Super Bowl ads: Hits and misses included a blend of nostalgia, humor, and celebrity overload

Article



The news: The **Super Bowl** once again served as the ultimate platform for brands to present their most innovative and engaging commercials. With a steep <u>\$7 million price tag</u> for a 30-





second spot, advertisers embraced safety, nostalgia, and the undeniable allure of celebrity endorsements while subtly navigating the realms of politics and social commentary.

Pushing boundaries: One of the standout attempts to break the traditional mold came from a collaboration between **Cardi B** and makeup brand **NYX**. The original concept, aiming to playfully challenge male-dominated sports fan culture, faced modifications by the NFL.

The result was a toned-down version that still managed to intrigue viewers with a QR code leading to the full ad. The move to inject humor and challenge stereotypes was a bold nod to the evolving dynamics of Super Bowl advertising.

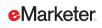
Celebrity cameo overload: The use of celebrities was more pronounced this year. **Arnold Schwarzenegger**'s self-parody in a State Farm ad and **Beyoncé**'s Verizon commercial, which cleverly teased new music, exemplified how stars can bring a mix of humor and surprise to the advertising table.

- Jennifer Aniston's appearance in an Uber Eats ad underscored the trend of leveraging star power to create memorable moments that resonate with audiences beyond the game.
- The CeraVe ad featured Michael Cera implying he inspired the brand's name, blending humor and celebrity to boost brand recognition. This creative approach and playful tone facilitated viewer engagement and shareability while subtly promoting CeraVe's dermatologistdeveloped products without overt selling—effectively distinguishing CeraVe in the crowded skincare market.

Nostalgia and emotion: Nostalgia played a significant role, with brands like **Volkswagen** reminiscing about their iconic vehicles while introducing the electric ID. Buzz.

 Google's ad for its Pixel camera, featuring technology aiding a visually impaired man, stood out for its emotional depth, earning high praise for linking tech with genuine human experiences.

Highs and lows: While many ads received accolades for their creativity and impact, others fell short. **Temu** and **Homes.com** were criticized for repetitive and unclear messaging, demonstrating the challenges brands face in making a lasting impression during a brief Super Bowl spot.



Squarespace's ad underperformed because it confusingly mixed aliens with phone distractions, failing to clearly link its plot to the company's services, despite direction from Martin Scorsese, resulting in a lack of viewer engagement and unclear messaging.

Our take: This year's Super Bowl ads mirrored the complexities of the cultural climate, balancing entertainment and messages.

As companies continue to vie for the attention of a diverse and discerning audience, the evolution of Super Bowl commercials remains a fascinating barometer for shifts in advertising strategies and public sentiment.

