

# Qualitative Summary

Super Bowl Advertisements IRG

February, 2015

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## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Super Bowl is widely regarded yearly as one of the most watched television programs in the United States. This year, Super Bowl XLIX (airing February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015) was no different, as this XLIX was rated the highest rated U.S. television program of all time. Having access to such a large audience during the Super Bowl sets a grand stage for brands to be able to connect with consumers and use television advertisements to increase purchase intent and overall brand appeal. The GutCheck marketing team was looking to understand the appeal of such ads and purchasing behavior that followed.

### KEY QUESTION



How, if at all, do the Super bowl advertisements affect brand appeal and the consumer's intent to purchase?

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES



1. Understand consumer expectations for Super Bowl advertisements, including supreme brands and effective advertisement screenings.
2. Identify the most and least appealing advertisements, and why consumers labeled them as such.
3. Understand how Super Bowl advertisements affect brand attitudes and the likelihood of consumer purchase.

### RESEARCH DESIGN

Instant Research Community	30 Respondents	1 Day
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This study was executed via an online Instant Research Community™ where respondents answered open-ended questions and follow-ups posted by a trained moderator. This technology fosters a dynamic qualitative discussion where respondents are easily able to interact with others in the group.

## AUDIENCE

The table below provides a high level overview of who was included in this research. Additional detail on respondents can be found in the [Respondent Appendix](#).

SCREENER	Super Bowl Viewers
<b>Completes</b>	30
<b>Country</b>	USA
<b>Gender</b>	Mixed
<b>Age Range</b>	18-65
<b>Custom Screens</b>	Watched Super Bowl Watched all or most commercials

## KEY FINDINGS & IMPLICATIONS

*This section is designed to provide a topline summary of the most important findings and implications from this research. More detailed findings, including verbatim comments from respondents, are provided on later pages within this report.*

### A VARIETY OF BRANDS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH GREAT SUPERBOWL ADVERTISING.

- **Among respondents, Budweiser was the clear cut front runner when it comes to great Super Bowl advertisements.**
  - Respondents recalled the Bud-Weis-Er frogs and stated that Budweiser always has ads that are both attention grabbing and memorable without being over the top.
  - The Budweiser ads are highly regarded as humorous and witty, which is a huge draw to the consumers in this study.
- **Other companies such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola, Doritos, Go Daddy, E-Trade and BudLight were also oft represented as companies with great Super Bowl ads.**
  - Respondents felt like these companies often produced ads that were amusing and clever.
  - Some respondents felt that the ads of these companies embraced the best of American culture and presented it in their ads.

### AMONG RESPONDENTS, THERE WAS LITTLE INTEREST TO PREVIEW THE SUPER BOWL ADS.

- **Many consumers within this community did not watch any “early release” ads.**
  - These respondents had little desire and put forth little to no effort to view Super Bowl ads before they were set to air during the actual game.
  - Several respondents stated that they enjoyed the element of surprise that came with viewing the ads for the first time while watching the Super Bowl.
- **Although there was low interest in previewing the ads, the respondents did watch certain ads beforehand.**
  - A few respondents stated that while previewing full ads was not ideal, airing short previews of ads would drum up interest and was an effective tool used by brands.
  - Respondents noted that while they did pre-watch certain ads, they still preferred to watch the ads during the Super Bowl.

### AD APPEAL

- **One of the most popular ads within the community was Budweiser’s Puppy and Clydesdale Part 2 spot.**

- Many respondents felt that this heartwarming ad that included cute and loving animals catered to all of the right senses. Several within the community noted just how much this ad pulled at their “heart-strings” and evoked very real emotions within them.
- **Ads that were humorous and/or touching had a high appeal within this community.**
  - Fiat, Snickers, Doritos, and E-surance were all pinned as favorite ads because of their comical nature.
  - Similarly, McDonalds, Nissan, and Always were all brands that were tagged as favorites due to their heartwarming nature.
- **The respondents’ selections of the ‘least appealing’ ads were a mixed bag.**
  - The T-mobile commercial that featured Kim Kardashian was the least favorable ad, as she is a polarizing figure that several respondents highly dislike.
  - There were a host of other brands that respondents selected as their least favorite, including but not limited to: Nationwide, McDonald’s, E-surance, and Toyota.

