



# Lessons in Advertising: The Touchdowns and Fumbles of the 2010 Super Bowl Ads

by Wendy Swiggett, Ipsos ASI



## Lessons in Advertising: The Touchdowns and Fumbles of the 2010 Super Bowl Ads

Big events, and big sporting events in particular, represent an incredible opportunity for advertisers to promote and build their brands. Baseball's World Series, soccer's World Cup, the Olympic Games – all attract large television audiences and garner a great deal of discussion in living rooms, in office hallways, and on the Internet.

In the United States, there are few sporting events bigger than the NFL's Super Bowl – an arena where touchdowns, champions and the occasional costly fumble are made. Both on the field of play and during the commercial breaks. And there is no denying it. Often, the advertisements featured during the Super Bowl generate more buzz and discussion than the game itself! Super Bowl ads have become a contest on to themselves. Known for their entertainment value, their creativity, and the high cost associated with producing and airing them, it is a high stakes game for big advertisers. In fact, it is more than a game – it is a serious business matter with all the implications for risk, failure and success.

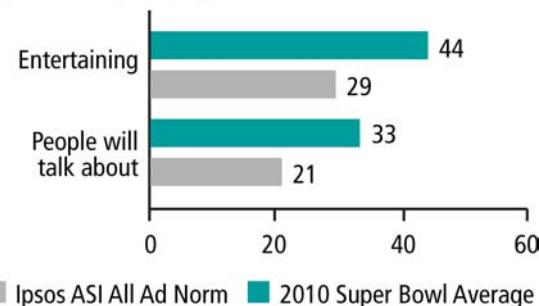
With this February's Super Bowl now on the books, which ads were winners, which ads failed to score and what are the lessons for advertisers? Ipsos ASI took a look at some of the most buzzed about Super Bowl ads to get deeper insights into how they worked. And we noted three crucial lessons that made the difference for many of this year's ads.

### Lesson 1: Don't Just Entertain

Super Bowl ads are meant to make a big splash and get 'talked about'. This year's crop of ads was no exception to that rule. When compared to 'regular' ads during normal television programming, viewers have a different set of perceptions about Super Bowl ads. For this year's crop of ads, a larger percentage of consumers found them to be entertaining and said they were something people would talk about after the game, especially when compared to everyday advertising.

#### 2010 Super Bowl Ads were Entertaining & Buzzworthy

Top Box. Completely Agree. The ad is ...

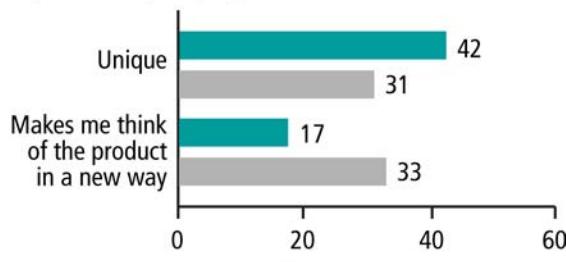


■ Ipsos ASI All Ad Norm ■ 2010 Super Bowl Average

Given the creative forces brought to bear on these ads, it is not surprising that consumers generally found the Super Bowl ads to be more unique than a typical ad. But what is a bit more surprising, and perhaps most crucial to the advertiser's business, is that this perceived uniqueness for the ads did not necessarily translate to the products and services being advertised.

#### Unique Ads, but the Same Old Products

Top Box. Completely Agree. The ad is ...



■ Ipsos ASI All Ad Norm ■ 2010 Super Bowl Average

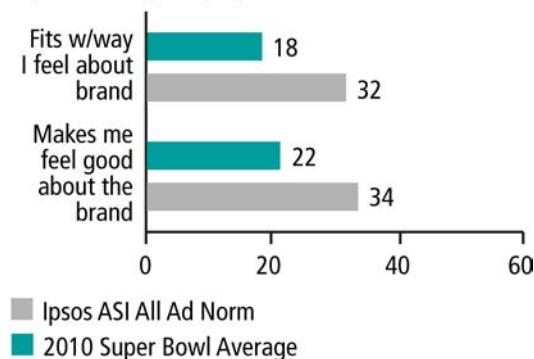
The lesson here? **Don't get caught up in entertainment value at the expense of your brand.**

The big event nature of the Super Bowl and the heightened expectations placed on advertising creativity and production does encourage ads that are highly entertaining. But the price of going over the top to meet or exceed that expectation may be at the expense of the brand itself.

The chart below illustrates this risk. Our research on this year's Super Bowl ads shows a clear disconnect in the way people feel about the brand when compared to the brand's regular advertising. If the brand consumers know from other ads or from their personal experience is not reflected in what they see, this lack of fit will hurt how consumers *feel* about the brand as it appears or is portrayed in a Super Bowl ad.

