

ADVERTISING INTERFERENCE: FACTORS AFFECTING ATTENTION TO SUPER BOWL ADVERTISEMENTS AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS

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Advertising interference occurs when viewers are exposed to multiple advertising messages for various brands within a short period of time. A study featuring a highly-cluttered advertising event, Super Bowl XLIX, is conducted to examine what factors influence the attention paid to the advertisements and the effectiveness of individual advertisements. Utilizing hierarchical regression analysis of survey data collected from 343 viewers in the days following the event, results indicate that NFL fans pay more attention to the advertisements during the Super Bowl broadcast. Attention then acts as a mediating variable leading to advertising effectiveness. An ancillary study is added from additional data gathered in the survey. Respondents indicated adjectives to describe their emotional responses to their favorite and least favorite advertisements. Humorous, memorable, creative, and attention-getting adjectives elicit desirable emotional responses and may be one way to break through the clutter to garner the attention of viewers.

INTRODUCTION

To have a commercial aired during the 2015 NFL (National Football League) Super Bowl, advertisers paid \$4.5 million dollars for a 30-second spot – the most ever paid in the history of television advertising (Ferrario, 2015). Additionally, according to the Nielsen Company a record-breaking audience of 114.4 million people tuned in for the 2015 Super Bowl. While this enormous audience may provide initial justification for the high cost of advertising during the game, important questions persist regarding the true value of Super Bowl advertising (Kalb, 2013). Consider for example that there were 70 national ads aired during Super Bowl XLIX and according to a study conducted by the Media Education Foundation about the 2014 Super Bowl broadcast, 24% or 48 minutes of the entire broadcast was dedicated to ads including commercials and on-screen promotions. The sheer volumes of information viewers are exposed to during a relatively short period of time can be overwhelming for the viewing public (Moorman, Willemsen, Neijens, & Smit, 2012). Thus, while advertisers hope to capitalize on the Super Bowl broadcast's large television audiences, they must also hope that viewers will pay attention to their multi-million

dollar advertisements. Hence, the important question in this context is: how do advertisers ensure they are breaking through the “clutter” of multiple factors to enhance their advertising effectiveness?

“Clutter” is a commonly used term which describes situations when there is a “combination of commercials and other nonprogram material, such as program promotions and public service announcements” (Danaher, Bonfrer, & Dhar, 2008, p. 212) occurring during a short period of time with regards to television broadcasts. This advertising interference that occurs is a great concern for advertising practitioners and thus has garnered attention from scholars. Previous research in the area of advertising interference has occurred in controlled, laboratory settings (Kent & Allen, 1994), used unfamiliar brands (Kent & Allen, 1994), and focused on the competitive interference that occurs in a single product category (e.g., two competing brands advertising during a single television broadcast) (Danaher et al., 2008).

The current research aims to address these limitations and examine advertising interference in a natural environment – the Super Bowl broadcast – where the brands are (mostly) familiar and the advertising competition occurs across multiple product categories simultaneously (e.g., automotive vehicles, motion pictures, soft drinks, etc.). During the live airing of the 2015 Super Bowl

broadcast, 16 automotive commercials aired, 16 food and beverage commercials, nine that highlighted upcoming movie releases, eight online services brands, seven from insurance and finance brands, five commercials from the technology and telecommunications industry, four from consumer packaged goods brands, three fashion commercials, one public service announcement (PSA), and one commercial from a brand in the travel industry was aired. Table 1 includes the 70 national advertisements that aired during the 2015 broadcast. Clutter, in

this context, exists in viewing the other advertisements, a half time show, the championship game, and possible social factors such as viewing the event in the presence of others during a “watch party.” Thus, the purpose of this paper is to complement the existing research and extend into the area of examining how advertisers break through to negate the advertising interference, or “clutter”, which exists during one highly-viewed event, the Super Bowl broadcast.

TABLE 1:
Super Bowl XLIX National Advertisements

Period	Brand	Industry	Ad Duration
First	Snickers	Food & Beverage	30-second
	“Minions” (Universal)	Movies	30-second
	BMW	Automotive	60-second
	“Tomorrowland” (Disney)	Movies	30-second
	Game of War	Online Services	30-second
	Turbo Tax	Insurance & Finance	60-second
	Toyota	Automotive	60-second
	Esurance	Insurance & Finance	30-second
	Chevy	Automotive	30-second
	“Jurassic World” (Universal)	Movies	60-second
	McDonald’s	Food & Beverage	30-second
	Chevy	Automotive	30-second
	“SpongeBob Movie” (Paramount)	Movies	30-second
	Pizza Hut	Food & Beverage	30-second
	Verizon	Technology & Telecommunications	30-second
	Reebok	Fashion	60-second
	Chevy	Automotive	15-second
	“Kingsman: The Secret Service” (Fox Films)	Movies	30-second
	Subway	Food & Beverage	30-second
	Mountain Dew Kickstart	Food & Beverage	30-second
Second	Chevy	Automotive	45-second
	Squarespace	Online Services	30-second
	Microsoft	Online Services	60-second
	Discover	Insurance & Finance	30-second
	GoDaddy.com	Online Services	30-second
	Fiat	Automotive	60-second
	Esurance	Insurance & Finance	30-second
	McDonald’s	Food & Beverage	60-second
	WeatherTech	Automotive	30-second
	WeightWatchers	Food & Beverage	30-second
Nationwide	Insurance & Finance	45-second	

