

Lessons in advertising: Super Bowl LIX



Introduction

The Super Bowl is a unique opportunity to get your brand and product in front of **over 100 million people** who are watching live. It's the time for advertisers to bring out their best work.

And while we certainly see a lot of creativity year after year, we don't always see all that creativity harnessed for the brands being advertised.

This year, I was particularly struck by the **strength of the branding**. Many ads did a much better job using their creativity for the brand — giving the brand a clear role and putting it at the heart of the ad's narratives (not adding it in as an afterthought). And even more than that, many also did a fantastic job of implicitly landing key associations about the brand that will make it come to mind more powerfully on more occasions. They shared key brand and product messages, without saying them directly.

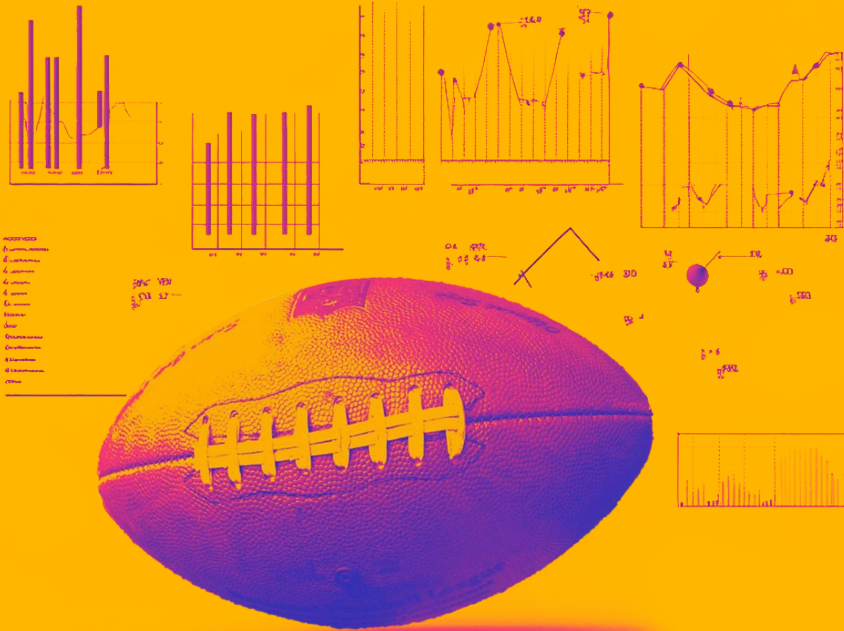
Consumers in our research commented on how the ads demonstrated that Doritos and Reese's Chocolate Lava were tasty, that Duracell batteries were powerful and that STÖK Cold Brew Coffee gives you energy.

It's such a great thing to see Super Bowl ads be both creative and effective!



Kim Malcolm
**Head of advertising
research**

Super Bowl LIX by the numbers



57

national ads
shown during
the game

68%

ads
contained
celebrities

And
feedback
from

20K

US
consumers in
this analysis!

23%

ads
contained
animals

79%

prominently
featured
music

Zappi's results link to business impact

Before we get into it, it's important to note that these results are **not rankings**.

Zappi researches ads with consumers who **want, need and are likely to purchase the products or services being advertised**.

For this reason, the results presented are not reflective of merely how the average American consumer felt about the ad.

Zappi's results are reflective of **how likely brands are to win with consumers** – the ones for whom the category is relevant.



Methodology

We analyzed all the ads with consumer feedback from over 20,000 US consumers using **Zappi Amplify Advertising System**, a modern research system that fuels agile, iterative ad development with continuous consumer feedback.

Developed in partnership with leading global brands, **Zappi Amplify Advertising System** combines the best of advertising research approaches to **predict how well an ad will deliver ROI**, via both short-term sales and long-term brand equity, so you can learn what works and what doesn't to optimize ads at every step of the creation process.



The metrics used

We looked at five metrics for each Super Bowl ad:

Sales Impact: How likely is the ad to deliver ROI via short-term sales uplift?

Ad Distinctiveness: Is the ad different from other ads viewers have seen?

Brand Recall: Did viewers spontaneously recall seeing an ad for the brand?

Overall Emotion: What, if anything, did viewers feel after seeing the ad?

Top Scoring Emotion: What emotion did the ad make viewers feel most?



Why these metrics matter

You can never look at a single advertising metric in isolation, because there are many elements required for successful advertising. Each of these five metrics are important for Super Bowl advertisers.

It's essential for any Super Bowl ad be **distinctive**, because it has to stand out to be noticed during the spectacle of the big game.

But distinctiveness alone is not enough. The best Super Bowl ads are the ones that tap into people's **emotions**. That's what makes them memorable.

And if viewers struggle to **remember the brand** in the ad, and the **product** being advertised, it wasn't worth the high cost of advertising in the Super Bowl.

Finally, the best Super Bowl ads aren't simply a source of entertainment for those of us watching during the game — they **drive sales** for the brand.

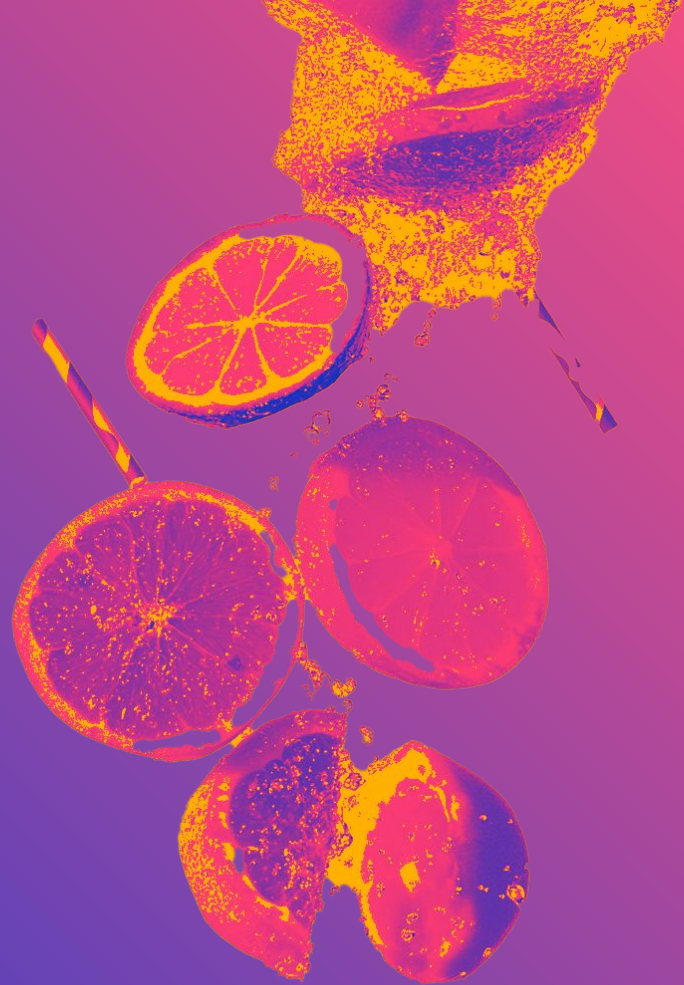


Ads that stole the show

A look some of the standout ads, as determined by more than 20,000 US consumers.