#### IMPACT OF ADS.

- **The majority of respondents felt that their favorite ads had no impact on their interest in purchasing from that particular brand.**
  - For both respondents’ favorite and second favorite ads, there was very little increased desire to go out and purchase the advertised items/brands.
  - Although the consumers within the community enjoyed certain ad spots, they were not moved to go out and buy products that they rarely use, and were not more motivated to purchase increased quantities of what they already buy.
- **Most respondents stated that they did not discover any new brands or products while watching the Super Bowl ads.**
  - A vast majority of the respondents stated that they were familiar with most all the brands that had Super Bowl ad spots.
  - Mexican Avocados, The Carnival Corporation, Mophie, and new types of Cars were some of the brands/products in which consumers were introduced.
- **A few respondents did feel an increased sense of brand perception.**
  - The brands that touched on humanity and other heartwarming traits presented a sense of pride within some of the consumers and made them proud to be using products from such brands.

## IMPLICATIONS BASED ON THIS RESEARCH

- **Respondents enjoy ads that evoke positive reactions.**
  - Laughter, happiness, and pride are all desired responses when watching the Super Bowl ads. Humorous, witty, fun ads go a long way in making an ad campaign memorable and effective.
- **Consumers prefer watching the “first-run” of an ad during the Super Bowl, but are able to recognize a successful campaign no matter when it airs.**
  - Respondents felt that the element of surprise makes watching the ads during the Super Bowl a more exciting experience and prefer to watch the ads for the first time during the actual game.
  - Although several respondents previously saw the Budweiser commercial before it aired during the Super Bowl, it was still voted the most appealing ad. Consumers appreciate good ads, no matter when they first view it.
- **Overall, the Super Bowl ads do not do much for increased purchasing intent. However, the same cannot be said for brand opinion.**
  - Respondents are unlikely to change their buying habits of a brand based upon an ad, however, the ad can go a long way in aiding or damaging a consumers sentiment of that particular brand.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

*This section expands on the key findings above and includes verbatim comments from respondents where applicable. Note that some comments have been modified for misspellings and/or capitalization but the content was not edited.*

Objective: Understand consumer expectations for Super Bowl advertisements, including supreme brands and effective advertisement screenings.

### A VARIETY OF BRANDS AND METHODS OF SCREENINGS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH GREAT SUPERBOWL ADVERTISING

**While watching the Super Bowl, consumers expect ads that cater to a variety of emotions ranging from witty and humorous to touching and heartwarming.** Every year, the ads are one of the most appealing aspects of the Super Bowl. The majority of respondents felt that this year's ads were on par with previous years. Bud Light, Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola, Go Daddy, E-Trade, Microsoft and Doritos are all brands that are associated with great Super Bowl advertisements. Some of these companies, like Pepsi (who sponsors the half time show), are able to advertise their brand during the actual Super Bowl, and not through means of a commercial. Other companies, such as Coca Cola seem to parallel the very epitome of American Culture, and allowed viewers to see the best of themselves in the ads.

Budweiser, Doritos, and E-Trade traditionally have fantastic Super bowl commercials. They each produce humorous and clever commercials, which I appreciate. Microsoft has had some great commercials as well; I think last year's commercial was super powerful and shows how technology transforms the world. (Female, 25)

Coca Cola and Budweiser. Their ads always seem to embrace the best of American culture. (Male, 42).

**During the Super Bowls, according to respondents, Budweiser is always on top of its' game and is able to consistently produce top-rated, memorable ad spots year in and year out.** Consumers within the community felt that Budweiser ads are attention-grabbing and unforgettable. The Bud-Weis-Er talking frogs, from several years ago, are an example of a successful, humorous, catchy campaign and was mentioned by several of the respondents.

The Budweiser commercials from the past which featured the lizards. They were funny and held a person's attention so that you wanted to see them again and again. (Male, 64)

I think Budweiser did well waaaay back when they introduced those bud- weis- er- frogs. It was ridiculous without being over the top. It makes you remember the brand's name. And that's what's important - remembering the brand's name. (Male, 33)

**A small number of respondents chose to watch ads that were pre-released.** Many respondents stated that they enjoyed seeing ads for the first time while they were actually watching the Super Bowl. Several felt that watching the ads before they aired during the Super Bowl, took away the element of surprise and thus took the fun away from the “commercial-watching” aspect of the Super Bowl.