### Entertaining, but Disconnected Ads

Top Box. Completely Agree. The ad is ...

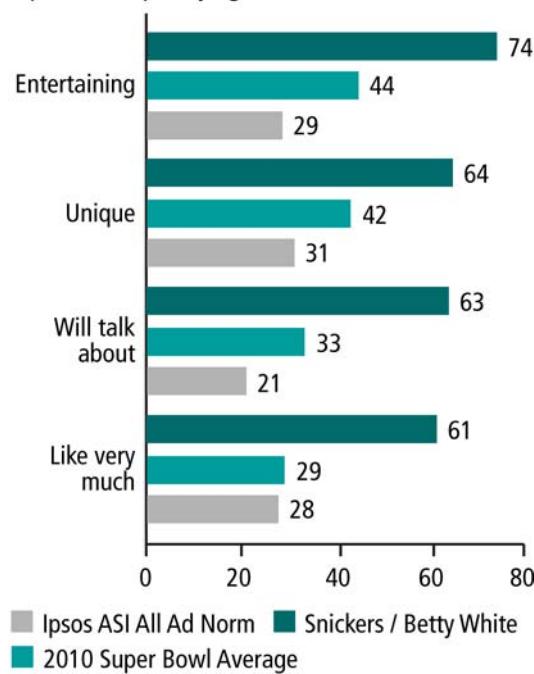


### Who applied this lesson well?

There were a number of advertisers who found the right recipe for creating ads that were both entertaining *and* supported their brand. The most outstanding example of this is the **Snickers** ad featuring **Betty White** and **Abe Vogoda** (see chart below).

### The Snickers Ad - A Hit!

Top Box. Completely Agree. The Snickers' ad is ...

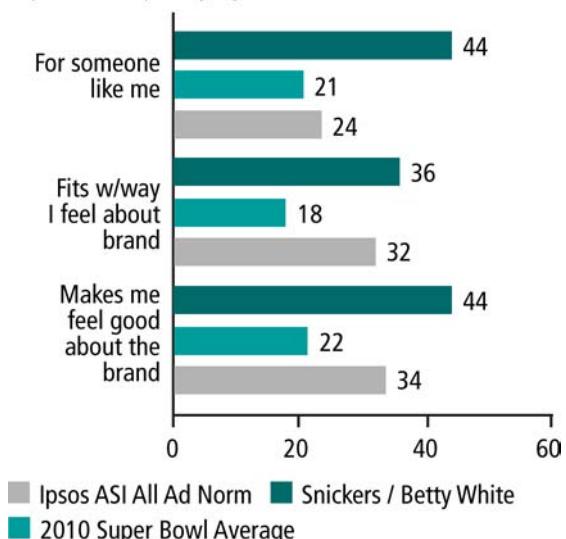


This ad was at the top of the USA Today Ad Meter rating and was also the most entertaining, unique, liked and talked about Super Bowl ad tested by Ipsos ASI. Beyond these results, the ad had wide appeal and was equally liked and found to be entertaining by men and women, and by older and younger target groups.

Despite breaking new ground for the brand with a humorous metaphor - "You're not you when you're hungry, you're Betty White!" - it fit with what consumers feel about Snickers, it made them feel good about the brand and was perceived as relevant to everyone.

### The Snickers Ad - Relevant & Credible

Top Box. Completely Agree. The Snickers' ad is ...

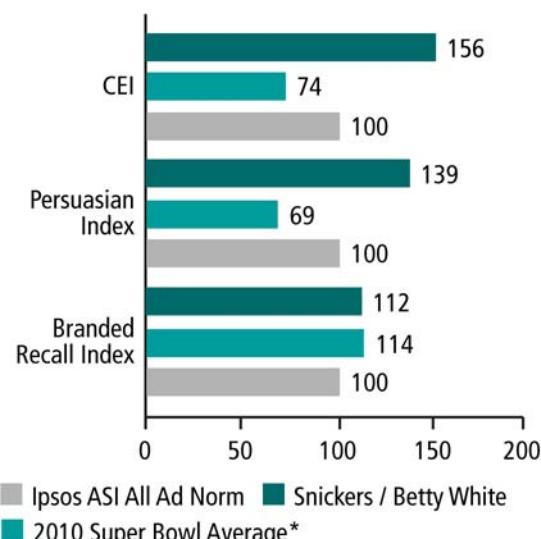


■ Ipsos ASI All Ad Norm ■ Snickers / Betty White  
■ 2010 Super Bowl Average

These positive scores also translated into strong in-market potential for the ad. The Copy Effect Index (CEI) is Ipsos ASI's proprietary measure of in-market sales performance potential for ads. This measure is a weighted combination of branded ad recall impact and ad persuasion impact.