Beverages



Budweiser “First Delivery”

ABOUT THE AD

Bringing back the brand’s iconic Clydesdales, this sweet ad shows a baby Clydesdale — deemed too small to participate in a Budweiser delivery — rescue a loose keg and prove his worth. The ad uses the tagline “This Bud’s For You” which the brand brought back in last year’s big game.

WHAT WORKED

The beautiful storytelling, music and visuals create a heartwarming and touching ad with a universal story that appeals across generations. 50% of people spontaneously said that the Clydesdales made them realize the ad was for Budweiser, and viewers praised the determination of the baby Clydesdale. We all want to see a young one succeed! The result is an all-around great ad people love.



I always love the Budweiser horses and how they have heart and determination. They stand for American spirit and pride.

The nostalgic music playing with the whole scene gave it a special touch that warms the heart.



Sales impact

100

Ad distinctiveness

4.4

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

85%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

73

Norm
56

Love 🥰

48%

Norm
28%

Stella Artois “David and Dave: The Other David”

ABOUT THE AD

This ad tells the tale of David Beckham discovering he has a twin brother in America called “Other David” over a pint of Stella Artois with his parents. Naturally, Beckham travels over to meet “Other David,” who turns out to be Matt Damon. When he arrives at his house, there’s a backyard BBQ party where the two bond over similarities, including the fact that they can both kick — and they both drink Stella Artois.

WHAT WORKED

The classic combination of celebrities and humor! Viewers found the jokes in the ad — especially the dig at Ben Affleck and Matt Damon’s football kick — to be hilarious. The two finding common ground in their love of Stella Artois helped land the branding too!



I love the humor. Matt Damon asks David Beckham if he’s “Matt Damon famous” and David replies ‘no, sort of Ben Affleck famous.’ It’s hilarious.”

I loved literally everything about the ad. The best part was when he asked, ‘How famous are you, Matt Damon famous?’ And Beckham says, ‘Ben Affleck famous.’ And Matt Damon says, ‘That’s a shame.’ Lmfao.



Sales impact

98

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

82%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

65

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

25%

Norm
8%

Michelob Ultra “The ULTRA Hustle”

ABOUT THE AD

Michelob Ultra’s “The ULTRA Hustle” stars actors Willem Dafoe and Catherine O’Hara as pickleball court “hustlers” that challenge others (including NFL’s Randy Moss, Olympic gold medalist Ryan Crouser and WNBA Champion Sabrina Ionescu) to competitive games of pickleball for some Michelob Ultra.

WHAT WORKED

The combination of celebrities and humor made for a highly enjoyable ad. The ad surpassed all norms for Laughter and Overall Emotion, with viewers noting how funny it was. Plus, with the goal of Dafoe and O’Hara’s matches being a fresh pour of Michelob Ultra, it was easy for viewers to recall just who the ad was for. What a great way to implicitly convey the beer’s desirability!



I liked the actors. I liked the sport. I liked the look of the beer. It was very appealing, funny and likeable.

I thought it was very creative and funny. I love Willem Dafoe and Catherine O’Hara and they were great in this ad. I like that it showed people of different generations enjoying the Ultra.



Sales impact

96

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

79%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

65

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

23%

Norm
8%

STōK Cold Brew Coffee “Hollywood Magic”

ABOUT THE AD

Magic Mike and Step Up nostalgia abound in STōK’s ad featuring Channing Tatum, who bursts into Wrexham AFC’s locker room with a backflip as he tells the team it’s time to amp up their celebration dances. He passes them a jug of STōK Cold Brew Coffee and begins showing them how to really dance, to the sound of “Gonna Make You Sweat” by C+C Music Factory.

WHAT WORKED

The many references to the past dance films Tatum starred in (particularly Magic Mike) were a real hit with viewers, who found the ad hilarious while also noting how the brand did an excellent job showing just how energized their cold brew will make you.



The dancing, Channing Tatum on the table dancing, & the music was great and I liked how excited the team was.

It shows the effect of drinking their coffee in a humorous way. It's a great representation of what an energy boost would look like.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.2

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

68%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

58

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

38%

Norm
8%

Coors Light “Slow Monday”

ABOUT THE AD

This ad from Coors Light may capture how we all feel on a typical Monday morning. Part of their “Choose Chill” campaign, the ad depicts a world of people as sloths trying to get through their Monday morning, whether it be at the office, the gym, the grocery store and more. At the end, a “case of the Mondays” is given to one of the sloths, who instantly transforms back into his human form, with the voiceover: “Tomorrow, we’ll all have a case of the Mondays. Coors Light made a better case to help you chill.”

WHAT WORKED

The animals are back in the game with this Coors Light ad! Viewers found the ad to be highly relatable and hilarious — particularly calling out a peak of Laughter when the “slow speed chase” was shown. Audiences connected with the idea that we feel slower than usual on Mondays.



I thought the whole ad concept was hilarious. We have all been there after Super Bowl Sunday attempting to make it through work the following Monday.

My favorite part was the slow speed chase. The sloths facial expression was priceless. Loved it.



Sales impact

88

Ad distinctiveness

4.3

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

75%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

55

Norm
56

Laughter 😂

34%

Norm
8%

Poppi “Soda Thoughts”

ABOUT THE AD

Poppi's ad opens to a stressful scene at a diner where a girl is struggling with which beverage to order. A montage of similar scenes is shown, with each person thinking about getting a soda, but wrestling with the sugar content. But then, Poppi is suggested as the simple solution with 5g of sugar, prebiotics and (most importantly) no baggage.

WHAT WORKED

Viewers love this bright, colorful, solution-driven ad from Poppi! This spot particularly resonated with women, who related more to the messaging, with the Love reaction far surpassing the norm (36% vs. 27% norm) for this specific audience vs. total audience (listed on the right). Poppi also did a great job incorporating humor to keep viewers engaged, particularly with the waitress and at the drive-thru when a friend says, “it’s a drive-thru, not a confession booth.”

“

I liked the bright colors. I likes how they incorporated influencers like Alix Earle and Rob from Love Island. They also showed different events/times of day someone may crave a soda but opt for Poppi.

I liked that it was bright and colorful and upbeat.



Sales impact

82

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

69%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

57

Norm
56

Love 🥰

29%

Norm
28%

Red Bull “Flying Penguins”

ABOUT THE AD

This ad opens to a flock of illustrated penguins on an iceberg. A young penguin emerges from the crowd claiming to have figured out how to make them be able to fly, to which the Dad penguin replies, “That’s going to be tricky without wings.” Explaining how that’s exactly what Red Bull does, the young penguin opens the can to drink it, only to discover that it’s completely frozen.

WHAT WORKED

This spot from Red Bull delivers some great comic relief as well as excellent branding, with viewers immediately recognizing who the ad was for from its classic illustrated style and slogan. People found the ad to be hilarious, especially when the older penguin says “That’s going to be tricky without wings” and at the very end when the voiceover says, “But only if you drink it.”



Love the way they used the penguins, and it was hilarious that the drink was frozen and he couldn't prove his point.

I liked that it was relevant to the cold winter we are having here in CT. I also liked that the biggest penguin was sick. It was quite comical. It kept me engaged in the ad the whole time.



Sales impact

**75****Ad distinctiveness****4.0****Norm
3.8****Unaided brand recall****75%****Norm
68%****Overall emotion****57****Norm
56****Laughter 😄****30%****Norm
8%**

Food



Nerds “Unleash Your Senses”

ABOUT THE AD

Nerds released a nostalgic ad with a wonderful local nod to the host city of the big game featuring “A Bar Song” singer, Shaboozey, strolling down a street in New Orleans. As soon as he takes a bite of some Nerds Gummy Clusters, he starts singing “What a Wonderful World” as bright colors and “living” nerds and a giant gummy (originally introduced at last year’s big game) appear all around him to join in song.

