

Super Bowl: boring and elitist marketing strategies

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Isn't it time mobile technology was used to wrestle the **marketing** value of the world's most watched sporting event out of the hands of the super rich brand elite?



There's nothing like the Super Bowl to remind you just how ludicrous **brand advertising** budgets can be. Total Super Bowl ad spend for this year's event was [predicted to hit US\\$377 million – a new record](#), according to the **Advertising Age** Datacenter.

The average cost of a single 30-second ad was \$4.8 million¹, 7% up on last year. This is, of course, on top of the millions spent on producing the commercial itself.

I guess the thinking is that these ads are reaching the biggest global TV audience available, so it's worth it. But is it? Is any advertising worth that much money?

This makes for a very exclusive club of **brands** who can afford it. Others can simply forget it. Sure, they're reaching a lot of people in theory, but to what extent are they engaging with them? And just how many are leaving the room for a comfort break, and missing the ad entirely?

A lot of money is being thrown at something that is pretty difficult to quantify. In the multi-channel world in which we live in, why are brands still mainly focusing on one channel to tap into the audience of the most watched sporting event on the planet?

Yes, some of the ads will have social calls to action, but it's obvious where the focus is.

Pretty much each grid iron fan has a window to a multi-channel universe in their pocket, which they use to not only consume media, but also chat with their friends.

So why hasn't a **brand** come up with an app that actually encourages fans to engage with each other on the subject of the Super Bowl? You could build in some gamification to create a fun forum for them to pit their wits against their friends and the wider fan community, and enable social wagers on key elements of the game, such as a crate of beer rather than actual hard cash?

Developing something like this – and the technology is out there – would actually add value to the fan experience and prove valuable for a **brand** to be associated with.

After all, they'd essentially be joining the fan conversation. Oh, there are Super Bowl apps. But they are pretty functional to say the least.

Wired, for example, chose its favourites. These included: CBS, which let you stream live from your mobile; NFL for the stat attack; Road to 50 and Levi's Stadium, full of useful info about getting there and local facilities in the host city and venue if you're attending, with the latter also holding your e-ticket and enabling you to order food to your seat – nice; and Postmates, for ordering food in if you're watching from home (spotted a theme here?).

But, no, alas nothing so creative, innovative or engaging as a well **designed** social app. And I carried out quite a search, so if there is something out there, please let me know – and promote it better next time.

And the entire development, launch and management process would be likely to be a fraction of the cost of that average 30-minute TV slot.

This kind of app could run not just for the Super Bowl Final, but, say, from the start of the play-offs, therefore extending the fan engagement period to weeks rather than just a single day.

Surely brands are missing a trick here – and they say the world's gone mobile.

Perhaps next year...