On this measure, an ad that performs at average expectations receives a score of 100. In Chart 6, the scores for the Snickers ad are revealed, showing a higher than average CEI score of 156. The Snickers ad also had a somewhat stronger persuasion impact than recall impact, meaning consumers remembered what they saw in the ad and associated it with Snickers, but they were even more motivated to buy the brand.

## The Snickers Ad - Effective



Ipsos ASI has the ability to collect true Next Day Recall for all types of ads.

- This enables ASI to understand if an ad leaves a lasting, branded impression, and what specific impression it leaves. What are consumers remembering about your ad?
- And, do they remember that it's yours, and not your competitors?

This brings us to our next lesson.

## Lesson 2: Connect the Brand



As successful as Snickers' Betty White ad was, it was not the most Recalled ad among this year's Super Bowl ads. Ipsos ASI's testing gives that honor to **E\*Trade's Milk-aholic** ad.

A popular and well-liked ad that benefited from an appealing, continuing character in the E\*Trade baby, the ad also featured a humorous and engaging story.

Our testing showed that about half of Recallers specifically mention some aspect of the story – about a cheating baby boyfriend, who tries to cover for not calling his baby girlfriend by saying he was up all night trading online – and sometimes in great detail!

For example, the recall from one respondent was almost verbatim from the ad's copy and content:

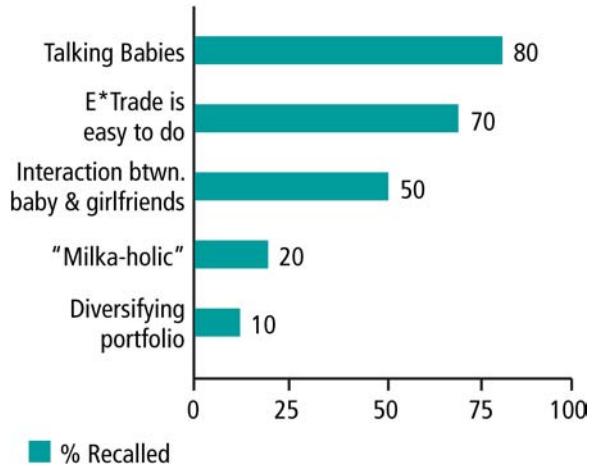
*"Cute babies. A little boy baby is apologizing for not making the date of a girl baby, holding a stuffed animal on the other end and not looking too thrilled. The boy said he couldn't make the date because he was trading stocks on E\*trade. The girl said she hopes he really wasn't spending time with that "milk-aholic" girl named Lindsay. Then the girl, Lindsay, enters the boy's screen and says 'milk-a-WHAT?'"*

This same respondent went on to comment:

*"E\*trade is very simple to do. You can buy and sell online and even do research about the companies you want to invest in. So easy a baby can do it."*

A high percentage of Recallers mentioned a specific brand message - E\*Trade is easy to do - greatly aided by the visual story: babies are trading stocks in these ads, so it must be easy to do. The almost throw-away message about diversifying your portfolio with E\*Trade, not surprisingly, was mentioned by relatively few. See the chart below for details.

## E\*Trade - What Consumers Remembered Most



What can we learn from this? On Super Bowl Sunday, or at any time on TV, ads that are the best at winning attention and getting brand credit for their message connect the brand to their arresting or appealing visuals and integrate the brand and the message visually into the story.

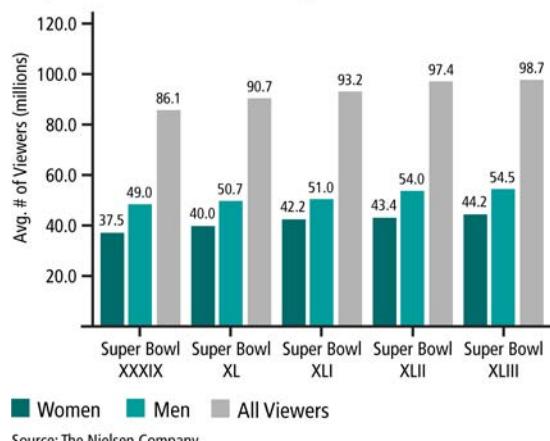
E\*Trade applied this and succeeded with it.

### Lesson 3: Know the Audience

This year's Super Bowl attracted a record-setting audience. With over 106 million viewers, Super Bowl XLIV was successful in dethroning the 1983 series finale of M\*A\*S\*H as the most viewed program in U.S. television history.

