

**BIG IDEAS**

**FROM THE**

**BIG GAME**

(Or rather, the breaks in between)

**Ogilvy**

# ADVERTISING'S SUPER BOWL IS ... THE SUPER BOWL

The Super Bowl stands out to advertisers for a reason. It goes far beyond the impressions reached on the screen - people talk about their favorites and least favorites, news sources write summaries, and you truly can't put a price tag on the conversation that extends beyond the event itself.

# WHY IS IT SUCH A BIG DEAL?

**113M**

Tuned into the game, largest Super Bowl average audience since 2017

**\$233K**

Cost per second of a spot during the big game

**18%**

Increase in viewership over last year

**118M**

Watched Rihanna's Super Bowl Halftime Show

**\$1.5M**

Increase in price per 30 second spot over last two years

**20x**

Super Bowl ads are 20x more effective than a typical TV spot at driving brand perceptions



# A PULSE

OGILVY

4

# ON CULTURE



# THE SUPER BOWL GIVES US A PULSE CHECK ON CULTURE

As one of the most iconic and “all American” events of the year, the Super Bowl shows us the prevailing sentiment of our present society.

# AMIDST GLOBAL ANXIETIES, PEOPLE ARE SEARCHING FOR LEVITY AND JOY

This year’s spots responded to that need: highlighting tangible luxuries, showing off brand personality, and providing light-hearted messages that allowed consumers a moment of escape in a gloomy world.

# LESS CRYPTO & CARS, MORE BEER & BETTING

SB ads are indicative of the greater cultural moment we live in. And so we didn't see a lot of cars and absolutely no crypto.

In a time of high inflation and a recession, people want tangible luxuries they can afford to enjoy, rather than lofty promises and expensive status symbols.

# SHARING OF RESOURCES & UNIQUE WAYS OF SHOWING UP

\$7 Million sound like a lot? Maximize! From partnerships like GMxNetflix and AntmanxHeineken to QR codes popping up in hopes of stretching the ad experience, and Rihanna herself using the halftime to promote Fenty Beauty, this SB was a masterclass in getting more bang for your buck.







WHILE SOME ADS  
STUCK TO THE  
PLAYBOOK,  
OTHERS WROTE  
THEIR OWN RULES.

# WHAT WE SAW

SOME TEAMS  
STUCK TO THE  
PLAYBOOK ...

Context is Key

Pop Culture Moocher

Subtle Flex

Imagine That

Action & Animation

Incomplete Passes

WHILE  
OTHERS THREW  
IT AWAY

Concept over Contrivance

Breaking the Fourth Wall

Gamifying the Big Game

Overthrows



# STICKING TO THE PLAYBOOK

Hire a celebrity, or five. Create nostalgia. Bigger sets and crazier special effects. After all, it's the Big Game —so go big or go home.

The playbook works for a reason: people love seeing the grandeur of Super Bowl ads. Yet, sticking to the conventions must be done well; just using a big name or big budget to bolster your ad won't necessarily land your spot in the Super Bowl commercial Hall of Fame.

# CONTEXT IS KEY

The best way to use a celebrity is rooted in insight—how can you leverage their personality to fit into your story? How can their star power elevate your already powerful idea?





Pepsi Zero Sugar: Great Acting or Great Taste — The campaign featured two 60-second spots showing Steve Martin and Ben Stiller showing off their acting chops to provoke viewers to try Pepsi with the question, “does it taste good, or was I just acting?” The spots use big star power to their advantage by grounding the storyline in the big idea of a trial. The concept works because it can stand alone, no matter the celebrity they had used—yet choosing to use Stiller and Martin elevated the spot even further.



**THIS BUD'S FOR YOU** 

Budweiser: Six Degrees of Bud — The beer brand's spot featured Kevin Bacon's voice to reference "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon," connecting the game to their six-pack's ability to bring people together. The usage of celebrity here enhanced the idea of connection.





Workday: Rock Star — The 60-second spot combined the common workplace term “rock star” and actual rock stars to show how their finance and HR platform can turn you into a workplace rock star. The storyline is elevated by the usage of popular rock stars, rather than just riding on the coattails of a famous face.

# POP CULTURE MOOCHER

If your brand isn't an icon yet, you need to attach yourself to others with cultural relevance to make people pay attention. Aligning yourself with a pop culture moment can be successful when it's timely or fits in with your brand.





