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## Bowl ads: Were they worth the millions?

Got your 3-D glasses on? Many Super Bowl messages were uplifting. Some were just dumb. Each 30-second spot costs \$3 million, plus production. Were they worth it? I tell my marketing and advertising classes, what's the R.O.I. or return on the advertiser's investment?

Companies could have spent their money in other promotional areas, such as a better, larger sales force, customer service, sales promotion, P.R. or direct marketing. Add alternative marketing strategies of new product development or just lower prices. By the way, I do not know of a company which is not improving and revising their website. For \$3 million a spot in media that's a lot of product to sell.

Conversely, the high price tags of the commercials all but promise viewers that they will be spectacular and innovative, in most cases. A couple Budweiser spots and the E-Trade spot were excellent. Unfortunately, not all. I thought the Teleflora spot was mean spirited. The GoDaddy spot was not as good as in previous years. It was uninspired.

For many in marketing, the commercials are always more anticipated than the game. The ads generate much buzz even before the game. Stung by the recession, some of our biggest companies are cutting and slashing their advertising budgets. But television viewers won't know it from watching the spots in Sunday's game.

You didn't see FedEx or GM. I lot of people have lost jobs. Today generating sales revenue is tough. In last Sunday's Super Bowl, I saw strategies of value, hard sell; get it free, appeal, selling gold, and more. It's a terrible time for the economy but a strategic opportunity for marketers to build and generate additional market share and enhance their brands versus their competition.

DreamWorks Animation ran a 90-second spot for its movie "Monsters vs. Aliens," one of only a handful of spots of that length ever to run during the Super Bowl. What's more, it was in 3-D. The movie studio partnered with Intel Corp. and Pepsi, to make and distribute more than 125 million pairs of glasses in supermarkets. The "Monsters vs. Aliens" ad was followed by a one-minute, 3-D commercial for PepsiCo's SoBe beverage that featured football players.

New were Pedigree, Cash4Gold and Denny's. Dogs make better pets and you could have gone to Denny's on Tuesday for a Free Grand Slam. Some viewers have tuned off from the National Football League playoffs; with 13% fewer homes watching this year's AFC Championship game compared with 2008, and 23% fewer homes watching the NFC Championship game.

Well the game is over, but the advertising lives on. My classes discuss that it's the commercials or the spots that get talked about, more than the game. You can go to [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) or [hula.com](http://hula.com) to watch the best ones again. Other avenues you can read about them in the [Daily News](#), a recap of the advertising in [USA Today](#), plus for 37 years of advertising you can go to Adland, at. <http://commercial-archive.com/SuperBowlCommercials>.

The most renowned Super Bowl spots have been: The "Big Brother" ad, introducing Apple's Macintosh, was introduced in 1984 and followed the "1984" theme of George Orwell's classic novel. It ended with the tag line, "We shall prevail." The ad has won recognition as the best TV spot ever by [Adweek](#), [TV Guide](#), and [AdAge](#). In 1993, Michael Jordan's most famous spot included Larry Bird playing an entertaining game of HORSE, for McDonald's Big Mac and fries. The advertising was interesting due to the dares and obstacles set for both players.

Next year's Super Bowl may be a different story. Many advertisers bought ad time for this year's game in the spring or summer, before the severity of the economic meltdown. As the financial crisis drags on, advertisers may decide that the 2010 Super Bowl isn't worth the money.

So go ahead and I hope you lined up for the free Grand Slam breakfast at Denny's and then got down to business or maybe sending our more resumes. One last question, do you keep your gold as an investment or send it to Cash4Gold to get some money?