I don't really like airing early advertising because it sucks out the fun of watching Super Bowl commercials. Thus, it do not like to "pre-see". (Male, 18)

I heard about some of the ads but I didn't see any. I know they release some of the ads before the game to drum up interest but I kind of wish they didn't because it spoils the surprise. (Female, 42)

**However, those that did preview the ads before the Super Bowl were able to screen the ads through a variety of means.** Respondents pre-watched certain ads, such as the Go Daddy puppy ad, Kim Kardashian's T-Mobile ad, the Mexican Avocado ad, and the Budweiser ad by means of YouTube, social media, and news shows such as 'The Today Show.' A few respondents even chose to share the ads that they liked on Facebook or other social media sites. Some respondents, through no choice of their own, realized that they had already viewed certain Super Bowl ads, as they had been “mixed in” with other commercials before the Super Bowl. Even still, most respondents preferred to watch the ads for the first time during the Super Bowl.

I tried to not look for the commercials ahead of time...but the Today Show (and probably the other morning shows), forced them on me. (Female, 58)

I saw the Budweiser puppy commercial, on my Facebook wall. Posted by a friend. I then shared it also, because I loved it so much! (Female, 33).

The only commercial I saw early was for Mexican Avocados. I really liked it and thought it was funny :) I personally did not see anything else "early," however, my fiance has mentioned a few times tonight as we are watching that he already saw the ad. I think it ruins a bit of the fun during the Super bowl to see some of these early. I think a lot of people look forward to the Super bowl commercials, so it's nice to keep the funny ones a surprise. (Female, 25)



Objective: Identify the most and least appealing advertisements, and why consumers labeled them as such.

### AD APPEAL

**Consumers within this community preferred different ads for a variety of reasons.** Some consumers preferred the ads that were clever and witty, others preferred ads that were humorous, and others preferred the ads that tugged on their heart-strings. Fiat (with the Viagra pill), Doritos, Snickers, and E-surance all were memorable ads to several of the respondents because they contained the element of humor. Others enjoyed commercials that warmed their hearts, such as the Nissan commercial or the 'Lovin Pays' ad from McDonalds. A couple of respondents even stated that a couple of the commercials brought tears to their eyes.

The McDonald's Ad called "Lovin' Pays" that asks customers to pay for their meals by doing a good deed. It reminds me of the good side of humanity and promotes charity to others. (Male, 42)

Snickers's the Brady Bunch ad. I mean these actors are the antithesis of Jan and Marsha-- especially Steve Buscemi as Jan. best. Casting. Ever. It was funny, ironic and reminded me of watching the show when I was a kid which are always the best for me, personally. (Female, 39)

**Budweiser's puppy and Clydesdale ad was the overall fan favorite and resonated with many within this community.** Several respondents noted that this particular commercial was endearing and heartwarming. The puppies were cute and the storyline of the Clydesdales helping and protecting the puppy paralleled good nature and humanity.

Budweiser! I'm a sucker for the puppy & Clydesdales. It's so heartwarming, I have to admit I cried a little. I watch it over & over again on YouTube. I don't drink, in fact I hate beer, but I love they're Super bowl commercials! (Female, 32)

The Budweiser ad was my favorite. It had a great story and a cute dog and for a dog lover and beer lover, it combined two of my favorite things (Female, 41)

**Consumers preferred ads that were upbeat and evoked positive reactions. The least appealing ads were those that caused them to experience negative responses and emotions.** Kim Kardashian's T-mobile ad was the least appealing ad, largely because several respondents dislike her and who they believe she is. They felt that T-mobile centering an ad on her was in very poor taste. Several respondents also noted that the Nationwide ad was the least appealing ad, as it highlighted and discussed deceased young adults. Respondents felt that this topic was too depressing to be addressed during the Super Bowl.

The Kim Kardashian TMobile ad was really bad. I am now thinking I need to switch providers if they would stoop so low as to use someone as filthy as her in their commercials. (Female, 36)

Now that I'm seeing other people's answers, I am re-thinking what I put. When I saw this nationwide ad, I was a bit speechless. What a depressing ad. Not at all what I was expecting, nor was it the type of Ad I wanted to see to put me in "superbowl" mode. I'd actually probably agree that this was the worst-ad of all. Important message, but not the time or place. It could also be done in a more tasteful manner. (Female, 25)

**Objective: Understand how Super Bowl advertisements impacts brand attitudes and the likelihood of consumer purchase.**

#### IMPACT OF SUPERBOWL ADS

**Although their favorite ads were highly enjoyable and memorable, the majority of respondents stated that these ads had no impact on their interest in purchasing from that particular brand.** Budweiser was selected by many respondents as the most appealing ad of the night. However, many of those same respondents stated that they were not beer drinkers and a commercial would not convince them to go out and buy beer. Similarly, although many respondents enjoyed the Snickers and Doritos ads, several of those same respondents are health conscience and rarely eat these brands. Thus, they stated that they were no more likely to go out and purchase products from either brand. Conversely, those that already by products from their favorite brand, stated that they are no more likely to go out and buy more (or less) than they would have before the ad aired.