WHAT WORKED

The use of nostalgia, music and a trending celebrity resulted in a wonderful ad for Nerds! Viewers were left with positive feelings of love and happiness, with both Overall Emotion and Love reactions far surpassing the norms. And with Nerds Gummy Clusters fuelling the color-filled streets, viewers couldn’t help but remember who the ad was for.



I liked the bright colors, the recreation of a street scene in New Orleans, the buildings, the brass band, the people. I love the song! The animation was very cute! the way the little gummies attached themselves to the giant nerd candy.

I like the little nerd characters. I want a keychain with one. I love the song. Timeless. I like the vibrant colors.



Sales impact

98

Ad distinctiveness

4.2

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

72%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

67

Norm
56

Love 🥰

40%

Norm
28%

Lay's "The Little Farmer"

ABOUT THE AD

Part of the brand's "What joy tastes like" campaign and set to the tune of Barry Louis Polisar's "All I Want Is You," this heartfelt ad follows a determined young girl who sets out to grow her own potato. From rainstorms to grasshoppers to nights in a nearby tent, the girl keeps watch to protect her little spud. In the end, she proudly adds her fully grown potato to the massive load on a Lay's truck — with the message that they use real potatoes on family farms across America.

WHAT WORKED

Love wins the day with this pure and joyful ad from Lay's! Audiences were hooked on the perfect storytelling, with many noting how wholesome and family-oriented it was. People specifically referenced the sourcing from local, American farms, which matters to them and made them feel warm towards the brand. What a great way to implicitly and meaningfully convey quality!



I liked the little girl growing and taking care of her own potato plant. I liked that she felt proud at the end when she handed her potato to her dad.

The girl was so cute and I love the family values. The scene in the rain and tent were especially heart warming.



Sales impact

97

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

74%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

70

Norm
56

Love 🥰

45%

Norm
28%

Pringles “The Call of the Mustaches”

ABOUT THE AD

Pringles’ hilarious ad features actor Adam Brody at a house party that’s just run out of Pringles. The can whispers for him to blow into it, which lets out a call for all the mustaches — from the likes of Nick Offerman, James Harden, Andy Reid and of course, the iconic Mr. Potato Head. The mustaches fly off their faces and take to the skies in flocks to deliver new cans of Pringles to the party.

WHAT WORKED

What a great insight on Pringles’ part to connect their own Mr. Pringles mustache with the likes of other celebrity ‘staches! Viewers immediately recognized the connection, finding the ad to be very distinct to the brand and absolutely hilarious.

“

It was funny watching everyone’s reactions to the mustache flying and flying off their face, overall it just made me laugh.

I thought it was very funny, my favorite part was the guy with the big mustache at the end that didn’t belong to him.



Sales impact

96

Ad distinctiveness

4.3

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

82%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

56

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

33%

Norm
8%

Doritos “Abduction”

ABOUT THE AD

Doritos brought back their famous Crash the Super Bowl contest this year after nearly a decade-long hiatus! Crash the Super Bowl invites Doritos fans the chance to land their own ad into the lineup (and \$1 mil) by consumer vote. “Abduction,” created by Ohio-native Dylan Bradshaw, features a man fighting to save his precious bag of Doritos from being abducted by aliens. At the end, the man and alien share a bag of Doritos together.

WHAT WORKED

What better way to engage fans than to have them participate in the making (and selection) of the ad itself? Doritos’ ad resonated very well with consumers, kept the product at the heart of the story and delivered lots of laughs — making it a truly distinct and hilarious spot.



I like the spaceship taking the product from the human, liked the space person coming down and sharing the product with the human. Fun to watch.

I liked how the after the fight, the alien and the man came together and enjoyed the bag of Doritos.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.3

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

80%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

56

Norm
56

Laughter 😂

34%

Norm
8%

Little Caesars Pizza “Whoa!”

ABOUT THE AD

Eyebrows are raised to the sky in this spot from Little Caesars! The ad opens to Eugene Levy leaving one of their restaurants and as he tries their new Crazy Puffs. He raises his iconic eyebrows so high, they fly off his forehead — causing just enough chaos as they fly into a runner, land on a baby, are worshipped by some caterpillars and more.

WHAT WORKED

This ad does a great job at hilariously showing and not saying that the brand’s new Crazy Puffs are eyebrow-raisingly good! There’s great use of a celebrity (who else do you think of but Eugene Levy when it comes to eyebrows?) and humor as his infamous brows fly all over town. Viewers even share how good they think the product looks in the ad, making it an all around hit for Little Caesars!



Eugene and his iconic eyebrows steal the show, and the crazy puffs look great. Loved that his daughter is in it. Really great story/videography with the journey of the eyebrows.

I liked the flying hair, it was hilarious and everyone seemed to know why it was flying lol.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

76%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

61

Norm
56

Laughter 😂

28%

Norm
8%

Häagen-Dazs “Not So Fast, Not So Furious”

ABOUT THE AD

Another nostalgic ad, Häagen-Dazs’ spot brings back members of the original Fast & Furious cast, with Vin Diesel starting up a convertible with Michelle Rodriguez in the passenger seat. But instead of racing, Rodriguez opens up a Häagen-Dazs ice cream as the two take a peaceful joyride along the coast and a disappointed Ludacris pulls up alongside them.

WHAT WORKED

While it was more difficult for viewers to remember this was an ad for Häagen-Dazs, the ad was well-received by viewers, who were happy to see the cast all together again and appreciated the humor of Diesel and Rodriguez slowing down and savoring the moment.



I love the actors from The Fast and Furious movie being the main characters. I like when they decided to take life not so fast and furious.

I loved seeing Vin Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez, and Ludacris in the commercial.

I like the message, the view, the people in it, and the ice cream.



Sales impact

93

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

61%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

67

Norm
56

Love 🥰

39%

Norm
28%

Reese's "Don't Eat Lava"

ABOUT THE AD

This ridiculously funny ad from Reese's promotes their new chocolate lava big cup — which seems to have caused a lot of confusion among consumers. Reese's fans are shown flocking to an active volcanic eruption with buckets and cups in a desperate attempt to taste the lava, while park rangers hold them back — with a PSA to not eat lava, but to eat Reese's chocolate lava instead.

WHAT WORKED

Reese's featured their trademark colors, half-bitten cup shots and slapstick humor in this absurd PSA-style ad, making it a clear win with consumers. The humor and characters were universally appealing — landing successfully with viewers of all genders and ages. The older lady in the scooter at the end got the most laughs. What a smart idea executed to perfection!



It was a touch of humor, which Reese's ads always contain. It was something new to an old favorite.

The ad was genuinely funny, both in the slapstick antics of the lava-crazed people, and the over-the-top yelling of the ranger with the microphone, as well as how silly the premise is, that people would confuse real lava for chocolate lava.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

78%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

62

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

27%

Norm
8%

Hellmann's "When Sally Met Hellmann's"

ABOUT THE AD

Hellmann's is back with another celebrity and nostalgia-filled ad for the big game! Their ad brings back the iconic restaurant scene from the romcom "When Harry Met Sally," starring Meg Ryan and Billy Crystal (and a special appearance from Sydney Sweeney). The two acknowledge their return to the spot and what happened last time, but history repeats itself as soon as Meg Ryan adds some Hellmann's mayonnaise to her sandwich!

