

"This is all news to me"

Marc Cherry, 'Desperate Housewives' executive producer, referring to KB Home's product placement letter

Los Angeles Times

January 19, 2005

KB Aims to Make Home for 'Desperate Housewives'

By Annette Haddad, Times Staff Writer

Forget "Desperate Housewives." How about "Desperate for Publicity"?

In an audacious attempt to get its product placed on ABC's top-rated prime-time soap opera, **KB Home** sent a letter to the show's executive producer suggesting that the suburb where every housewife has a secret needed a brand name.

KB Home added that it was more than happy to offer its own.

"Their community deserves an identification and KB Home can deliver it," said Derrick Hall, a spokesman for the Los Angeles-based builder. If you put aside "the problems, personalities and idiosyncrasies" of the main characters, Hall said, the domiciles on fictional Wisteria Lane are not unlike those in a KB Home tract-housing community. "The homes are attractive, well-landscaped and well-maintained."

The similarities may end there. Each house on the show — which is shot on the Universal Studios back lot known as Colonial Street — carries a rich heritage and unique design. For example, Bree's abode was in the now-defunct NBC series "Providence" and Lynette's manse can be seen in the 1951 classic film "Bedtime for Bonzo." Also making appearances are the old "Leave It to Beaver" house and "The Munsters" hangout.

Product placement is big business for brands. Last week, **Volkswagen** paid **NBC Universal** \$200 million to use its vehicles in various films and TV shows.

And Marc Cherry, the Orange County native who created "Desperate Housewives," writes the scripts and is its executive producer, said a number of companies were seeking to promote their products on the show, which Sunday won two Golden Globe awards.

Each corporate offer is being weighed "very carefully," he said.

Cherry also said he had hoped for a more "tract-house" look for Wisteria Lane.

But so far, ABC hasn't responded to KB Home's offer.

In fact, Cherry said: "This is all news to me."