I don't really drink a lot of beer so this ad couldn't really sway me to change that. Ads that would get me to consider a brand would have to offer an incentive like a reduced price or something like that. Otherwise, it doesn't matter how good an ad is, I really won't be swayed to try their product. (Female, 36)

It didn't do anything at all to improve my interest in purchasing from the brand - I don't care for fast food in general and tend to eat a lot more healthy diet - but it vastly improved my impression of the company. (Male, 42)

As good as the ad was for Best Buds; it really does not impact my interest for purchasing Budweiser as I would purchase that brand anyway since it is my regular brand of beer. Maybe if they offered a special sale this week due to the Super Bowl I may have purchased more than usual. (Male, 59)

**Very few respondents felt that the Super Bowl ads introduced them to new unknown brands or products.** Most respondents stated that they were familiar with all of the companies that had ad spots during the Super Bowl and that they in no way discovered any new brands. Several respondents noted that while they were not introduced to new brands/products, there were introduced to new information about products in which they had been previously exposed.

I did not discover any new brands this superbowl but did fall in love some old brands again.  
(Female, 41)

None really. Just saw one about 'being a girl' and how that is good...but it was for Always...A different way to think of feminine products...clever...The T-Mobile with Kim Kardashian told me something new...that their unused data minutes can last for a year. The other ads, I already knew everything about them. So really, NO, I haven't see a new product...yet. (Female, 58)

**Although the ads did not increase the likelihood that the respondents would buy a product, for some, the ads did aid in increasing consumer loyalty and pride.** Some respondents felt that certain brands spoke to their human nature, and to humanity as a whole. Seeing these ads made these respondents proud that they purchase products from the advertised brand and increased their allegiance to the company.

Again, Bud is my favorite product from this product line, so it wouldn't make me more likely to buy. I might feel a little more loyal, but just a little. (Male, 59)

I already buy from Always, but this commercial made me more proud of the company I am buying from. I don't think the Ad could have sent a better message. (Female, 25)

## APPENDIX A: RESPONDENT PROFILE

*A total of [#] respondents met all screening criteria and completed the study. Demographic and psychographic information is included the table below.*

PARAMETER	TARGET AUDIENCE	ACTUAL AUDIENCE
<b>Country</b>	USA	USA: 30
<b>Gender</b>	Mix	Male: 15 Female: 15
<b>Age</b>	Mix, Age 18-65	18-24: 4 25-34: 7 35-44: 8 45-54: 2 55+: 9
<b>TV Programs Watched on Feb 1st</b>	NFL Football Viewers	NBA Basketball: 6 NFL Football: 30 NHL Hockey: 3 None of the above: 0
<b>Level of Engagement</b>	Views most or all Commercials	I watched all commercials: 17 I watched most commercials: 13 I skipped most commercials: 0 I skipped all commercials: 0

## APPENDIX B: POLLING QUESTIONS

*Polls were included in this study to provide guidance to respondents and/or add an additional layer to the qualitative questions that were analyzed in this report. Poll results are shown below, but they should be considered directional and not serve as a means of statistical significance since this was a qualitative study.*

Next I'd like to know how you felt the advertising this year compared to previous years. After you've made a selection, please explain why you rated this year the way you did.	Poll Results
This year was better than previous years.	5
This year was about the same as previous years.	18
This year was worse than previous years.	7

Thinking about the last question about your favorite ad, how likely was it to make you want to purchase something from the brand advertised?	Poll Results
Made me more likely to purchase from this brand.	8
Didn't impact my interest in purchasing from this brand.	21
Made me less likely to purchase from this brand.	1

Thinking about the last question about your second favorite ad, how likely was it to make you want to purchase something from the brand advertised?	Poll Results
Made me more likely to purchase from this brand.	6
Didn't impact my interest in purchasing from this brand.	23
Made me less likely to purchase from this brand.	1