But the days of a nearly male-exclusive Super Bowl audience are over. Women have been a growing proportion of Super Bowl viewers for some time, peaking at 44.2% of the audience last year and achieved a near similar percentage for 2010. In the past five years, female viewership has increased by 17%.

### Super Bowl Viewership 2005 - 2009



Not surprisingly, men and women had different opinions about some ads. For many ads, this skewing of opinions is entirely appropriate.



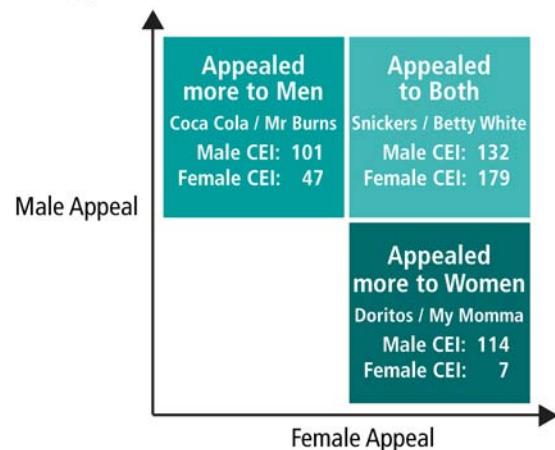
For example, the **Kia Sorento** ad was better Recalled and more liked by women. Meanwhile, **Audi's** ad was liked by men and women in

equal proportions, but Audi linked their brand to far more men.

The biggest gap we saw in Likeability among all ads was for the **Motorola Motoblur** ad featuring Megan Fox in a bathtub. For this ad, Likeability ratings were 30 points higher among men than women.

Even among generally targeted ads – ads which in theory could appeal to both men and women – we saw some surprising differences.

### Ad Appeal & Gender Differences



The **Coca-Cola** ad featured a character from The Simpsons, Mr. Burns. As one respondent (a male) described the ad in his Next Day Recall playback:

*"It was about The Simpsons TV show and how Mr. Burns was no longer a billionaire he was now broke and he walked around Springfield sad and upset then he noticed a lot of people who were drinking Coke and they all looked happy and finally someone offered him a Coke. and it made his day. People of all ages and walks of life enjoy Coke. It lifts you up. A lot of people enjoy Coke in different ways."*



The **Doritos** ad featured a single mom getting ready to go on a date, and her rather protective son. As another respondent (a female) described it in her Next Day Recall playback:



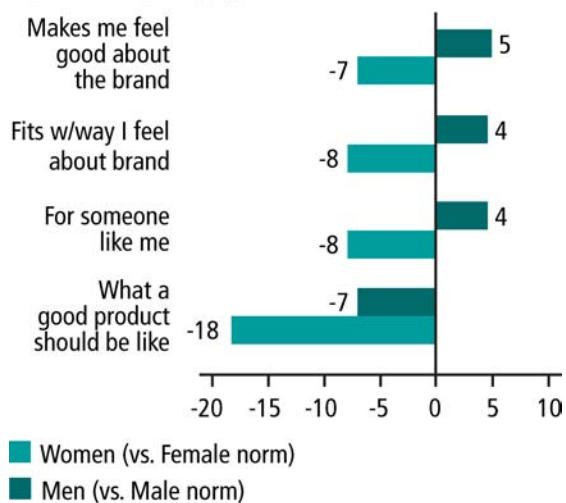
*"I remember thinking that it was one of the woman-friendly ads shown on the Super Bowl. A little boy is playing video games with a bowl of Doritos while his mom is getting ready for a date. The date arrives at the door, gives the mom flowers, and tries to make small talk with the little boy. The date grabs a Dorito, and the little boy slaps him and warns him, 'Don't mess with my mom, and don't mess with my Doritos.' I thought the little kid did a great job, and the tone of the ad was really appropriate for the brand."*

Interestingly, Likeability does not explain the discrepancy in the scores. It just so happens that women actually liked the Coca-Cola ad at slightly higher levels than men, and men actually liked the Doritos ad at slightly higher levels than women.

For Coca-Cola, men, who perceive themselves to have been harder hit by the financial downturn, found the story of Mr. Burns' redemption more relatable, and felt better about Coca-Cola (relative to normative expectations by gender) than did women. Women also penalized Coca-Cola more because the ad did a poor job of living up to their expectations of portraying what a good soft drink should be like.

### The Coca-Cola Ad - Consumer Impressions

Top Box. Completely Agree. The Coca-Cola ad is ...



