of the 1980s, creating deeply engaging and emotionally resonant experiences for both those who lived through that era and those who did not. I found that these campaigns strategically use cross-medial elements to ensure that the nostalgic experience is consistent and reinforced across media platforms, not only resulting in a cohesive narrative that engages the audience but also adding a new embodied dimension to the cross-medial element. This chapter explores how these elements create a specific type of nostalgia and the resulting meaning created through cross-mediality. I argue that the nostalgia crafted through these four campaigns is a specific nostalgia of a deeply fictional space, as seen in a Netflix show.

#### 4.1.1 Aesthetics, Sound & Taste Elements

I argue that the visual elements of the 1980s in these campaigns alone contribute significantly to a sense of mediated nostalgia for the audience, engaging them in an emotional journey. These elements are meticulously recreated in *Stranger Things* campaigns to evoke a sense of nostalgia. The use of neon lights, a colour palette dominated by reds, blues, and purples, and detailed recreations of 80s settings are central to this strategy. In *Stranger Things: The Experience*, for example, visitors are greeted with neon signs and lights that immediately set a nostalgic tone, as seen in Figures A1 and A2. The arcade area (see Figure A3), bathed in blue, pink, and purple lights, transports visitors back in time, creating an exciting and nostalgic environment. Similarly, the Byers' living room, as seen in Figure A4, is recreated with its distinctive Christmas lights and alphabet wall, allowing visitors to physically step into a scene from the show. This detailed visual setup not only evokes the period but also contrasts sharply with the red lights used in more suspenseful scenes, guiding the emotional journey of the audience.

Nostalgia plays a critical role in engaging the audience by triggering memories and emotions associated with the 1980s. This emotional connection enhances the overall sensory immersion, making the experience more impactful. As Hsü (2008, p.433) argues, sensory experiences are not just physiological but are profoundly influenced by social and cultural contexts. The careful selection of visual elements ensures that nostalgia is not just a background element but a central part of the immersive experience. Some of the visual objects of the campaigns evoke 1980s nostalgia. For example, arcade machines, roller skates, boom boxes, VHS tapes of 1980s films and even the fictional newspaper 'The Hawkins Post' from 1986, as seen in Figure A5, contribute to a nostalgic atmosphere. These objects can resonate with the audience's personal memories, increasing the overall sense of nostalgia.

Similarly to visual stimuli, auditory elements were found to be equally crucial in evoking 80s nostalgia. All four campaigns in some way utilise 80s music, which is instantly recognizable and emotionally resonant for many viewers. In *Stranger Things: The Experience*, 80-inspired hits play continuously in the background, which, combined with the visual aesthetics, create a lively and nostalgic environment. Furthermore, familiar sounds such as the ones coming from the arcade machines, draw the audience back to familiar sensations of the 80s. The Lyft Partnership rides also extend this auditory nostalgia by playing 80s music softly in the background, complementing the visual transformations of the Lyft cars into *Stranger Things* scenes. The music selection, including iconic tracks from the era which had been used in the show (i.e. 'Should I Stay or Should I Go?' by The Clash), helps passengers feel like they are part of the 80s *Stranger Things* universe. The use of 80s music triggers emotional and nostalgic responses, enhancing the immersive experience. This aligns with Krishna's (2011, p.333) concept of sensory marketing, where auditory experiences shape consumer perceptions and behaviours. The auditory elements reinforce the visual nostalgia, creating a cohesive and engaging sensory experience. These sensory layers add to the embodied experience of the individual, mastering sensory cues to trigger bodily sensations and emotional responses, which is in line with the theories proposed by Krishna (2011, p.333). As Milliman (1982, p. 90) similarly argued, auditory cues, such as background music, can enhance the atmosphere and influence consumers' behaviour, such as the pace of their movements and time spent in the shop.

Taste was also found to be a powerful sense evoking strong memories and emotions in the analysed campaigns. *Stranger Things* campaigns cleverly incorporate 80s-themed food and drinks to deepen sensory engagement. In *Stranger Things: The Experience*, 80s food and drinks are available at various points, all of which have been displayed in the Netflix show, providing a literal taste of the *Stranger Things* world. Standout offerings include the popular ice cream at Scoops Ahoy, Eggo waffles, and Surfer Boy Pizza take-outs (see Figures A6, A7 & A8). The sensory experience of taste

reinforces the nostalgic connection and provides a multi-sensory engagement, making the experience more memorable. By integrating taste elements, the campaigns create a deeper emotional connection with the audience, enhancing the overall immersive experience. This aligns with Krishna's (2011) notion that sensory marketing creates immersive consumer experiences by appealing to fundamental senses such as taste and smell. It was interesting to note that in one of the walkthrough videos of the *Stranger Things: The Experience*, a user explained:

“So I went ahead and got the California wrap. I'm a little disappointed. It's a little soggy at the bottom. Like it's been sitting in the water for a little bit, but I wanted to try something healthy today.” (Fieldnotes, April 2024)

#### **4.1.2 Cross-medial Elements**

These multisensory elements not only were recreating personal nostalgia but a recurring nostalgia identified across different types of media. I argue that this multisensory approach not only reinforces the narrative of the show but also alters audience perception and understanding by providing new sensory experiences in different contexts, specifically for the audiences who have watched the show. As a matter of fact, when analysing the data from the campaign, several recurring elements were identified across media, including physical experiences and digital campaigns. These recurring elements, experienced through various sensory cues, can be classified as cross-medial. In the *Stranger Things* campaigns, these elements are employed through the consistent use of colour palettes, sounds, lights and objects across different media platforms, allowing the audience to recognise recurring patterns. A noteworthy finding is the consistent use of font and text style across all campaigns and social media posts, characterised by bold text with a neon red outline and empty fill (see Figures A9 and A10). The pervasive use of the colour red in all media is an excellent example of cross-mediality. Furthermore, songs from the show, such as the *Stranger Things* theme and other 80s hits, are used in both physical campaigns and Instagram posts to create instant recognition and connection. In the Global Rift Takeover campaign, the familiar sounds of 80s music and the *Stranger Things* theme were broadcast around transformed landmarks, creating an immediate connection for anyone who had watched the Netflix series. The music helps anchor the stunning visuals to the recognisable world of *Stranger Things*. In one of Lyft's walkthrough videos, I noted:

“The theme music of *Stranger Things* starts, the woman says ‘oh my god, I obviously know this music’...” (Fieldnotes, April 2024)

Sounds were also identified as cross-medial. Noises such as the screeching of 'demodogs' (the scary creatures featured in the show) or static screen noise, present in almost every campaign, have a distinctive impact on those who have seen the series as opposed to those who have not. The cross-medial nature of these sounds makes them instantly recognisable to viewers familiar with the series, enhancing and changing their perception of the experience. These sounds create a sense of anticipation for what is about to happen; for example, when the screeching starts, viewers know that danger is imminent and begin to feel frightened. Similarly, when the static screen noise begins, viewers realise that the transition to the Upside Down is likely, increasing their immersive experience.

Recognisable objects such as Eggo waffles, white hazmat suits, flashlights and grandfather clocks can be identified in almost all campaigns on different channels, having been presented for the first time in the show (see Figures A11, A12). This integration increases the depth of the sensory experience and creates a coherent narrative across different media. These cross-medial objects, in particular, enhance the sensory experience by creating new associations and meanings with familiar elements that have previously been experienced visually and acoustically through a screen. When audiences encounter these elements again in a physical context, their perception and understanding are altered, adding a deeper sensory dimension to their experience of the object. This cohesive narrative across media platforms deepens immersion and makes the experience more engaging and memorable. As Davidson (2010) explains, cross-media communication creates a cohesive narrative that engages the audience across multiple channels, which Netflix succeeds in doing with these campaigns. Furthermore, after experiencing the cross-media object in a new sensory way, it is interesting to investigate how this alters the perception of the show as a whole. This is in line with Pink's (2015, p. 6) argument that "new ways of touching, looking and moving with digital media [...] have alerted us to the sensoriality of our embodied and affective engagements with media in new ways".

