

Super Bowl 44 Ads: Overpriced airtime. Was it worth it?

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Super Bowl 44's record breaking 106.5 million viewers proved to be a tough crowd for advertisers. Not only did they tune in but they also logged in—Tweeting, blogging, and “Facebook-ing” their opinions about the ads by the second. The result: these highly anticipated ads didn't live up to all the hype—although a few were unexpectedly good.

TiVo, the company responsible for putting digital video recorders on the map, said that their “second-by-second analysis” of subscriber activity allowed them to rank the most replayed commercials. Topping their list was the Doritos ad titled “House Rules” in which a toddler slaps his mothers' lover across the face and tells him to keep his hands off his momma and his Doritos. Another fan favorite is the Snickers ad featuring Betty White being tackled by a football player—which seems to be taking the number one spot on many people's list.

For some, this year's ads showed a lack of creativity. In the bad batch was one of the most talked about commercials: the highly anticipated Tim Tebow ad from anti-abortion group “Focus on the Family” which left many bewildered. With no definite message, this ad simply directed its viewers towards a link containing “the full story.” Another disappointment, the U.S. Census Bureau's “Snapshot of America.” Derek Rucker, a Research Professor at Northwestern's Kellogg School, stated that the Census ad “fell flat” and gave it an “F.” Twitter users are in agreement with Rucker and go further by tweeting that it was a “waste of [our] tax money” and a “bad judgment call” from the Census Bureau. Comparably, the Census ad finished with a link, leaving it up to the viewers' curiosity to make sense of its vague message.

Comical visuals and witty remarks appear to be the common thread for the more successful Super Bowl commercials. As for the “loser” ads, vagueness and a lack of creativity are the main culprits. Expecting to get six-pack abs from all of the laughing, many fans felt disappointed when this year's ads fell short of humor. David Vasquez, a student at Fresno State University and a Super Bowl fan said: “I just like to watch the funny [ads]. That's what everyone looks forward to when the Super Bowl comes around.”

Pleasing the viewers was the number one priority for Budweiser. They allowed their Facebook followers to decide whether the classic Clydesdales made an appearance in their Super Bowl ad; they did.

Averaging at about \$100,000 dollars per second, the Super Bowl 44 ads continue to have everyone talking. But for those who failed to impress, which is best, bad publicity or no publicity at all? Next year the spots will only get more expensive and advertisers face a tough challenge yet again.