Doritos is an interesting example of an ad in which viewers nearly universally found humor in the situation, but whereas women more or less related to the woman in the story (or at least, didn't not want to be her), there was a group of men who felt that they themselves did not want to be 'that guy', for reasons described by actual respondents:

- *The little kid kicked butt on a big man*
- *The guy was ogling the mom*
- *That guy is trying to put the moves on this kid's mother*
- *The kid is protecting his momma and his Doritos from a 'mac daddy'*
- *Kid puts his mom and his chips in the same category against a womanizing chip thief*

And possibly because 'that guy' doesn't get the Doritos, the ad does nothing for men overall to make them want Doritos as a product.

**So the lesson here is about matching the message to the audience. The Super Bowl audience is no longer a monolithic block of young male viewers. Consider how your ad impacts not just your target audience, but everyone who is likely to see it or be a candidate to use your brand.**

### Applying the Lessons

When you're advertising in and around big events - don't get so caught up in the entertainment value of the spot that you fail to do what's best for your brand. The first step is to know your audience and develop a message that speaks to them - and then do it in an entertaining way. In this year's crop of Super Bowl ads, just as in nearly every year, some advertisers did a better job than others at this. And it showed. Those who seemingly focused their effort on the fun, entertaining, and gimmicky aspect of their ad weren't remembered the next day and weren't always given credit for the ad.

To win the Super Bowl, you need a commanding quarterback, solid team, and a sound game plan to outscore your competitor. That's essentially the same concept advertisers need to adhere to. Great entertainment is the hallmark of the half-time show, but it is the tackles and the touchdowns on the field that will get you closer to the prize. Value your brand, know your audience, and connect the two to get there.

And these are lessons that can and should be applied to all your advertising.

**How we did it:** Ipsos ASI's Super Bowl test was conducted using its proprietary Next\*Connect platform, which enables the collection of true Next Day ad and brand Recall, as well as a rich battery of diagnostics in an interactive, online environment. For this study, Ipsos ASI selected a mix of some of the most buzzed about Super Bowl ads and tested them in an all-Super Bowl ad environment, to replicate the effect of the game broadcast itself. Which ads would standout among the many high profile ads shown? For each of the 23 ads tested, we collected Next Day Recall among 100 Men and 100 Women, with a balanced mix of ages (50% 21-34, 50% 35-65). For most of the ads, we also collected ad Diagnostics among this sample, although for a few ads which seemed particularly Male-targeted (Dove Men+Care and Dockers), we excluded Women from the Diagnostic sample.

#### Ads tested include:

Coca-Cola "Hard Times" • E\*Trade "Baby Girlfriend" • Dr Pepper Cherry "Little Kiss" • Doritos "House Rules" • Dove Men+Care "William Tell" • Kia Sorento "Sock Monkey" • Doritos "Voice Box" • Dockers "I Wear No Pants" • Bud Light "Light House" • Dodge Charger "Man's Last Stand" • Intel Core Processor "Robot" • Snickers "Betty White" • kgb "Sumo" • Bud Light "Stranded" • CareerBuilder "Casual Friday" • Bridgestone "Your Tires or Your Life" • Coca-Cola "Sleepwalker" • Audi A3 TDI "Green Police" • PopSecret and Emerald Nuts "Aquatic" • Monster.com "Fiddling Beaver" • Boost Mobile "Shuffle" • Bridgestone "Whale of a Tale" • Motoblur "Bathtub"

### **About Ipsos ASI**

Ipsos ASI offers marketers state-of-the-art advertising research built on more than 40 years of experience using measures predictive of in-market performance. We offer a full-range of solutions across all media – at any stage in the creative process – from equity assessment to strategic development, advertising testing, and tracking. Our research is backed by a dedicated team of advertising research specialists whose mission is to deliver the answers that will add value to your business anywhere in the world.

### **About Ipsos**

Ipsos ASI is a member of the Ipsos Group, a leading global survey-based research company. Ipsos member companies offer expertise in advertising, customer loyalty, marketing, media, and public affairs research, as well as forecasting, modeling, and consulting. With offices in 55 countries, the Paris-based company was founded in 1975.

For general information, contact us via email at:

[info@ipsos-asi.com](mailto:info@ipsos-asi.com)

For regional information on North America:

[naminfo@ipsos-asi.com](mailto:naminfo@ipsos-asi.com)

For regional information on Latin America:

[lataminfo@ipsos-asi.com](mailto:lataminfo@ipsos-asi.com)

For regional information on Europe:

[europeinfo@ipsos-asi.com](mailto:europeinfo@ipsos-asi.com)

For regional information on Asia-Pacific:

[asiainfo@ipsos-asi.com](mailto:asiainfo@ipsos-asi.com)