#### **4.1.3 Fictional and Mediated Nostalgia**

Finally, I argue that the *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns evoke a particular type of nostalgia for the 1980s, which is largely constructed and mediated rather than based on genuine personal memories. Having first established the different ways in which Netflix uses the senses to trigger nostalgia for the 1980s, especially in a cross-medial way, it is important to recognise that this nostalgia is of a particular kind. In general, nostalgia involves a feeling of longing for the past, often linked to personal associations with a particular time or place. However, the nostalgia for the 1980s evoked by these campaigns is largely fabricated and does not necessarily refer to personal

experiences, but rather to a constructed and fictitious memory. For a significant part of the campaign audience, the 1980s was a period they did not live through or do not remember. Even for those who have lived through the 1980s, their reality may be very different from that conveyed aesthetically, through the sound and taste in the campaigns. This raises the question of whether this kind of nostalgia can still be considered authentic, as it is imagined and mediated through sensory associations based on cultural knowledge and external narratives, such as parents' stories. Moreover, this fictional nostalgia of the 1980s refers to a time and place imagined through embodied sensory experiences. The senses create a nostalgic connection to a period that may not have existed as portrayed. This overlap between sensory nostalgia, created through specific visual and auditory cues, and the embodied experience of the campaigns suggests a complex interplay between reality and imagination. In this way, the campaigns construct a nostalgia that is not only about the nostalgia of the past but also about the experience and embodiment of a collective, fictional memory of the 1980s.

Furthermore, this mediated nostalgia is ideologically charged, as Mollet and Scott (2021, p.9) argue, with significant implications for how we perceive history and shape our present and future. Previous research by Klinger (2006) has observed that while audiences "are now able to be informed about the political aspects of the 1980s, they prefer to remember the less political aspects of those years", where the past serves as an "antidote to social complexity" (cited in Mollet & Scott, 2021, p.9). In the context of the *Stranger Things* campaigns, this ideological nostalgia allows the audience to confront a sanitised version of the 1980s, stripped of its political and social complexities. Instead, the focus is on aesthetic, auditory and sensory elements that evoke a simpler, more pleasant era. This selective memory shapes the audience's perception of history, creating a collective memory that is comforting rather than challenging. I argue that, by presenting an idealised version of the 1980s, the campaigns offer a form of escapism that resonates with contemporary audiences grappling with complex social realities. This nostalgia, then, functions as a coping mechanism, allowing audiences to momentarily escape the present by immersing themselves in a more linear past, even if fictional. This process not only influences the way audiences perceive the 1980s, but can also shape their current cultural and social perspectives.

In this chapter, I argued how *Stranger Things*' advertising campaigns exploit a mixture of aesthetic, auditory and taste elements to evoke a mediated nostalgia of the 1980s. This approach not only engages audiences who lived through that era but also those who did not, creating a multi-sensory memory that offers an immersive and emotionally resonant experience. By integrating cross-medial elements, these campaigns ensure a coherent and reinforced nostalgic experience across different media platforms, enhancing the overall narrative and adding a new embodied

dimension to audience engagement. This mediated nostalgia, although largely constructed and fictional, provides a comforting escape from contemporary social complexities, influencing both historical perceptions and current cultural perspectives. Through the strategic use of multi-sensory cues, *Stranger Things* succeeds in creating a cohesive and engaging nostalgic experience that captures and resonates with the audience.

## **4.2: Constructing Immersive Spaces: Space, Environment and The Body**

In this chapter, I argue that the *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns effectively exploit aspects such as darkness and light, familiar places and cross-media spaces to add a new embodied dimension for the audience. By examining these elements, I argue how physical and digital environments interact to blur the line between reality and fiction, increasing the sensory and emotional engagement of the audience. This chapter focuses on the interplay between space, environmental factors and the body, illustrating how these components collectively contribute to the immersive and engaging nature of these campaigns.

### **4.2.1 Environment: Darkness & Light**

The use of darkness and light to create atmosphere was found to be a key element in the *Stranger Things* campaigns. In various moments in each campaign, darkness envelops the body and focuses attention, creating tension and immersion, where all external stimuli are reduced. This manipulation of light and shadow reflects the aesthetics of the show and enhances the immersive experience. It does so in a very specific way, where darkness removes external stimuli such as numerous visual distractions and allows the audience to envelop their body in the experience. This is in line with Joy and Sherry's (2003) theories on embodiment, according to which bodily experiences are shaped by the spaces we inhabit and move through, which in this case are characterised by darkness and shadows. In *Stranger Things: The Experience*, a notable example is the 'portal to the Upside Down', constructed with tentacle-like structures that narrow into a small tunnel (see Figure A13). As visitors pass through this tunnel, the constricted space and dark eerie lighting evoke a sense of unease and anticipation, making them feel vulnerable and on edge. A similar scenario recurs in the London OOH walkthrough billboard, where a similar 'portal' leads to an immersive walkthrough experience with props, actors and a short storyline linked to an escape through the underworld, mostly characterised by complete darkness and a couple of flashlights, as seen in Figure A14. These physical and visual constraints are not just an aesthetic choice but a strategic design to elicit a specific sensorial experience, immersing the audience in the show's suspenseful atmosphere. Similarly, the Lyft Partnership transformed ordinary car interiors into enclosed *Stranger Things* environments. The confined space of the car, combined with thematic elements like eerie lighting and jump scares (see Figure A15), intensified the feeling of being trapped in the narrative world. Passengers experienced the story in a physically constrained setting, enhancing the overall tension and immersion in the experience. Notably, at one point of the ride, when strange things start happening, the car locks up all the doors automatically, adding to the sense of entrapment.

In contrast to the indoor use of darkness, the *Stranger Things* campaigns were also found utilising darkness in large outdoor environments, removing external stimuli and drawing attention to the campaign elements, just as effectively as indoor darkness. The use of night-time settings significantly enhances the immersive experience, leveraging the natural association of darkness with mystery and fear and placing the campaign elements at the forefront. Night environments amplify the eerie and suspenseful atmosphere, making the design of the spaces more effective. Night-time settings increase the visibility and effectiveness of the installations, creating a more evocative and memorable experience. This supports Kirby's (2023) research on 'composite spaces', where digital elements and materials intersect to create a layered spatial experience, where the digital projections overlap with the material structures of the buildings and urban and historical landmarks. In the *Stranger Things* Experience, many of the immersive installations are designed to be experienced in low light or darkness. The use of dim lighting not only increases the sense of discomfort but also ensures that visual effects, such as glowing tentacles and flickering lights, have a greater impact. Likewise, the partnership with Lyft seems to be commonly experienced at night, allowing the special effects to be more effective and visible to passengers. The 2022 OOH Billboards campaign was often projected in the later hours of the day to increase the visibility and effectiveness of the installations. Similarly, the Global Rift Takeover campaign was most effective in the evening and night hours. Upside Down projections on historical monuments created a stark contrast with the night sky, making the otherworldly images even more captivating. The shadows and lighting used in these projections played off the natural darkness, enhancing the immersive and eerie experience.

#### **4.2.2 Urban Environments and Cross-medial Spaces**

I argue that *Stranger Things*' advertising campaigns effectively exploit urban environments, historical landmarks and cross-medial spaces to create immersive experiences that blur the boundaries between the physical and digital worlds. Using specific locations and blending them with digital installations, these campaigns repurpose familiar physical spaces and integrate elements originally featured in the series, creating new associations for both the physical location and the series itself. The choice of urban settings and historical landmarks significantly influences the impact of the campaigns. These settings not only provide a backdrop but also contribute to the thematic resonance of the advertisements. The 2022 OOH Billboards campaign, for example, strategically placed installations in lively urban settings, especially near busy streets (see Figure A16). This dynamic choice of location creates a striking contrast that attracts attention and engages passers-by.

Interactive elements, such as immersive light shows and crossing experiences, encourage new interactions with the environment, turning it into an extension of the *Stranger Things* universe.

The Global Rift Takeover campaign took this a step further by using a combination of modern and historical landmarks. By projecting the Upside Down aesthetic onto iconic landmarks, the campaign transformed these familiar locations into eerie, otherworldly scenes, adding new layers of meaning for the audience. This approach not only attracted a diverse audience but also emphasised the inescapable scope of the show, making the *Stranger Things* narrative feel global. Visitors to these locations were able to interact with the projections, adding a tactile dimension to the visual spectacle and altering the perception of these familiar environments. The choice of familiar locations adds a new dimension to the show's narrative and individual experience. Urban environments make the experience more accessible, for example, the projection on the Empire State Building in New York (see Figure A17), while historical locations create a juxtaposition that enhances the surreal aspect of the campaign, for example, the Wawel Castle in Krakow (see Figure A18). This supports Rose's (2022, p.140-141) concept of 'digital embodiment', where the integration of new media technologies reconfigures the experience of embodiment, which, in the case of the campaigns, enhances the sensorial experience in once familiar locations.