WHAT WORKED

The combination of nostalgia and comedy was a smash hit for Hellmann's in this ad, resulting in lots of laughs. Older audiences in particular connected with this one, as they find the 1980's movie more nostalgic. Hellmann's also kept their mayo front and center throughout the ad, ultimately making it the star that caused history to repeat itself!



I loved the whole restaurant scene re-portraying the 1980s movie with the same actors and similar restaurant scene. It's a brilliant idea for advertising Hellmann's.

I liked the humor and the nostalgia for an old movie scene.



Sales impact

88

Ad distinctiveness

4.3

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

72%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

60

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

38%

Norm
8%

Totino's Pizza Rolls "Chazmo Finally Goes Home"

ABOUT THE AD

A continuation of the "Chazmo Name" ad that originally aired last year, Totino's Super Bowl spot shows the alien Chazmo finally setting out to go home with his box of Totino's Pizza Rolls. As the kids, dads (comedians Tim Robinson and Sam Richardson) and Chazmo say their goodbyes, the spaceship's elevator doors abruptly slam shut, squishing him to death. The kids scream and cry in horror, but the dads, who claim not to have know him as well, snack on some Totino's and share blasé remarks about his passing.

WHAT WORKED

Great storytelling, celebrities and deadpan humor make for a successful spot from Totino's. Viewer's remember the alien friend Chazmo, and find the celebrity choices perfect for this type of ad. The spot led to a lot of laughter, but also surprise when Chazmo was squished — keeping viewers attention throughout.



I recognized the comedian actor and the alien was cute before being crushed. I love Totino's. I've been eating them since I was a child.

I like the alien in the ad when he got stuck in the elevator and then the girl screamed that really got my attention.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

77%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

52

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

25%

Norm
8%

Ritz Crackers “No Smiles Allowed”

ABOUT THE AD

Things get salty in Ritz’s first-ever Super Bowl ad featuring Aubrey Plaza, Michael Shannon and Bad Bunny. The spot takes viewers to Ritz’s “Salty Club” in Salt Flats, Utah, where only big attitudes and absolutely no smiles are allowed. Aubrey Plaza and Michael Shannon hilariously discuss how they’ve found their people (and debate which one is the saltiest) as they head to a Ritz buffet and share how good and salty they are — when they’re joined by Bad Bunny who smiles as he eats the crackers, but quickly returns to his salty self to avoid getting kicked out.

WHAT WORKED

Everyone loves a little saltiness, especially on a Ritz cracker! The brand tapped into a great idea that connects the product to a trendy adjective, which made for a clever, engaging and humorous spot. Viewer’s loved this connection, the celebrity choices and were so engaged, they had to watch to the end.



The actors are interesting. The concept of a “salty snack house” in the middle of the salt flats is creative.

I liked how Bad Bunny appeared out of nowhere and the ending of the ad was the best part.



Sales impact

**84****Ad distinctiveness****4.0****Norm
3.8****Unaided brand recall****78%****Norm
68%****Overall emotion****57****Norm
56****Laughter 😄****16%****Norm
8%**

WeatherTech “Born to Be Wild”

ABOUT THE AD

This ad from WeatherTech follows a group of rebellious older women to the tune of Steppenwolf’s “Born to Be Wild.” The ladies take a wild ride in their convertible along the coast, partake in some breakdancing, flash the crowd when they win a game of bingo and more — but they don’t have to worry about whatever is thrown at them, even if it’s some tea and cookies spilled on the convertible’s floor; because they have WeatherTech.

WHAT WORKED

These fab four made for a wildly rebellious ad that kept the audience laughing and rocking out from the get-go. Viewers enjoyed the complete chaos the women left in their wake, all while having a grand ole time! It’s great to see such a positive portrayal of an older generation. The music choice, casting and humor landed a real win for WeatherTech.

“

The visuals were fabulous. It was funny. The music fit great with the ad. Loved the 4 women. The other characters were great. Glad to see a sense of humor.

I like the craziness and chaos as well as the old ladies live in their best life. It was very inspiring.



Sales impact

94

Ad distinctiveness

4.3

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

74%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

65

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

31%

Norm
8%

Ram “Drive Your Own Story”

ABOUT THE AD

This spot starts out with what we assume is the classic tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, but we quickly discover it's Glen Powell's version of the story as part of Ram's “Drive Your Own Story” campaign instead. The ad shows Glen's epic, manly and hilarious rendition, where he drives three different Ram trucks in an epic battle with a dragon, into the woods to use chainsaws to carve a wooden statue of himself and over an active volcano, dodging fireballs.

WHAT WORKED

The great use of celebrity, hilarious storytelling and product placement featuring the three Ram trucks (the Ram 2500 Rebel, the Ramcharger and the Ram RHO) made for a winning spot. Viewers loved the twist on the tall tale and the epic action scenes, but also found it to be extremely funny — and on top of it all, thought the trucks looked great!



I loved the twist and humor of the 3 bears story, and the fantasy action scenes. It's really a funny and engaging mini-movie. And the trucks did look great, too.

I like everything about this ad. It was very creative, fun and different. It really shared the truck's capacity and strength in a very fun way.



Sales impact

**94****Ad distinctiveness****4.2****Norm
3.8****Unaided brand recall****71%****Norm
68%****Overall emotion****63****Norm
56****Laughter 😄****28%****Norm
8%**

Jeep “Owner’s Manual”

ABOUT THE AD

Jeep’s two minute Super Bowl spots stars Harrison Ford in a firelit cabin, who settles viewers in with his wise words on the journey of life, freedom and real heroes. He grabs his Jeep keys off the table and heads outside, where viewers see shots of the classic Jeep Wrangler and all-new, electric Jeep Recon as Ford continues his patriotic voiceover with advice on life choices — ending with the message to do what makes you happy and the winning line, “This Jeep makes me happy, even though my name is Ford.”

WHAT WORKED

Even though the ad was longer than the typical Super Bowl spot, viewers thoroughly enjoyed the storytelling and patriotic scenes shown throughout the ad. They also liked that Ford was in the ad, because of the respect they have for the actor as well as the humorous line about his last name, considering this is a Jeep ad.



I liked that this commercial featured an actor that I like and respect. I liked the story that he was telling. I enjoyed seeing the way the Jeep vehicle was shown off in the ad. I appreciated the fact that Jeep makes plug-in hybrid vehicles.

The acting by Ford was great and so was the humor about his last name. The American scenes and outdoor scenes were great too.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.0

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

82%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

58

Norm
56

Love 🥰

34%

Norm
28%

[illegible]

Hims & Hers “Sick of the System”

ABOUT THE AD

Hims & Hers serves up a rebellious ad that calls for viewers to join in the fight for a healthier America. “Sick of the System” shows a montage of fast-paced stats, headlines and vintage footage with a voiceover on how America’s healthcare system was designed to keep us “sick and stuck,” followed by a message on the refreshing type of weight loss care Hims & Hers provides.

WHAT WORKED

Hims & Hers’ fight-the-system ad really caught attention and took audiences on an emotional journey. Viewers were surprised at the stats presented describing the state of the system and loved the Hims & Hers solution. Many commented on the realistic models in the ad and the biggest driver of likes was the messaging. Viewers saw Hims & Hers as an ally. It’s a great example of the brand/product as the hero in the story!