Rakuten: Not-So Clueless — The 90's movie known for its wardrobe and funny lines is currently having a moment, so why shouldn't a Cash Back shopping app attach itself to it? Rakuten plays into nostalgia with this 30-second spot that highlights its product features while reuniting some of the Clueless cast.





e.l.f.: eyes. lips. face. sticky. — The makeup brand teamed up with Jennifer Coolidge and Mike White to show off the effectiveness of their Power Grip Primer. The 30-second spot is timely as Coolidge and White are coming off of the incredibly successful season two of "The White Lotus," and Coolidge recently joked her dream role would be a dolphin.





PopCorners: Breaking Good — The chip brand spoofed the popular show “Breaking Bad,” by showing what it would’ve been like if Walter White and Jesse Pinkman had used their talent to make chips rather than drugs. The callback to the show was well-received by viewers.



# SUBTLE FLEX

Brands play into popular culture by showing off how they already fit into that culture. They don't need to latch onto someone else's moment, instead saying, "here's how we're already iconic."





Dunkin' Drive-Thru Starring Ben — Dunkin' Donuts made its Super Bowl Debut with a spot featuring famed Dunkin' lover Ben Affleck and wife Jennifer Lopez. The 30-second ad put Affleck in the drive thru to remind viewers that unlike other brands that have to pay celebrities big bucks to star in their Big Game spots, Affleck has been repping the brand organically for years.





Pringles: Best of Us — Pringles acknowledged (for the second time) the funny phenomenon of getting your hand stuck in their iconic cylindrical tube by highlighting that it happens to everyone, even Meghan Trainor. The 30-second spot successfully turned a presumed packaging flaw into a joke and cultural moment.



Planters: The Roast of Mr. Peanut — The 30-second spot pulled in popular comedians to highlight their roasted peanut line through the “roast,” of their mascot Mr. Peanut. The commercial highlighted the mascot’s icon status and even poked fun at last year’s commercial where they “killed him off.”





GM x Netflix : Why not an EV? — This spot's unique collaboration between brands creates a balancing act between cultural flex and borrow: Netflix gets to advertise their original content and flex their place within popular culture, while GM gets to align itself within that place. Rather than just creating a one-off viral moment, GM and Netflix create a long-lasting partnership; one that will put GM's EVs at centerstage. This partnership toys with throwing out the playbook with this unexpected partnership, but ultimately sticks to tried and true Super Bowl spot tactics of playing into pop culture.

# IMAGINE THAT

Brands play with the concept of a different world and emphasize how their brand and products make the world better.





Sam Adams: Your Cousin's Brighter Boston — Sam Adams imagined what a “brighter Boston” would look like in this 60-second spot that highlighted their new recipe and their connections to the city of Boston. The spot plays with the idea that this brighter beer could make for a nicer city.





Avocados from Mexico: Make It Better — Some loved it, others hated it, many were left confused as to why produce requires advertisement. Nevertheless, the 60-second spot had viewers talking. The ad imagined what the world would have looked like if Eve had eaten an avocado instead, and pushes the idea that avocados make everything better—even biblical stories.





M&M's: Ma&Ya's — Following the controversy surrounding their famous spokescandies, M&M's subverted the idea of "Imagine That" by instead showing viewers how much worse the world would be without M&M's. After changing the name to Ma&Ya's (after new "spokesperson," actor Maya Rudolph) and the chocolate to clam-flavored, they had everyone wishing they would just bring the old mascots back.

# ACTION & ANIMATION

Big Game spots often employ a fast pace and showy special effects to draw eyes in —but when everyone is going bigger, how can you stand out? These spots effectively use action and animation to propel their message forward by using the attention-grabbing tools in ways that make sense for the story.





NFL: Run With It — The NFL spot uses sports star power, an action-packed chase scene and slapstick humor to celebrate the “women pushing football forward,” like the star of the spot Diana Flores, captain of the Mexican National Flag Football team. The chase scene works because it is rooted in context—a flag football player is being chased—and because it highlights a higher message in honoring women who are taking the sport to new places.





## Binky Dad | The Kia Telluride X-Pro

Kia: Binky Dad — Kia ditched car commercial conventions for a high-speed race to retrieve a forgotten binky. The commercial made viewers laugh because of its relatability and its usage of action to respond to a minor mess-up.





Google: #FixedOnPixel — Google combines celebrity, humor and animation in this 90-second spot to highlight its product features. Rather than the usual tech-y tone of product feature ads, Google’s ad shines through by using animation (particularly in the Unblur portion of the ad) to literally bring photos “back to life.”