The cross-medial spaces of *Stranger Things* campaigns involve the transposition of elements from one medium to another, enhancing the overall advertising experience. By recreating spaces and environments from the series, these campaigns bridge the gap between the screen and real life, allowing the audience to physically enter the world of *Stranger Things*. The use of cross-media spaces in the *Stranger Things* campaigns adds a new dimension to the environments, transforming them into multi-layered experiences that go beyond simple replicas. For example, when the audience encounters a room with peeling wallpaper, similar to a scene from the show, it triggers a sense of familiarity and connection, altering their perception of the space. Furthermore, recreating iconic locations such as the Byers' living room or Hawkins' lab' 'Rainbow Room' allows for deep immersion in the *Stranger Things* universe, adding a sensory layer to the experience (see Figure A19). These spaces have been meticulously crafted to reflect every detail seen on screen, from the furniture to the lighting. This level of detail increases the sense of authenticity, making visitors feel as if they have entered the fictional world of *Stranger Things*. The physical presence of the individual in these replicated spaces alters the perception of the story.

#### **4.2.3 Positionality of the Body**

I argue that the positioning and movement of the body in these above-mentioned spaces play a significant role in the audience's embodied experience of these campaigns. For example, in

*Stranger Things: The Experience*, participants have the opportunity to sit on themed couches, stand in specific poses during interactive tasks, or move through spaces in ways that mirror the actions of characters in the show. For instance, in one interactive task, visitors use hand gestures to "freeze" locking mechanisms, mimicking the telekinetic abilities of Eleven, which is the show's main character, as seen in Figure A20. Physical engagement and positioning make the experience dynamic and interactive, reinforcing the connection between the participants and the narrative. This aligns with Longo et al.'s (2008, p.980) research on embodiment, which emphasises the connection between sensory experiences and the construction of body self-awareness. By allowing the audience to physically participate in the experience, they become more self-aware and construct a new layer of meaning connected to the sensory experience of the campaign. Some campaigns have required the audience to sit, either on couches in locations related to the *Stranger Things* narrative, such as Scoops Ahoy, or in the backseat of a Lyft car. This sitting and relaxed position allows the audience to be more receptive to external stimuli, not having to focus on their body movements.

3D effects and digital projections further enhance the embodied experience within the environment. In the Upside Down tunnel of *Stranger Things: The Experience*, visitors wear 3D glasses to intensify the sensory experience(see Figure A21). The next room features a semicircular screen showing a forest environment with a mix of red and blue lights, while slimy, tentacled structures extend from the walls. The use of 3D effects not only adds visual depth but also makes the environment more interactive and immersive. Visitors become active participants in the unfolding of events, rather than mere passive observers. This exemplifies how these campaigns alter the perception of experience, immersing individuals in a unique visual and auditory environment where the boundary between the physical body and digital enhancements blurs.

In conclusion, the *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns effectively exploit aspects such as darkness and light, familiar locations and cross-media spaces to add a new embodied dimension for the audience. By examining these elements, I demonstrated how physical and digital environments interact to blur the line between reality and fiction, increasing the sensory and emotional engagement of the audience. The strategic use of spatial design, environmental factors and the body collectively contribute to the immersive and engaging nature of these campaigns. Whether it is the manipulation of light and shadow, the repurposing of urban and historical locations or the creation of cross-media spaces, these campaigns succeed in deepening the audience's connection to the *Stranger Things* universe, making the fictional world feel tangible and real.

### **4.3: Blurring the Lines: The Interplay of Fantasy and Reality in Immersive Advertising**

In this chapter, I argue that the *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns effectively blur the line between fantasy and reality, creating immersive experiences that engage the audience in a novel way. By leveraging detailed recreations of spaces, invoking feelings through characters, incorporating actors, offering themed food and drink, and using colours and symbols from the series, these campaigns create a multi-sensory environment that merges the fictional world of *Stranger Things* with the physical reality of the audience. This chapter explores how these elements help to blur the boundaries and the resulting consequences on the audience's perception and sensory associations.

#### **4.3.1 Reality Vs Fantasy**

I discovered that the four *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns all masterfully blur the line between reality and fantasy by creating detailed recreations of spaces, invoking feelings through characters, incorporating actors, offering themed food and drink, and using colours that reference the show. Despite the challenge posed by the show's deep roots in the fantasy genre, these elements immerse participants in the *Stranger Things* universe. Iconic locations from the series, such as the Byers' living room and Hawkins' lab, are recreated in meticulous detail. These spaces evoke the atmosphere and emotions of the series, allowing participants to enter immediately recognisable environments. Detailed recreations allow audiences to step into the world of *Stranger Things*, blurring the line between fiction and reality. This spatial immersion enhances emotional connections and sensorial engagement. This supports Cresswell and Hoskins' (2008, p. 394) notion that place involves both tangible materiality and abstract meaning, contributing to a sense of place. Actors playing characters such as Eleven, or more generally actors dressed in 80s clothes interact with participants, guiding them through the experience and acting out key scenes. For example, the Global Rift Takeover campaign in Italy involved various actors taking to the streets of Milan, and interacting with the audience, as seen in Figure A22. This physical interaction, combined with the stunning visuals, created a sense of wonder and intrigue, drawing crowds to interact with the installations. This direct involvement deepens the immersion and makes participants feel part of the narrative. Items such as Eggo waffles and Scoops Ahoy ice cream engage the sense of taste, adding another layer to the tangible experience of the show. Consuming these familiar items breaks the barrier into the *Stranger Things* universe. A consistent colour palette and visual symbols create an immediate connection to the series. The reds, blues, purples and iconic symbols make the *Stranger Things* aesthetic instantly recognisable and deeply embedded in the experience. Despite the challenge of integrating fantastical elements into real environments, the campaigns focus on

creating an immersive atmosphere rather than replicating every fantastical element. By emphasising sensory and emotional aspects, the campaigns make the fantastic seem plausible, bridging the gap between the real and the imaginary.

### **4.3.2 Mechanisms Blurring the Line**

I found interactive elements to play a crucial role in making the fictional world of *Stranger Things* real. Participants are often asked to perform tasks that mirror the actions of characters from the series, increasing their sense of immersion and involvement. These interactive tasks are key to actively engaging the audience and making them feel part of the story. In the *Stranger Things* Experience, one of the most memorable interactive tasks involves participants using hand gestures to modify the locking mechanisms, guided by videos of the characters from the series on a static screen, as seen in Figure A20. This task not only requires physical movement but also creates a sense of urgency and involvement in the storyline, as visitors feel they are helping the characters achieve their goals. Another notable interactive element is the group challenges, in which participants solve puzzles and find clues within the Hawkins Lab. This encourages teamwork and participant involvement, making them feel like characters from the series as they move through the mysterious world of *Stranger Things*. In the Global Rift Takeover, the audiences at the transformed landmarks were able to discover the event through a social media post by @strangerthingstv, which featured coordinates and riddles, as seen in Figure A23. This post encouraged users to decipher the clues and explore the landmarks in new and engaging ways. This interactive element exemplifies cross-media engagement, moving from the show to social media to physical spaces. Participants are engaged in the narrative across multiple platforms, enhancing their sensory experience and deepening their connection to the story. According to Pink (2015, p.6), the material and experiential qualities of media invite attention to the senses. By integrating interactive activities that require physical participation, the *Stranger Things* campaigns create a multisensory experience that transcends mere visual engagement. The shift from digital clues to physical exploration highlights the concept of cross-media, where narratives embrace multiple media forms, creating a cohesive and immersive experience. This approach not only strengthens the connection between the physical body and digital content but also exemplifies how interactive elements can enhance the audience's perception of the narrative world, blurring the boundaries between reality and fantasy.

Furthermore, I argue that incorporating the series' narration and dialogue into the campaigns helps anchor the experience in the *Stranger Things* narrative. Hearing familiar voices and jokes further immerses participants in the storyline, blurring the line between watching the series and experiencing it. In *Stranger Things: The Experience*, characters such as Eleven and Dustin appear

on the screens to provide instruction and narrative context. For example, Dustin and Erika engage the crowd by asking for help to turn off the system, creating a direct interaction between the viewers and the storyline, effectively blurring the line between reality and fantasy. During Lyft rides, pre-recorded messages from characters such as Mike and Lucas are played, enhancing the sense of being part of the *Stranger Things* narrative. These dialogues help passengers understand the context of the transformed environments inside the cars, deepening the immersive experience. Moreover, at various global landmarks during the Global Rift Takeover, the *Stranger Things* theme song and audio installations include dialogues from key characters playing alongside visual projections. This integration helps passers-by connect the striking visuals to the *Stranger Things* story, reinforcing the narrative's presence in the real world.