I enjoyed the whole ad. The fact that it showed overweight people and not skinny models is awesome.

I liked how the ad felt more like a story than a sales pitch. The visuals were beautifully shot and relatable, showcasing real-life moments that felt authentic and universal.



Sales impact

100

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

74%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

67

Norm
56

Love 🥰

33%

Norm
28%

Dove “These Legs”

ABOUT THE AD

Dove delivers another powerful message with “These Legs,” which shows a little girl running down a sidewalk to Bruce Springsteen’s “Born to Run” with the message, “At 3, these legs are unstoppable.” As she continues running and laughing, the message changes to “At 14, she’ll think they’re unbearable.” Part of their #KeepHerConfident campaign, this ad raises awareness that 1 in 2 girls who quit sports are criticized for their body type, and the desperate need to change the way we speak to young girls.

WHAT WORKED

The music, the message and the visual of the young girl, freely and confidently running down the sidewalk certainly struck a chord with viewers. The brands’ consistent championing of body positivity over the years made it easy for viewers to know who the ad was for, which again delivered high feelings of Love and Overall Emotion that surpassed the norms.

“

I appreciated that it's building confidence for women starting as little girls going through teenage years and on up. I also like the music in the background it was uplifting, and I like the fact that it's trying to make women feel better about themselves.



Sales impact

97

Ad distinctiveness

4.2

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

71%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

71

Norm
56

Love 🥰

50%

Norm
28%

NFL “Somebody | It Takes All of Us”

ABOUT THE AD

NFL’s “Somebody” is a heartwarming ad that shows football players Demario Davis, Arik Armstead and Adam Thielen speaking to groups of kids across New Orleans to support, inspire and tell them that they are somebody, no matter what they look like or where they come from. The ad helps shine a light on the NFL’s ongoing dedication to supporting programs that positively impact the lives of kids everywhere.

WHAT WORKED

This real and heartfelt ad from the NFL had viewers feeling the love right from the start, with above average scores for Overall Emotion, particularly eliciting very strong feelings of love. This ad helps showcase the power of love versus humor and uses celebrities to deliver a positive message to such a precious part of our world: the kids.



I loved seeing the children being taught to believe in themselves. I loved the setting with the oak tree. It was a very uplifting and positive message.

The ad was very real. I like all the kids that are enthused by these programs. It is nice to see high profile athletes giving their time to this.



Sales impact

**95****Ad distinctiveness****4.1****Norm
3.8****Unaided brand recall****69%****Norm
68%****Overall emotion****75****Norm
56****Love 🥰****55%****Norm
28%**

Ray-Ban / Meta “Hey Meta, Who Eats Art?”

ABOUT THE AD

Ray-Ban and Meta come together in this spot featuring Chris Pratt, Chris Hemsworth and Kris Jenner. The ad opens to Pratt in an art gallery, standing in front of Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan’s infamous banana installation, asking Meta “What is this artwork?” when his Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses respond. Hemsworth later joins him, with Cattelan’s \$6.2 million banana in hand — setting them on a search for a replacement. Kris Jenner, also donning a pair of Ray-Ban Meta glasses, catches them in the act and asks “Who eats art?” To which the two reply she should actually ask Meta that. Instead you hear her say, “Hey Meta, call my lawyer.”

WHAT WORKED

A wonderful combination of three celebrity Chris’s, viral artwork, humor and state-of-the-art tech make for a very cool and comedy-filled ad from the brands. The ad does a great job at communicating the brands’ collab on their new smart glasses, all while keeping viewers entertained!



I liked all 3 Chris’s were in the commercial. And the glasses were very stylish.

It was entertaining and unique and made the brand seem cool and appealing.



Sales impact

95

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

87%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

59

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

29%

Norm
8%

Homes.com “Not Saying We’re the Best”

ABOUT THE AD

Homes.com’s spot opens with the site’s familiar duo (Dan Levy and Heidi Gardner) in a conference room, where Levy asks a lawyer why they can’t say Homes.com is the best. Met with a resounding no, Gardner and Levy offer up variations of the phrase to see if that will work, from jumbling up the words, to saying it in Spanish or a whisper and even seeing if Morgan Freeman voicing the phrase changes anything.

WHAT WORKED

Character consistency, humor and excellent brand positioning made for a great ad from Homes.com! With humor and a rational message (“Homes.com is the best home shopping site”) the purchase uplift was sky high! People enjoyed seeing Morgan Freeman make an appearance, and particularly loved how he tricked the lawyer into saying the phrase at the end.



I love Morgan Freeman and we trust him instinctively so it was great to have him in the ad. They repeated homes.com is the best several times.

I thought it was clever how they made sure you knew and would remember who the ad was for. Love Morgan Freeman.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

3.9

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

73%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

59

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

20%

Norm
8%

Instacart “We’re Here”

ABOUT THE AD

“Release the hounds,” say’s Cheetos’ Chester Cheetah, as many familiar brand characters and assets begin parading down a hill into the city and to a user’s home — including the Pillsbury Doughboy, Green Giant, Heinz Weiner Dogs, Mr. Clean, Kool-Aid Man, Energizer Bunnies and many more! Instacart’s ad bring all the brands you know and love together, with the message that they’re here for you when you need them.

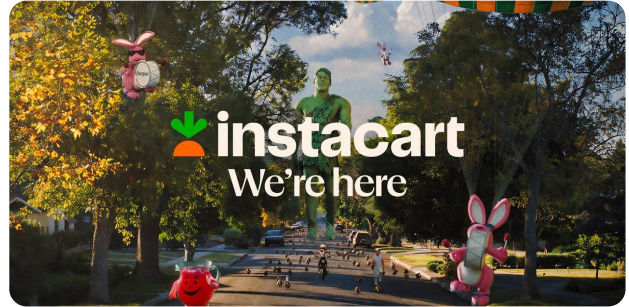
WHAT WORKED

The upbeat music choice, humor, celebration and feeling of togetherness that stemmed from seeing all your familiar brand characters come together all made for a hit ad from Instacart! With more than double the norm for Laughter, the ad certainly brought smiles to viewers faces as well. And despite featuring so many other brands’ mascots, Instacart still managed to achieve a Brand Recall score in line with the norm. Impressive!

“

I liked all the different brand characters coming together. It was so cute! I liked the visuals and how they were so accurate to the brands they represented.

I liked it all, excellent ad. Having Mr. Clean and the other characters in the ad was just awesome - made my day.



Sales impact

87

Ad distinctiveness

4.1

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

63%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

62

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

16%

Norm
8%

Booking.com “Get Your Stay Ridiculously Right”

ABOUT THE AD

The Muppets star in Booking.com’s ad, kicking off with what seems like your typical travel booking ad, until Kermit starts playing his iconic banjo. The ad continues to show off all of Booking.com’s offerings, such as a “more boutique” option for the fabulous Ms. Piggy, something “more PG” for a family-of-four and something *less* family friendly for a group of girls on a bachelorette weekend.

WHAT WORKED

Booking.com’s spot is filled with nostalgia, humor and relatability for all types of viewers! The ad clearly conveyed what users can expect from the brand, and viewers remembered, with above averages scores on brand recall. Viewers also found the classic Muppets style humor sprinkled in throughout to be a great addition as well.