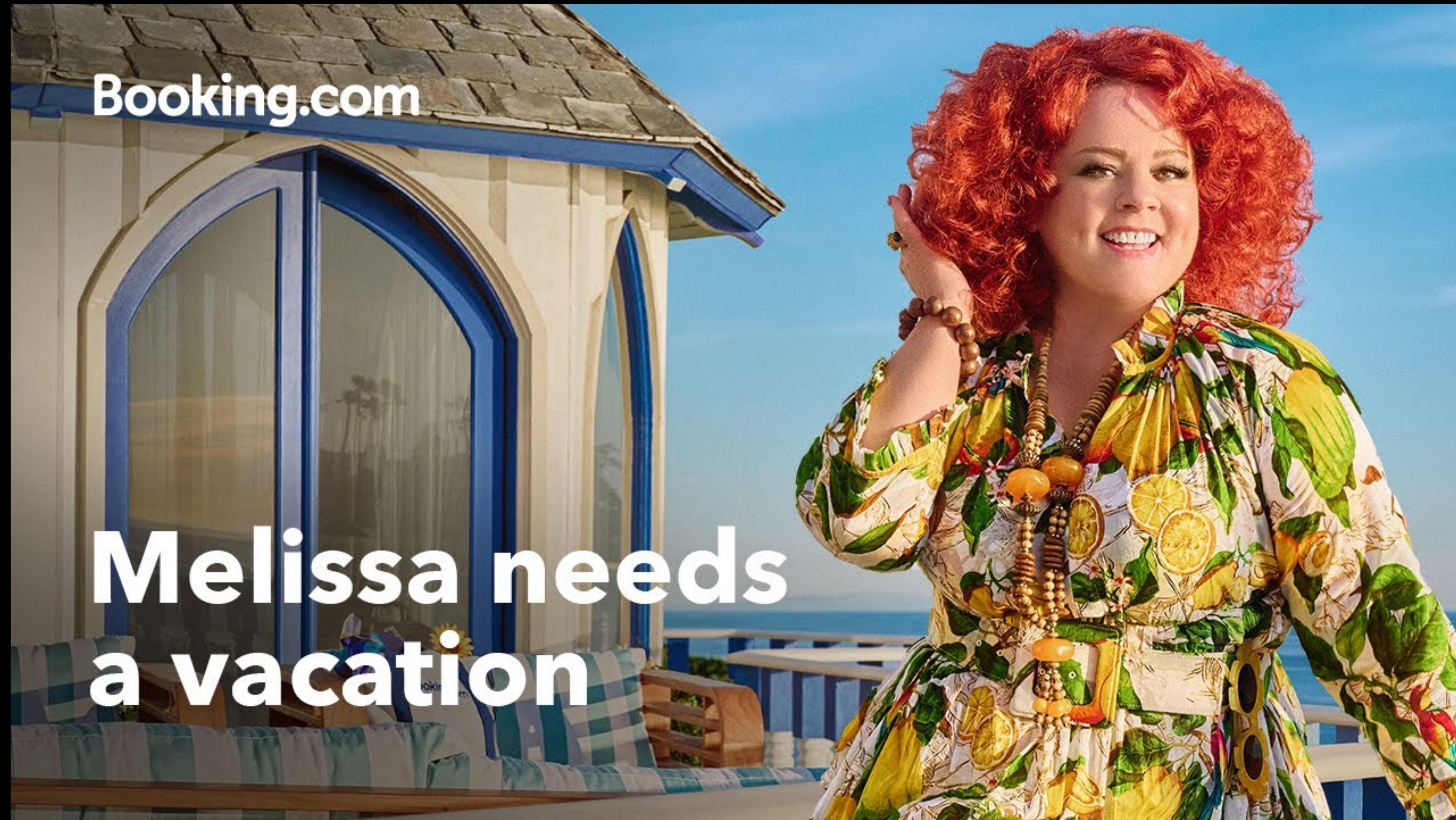
Jeep: Electric Boogie — Introducing a product into a crowded category? No problem. Rather than show off product features, Jeep used animation to show off personality. Remaking the electric boogie with animated animals highlighted Jeep's commitment to "Freedom" in the outdoors, breathing new life into traditionally stuffy car commercials and allowing Jeep to differentiate based on its brand, rather than its product.



# INCOMPLETE PASSES

Following the playbook won't always get you to the end zone. These spots missed the mark because they were not grounded in insight—instead trying to take a shortcut to success by cherrypicking out of the playbook conventions.





Booking.com: Melissa McCarthy in “Somewhere, Anywhere” — This 30-second spot chose to position itself face first by using McCarthy’s star power—but the plot-less singing spot ends up not making much sense.





Doritos: Jack's New Angle — The chip brand known for its Super Bowl ads tried to utilize the following formula: big celebrity plus more celebrity plus absurd comedy equals a viral moment. The formula may help Doritos increase reach, but cutting corners won't make this commercial stand out in the long run.