Themed foods and drinks, such as Eggo waffles and Scoops Ahoy ice cream, add a multi-sensory layer to the experience, bringing the fictional world into reality and making fantasy more concrete. Items such as the 'Demogorgon' cocktail and Surfer Boy pizza integrate elements of the show into the physical space, reinforcing thematic immersion. Taste is a powerful sense that evokes strong memories and emotions, and the *Stranger Things* campaigns leverage this by offering themed food and drinks in various locations, providing a literal taste of the world of *Stranger Things*. The 'Demogorgon' drink, as seen in Figure A24, served in a specially designed cup, directly references the mythology of the series, reinforcing the thematic experience. Eggo waffles, a nod to Eleven's favourite food, are available in almost every campaign, deepening the sensory connection to the storyline. In addition, the Global Rift Takeover and OOH billboards included food trucks or pop-up stands selling *Stranger Things*-themed snacks and drinks. This multi-sensory approach can have a significant impact on the audience's perception of the show. Positive experiences with these themed foods can strengthen the connection to the series, while negative sensory experiences can alter perception. This dual potential highlights the critical role of taste in shaping the overall perception of the show.

Nevertheless, I argue that prior knowledge of the show creates expectations that campaigns can meet or subvert. Recognisable elements, such as iconic songs, objects or food, set the stage for an immersive experience, making expectation management crucial to balancing reality and fantasy. For example, the appearance of a static screen immediately signals to fans that something supernatural is about to happen, using their familiarity with the series to heighten anticipation. This transfer of knowledge from the show to the real-world experience allows for deeper engagement. Krishna's (2011, p.333) concept of sensory marketing supports this by highlighting how sensory experiences shape consumer perceptions and behaviour. The effective use of familiar elements, such as listening to a familiar song from the series, creates a clash between expectation and surprise,

enhancing the immersive experience. For this blurring to be effective, it is crucial that the audience has seen the show, as this prior exposure allows for the necessary transfer of knowledge and meaning.

### **4.3.3 Consequences of Blurring the Line**

Finally, I argue that all the above-mentioned elements, when considered together, create new sensory associations by mixing fantasy and reality, thus enriching the audience's perception and engagement with the series. This is done by immersing participants in real-world contexts that replicate elements of the show, leading to a deeper emotional and cognitive connection. However, this approach has a twofold effect: while enhancing the overall experience and making the fictional world more tangible, it can also diminish the magical qualities of fantasy, making a careful balance necessary to maintain the integrity of the narrative.

A consequence of this clash between fantasy and reality in *Stranger Things* campaigns, is the creation of new associations with elements of the series, enriching the audience's perception and understanding. When participants encounter objects and songs from the series in a real-world context, these elements take on additional layers of meaning. For example, hearing the series' iconic theme music while browsing through a walkthrough billboard can evoke a stronger emotional response than simply watching the series at home. Similarly, physically interacting with objects such as Eggo waffles or the Demogorgon drink deepens the connection to the narrative. These new sensory associations make subsequent viewings of the show more meaningful, as participants bring their real experiences back into the realm of fiction. This process is in line with Pink's (2015, p.6) idea that sensory experiences are crucial in shaping the way we perceive and engage media.

Furthermore, being in a real space designed to replicate an imaginary space can make fantasy seem more real. When participants physically inhabit these recreated environments, the distinction between reality and imagination blurs, strengthening their emotional connection to the narrative. For example, entering a meticulously recreated Hawkins lab or sitting in the Byers' living room allows fans to feel part of the world of *Stranger Things*. This physical presence in a familiar environment of the series not only reinforces the reality of the fantasy but also deepens engagement with the plot. This heightened perception is supported by embodiment theory, which suggests that our physical experiences are integral to our understanding of the world around us. By placing participants in spaces that closely mirror the environments of the show, the campaigns promote a sense of authenticity and immersion, making the fictional narrative more tangible. Contrarily, the tangible nature of these immersive experiences can sometimes flatten the space of fiction. When fantasy elements are experienced in a physical form, they may lose some of their magical or otherworldly

qualities. For example, seeing a Demogorgon in a real environment can lessen its frightening impact compared to its representation on the screen. This dynamic interaction challenges traditional boundaries and reshapes the audience's perceptions as the fantasy becomes part of their everyday reality. This altered perception can have a twofold effect. On the one hand, it can enhance the overall experience, making the world of fiction feel more accessible and real. On the other, it can diminish the sense of wonder and mystery that characterises the fantasy genre. This complex interplay between reality and imagination requires careful balancing to maintain the integrity of the narrative while providing a deeply immersive experience for the audience of the campaigns.

In this chapter, I argued that the *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns effectively blur the line between fantasy and reality, creating deeply immersive experiences. Using detailed recreations of spaces, engaging characters, embedded actors, themed food and drink, and iconic symbols from the series, these campaigns create a multi-sensory environment that fuses the fictional world of the show with physical reality. This fusion generates new sensory associations and enriches the audience's perceptions. While this approach enhances the overall experience by making the world of fiction more tangible, it also risks detracting from the magical qualities of fantasy. A careful balance is needed to maintain narrative integrity while delivering a deeply immersive experience. The *Stranger Things* campaigns effectively demonstrate how the blending of fantasy and reality can transform audience perception.

## 5. Conclusion

This research investigated the phenomenon of immersive advertising in the context of four *Stranger Things* campaigns, focusing on how sensoriality is constructed through cross-mediality and spatiality. The central research question that guided this study was: "How is sensoriality constructed through cross-media and spatiality in *Stranger Things* advertising?" This question aimed to explore the integration of sensory elements, spatial design and cross-media strategies to create deeply engaging experiences for the audience.

My first finding was the central role of 1980s nostalgia in the *Stranger Things* campaigns. The four campaigns utilise aesthetic, sound and taste elements to evoke a mediated nostalgia, creating emotionally resonant experiences for both those who lived through that era and those who did not. Neon lights, a colour palette dominated by red, blue and purple and 80s music are used to evoke nostalgia, while themed foods such as Scoops Ahoy ice cream and Eggo waffles deepen the sensory engagement. Nevertheless, I argued that this nostalgia is largely constructed, offering an idealised version of the 1980s that provides escapism and shapes the audience's perception of history and current reality. By presenting an idealised version of the past, the campaigns offer a comforting escape from contemporary social complexities, influencing both historical perceptions and current cultural perspectives.

My second finding was the recognition of the crucial role of spatial design and environmental elements in creating immersive experiences. The *Stranger Things* campaigns strategically use space, darkness, light and audience positioning to blur the line between reality and fiction. I argue that the use of darkness envelops the body, reduces external stimuli and creates tension, while light manipulates attention and atmosphere, enhancing the immersive experience. Furthermore, I discuss how the campaigns effectively repurpose urban settings and historical landmarks, merging them with digital installations to create new associations and deepen the narrative experience. This cross-media approach integrates elements of the series into real contexts, increasing authenticity and engagement. Moreover, I examined how the physical positioning and movement of the audience in the recreated spaces, such as the use of hand gestures to interact with the environment, strengthen the connection between the participants and the narrative, making the experience more dynamic and interactive.

In my last findings chapter, I presented the ways in which the analysed *Stranger Things* campaigns effectively blur the boundaries between fantasy and reality. I argued how the campaigns masterfully recreate iconic locations such as the Byers' living room and Hawkins' lab, immersing participants in the *Stranger Things* universe. Actors playing characters from the series and themed food products reinforce this immersion. The consistent use of colours and symbols from the series

further blurs the line between real and imaginary, making the fantastical elements seem plausible and tangible. Furthermore, interactive elements, such as performing tasks that mirror those of the characters, significantly increase audience interaction. These tasks range from solving puzzles in the Hawkins lab to deciphering clues posted on social media, exemplifying cross-media engagement. The incorporation of series narration and dialogue also deepens immersion, making participants feel directly involved in the plot. Finally, I argued that the overlap of fantasy and reality in the campaigns creates new sensory associations and enriches audience perception. Physical interaction with series elements in real-life contexts reinforces emotional ties to the narrative. However, I discuss how this can sometimes detract from the magical qualities of fantasy, making a careful balance necessary to maintain the integrity of the narrative.