I love the muppets. I liked the touches of humor, the bridal party getting soaked, the family in a hot sheets hotel, etc.

I liked the humor, especially having run into somewhat similar bad situations through the years.



Sales impact

85

Ad distinctiveness

3.9

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

73%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

60

Norm
56

Laughter 😂

18%

Norm
8%

GoDaddy Airo “Act Like You Know”

ABOUT THE AD

Walton Goggins stars in GoDaddy’s spot, who shares how actors can do a great job at making you think they know what they’re doing... when they really don’t. Goggins is shown in a series of scenes where he, very clearly, has no clue what he’s doing. He shares that his hardest role yet, however, is as a small business owner. Fortunately, he found GoDaddy Airo, which uses AI to help you build anything from a website, to logos to social content — just like his Goggins Goggles.

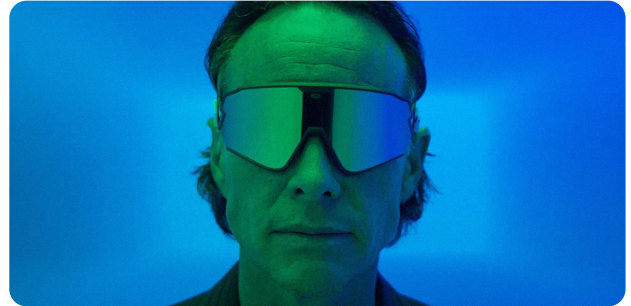
WHAT WORKED

Viewers felt like they could relate to this hilarious spot from GoDaddy, especially the notion of just trying to figure it all out. The brand also did a great job at communicating its new product features with AI integrations, complete with a small demo of what users can expect to see.

“

I liked all the comments about not knowing what your doing...so relatable in today's world.

I loved how modern it look. The colors and dynamic of it grabbed my attention from the beginning.



Sales impact

84

Ad distinctiveness

3.9

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

77%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

51

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

12%

Norm
8%

Duracell “Brady Reboost”

ABOUT THE AD

Duracell’s ad begins with what looks like a return to the big game with commentary from Tom Brady and Kevin Burkhardt, when Brady suddenly drops his head and “shuts down.” A Duracell Scientist walks on screen to examine Brady, opening a compartment on his arm with off-brand batteries inside. He switches these with Duracell batteries because “winners like Tom only run on Duracell.”

WHAT WORKED

Viewers really enjoyed the idea of people running on batteries, as well as the fact that Tom Brady was featured in the ad. While the whole ad was clever, people found the line when Brady responds to being asked whether he’s okay with “Why does everyone keep asking me that since the roast?” to be absolutely hilarious, giving the spot a great balance of cleverness, branding and humor.



The funny thought that “what if ” people ran on batteries. Also like how fast they swooped in and fixed him with the batteries.

I really liked the humor in the ad especially with Tom Brady. He isn’t known for his humor as he could be intense on the football field.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.0

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

73%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

53

Norm
56

Laughter 😄

24%

Norm
8%

NFL “Flag 50”

ABOUT THE AD

The second NFL ad and second two minute spot that aired during the big game, NFL’s “Flag 50” takes us back to a nostalgic 80s high school movie setting, complete with Yellow’s “Oh Yeah” track. The ad follows a “new girl” who stands up to a football player and bully, challenging his notion that girls don’t play football. He challenges her to a faceoff with their best player, who she epically beats. The ad ends with the message: Let’s make girls flag football a varsity sport in all 50 states.

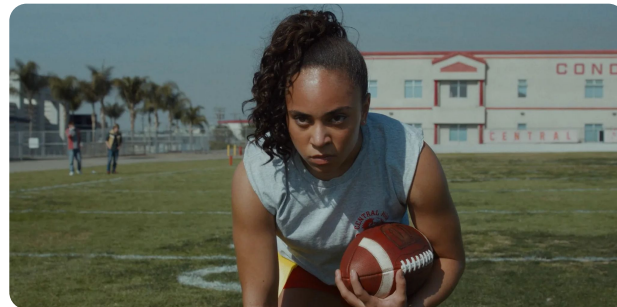
WHAT WORKED

What an empowering, funny and nostalgic ad from the NFL! Women in particular loved the 80s movie references, the message that girls can be just as great (if not greater) than boys, the humor and the positivity that radiated from the final line. They also like how all the girls were portrayed as strong individuals, ready to leave the past behind.



I like that it shows that girls can be as good at sports as guys and they should be given the chance to do that. I like that the ad shows a strong girl willing to compete against the guys.

I liked the images portrayed of the females in the commercial. The girls were depicted as strong, competitive, talented, tenacious and smart.



Sales impact



Ad distinctiveness

4.2

Norm
3.8

Unaided brand recall

53%

Norm
68%

Overall emotion

64

Norm
56

Love 🥰

40%

Norm
28%

Themes from the ads this year

Here's a look at some of the overarching themes we saw from this year's ads.



1. Celebrities

Including celebrities in advertising can often be quite successful, as they **catch attention and build confidence** for the product or brand they're advertising. And celebrity-ridden advertising has been a staple of Super Bowl advertising for decades.

So it's no surprise that we saw tons of celebrities featured in this year's Super Bowl ads, including Catherine O'Hara, Willem Dafoe, Vin Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez, Ludacris, Post Malone, Shaboozey, David Beckham, Matt Damon, Meg Ryan, Billy Crystal, and many, many more.

The challenge with using celebrities is that they aren't brand mascots — they have their own fame and that **fame can often overshadow the product or brand**. Some brands this year used celebrities to great effect, others were a little outshone. On average, the presence of a celebrity didn't make for a more effective ad.



2. Animals

No surprise here: People like animals. We can quickly create emotional connections with most animals we see on screen.

Whether they're doing something silly, acting cute or driving an emotional narrative forward — **animals in advertising are usually a crowd pleaser.**

Budweiser once again used its Clydesdales very successfully (making us feel emotionally connected to a young foal and immediately cueing the Budweiser brand), Ram used bears in a funny way with a fresh take on an old tale, and Coors Light compared all of us the Monday after the Super Bowl to sloths.

Animals alone don't make a great ad, but they can certainly help. Ads with animals had an average Sales Impact of 84 compared to 71 for those without.



3. Music

The music in an ad can play a pivotal role in grabbing attention, setting the scene, evoking emotions and ultimately creating a more immersive experience for the audience. By adding to the overall experience, **music help make the ad more memorable.**

Music was a key driver of success for Super Bowl ads this year: Ads with music had an average Sales Impact of 74 compared to 67 for those without.

So it's no surprise that some of the best ads had a great soundtrack.

Lots of ads used recognizable songs to set the tone, like Bud Light's use of Huey Lewis & The News' "The Power of Love" for an upbeat vibe and Lay's use of Barry Louis Polisar's "All I Want Is You" for a sweet and sentimental one.

Nerds also gave us a reimagined classic, with Shaboozey's take on Louis Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World."



4. Good stories

30 or 60 seconds isn't much time, but some of the best ads this year used their time effectively to tell an engaging story.

We saw the heartwarming ones, like Budweiser's "First Delivery" and Lay's "The Little Farmer" that both told a story of determination and overcoming obstacles.

But we also saw good stories told through humor, like Doritos' "Abduction" — which told a quick story of an alien and human man coming together over a bag of Doritos — and Stella Artois' "David and Dave" — that told the story of long-lost twins David Beckham and Matt Damon meeting and bonding over their shared love of Stella Artois.