T-Mobile: New Year, New Neighbor: T-Mobile tried to play on nostalgia by bringing back John Travolta to sing a song from "Grease." Yet, combining Travolta with the leads of the show "Scrubs," made little sense. Additionally, the callback to the 50's movie doesn't necessarily connect to a mobile phone commercial.





DoorDash: We Get Groceries — DoorDash tried to show off its grocery-shopping features by highlighting three celebrity chefs—Matty Matheson from *The Bear*, Raekwon The Chef of The Wu-Tang Clan, and Nickelodeon’s stop-motion-animated *Tiny Chef*. The concept is there, but if viewers weren’t familiar with these niche chefs, they were left in the dark.

# THROWING OUT THE PLAYBOOK

Rather than play by the rules, these spots hoped to stand out by throwing out the handbook on how a Super Bowl ad should look. They ditched the gimmicks for substance, created new ways to engage, and even acknowledged that they are a commercial. But don't stray too far from the playbook—or you might fumble.



# CONCEPT OVER CONTRIVANCE

You don't always need the biggest names, the craziest special effects, or the wildest story line to put out an effective spot. These ads show how sometimes it's better to execute a simple concept well than to do too much with gimmicks and fall flat.





Tubi: Interface Interruption - Tubi's disruptive 15-second spot left many viewers yelling at their friends, "Who's sitting on the remote?" Amidst a sea of commercials employing major star talent or special effects in hopes of grabbing viewers' attention, the simple yet clever spot broke through the noise in an unexpected way.





The Farmer's Dog: Forever - If there is one thing to take away from the 60-second spot voted the most popular ad by the USA Today Ad Meter, its that all you need is for a good Super Bowl spot is a good storyline and a cute dog. The commercial ditched big name endorsements for a good storyline that left viewers teary-eyed and wanting to buy the Farmer's Dog for their pup.



**RAM**

Ram: Premature Electrification — The tongue-in-cheek commercial spoofs male enhancement prescription drug commercials while addressing real anxiety around EVs and calling out competitors for rushing to put their product out too early. The 60-second spot uses humor to stand out amongst traditional aspirational car commercials.





Bud Light: Bud Light Hold - Beer commercials were plentiful this year, but one stood out amongst the pack. Despite being so scaled back you may not even think it was a Super Bowl spot, the 60-second spot featuring Miles and Kaleigh Teller drew affection from viewers for its relatability.



McDonald's: Knowing Their Order — The fast food giant played off their motto “I’m Lovin’ It” and the Super Bowl’s proximity to Valentine’s Day to highlight how knowing your partner’s McDonald’s order is a sign of love. The spot traded in the usual grandeur of Big Game spots for a film-commercial that tugs at your heart strings.



# BREAKING THE FOURTH WALL

Ads poking fun of ads are becoming more and more of a norm after Tide put the idea on the map in 2018, but the concept is still novel, and a unique way to show self awareness. Yet, given its growing popularity, self aware ads have the potential to become overused soon.





T-Mobile: Bradley Cooper and His Mom Attempt a T-Mobile Commercial — This spot plays like a bloopers reel from a T-Mobile shoot, complete with Bradley Cooper's mom roasting her son for never winning an Oscar. This different spin on breaking the fourth wall captured viewers' attention.





Downy: Call Me Downy McBride — Downy's teaser poked fun at Super Bowl commercials tendency to use celebrity faces and talking dogs to sell products. They had their celebrity endorser remain anonymous until the Big Game by keeping a Downy-washed sweatshirt over his head. The commercial then revealed it was Danny (now Downy) McBride, and since Downy worked at keeping the smell away for weeks, he finally agreed to do the spot.





Uber One: One Hit for Uber One — Uber One gave us the behind the scenes of commercial jingle-making with Diddy, taking us through the re-mastering of one hit wonders to highlight Uber One's product appeal.





State Farm & Khaby Lame — This TikTok spot uses the app’s most popular creator, @khaby.lame, to poke fun at the conventions of how to “show up big for the big game.” It currently has over 1 million likes on TikTok.



# GAMIFYING THE BIG GAME

This year, brands tapped into moments and behaviors already surrounding the game to up levels of engagement during the commercial break.



THE FIRST AD YOU  
CAN PLAY ON  
**DRAFTKINGS**

MILLER LITE AVG. ANALYSIS (12 FL OZ): 96 cal, 3.2g carbs, <1g protein, 0.0g fat

DraftKings & Molson Coors: The High Stakes Beer Ad — The beer and betting companies tapped into fan behaviors by creating the first ad experience you could bet on.