To answer my research question, "How is sensoriality constructed through cross-media and spatiality in *Stranger Things* advertising?" it is essential to explore how these campaigns combine sensory engagement, spatial design and cross-media strategies to create deeply immersive experiences. *Stranger Things* ad campaigns meticulously recreate iconic spaces, utilise consistent sensory cues across media, and employ interactive activities that blur the line between reality and fiction. This approach strengthens the emotional connection to the narrative and enriches the audience's sensory experience, making the fantastical elements of the series feel tangible and real. The *Stranger Things* campaigns actively engage the senses through a combination of aesthetic, auditory and taste elements. The use of neon lights, bold colour palettes, and meticulously recreated 1980s settings evoke a strong sense of nostalgia. Auditory elements, such as 80s music and familiar sounds from the series, further reinforce this nostalgia, creating a cohesive sensory experience. Themed foods and drinks, such as Eggo waffles and Scoops Ahoy ice cream, provide a literal taste of the world of *Stranger Things*, deepening the sensory engagement. These sensory elements are used consistently across different media platforms, creating an immersive and continuous experience that resonates emotionally with the audience. The campaigns use spatial design, environmental factors and body involvement to create immersive experiences that blur the boundaries between reality and fiction. The use of darkness and light creates atmosphere and immersion, reducing external stimuli and focusing attention on the narrative. Meticulously recreated locations, such as the Byers' living room and Hawkins' lab, add authenticity and make participants feel as if they have entered the fictional world. Interactive tasks such as the use of hand gestures to alter locking mechanisms, require physical engagement and strengthen the bond between participants and the narrative. By combining spatial elements, environmental factors and bodily engagement, campaigns increase sensory immersion and emotional engagement. The cross-media nature of the *Stranger Things* campaigns enhances sensory and spatial engagement by creating a cohesive narrative across

multiple platforms. Social media posts, physical experiences and digital content are seamlessly integrated, allowing audiences to interact with the narrative in various contexts. Recognisable elements, such as songs, visual symbols and interactive tasks, are used across platforms to create a unified and engaging experience. For example, clues and riddles posted on Instagram lead followers to explore real-world locations, bridging the gap between the fantasy of the show and the reality of the audience. This cross-media approach amplifies sensory and spatial dimensions, ensuring continuous audience engagement and deepening their connection to the *Stranger Things* universe.

When drawing back to the theoretical foundation, I found that sensory marketing, embodiment theory and cross-media strategies provided a comprehensive understanding of how the *Stranger Things* ad campaigns created immersive experiences that deeply engaged audiences. These theories have been instrumental in explaining the campaigns' success in merging reality and fiction. Sensory marketing theories proved effective in understanding how campaigns engaged the audience's senses to evoke 1980s nostalgia. Exploiting visual elements such as neon lights, auditory cues such as 1980s music and taste elements such as Eggo waffles and Scoops Ahoy ice cream, the campaigns created a multi-sensory environment that resonated emotionally. This alignment with Krishna's (2011) concepts showed that multi-sensory engagement can significantly influence consumer perceptions and behaviour. Embodiment theory emphasises the role of spatial design and body engagement in enhancing immersion. Campaigns utilised strategic spatial elements and interactive tasks to deepen audience engagement. The use of darkness and light to manipulate sensory attention further immersed participants in the narrative. This approach emphasised the importance of theory to explain how physical presence and movement within a designed space contribute to a deeper immersive experience. Cross-media strategies created cohesive and engaging experiences by integrating content across multiple platforms. Consistent visual styles, auditory cues and interactive elements have been utilised across social media, physical experiences and digital content. This cross-media approach maintained narrative continuity and amplified sensory and spatial engagement, validating Davidson's (2010) concept of cross-media communication.

Reflecting on the chosen methods of analysis, visual analysis and sensory ethnography emerged as effective tools to capture the immersive and interactive nature of the *Stranger Things* advertising campaigns. Visual analysis was chosen because of the visually focused design of the *Stranger Things* campaigns. This method allowed for a detailed examination of visual elements such as neon lights, colour palettes, and meticulously recreated 1980s settings, which are key to evoking nostalgia and increasing sensory engagement. The strength of visual analysis lies in its ability to dissect and interpret these visual cues, revealing the strategic skill of the campaigns. However, its limitation is that it focuses primarily on visual elements, potentially neglecting the contribution of auditory and

tactile cues. Sensory ethnography, supported by field notes, provided a comprehensive understanding of immersive audience experiences, exploring how sensory elements - sight, sound, taste, touch and smell - collectively influenced engagement. The strength of this method is its holistic view of sensory experiences and its ability to capture participants' reactions and interactions, even if online, offering rich, qualitative data. However, it can be time-consuming and logistically difficult given the digital nature of the observation, as it portrays one edited picture or video. Furthermore, the interpretation of sensory experiences is subjective, as individual responses may vary. Despite these limitations, sensory ethnography has provided valuable and nuanced information on audience experiences.

This research faced a few limitations. The main limitation was the scope of analysis, limited by the digital nature of the observations and the sample size, which may not fully represent *Stranger Things* campaigns. Furthermore, the digital availability of the campaign materials meant that some sensory and spatial elements could only be experienced vicariously, potentially limiting the depth of the sensory ethnography. Furthermore, my previous involvement in the series could introduce bias, as familiarity could influence the interpretation of sensory and spatial elements. Other potential limitations include the dependence on qualitative data, which may not have the generalisability of quantitative methods. The subjective nature of the interpretation of sensory experiences may also introduce variability in the results. Furthermore, the rapid evolution of digital and cross-media strategies means that results may quickly become outdated.

To address these limitations, future research could include interviews to explore the effects of these campaigns in more depth. Conducting in-depth interviews with participants would provide rich, qualitative data on personal experiences and perceptions, offering a deeper understanding of how immersive advertising affects audience engagement. In addition, selecting a wider range of campaigns for analysis would allow for a more comprehensive examination of different strategies and their effectiveness in various contexts. Performing ethnography in person, rather than relying solely on digital observations, would allow researchers to capture all sensory and spatial dimensions of campaigns, providing a more authentic and detailed account of interactions with audiences.

Despite these limitations, this research makes a significant contribution to the field of media and the creative industries. It highlights the crucial role of sensory marketing in the creation of immersive cross-media campaigns, demonstrating how visual, auditory and taste elements evoke strong audience interaction. The impact of spatial design and body engagement has been shown to enhance the immersive experience, blurring the boundaries between reality and fiction. These results underline the importance of multisensory and spatial elements in audience engagement,

suggesting that future campaigns should integrate these strategies to create more compelling and memorable experiences.

In essence, these *Stranger Things* campaigns demonstrate that the magic of immersive advertising lies in its ability to seamlessly blend sensory engagement, spatial design and cross-media storytelling. While transporting audiences into a vivid reimagining of the 1980s, these campaigns not only captivate but transform passive viewers into active participants, leaving a lasting impact that blurs the boundaries between reality and fiction. By showcasing these innovative strategies, this study provides a valuable framework for future research and practical applications of immersive advertising, contributing to a deeper understanding of how to engage audiences in meaningful and impactful ways.

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[/?utm\\_source=ig\\_embed&utm\\_campaign=embed\\_video\\_watch\\_again](https://www.instagram.com/p/BauR4ynBf1-/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=embed_video_watch_again)

## Appendix A

Figure 1

Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Caliboss Nelson, 2022)



Figure 2

Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Eldon's Excursions, 2022)



Figure 3

Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (Ana Chiyo, 2024)



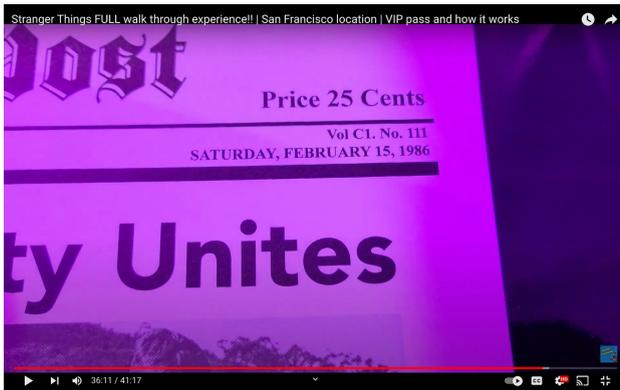
**Figure 4**

Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (Nicoly Lopes, 2024)



**Figure 5**

Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Eldon's Excursions, 2022)



**Figure 6**

Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (Stranger Things Experience, 2023)



**Figure 7**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Caliboss Nelson, 2022)*



**Figure 8**

*Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (Stranger Things Experience, 2023)*



**Figure 9**

*Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (THIS Warehouse, 2017)*



**Figure 10**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Netflix Italia, 2022)*



**Figure 11**

*Screenshot retrieved from X (Netflix UK & Ireland, 2022)*



**Figure 12**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Blonstein, 2023)*



**Figure 13**

*Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (Stranger Things Experience, 2024)*



**Figure 14**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Blonstein, 2023)*



**Figure 15**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Lyft, 2017)*



**Figure 16**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Wayout Media, 2023)*



**Figure 17**

*Screenshot retrieved from Clio Awards Website (Clio Awards, 2023)*



**Figure 18**

*Screenshot retrieved from Clio Awards Website (Clio Awards, 2023)*



**Figure 19**

*Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (Stranger Things Experience, 2024)*



