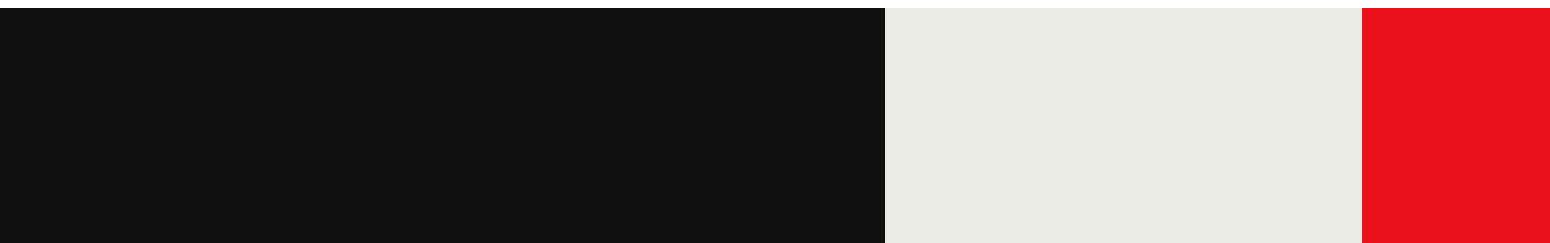



Did the Super Bowl deliver on ratings, ads, and streaming?

Article



The news: Super Bowl LIX had all the ingredients for a record-breaking night—defending champion **Kansas City Chiefs’ loss to the Philadelphia Eagles** (by score of 40-22), a historic appearance by **President Donald Trump**, and the continued presence of **[Taylor Swift](#)**, whose impact on NFL ratings has been a talking point all season.

Yet, early data suggests **viewership may have slipped** compared to last year's historic numbers. Meanwhile, ad prices continued to climb, and **Tubi's first free Super Bowl stream** provided a critical test for the future of sports broadcasting.

Viewership in question: Despite high expectations, the game's total audience may not have surpassed last year's **123.7 million viewers**, the second most-watched US television event in history behind the **1969 Apollo 11 moon landing**, per Benzinga.

- **Samba TV reports that 37.1 million US households watched the game, a 5% decline from 2024.**
- **The halftime show featuring Kendrick Lamar drew 8.8 million U.S. households, down 4% from Usher's performance last year, per Advanced Television.**
- **Tubi's role was significant, with analysts predicting up to 15% of total Super Bowl viewership came from the free streaming platform, according to Deadline.**

A key factor in the viewership dip may be **NFL fatigue**, with the Chiefs appearing in their **fourth Super Bowl in five years**; the league also faced **2.2% lower regular season ratings** compared to 2023, Deadline notes.

RoAS TBD: Super Bowl LIX continued to be the most expensive night for advertisers, with brands paying a record \$8 million per 30-second spot. But did they get their money's worth?

- **Nike dominated as the most-watched brand ad, reaching 28.1 million households, per Samba TV data.**
- **AI-driven advertising** was a major theme, reflecting broader industry trends.
- **Celebrity-packed campaigns continued their dominance;** in 2023, 74% of Super Bowl ads featured celebrities (see chart).

Streaming enters the chat: Tubi's free stream was a pivotal moment for FAST (free ad-supported streaming TV). While this expanded access, technical delays were a major issue.

- **Fubo had the worst lag, with some viewers seeing the action up to 78 seconds late, according to Phenix, a real-time streaming data provider.**
- **Streaming fragmentation was evident, with Spanish-language rights split between Fox Deportes and Telemundo, further segmenting audiences.**

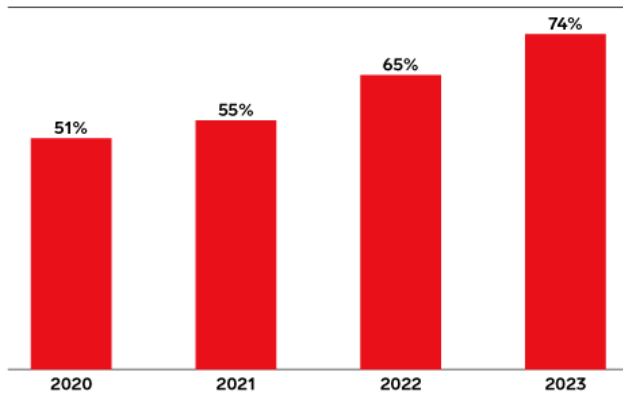
- The NFL's shift to streaming reflects a broader move away from traditional cable, yet latency issues could hinder real-time engagement and sports betting.

The final word: Super Bowl LIX showcased the changing nature of live sports broadcasting, advertising, and viewership habits.

- While it remains America's biggest TV event, slight declines in linear ratings, ad effectiveness, and streaming performance hint that the game's dominance may not be as untouchable as before.
- As brands and broadcasters refine their digital and streaming strategies, the Super Bowl is still poised to be the most valuable advertising moment in sports—for now.

Share of US Super Bowl Ads That Feature Celebrities, 2020-2023

% of total



Source: Kantar, "2024 Super Bowl Creative Effectiveness Report," Feb 12, 2024

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