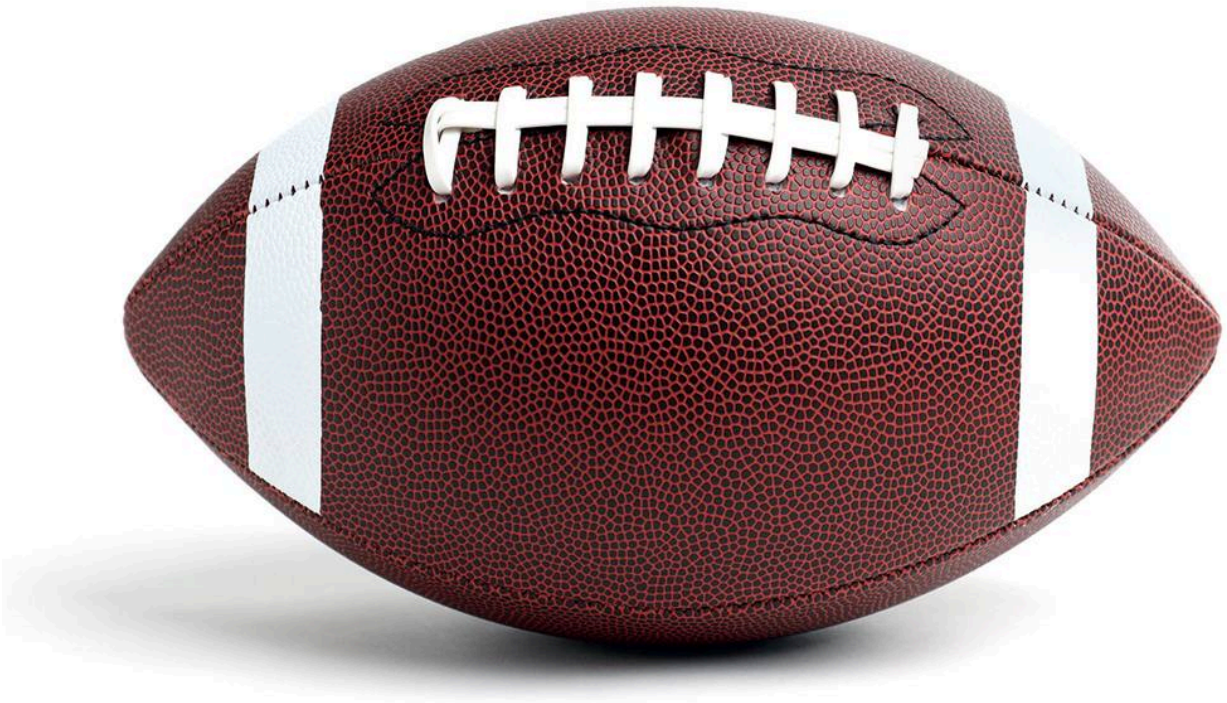
Which advertising trends stand out at the Super Bowl?

The Super Bowl and Halftime Show have become bonanzas for advertisers to create buzz for their brands. Here are some winning strategies.



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According to a 2024 survey, 11% of Super Bowl viewers tune in mainly for the commercials rather than the game, while nearly 80% admit they deliberately pay attention to the ads.

The American football league final has become a golden opportunity for advertisers. How do brands make the most of this event? Inigo Gallo, a professor at IESE Business School, recommends getting ahead of the trends.

The Super Bowl is the biggest annual advertising competition in the United States. No other TV event attracts such a large audience — nearly 125 million viewers on average over its four-hour broadcast. The 2026 Halftime Show, performed by Bad Bunny and sponsored by Apple, drew 128.2 million viewers at the time of broadcast. The video posted on the official YouTube channel of the NFL has accumulated more than 100 million views and counting.

Even though a 30-second ad now costs an average $8 million (not including production costs), for many brands it continues to be a worthwhile investment.

Advertising trends at the 2026 Super Bowl

Celebrities as attention magnets. Lady Gaga, Chris Hemsworth and Sabrina Carpenter are just a few examples of the ongoing use of major entertainment figures to capture attention at the most expensive and competitive advertising moment of the year.

The rise of AI developers as advertisers. An ad for Claude, developed by Anthropic, used humor — a Super Bowl staple — to present the benefits of its language model in an accessible way. Amazon also adopted a lighthearted tone in its Alexa campaign, using irony to reduce the fears and skepticism that surround artificial intelligence.

Extended-impact strategies. Brands no longer limit themselves to a single day. They release content in the weeks leading up to the game and continue sharing material on social media afterward, extending the campaign’s lifespan. One standout example was the 2024 campaign by Dunkin: Days before the Super Bowl, content began circulating that looked like leaks or side projects featuring celebrities. During the broadcast it was revealed that everything was part of a carefully designed strategy to amplify the official ad’s impact.

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Digital tactics to build anticipation before, during and after the Super Bowl

- Teaser ads on social media
- Live ads during the game, also distributed on YouTube and social platforms
- Variations of the ad and longer stories released after the event

Marketing gurus worth following

To stay ahead of marketing trends rather than jumping on them late, don't miss these two industry figures known for going against the grain:

Mark Ritson. Described on X (formerly Twitter) as "a bigger threat than Google and Facebook combined," this former professor at Melbourne Business School, award-winning columnist and consultant balances theory and practice. His provocative critiques are always grounded in traditional marketing models. If you want an irreverent and candid view of marketing, his writing is both revealing and entertaining.

Bob Hoffman. After running two agencies, Hoffman has become one of the world's most influential industry voices. He not only exposes short-term branding strategies and poor communication tactics but also dissects them to explain why they fail. You can subscribe to his newsletter, which uses simple language so that, as he jokes, "even a CEO can understand it."

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