**Figure 20**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Caliboss Nelson, 2022)*



**Figure 21**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Fever, 2023)*



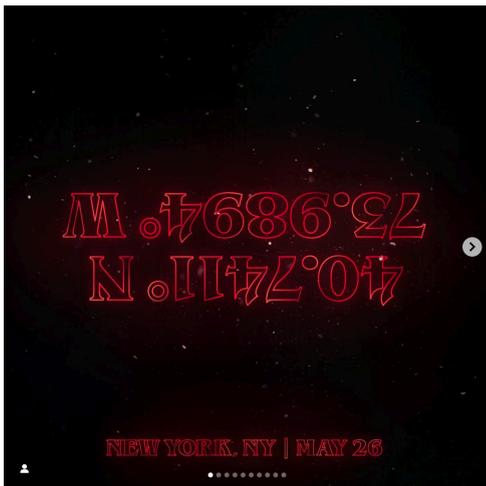
**Figure 22**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Netflix Italia, 2022)*



**Figure 23**

*Screenshot retrieved from Instagram (Stranger Things Netflix, 2022)*



**Figure 24**

*Screenshot retrieved from YouTube (Caliboss Nelson, 2022)*



## Appendix B

### Campaigns dataset:

CAMPAIGN 1 = STRANGER THINGS: THE EXPERIENCE						
PLATFORM	NAME/CAPTION	USER	DATE	LINK		FORMAT
1 YouTube	The Stranger Things Experience - Save Hawkins now!   Fever	fever	17/07/2023	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkjpm-9a7g">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkjpm-9a7g</a>		VIDEO
2 YouTube	Stranger Things The Experience Full walk through 2022 must watch!	Caliboss Nelson	05/08/2022	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cimkWu-B0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cimkWu-B0</a>		VIDEO
3 YouTube	Stranger Things FULL walk through experience!!   San Francisco locatio	Eldon's Excursion	09/09/2022	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfMTbBOHNc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfMTbBOHNc</a>		VIDEO
4 Instagram	SÃO PAULO, Stranger Things: The Experience chegou. Garanta já seus in	strangerthings.experience AND feverbr	12/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C5qe2RvMZD/">https://www.instagram.com/p/C5qe2RvMZD/</a>		REEL
5 Instagram	So who's gonna be the Eddie to my Steve for this???	strangerthings.experience AND horrornig	25/10/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cy074Y0MHn7/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cy074Y0MHn7/</a>		REEL
6 Instagram	ATENÇÃO 📢 Stranger Things: The Experience está chegando a São Paul	strangerthings.experience	20/03/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C4vgVNWmkZl/?img_ir">https://www.instagram.com/p/C4vgVNWmkZl/?img_ir</a>		REEL
7 Instagram	Strange things are happening at Scoops Ahoy and our friends at @chipse	strangerthings.experience	28/08/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CwgDakoJnLb/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CwgDakoJnLb/</a>		REEL
8 Instagram	Wonder how that could have happened? 🤔👀	strangerthings.experience	10/08/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CyxUjGoT1h/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CyxUjGoT1h/</a>		REEL
9 Instagram	Hawkins está chamando 📢 Qual sala você está mais ansioso para explc	strangerthings.experience AND fever_glc	19/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C58tV39sesS/?img_inc">https://www.instagram.com/p/C58tV39sesS/?img_inc</a>		POST
10 Instagram	Paris, tu nous reçois? La #StrangerThingsExperience ferme ses portes le	strangerthings.experience	29/06/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CuE74NVoZs3/?img_in">https://www.instagram.com/p/CuE74NVoZs3/?img_in</a>		POST
11 Instagram	In full summer mood having a blast at the #StrangerThingsExperience	strangerthings.experience	16/06/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CtiuwHEIYSO/?img_in">https://www.instagram.com/p/CtiuwHEIYSO/?img_in</a>		POST
12 Instagram	Extra pepperoni or loaded up with green goodness? Surfer Boy pizza's go	strangerthings.experience	31/05/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cs6fxH6oCGo/?img_in">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cs6fxH6oCGo/?img_in</a>		POST
13 Instagram	We've made so many new friends in Toronto, we can't even count ❤️	strangerthings.experience	23/05/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Csl6dlelw8j/?img_inde">https://www.instagram.com/p/Csl6dlelw8j/?img_inde</a>		POST
14 Instagram	Today is the day to thank all of the mothers and mother figures in Hawki	strangerthings.experience	14/05/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CsOvYKR0JUU/?img_in">https://www.instagram.com/p/CsOvYKR0JUU/?img_in</a>		POST
15 Instagram	Think you've got what it takes to escape Hawkins Laboratories in one pie	strangerthings.experience	14/04/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CrBcxgtIXOj/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CrBcxgtIXOj/</a>		POST
16 Instagram	❤️ Stranger Things Experience ❤️	stranger.halwkins AND renan_junior	29/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C6XUSTLA3M7/">https://www.instagram.com/p/C6XUSTLA3M7/</a>		REEL
17 Instagram	Fun times w/ fun people at the @strangerthings.experience 🥰	mizzk.o	21/11/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CINKVdnpkkl/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CINKVdnpkkl/</a>		REEL
18 Instagram	L'expérience Stranger Things ouvre aujourd'hui à Paris!	vivreparis	10/03/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CpnbhKQvzZA/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CpnbhKQvzZA/</a>		REEL
19 Instagram	Marca aqui quem vai com você viver isso!! 🌟	alinescalioni	29/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UpF8uLKJa/">https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UpF8uLKJa/</a>		REEL
20 Instagram	Quel est votre film préféré des années 80 ? J'attends ! 😊	shakermaker.gif	16/03/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cp3CpOll0y/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cp3CpOll0y/</a>		REEL
21 Instagram	Ela se divertiu tanto 😊 no fim nem conseguiu disfarçar	anachiyo	04/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C5Vua0G0pgy/?img_ir">https://www.instagram.com/p/C5Vua0G0pgy/?img_ir</a>		POST
22 Instagram	Por mais domingos assim 💕	niclopes	29/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UiOgkPloA/?img_inc">https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UiOgkPloA/?img_inc</a>		POST
23 Instagram	Belle découverte ce @strangerthings.experience !! Une superbe immer	clapman_yt	19/03/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cp-pEChqtjl/?img_inde">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cp-pEChqtjl/?img_inde</a>		POST
24 Instagram	80's	thyerryr	29/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UuaeWubH0/?img_i">https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UuaeWubH0/?img_i</a>		POST
25 Instagram	Foi muito incrível viver isso ❤️	palomaahauser	29/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UlyHjnR18H/?img_in">https://www.instagram.com/p/C6UlyHjnR18H/?img_in</a>		POST
26 Instagram	Onze, corre aqui!	.eu.dan	18/04/2024	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/C557hE1rPxy/">https://www.instagram.com/p/C557hE1rPxy/</a>		POST
27 Instagram	Just Et hanging with Mike at Surfer Boy pizza, probably ready to jump in a	alittleandroid	18/04/2023	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CrMBHlhpMl/?img_ir">https://www.instagram.com/p/CrMBHlhpMl/?img_ir</a>		POST

**CAMPAIGN 2 = LYFT PARTNERSHIP**

	PLATFORM	NAME/CAPTION	USER	DATE	LINK	FORMAT
1	YouTube	Strange Mode: Lyft x Stranger Things	Lyft	25/10/2017	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wcaHQgYOs&amp;t">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wcaHQgYOs&amp;t</a>	VIDEO
2	YouTube	Stranger Things: Lyft Strange Mode Preview (Philly and LA, Oct 27th and ; Dan Tabor		27/10/2017	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-j21rCyVK4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-j21rCyVK4</a>	VIDEO
3	Instagram	Thanks for the free rides @lyft! I'm super into Stranger Things on @Netfli	whitneyeveport	26/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BauR4ynRf1-/?utm_sp">https://www.instagram.com/p/BauR4ynRf1-/?utm_sp</a>	REEL
4	Instagram	STRANGER THINGS SEASON 2! There are two Eleven's in town 🦋 Thank	jaime_king	26/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BaspHk3FGsG/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BaspHk3FGsG/</a>	POST
5	Instagram	Things are feeling a little strange tonight.	thebodylagadi	29/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba0SCLaHV31/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba0SCLaHV31/</a>	POST
6	Instagram	#leggomyeggo demogorgon! Thanks	dimarco3	29/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba0QCm4h9R3/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba0QCm4h9R3/</a>	POST
7	Instagram	Went to the Upside Down today. Did you know they have Eggos there?	bloodysublime	28/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Bax_rl2bab/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Bax_rl2bab/</a>	POST
8	Instagram	Fun experience with @lyft x @strangerthingstv	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/sunnyschafieb">sunnyschafieb</a>	28/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BaxnT76jkhC/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BaxnT76jkhC/</a>	POST
9	Instagram	That's a wrap! Truly one of the coolest experiences of my life, and I'll nev	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/quinnstafriend">quinnstafriend</a>	29/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba0Vs1EFNPB/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba0Vs1EFNPB/</a>	POST
10	Instagram	Strange Mode goes live tonight! Some lucky (or maybe unlucky) riders ar	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/quinnstafriend">quinnstafriend</a>	28/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BaxLWPQB0IL/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BaxLWPQB0IL/</a>	POST
11	Instagram	#lyftstrangemode RIDE WITH ME IF YOU DARE DFW. !! # Carstume cont	dragonflyme6969	31/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba6ZCPHAKKM/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba6ZCPHAKKM/</a>	SM VIDEO
12	Instagram	To celebrate Halloween and a new season of Stranger Things, @lyft part	thiswarehousela	30/10/2017	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba4nKdzIKF6/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba4nKdzIKF6/</a>	SM VIDEO