5. Nostalgia

We tend to look at the past with rose-colored glasses — remembering a happier and simpler time. Super Bowl ads often tap into that feeling to create a feeling of bringing people together over shared memories.

We saw that in several ads this year. Hellmann's "When Sally Met Hellmann's" is a great example of an ad that revisited a classic movie.

Booking.com brought in the Muppets, which many of us remember fondly from our childhood.

And lots of ads used old songs to set a nostalgic mood.



Other themes

- **Slapstick humor** with absurd situations, like Doritos, Reese's, Totino's, Pringles, and many, many more
- **Tie-ins to the game** — Duracell made us think Tom Brady ran out of power during a segment, Angel Soft gave us a bathroom break and Rocket Mortgage transitioned from the song in its ad to a sing-along to the same song in the stadium
- **Brand characters** — Instacart, Budweiser and Nerds to name a few
- **Aliens** — stealing Doritos and getting squished by a door
- **Flying facial hair** — mustaches and eyebrows
- **Items falling off the back of trucks** — a Budweiser keg and a potato
- **Goldilocks & the 3 bears** — Ram and Redfin



Takeaways for making great Super Bowl ads

Advertising in the Super Bowl is a huge opportunity for your brand. But it's also a huge investment — one you want to be sure you get right.

Learning from the most successful ads this year can help you get it right next year.



Be entertaining

Right from the start it's important to remember that as a Super Bowl advertiser, **you're part of the show!** Viewers have tuned in to be entertained, so you have to deliver that.

Be cautious with strictly informational ads, especially if they're dry. The Super Bowl *can* be a place to convey new information, but it has to be done in an entertaining way.

Otherwise, there's no way you'll stand out among all the other entertainment that night.

But of course, entertainment is just the beginning!



Be distinctive

A successful ad must do two things: Capture attention and hold attention. To capture attention, your ad must be distinctive.

It needs to **stand out as something new** that audiences haven't seen before.

That is certainly no easy feat. But you can see that all of the great ads we featured in this report were able to do it.

And some brands are able to deliver distinctive ads year after year in the Super Bowl!

Think about how you can do something unusual, unexpected or visually impactful to capture attention.



Craft a compelling narrative

After you've captured attention, you have to hold onto it — and that's where a compelling narrative comes in.

We're all drawn to a good story. A story has the power to keep us invested, focused and interested in how the story ends.

An ad isn't a movie, but there's no reason it can't be structured like one.

Think of your ad as a 30-60 second movie and take inspiration from any great story you've ever seen: Start with a hook, establish the setting, characters and scenario, introduce a conflict or struggle and build on the tension until it reaches a climax — with a satisfying resolution that leaves people on a good feeling.

Ads like Lay's "The Little Farmer" and Budweiser's "First Delivery" did this very well this year. They told a compelling story that kept us watching — and connected with us emotionally along the way.

Hims & Hers "Sick of the System" told a great narrative too with its problem-solution style ad. It told the story of the problem with the current system and positioned its brand and product as a solution — in a way that resonated with consumers likely to buy the product.



Focus on the emotions

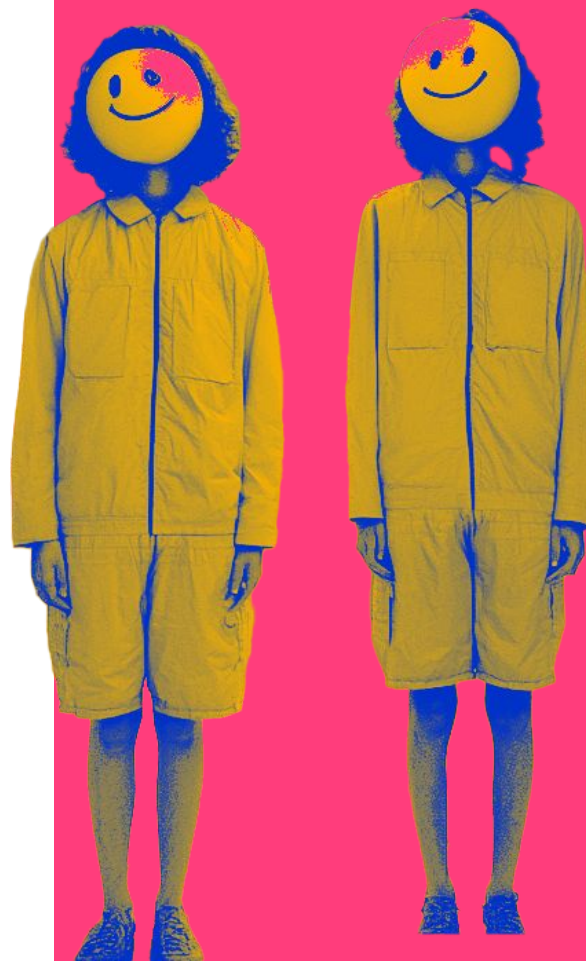
A critical element of any great story is how it made you feel. Did it make you laugh? Did it make you cry? Were you scared or anxious through the action and then relieved when it ended well?

A story that doesn't make you feel anything isn't a very good story. Audiences may forget the specific details of your ad, but **they won't easily forget the way they felt watching it.**

A strong emotional connection is how you ensure your ad is the viewers' favorite of the night.

Find those ways to engage audiences on a deeper level, either by tugging on their heartstrings, making them feel nostalgic, showing empathy for their pain, surprising them, inspiring them or making them laugh out loud.

The best ads we featured did just that, as you can see by all of their high "love" and "laughter" scores.



Find a real consumer insight

Many of the best ads are those that are grounded in a real consumer insight. These are **ideas that resonate and are instantly understood**, but aren't too obvious that you've really considered them before.

These are truths like Snickers' "you're not you when you're hungry" or Always' idea that doing something "like a girl" doesn't mean "bad" to a young girl, it only comes to mean that over time as society tells them so.

Coors Light associated its brand with a consumer truth this year: That the Monday after the Super Bowl is a tough day for most people.

When you can find a real truth — and a compelling way to associate your brand with that truth — that's where the advertising magic is.



Target strategically

The Super Bowl is a unique opportunity to have your ad seen by over 100 million people at one time. People of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, and genders. For some advertisers, the Super Bowl is a great opportunity to go broad, but for others, it's an opportunity to reach a specific segment.

It really all depends on the goal of the brand and the strategy of the marketing team. Want to grow market share with Gen Z? Featuring an up-and-coming TikTok star might be a great tactic. Need to increase awareness across multiple generations? Shared culture might give a brand the greatest chance of being more widely talked about after the game.

Nostalgia is a recurring theme in Super Bowl ads. Some brands rely on classic TV, movies or other moments that have become part of American culture in a way that most generations would recognize and connect with.

But some brands are already extremely well known and awareness is not their primary goal with Super Bowl advertising. Many brands use this moment in a more targeted way, to achieve a business goal within a specific focus segment of the population.

For example, NFL's "Flag 50" ad scored much higher with women than with men, but their goal was to increase the market for football by including more women — so those differences are in line with the strategy.



Let the brand and product shine

Your brand and product should always be primary considerations in your advertising. Remember that you aren't just making an ad to entertain, you're advertising a product and building a brand.

People tend to remember an overall summary of an ad. **If your brand or product isn't a part of that summary, it probably won't get credit for the ad.** And that's clearly not a good use of your \$8 million investment.