FanDuel: The Kick of Destiny — FanDuel created a unique experience for its bettors by promising that anyone who bet on FanDuel would win a portion of \$10 million, if football star Rob Gronkowski kicked a successful field goal during the third quarter commercial break. Unfortunately, the actual kick turned out to be a letdown as it was not actually live, but everyone still won anyway. Nevertheless, the teaser generated a lot of buzz for the brand ahead of the game.





Anytime Fitness: Big Game — Anytime fitness decided not to spend \$7 million for a 30-second spot, but instead generated buzz ahead of time with their #JustHeardAnytime campaign. Using Twitter, where many viewers hang out and communicate during the game, they were able to create a presence even without an in-game slot.





H&R Block: Tax Prep Tailgate — H&R Block showed up to the Big Game outside of commercial breaks by hosting pre-game events in Baltimore, Phoenix, and Birmingham, as well as sponsoring games and prizes at Guy Fieri's Flavortown Tailgate in Glendale, Arizona. The concept was designed to show that tax prepping can be made easier by combining it with a tailgate party.





Warner Music Group, Intuit, NFL & Roblox: The Saweetie Super Bowl Concert — These brands teamed up to put on a free virtual concert in the metaverse, touting it as a first-of-its-kind way to celebrate the Super Bowl ahead of the game.



# OVERTHROWS

Thinking outside the box can be effective, but straying too far from the reasons people love Super Bowl ads could lead you out of bounds. These spots outkicked their coverage by trying too hard to re-write the rules.





Rémy Martin: Inch by Inch — The 60-second commercial tried to push the boundaries of alcohol commercials by using Serena Williams and an inspirational pep talk to draw back to its heritage, but focused too much on creating a powerful moment that they forgot to advertise what they were until the last few seconds of the spot. With little connection made between the sports and cognac, viewers are more likely to remember how Serena Williams was in an ad than what the ad was for.





Miller Lite, Coors Light & Blue Moon: The High Stakes Beer Ad - Molson Coors Beverage Company had us buzzed with their interesting teaser leading up to the Big Game, but the highly awaited ad missed the mark. Pushing all three brands may have been an efficient way to spend the \$7 million, but their execution tried to do too much—in turn doing nothing but confusing viewers who are unaware the three not-so-differentiated brands are owned by the same company.





Popeyes: From Memes to Dreams — This spot tried to poke fun at the conventions of Super Bowl ads by using them all, while also acknowledging they were using them all. But given the increase in this tactic, the laidback ad doesn't stand out. Rather than create authenticity, it leaves the ad feeling lazy and uninspired.





Squarespace: The Singularity — The website-making-website highlighted the trippy nature of their business using Adam Driver cloned multiple times. Rather than highlight product features, they just highlight their main mission—making websites. The spot is weird to the point that it gets you talking, but you're kind of left thinking, what was the point of that?



# WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR US



# A GLIMPSE INTO OUR FUTURE: A TOUCHDOWN FOR ADVERTISING

The work from this year also showed us how the world of advertising may evolve.

## MORE BANG FOR THEIR BUCK

This year we saw new collaborations between brands hoping to stretch every dollar spent by splitting the all-time high spot cost with a partner. These business decisions call for creative solutions from advertisers, who must look for ways to pair brand stories and personalities for potential collaborations.

## PERSONALITY OVER PRODUCT

Last year we were overloaded with indistinctive car commercials. This year only four brands took part in the game (GM, Kia, Ram, and Jeep), and looked to establish brand distinction rather than product distinction. Playing up personality over product can be a way to draw distinctiveness in a crowded category.

## EXPLORING NEW FORMATS

Last year Coinbase's QR code ad broke the internet, this year Tubi's disruptive stunt had viewers searching for the remote. As we move into the future, we have an open invitation to reconsider the formats and creative on an otherwise very traditional advertising stage. What could a reimaged Super Bowl ad look like?

## AN INSIGHT IS STILL KING

A strong insight and tension creates great work. Some of the stand-out work from this year had a clear tension at the core, while weaker spots clung to convention in hopes of achieving virality. The mixing of commercial conventions and context can give viewers the grandeur they love from Super Bowl ads, while still delivering a great brand story for your client.



# QUESTIONS? REACH OUT TO:

**LAUREN NEFF - JUNIOR STRATEGIST**

**ELISE ALVERSON - ASSOCIATE STRATEGY DIRECTOR**

**AAKRITI GOEL - STRATEGY DIRECTOR**



The image features a central red square containing the word "Ogilvy" in a white, serif font. This central element is surrounded by a grid of squares with various patterns and colors. The patterns include solid black, solid white, solid light red, solid dark red, and diagonal stripes in black and white, as well as red and white. The overall composition is a modern, geometric design.

Ogilvy