**CAMPAIGN 3 = 2022 OOH**

	PLATFORM	NAME/CAPTION	USER	DATE	LINK	FORMAT
1	YouTube	Stranger Things   Netflix London Pop-Up	Blonstein	13/01/2023	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xvkbkuXbOk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xvkbkuXbOk</a>	VIDEO
2	YouTube	Wayout - Stranger Things 4 OOH Innovation	Wayout Media	04/01/2023	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UV25vGvFC_k">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UV25vGvFC_k</a>	VIDEO
3	X	Just thinking about 26th May again. #StrangerThings	hawkinspodcast	01/06/2022	<a href="https://twitter.com/hawkinspodcast/status/1532016">https://twitter.com/hawkinspodcast/status/1532016</a>	POST
4	X	Nothing to see here...	NetflixUK	24/05/2022	<a href="https://twitter.com/NetflixUK/status/1529100176320">https://twitter.com/NetflixUK/status/1529100176320</a>	POST
5	X	STRANGER THINGS BILLBOARDS... 🍷🍷🍷	StrangerNews11	30/03/2021	<a href="https://twitter.com/StrangerNews11/status/1376957">https://twitter.com/StrangerNews11/status/1376957</a>	POST
6	WWW	When OOH Gets Stranger Things	OOH TODAY	04/08/2018	<a href="https://oohtoday.com/when-ooh-gets-stranger-things">https://oohtoday.com/when-ooh-gets-stranger-things</a>	WWW

**CAMPAIGN 4 = GLOBAL RIFT TAKEOVER**

	PLATFORM	NAME/CAPTION	USER	DATE	LINK	FORMAT
1	YouTube	Global Rift Takeovers   Stranger Things 4	Stranger Things	01/06/2022	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFrgUJlXUe0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFrgUJlXUe0</a>	VIDEO
2	YouTube	Mumbai Goes Upside Down   Stranger Things Season 4   Netflix India	Netflix India	30/05/2022	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWRv66xc-Ps">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWRv66xc-Ps</a>	VIDEO
3	YouTube	Stranger Duomo   Perché Milano è tornata nel 1986   Netflix Italia	Netflix Italia	28/05/2022	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6_2uY1Toug">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6_2uY1Toug</a>	VIDEO
4	YouTube	Stranger Things' fans celebrate new season with global event	AP Archive	01/06/2022	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHOMU788nxk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHOMU788nxk</a>	VIDEO
5	YouTube	Multimedialne widowisko Stranger Things na Wawelu	Co w Krakowie	27/05/2022	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vK4z0BnedFo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vK4z0BnedFo</a>	VIDEO
6	Instagram	Something big is coming. Find your city, and that's where we'll be. Over	strangerthingstv and strangerthingstv and netflix	24/05/2022	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cd8Rl4iutKU/?hl=en">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cd8Rl4iutKU/?hl=en</a>	POST
7	X	#ClioEntertainment 2022 Grand Winner - Netflix: Netflix Stranger Things Global Rift Takeover by @netflix	The Clios	04/01/2023	<a href="https://twitter.com/The_Clios/status/161044239308">https://twitter.com/The_Clios/status/161044239308</a>	POST
8	WWW	Netflix Stranger Things Global Rift Takeover	Clio Entertainment	N/A	<a href="https://clio.com/entertainment/winner/122677?utm">https://clio.com/entertainment/winner/122677?utm</a>	WWW

## Appendix C

### *Sample of fieldnotes*

#### Global Rift Takeover Campaign

##### VIDEOS

###### 1. ST CAMPAIGN TRAILER

The video starts with an aerial shot of in the centre of Manhattan, in the middle the Empire State Building with some red lights towards the peak. A tense, rhythmic music in the background. The next scene is in a large square, there are many people sitting down next to each other on the floor clapping with a red light shining on them. The next scene shows an aerial shot of what look like looks like a castle with a blue projection shone on it of some bats and 4 red lights shining on the lake in front. It is night-time. Send a scene on a street with lots of people, to the front two guys screaming looking up and saying 'Oh my God', looking shocked with one having his hand in front of his mouth. A night shot of the Empire State Building covered in red spotlights with a projection in the middle of a Demogorgon's head moving around. Then the camera goes back to the streets and three girls wearing spread *stranger things* hats are looking up and are pointing to something further up they are smiling and have their mouth open in shock, people in the background are shouting and cheering.

A few shots of different locations and buildings with various projections of *stranger things* world such as a rift opening on a building, red and blue projection of tentacles, a skeleton looking hand moving. A camera moving from right to left in a large crowd looking up while recording with their phone smiling cheering shouting enthusiastically.

Different shots of various location signalled by a red text on the screen.

First stop is New York with an aerial shot of Manhattan and the Empire State Building to the centre covered in blue lights all around with a red rift opening up to the centre. The camera shot perceives closer to the building and shows the rift more clearly within the background a granddad clock. The other side is then shown with a large red and orange rift following the verticality of the building. Then a close up of the rift with tentacles moving and another with a projection of a scene from ST (eleven and the kids) with some lighting in the background. Then another aerial shot of the city, this time projection of vecna on the Empire State Building with red lights shining at the top. All shots were at night in the dark. Music builds up.

The next location is in a Alula in Saudi Arabia, an aerial shot of a desert landscape with rocky buildings during the day. We get closer to 1 specific rock and the camera transitions to an evening landscape with a projection of a rift on the rock and various lights at the front. The music speeds up

and it is now night time, the projection of the rift is faster and there are tentacles coming out of the sides, only the lights in front are visible. Some scenes from the show are projected.

The new location is Krakow in Poland, the camera shows a castle slash fortress with a lake in front, a projection is on the fortress full stop. It is night time the projection shows blue and grey lights and tentacles, a few white spotlights are moving along the surface of the lake. Send a couple of projections Are seen, one of a democrat organ opening his arms up and screaming which can be heard, one of vecna surrounded by tentacles.

Next up is Bilbao in Spain where there is another building oddly shaped with a projection of blue and orange light with tentacles. A crowd is seen watching the projection, some people are shown focused.

The next scene is set in Milan in a large square (Duomo) with a huge crowd of people occupying the whole square, a screen in one side showing a scene of the show. Then the camera shows a close up of the crowd which is filming and cheering and looking in the same direction. A projection shows the text "Milano 1986" with lighting around it. A rift opening with tentacles and bats flying out, the crowd cheers.

The next location is Kuala Lumpur and shows another projection on a tall tower of a rift orange lights occupying the verticality of the building.

Next up, Colombia, shows a large crowd with phones up, cheering. A projection on the floor of bats and red lights.

Next up, Cologne in Germany. A large air projection on top of a river come on 1st a blue grandfather clock, to the side ground a projection of a red rift moves towards the projection on the river. More lights turn on, red orange and blue and on top of the river there are now projections of the scenes.

Next is Los Angeles where a large 3D rift model is displayed on the floor with intense red lights coming out of it as well as smoke.

Next up, Mumbai, shows a night projection on a historic building, first a timer runs out. A few projections are shown, the show and coloured patterns. A few people taking vids in awe.

Madrid shows a few projections on a building, rift, tentacles as well as a rift on the concrete floor.

With yellow lights and the floor moving. A crowd is gathered around it, some are filming, in shock. 2 people dressed in hazmat suits are walking around.

Stockholm also shows a projection on a side of a building, grandfather clock, some people filming.

Next up, Tokyo, on the famous crossing street, most billboard show a rift video. People are filming.

London, shows a dark tunnel with a man in hazmat suit, a red and a yellow light.

Bondi beach shows a large 3D peace on the beach of a huge rift with 3D tentacles and red in the center. A few people dressed in yellow hazmat suits around it. A crowd gathers to watch.

A final scene of the empire state building of a Demogorgon reaching out and the gate closing in front. The *stranger thing* theme song comes to an end.