You want the associations and feelings from the ad to reinforce the strength of your brand and product in consumers' minds. That way, your brand comes to mind in key moments when they are considering purchasing products like yours.

Prioritize giving your brand a role to play. For example, Hellmann's "When Sally Met Hellmann's" wouldn't make sense without the mayo in the story — it's the product Sally is reacting to.

This is the time to rely on your distinctive brand assets. They're a branding shortcut that can help people identify your brand even with all those other ads competing for their attention. We saw that ads with brand characters achieved an average Sales Impact of 84 versus 72 for those without — driven particularly by branding but also some improvement in distinctiveness.



Land your implicit associations

Great ads often don't just give the brand a role, they **tell you something about that brand** — but often not explicitly.

For example, this year we saw Doritos' "Abduction" demonstrate that Doritos are delicious. The ad didn't say this out loud, but rather it showed them being so irresistible that an alien would try relentlessly to steal them.

Reese's "Don't Eat Lava" did something similar by showing us that Reese's Chocolate Lava Cups are so amazing that people would dive into lava if they thought it was Reese's lava.

These ads end up conveying key messages about the products being advertised, but in a more subtle way.

This is critical for the Super Bowl where you want to entertain, not educate.

Think about how you can land your own **key messages in an implicit way**, rather than a more direct (and less entertaining) way.



Tie into a longer-term marketing strategy

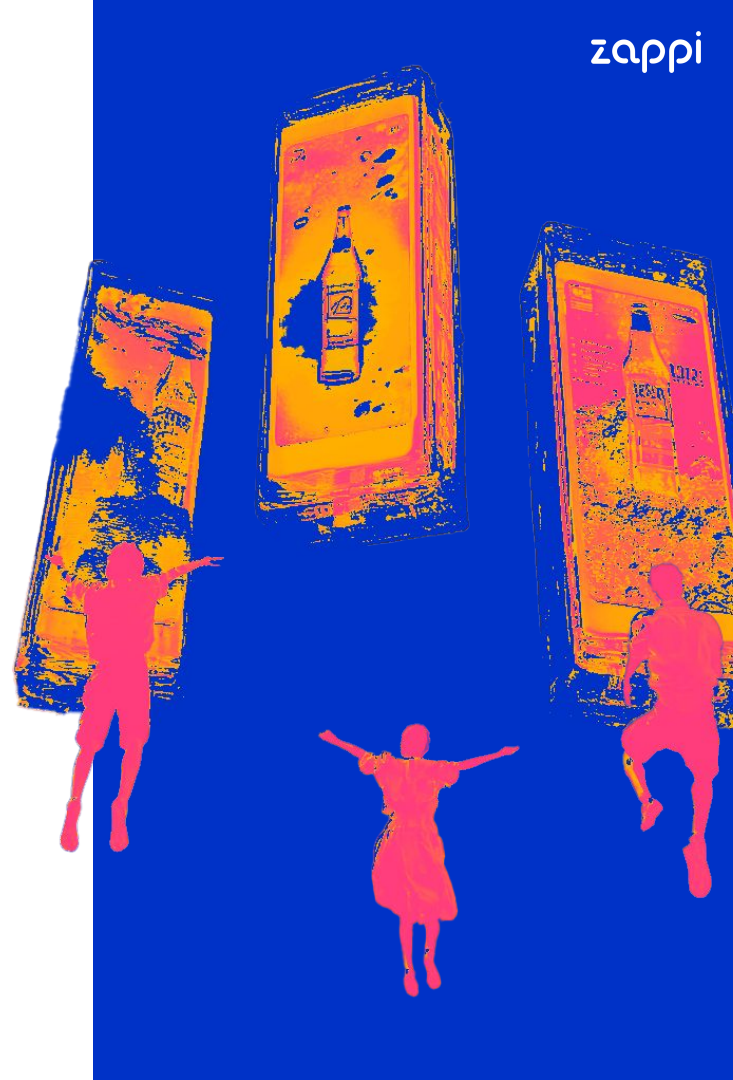
\$8 million is a steep investment for a single ad placement. To get the most bang for your buck, don't think of a Super Bowl spot as a single ad, think of it as just one piece of an overall strategy.

Focus on **activating around the Super Bowl** so it's not over after 30 seconds of air time. What can be done to build excitement before the Super Bowl? How is your brand connecting with the NFL not just on Game Day but season after season?

There are many examples of brands extending the life of their ads for this year's big game. One great one is Doritos' Crash the Super Bowl competition. In September 2024 the brand announced it was bringing back the competition for fans to make their own Doritos Super Bowl ad. They shared the finalists in January and announced the winner before the big game.

Other brands planned live activations at the Super Bowl, like the Häagen-Dazs road trip from LA to Super Bowl host city New Orleans to remind people to slow down — matching its message from its Super Bowl ad.

And you can activate around the Super Bowl even without advertising in the big game. Build-A-Bear Workshop has partnered with the Kansas City Chiefs for years, which has allowed the brand to create localized and relevant Super Bowl activations this year without advertising in the game.



Optimize your advertising with consumer feedback

The days of merely testing ads are over. Today, it's all about optimizing your investments to get the most bang for your buck.

Creative teams are often fearful of bringing consumer feedback into the process too early, lest their creativity be stifled, or their vision be stalled... or worse yet, never come to life.

But Super Bowl television commercials are high-stakes investments with a big price tag.

Capturing feedback from consumers early and often, and using it to optimize your ad is important. Optimizing with consumer feedback can help you achieve your goals, not only with a single ad, but with your Super Bowl advertising, and with your football and sports marketing strategy at large.

With a deep understanding of what works with consumers, and agile optimization at every step of the process, you'll be able to create the very best work, to **launch your Super Bowl advertising campaigns with confidence**, and the data to back it up!



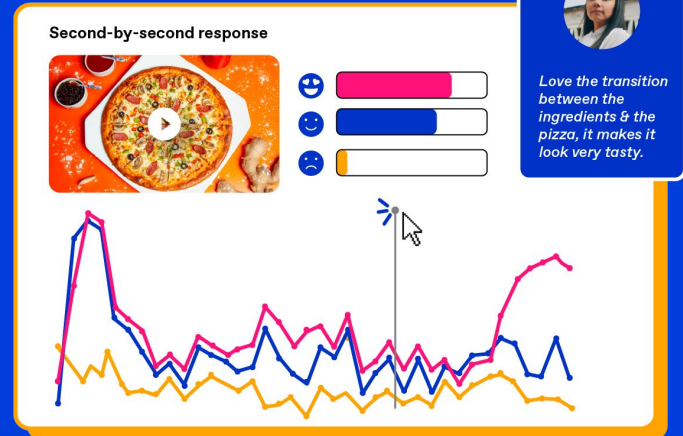
Create winning ads with connected insights

To create a winning Super Bowl ad, you need consumer feedback.

The Zappi Amplify Advertising System is a modern research system that gives you quick, accurate consumer feedback — powered by data and supercharged with AI.

With Amplify, you get:

- An ongoing learning loop for better, data-driven advertising
- Quality consumer research you can run fast, early and often
- AI reporting to get from data to insights in one click
- Comprehensive metrics and diagnostics for confident decisions
- All your research data in one comprehensive platform, so you can connect insights over time and learn from every win
- Backed by the most actionable and predictive research methodology



See how Zappi can help you
create winning ads with
connected insights

GET A DEMO