## **2. INDIA TRAILER**

The video starts with a short of a historical building, then a black boss is shown with black 3D tentacles surrounding the vehicle, a red netflix sign to the front and onion *stranger things* red sign to the side with a smaller white writing "every ending has a beginning". A few people are shown filming the van, a man holds both his hands to his face with a shocked expression. People walk towards the van. A person is shown to be touching a projection but quickly gets startled and jumps back a little bit. At time lapse of the same historical building as the beginning appears this time at night with a coloured purple and blue projection entirely covering it as well as a red digital clock at the top which slowly runs out to 0. The clock is upside down. Some people are shown sitting around under appeared to be waiting. Some people eating. A man appears excited. A few shots of the clock or shown with that I'm slowly decreasing. Some people coming out of the bus, one girls appears relieved to be leaving the bus and smiling. Finally the clock runs out and a child is shown to be screaming with excitement. A projection show starts on the historical building, various illustrations are shown as well as some characters from the show. Up to now the music was the theme music from the show and it was pretty static but suddenly some clock our noises start and the projection goes dark and the small orange rift appears at the centre. Suddenly some tentacles appeared to be spreading on the building which is now all in dark blue neon lights. Some people are in this belief and shouting in excitement filming the projection. Pull the lights start flickering and flashing, the music builds up. A clock appears at the centre of the projection, followed by a Netflix sign and a date.

## **3. MILAN TRAILER**

The video starts with a clock ticking noise and a tense music and it shows a large square in Milan at night full of people sitting down and a screen displaying the show to the right. The camera shows a row of people focused on watching something. Some people look tense and then suddenly people in the crowd start pointing to a different direction well a lot of people start filming. A different projection appears on another building of a grand father clock with clock sounds in the background. Suddenly the music comes to a standstill and the grand father clock projection turns into a red and orange rift with tentacles and bats coming out of it. The crowd is shown to be ecstatic. The projection now shows the text "Milano 2022" going down to "Milano 1986", in red neon lights and red lighting. Then a new scene is shown where a red bedside table digital clock it's showing striking 7:00 AM. Then an Italian radio voice starts and the different shot in a car with the hand moving

around an old radio machinery. A new scene in the same square, this time during the day. A line of old yellow taxis with a person coming out of the last one wearing 80s clothing stepping out of the car and wearing old school headphones. Then the sign overbuilding is shown with some 3D advertising colourful signage such as Coca-Cola, Polaroid, surfer boy pizza and *stranger things* 4. A group of friends is seen walking in front of them wearing an 80s outfit. Another group of people sitting on some old motorbikes in 80s clothes. A menu is then shown "paninaro". An old man in an old newsletter stand. Some people talking to a telephone in a telephone booth. A group of people standing around a wall and sitting on it wearing punk outfits all in black leather. A few people in 80s outfits carrying stereos on walking around the square with some people around them filming them and smiling. A group picture. A roller skater rink in the square with people gathered around it. Some roller-skaters in 80s outfits. A man spinning a wheel of fortune with a surfer boy pizza sign, some people queuing and grabbing something from the booth. People smiling. Up to now the music was upbeat and from the 80s but suddenly it changes slows down and becomes more eerie. A yellow old bus is shown, fair shot starts glitching and shows the side of the bus with some black looking tentacles replacing the door. The inside of the bus is dark and has low blue lights and tentacles all around the sides and floor. The music comes to a crescendo and the shot has now some blurry dust as if they were in the upside down. A few scenes from the new season are shown rapidly and then an old TV starts with the glitch slash interference and then shows the character dustin talking to the audience watching.

#### **4. NEW YORK FAN REPORT**

A recording of the empire state building at night from a street, illuminated with red lights at the top and a projection of a grandfather clock in the centre. In the background some hour clock sounds and a crowd of people counting down from 5 down. As it hits 0, the lights at the top start changing to blue and purple. The camera shows a man wearing a red and white ST hat. He said he was waiting around for 30 minutes. A man is taking a picture in front of an illuminated st sign. Another man says the wait has been crazy and the anticipation has been killing him, he loves the vibes. Then a close up of the building with the red projection on it. A group of friends is smiling, pointing up to something. A guy talks about how it's nice to be in the city again after covid, outdoor. Then a close up of the building, this time showing some scenes of the show, people cheer in the background. There is lighting in the background. A group of young girls wearing st hats, looking excited. In the background a busy NY street. A guys saying its pretty cool. Two girls sounds really excited, saying they watched the show since the start and that they saw the coordinates post (Instagram) and sent it to all friends. A shot filmed from the back of a crowd of people watching the projection and lights on the building.

The same girls as before said she loves when they do coordinates things, she likes mystery. A surfer boy pizza stands with a large crowd. The building is now shown all blue and white. The girls say it was phenomenal. The building's light keep flashing as if it was a lightning striking. Some people filming on their phone. Three women screaming. A busy street full of people, someone in the background saying "I love pizza".

## **5. WARSAW RECORDING**

A full video taken from a hill of a fortress/castle in Warsaw on an elevated area with a lake in front at night. A few people gathered in front of the lake. A light show and projection start on the façade of the fortress. Some tense music. The lights flicker white around the castle and suddenly the music and lights comes to a standstill and then starts to go a bit faster. All lights turn blue and a clock hour sound starts, along with some eerie music. Some lights start going red. A voice of dustin in the background. Some bats start flying in the projection. Some tentacles and a Demogorgon appears at the top walking around, screaming towards the crowd. A black fog starts moving around the projection. Some lights that look like flashlights come out of the building. Some thunderstorms sounds and lights, a fog appearing at the centre of the projection, Vecna comes out of it, more hour clock sounds, he disappears. Dustin talks again saying code red, the lights go red, more bats flying. The theme music starts again, a line of lights parallel to the lake. Some people walk around the lake, a lot are sitting watching.

## Appendix D

### Sample of visual analysis

#### 2022 OOH CAMPAIGN Visual Analysis

##### Image 1: Twitter Post by @hawkinspodcast

- **Color Palettes:**
  - Dominant colors include red, yellow, and black.
  - Red is used prominently in the "Surfer Boy Pizza" banner and the "Hawkins Power and Light" poster, evoking a sense of urgency and danger typical of the *Stranger Things* series.
- **Lighting:**
  - The lighting is natural, suggesting a real-world setting that juxtaposes with the supernatural elements depicted in the posters.
  - Shadows are minimal, ensuring all elements are clearly visible and emphasizing the brightness of the posters.
- **Image Composition:**
  - Symmetry and balance are achieved through the use of three posters in a row, creating a structured and organized layout.
  - The framing highlights the posters and the "Surfer Boy Pizza" van, focusing attention on these key elements.
- **Special Visual Effects:**
  - The tentacle-like structure in the middle adds a three-dimensional element to the otherwise flat posters, creating depth and visual intrigue.
- **Recognizable Elements:**
  - Characters from the show, the distinctive "Surfer Boy Pizza" van, and the iconic Hawkins posters are all instantly recognizable elements that tie into the *Stranger Things* theme.

##### Image 2: Twitter Post by @NetflixUK

- **Color Palettes:**
  - Dominant colors are red, yellow, and blue.
  - The red and black in the "Hawkins Power and Light" poster create a sense of tension, while the yellow and blue add contrast and variety.
- **Lighting:**
  - The lighting is natural with some added artificial light to highlight specific areas.

- The light creates minimal shadows, maintaining focus on the posters and the characters in hazmat suits.
- **Image Composition:**
  - The image uses balance by placing the posters side-by-side with equal spacing.
  - The inclusion of characters in hazmat suits adds an element of narrative and breaks the symmetry slightly to add interest.
- **Special Visual Effects:**
  - The use of the umbrella prop adds a dynamic element and suggests action or concealment, which is intriguing and draws the viewer's attention.
- **Recognizable Elements:**
  - Posters from the show, the hazmat suits, and the specific yellow umbrella are recognizable props and costumes that fans would associate with *Stranger Things*.

**Image 3: Twitter Post by @StrangerNews11**

- **Color Palettes:**
  - Bright and vibrant colors such as red, blue, and yellow dominate these billboards.
  - These colors are used to attract attention and convey excitement and intensity, aligning with the thrilling nature of the show.
- **Lighting:**
  - The lighting appears to be bright and even, emphasizing the vibrant colors and details of the billboards.
  - Shadows are used minimally, ensuring the artwork is clearly visible.
- **Image Composition:**
  - The composition is balanced, with each billboard occupying a distinct space within the frame.
  - The framing highlights each billboard individually, allowing the viewer to appreciate the details of each one.
- **Special Visual Effects:**
  - The three-dimensional elements such as the tentacle and the giant ice cream add depth and a sense of immersion, making the billboards stand out.
  - The use of fireworks and other dynamic visuals enhances the sense of excitement and spectacle.
- **Recognizable Elements:**

- Iconic *Stranger Things* imagery such as the Demogorgon, Scoops Ahoy ice cream, and characters from the show are prominently featured, making the billboards instantly recognizable to fans.