TABLE 1: (Continued)

	Nissan	Automotive	90-second
	Doritos	Food & Beverage	30-second
	Dove Men+Care	Consumer Packaged Goods	30-second
	“Furious 7” (Universal)	Movies	60-second
	Avocados From Mexico	Food & Beverage	30-second
	Coca-Cola	Food & Beverage	60-second
	“Terminator: Genisys” (Paramount)	Movies	30-second
	Nationwide	Insurance & Finance	45-second
	Budweiser	Food & Beverage	60-second
	T-Mobile	Technology & Telecommunications	30-second
	Lexus	Automotive	30-second
	Skittles	Food & Beverage	30-second
	Carnival	Travel	60-second
Halftime	NFL Domestic Violence	PSA	30-second
	Skechers	Fashion	15-second
	Geico	Insurance & Finance	15-second
	Always	Consumer Packaged Goods	60-second
	Pepsi	Food & Beverage	30-second
	Toyota	Automotive	60-second
Third	Jeep	Automotive	90-second
	Budweiser	Food & Beverage	60-second
	T-Mobile	Technology & Telecommunications	30-second
	Jublia	Consumer Packaged Goods	30-second
	Kia	Automotive	60-second
	Dodge	Automotive	60-second
	Microsoft	Online Services	60-second
	Lexus	Automotive	30-second
	Sprint	Technology & Telecommunications	30-second
	Clash of Clans	Online Services	60-second
Fourth	Heroes Charge	Online Services	15-second
	Victoria’s Secret	Fashion	30-second
	Wix.com	Online Services	30-second
	Doritos	Food & Beverage	30-second
	“Fifty Shades of Grey” (Universal)	Movies	30-second
	Mercedes-Benz	Automotive	60-second
	Bud Light	Food & Beverage	90-second
	Loctite	Consumer Packaged Goods	30-second
	Mophie	Technology & Telecommunications	30-second
	“Ted 2” (Universal)	Movies	30-second

Note. The commercials are presented in the order in which they aired during the February 1, 2015 broadcast.

The model developed in this paper suggests attention to the advertisements is a key factor influencing the effectiveness of individual Super Bowl advertisements. Two factors, (1) the degree to which a viewer is a fan of the NFL and the (2) social environment in which the individual is viewing the game, are proposed to affect advertising attention. Advertising attention, in turn, is proposed to positively influence advertising effectiveness. Advertising effectiveness is the degree to which a company's advertisement accomplishes their intended goals of inducing a "consumer to like the brand, improve the image, and/or purchase the brand" (Okazaki, Taylor, & Zou, 2006). Thus, advertising effectiveness is the extent to which an advertisement causes positive responses to the brand. To test these predictions hierarchical ordinary least squared (OLS) regression was conducted utilizing survey data collected from a sample of 343 individuals who watched Super Bowl XLIX. Additionally, to provide substantive guidance to advertisers, comparisons between respondents "favorite" and "least favorite" advertisement is conducted. This research isolates qualities of a respondent's recalled favorite and least favorite advertisement in the days following the broadcast to better understand what emotional responses come from a recalled single favorite and single least favorite advertisement. The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. After reviewing relevant literature, the formal hypotheses are proposed. Next, a detailed account of the methods utilized to test the study's hypotheses is presented. Then, discussion of the ancillary study is offered. Finally, the results are presented and the implications for practice and directions for future research are discussed.

RELEVANT LITERATURE

The advertising that occurs through the Super Bowl broadcast has become a popular choice for advertising research studies (Fehle, Tsyplakov, & Zdorovtsov, 2005; Jin, 2003; Jin, Su, & Donovan, 2008; Jin, Zhao, & An, 2006; Kim, Freling, & Eastman, 2013; Newell & Henderson, 1998; Pavelchak, Antil, & Munch, 1988; Tomkovick, Yelkur, & Christians, 2001; Yelkur, Tomkovick, & Traczyk, 2004). Pavelchak and colleagues (1988) provided the first Super Bowl study highlighting that viewers

from the winning and losing teams' cities had greater emotional reactions with the telecast which actually caused a *negative* reaction for ad recall. Jin and colleagues (2006; 2008) have focused on the importance of publicity effects for the advertisements; specifically, pre-advertising garners publicity for the upcoming Super Bowl commercial which is referred to as the facilitative effect (Jin, 2003). When this publicity of the advertisements occurs, ads are better recalled than recognized (Jin et al., 2006), and an inhibition effect occurs for brands that have been publicized meaning that publicized brands are strengthened while inhibiting the recall of other related brands (Jin et al., 2008). Research suggests that advertising through the Super Bowl can be very effective for launching new products (Yelkur et al., 2004) such as the launch of a movie premiere. Scholars have also studied the impact of advertising in the Super Bowl on the financial performance of the firm by focusing on stock market returns. Similar to the attitudinal studies discussed above, these studies have found mixed results regarding the effectiveness of Super Bowl advertising (Fehle et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2013).

These mixed results may be partly explained by the negative effects of advertising interference that occurs in the Super Bowl broadcast as numerous national brands are highlighted during a short period of time (70 ads in 2015). Prior research has identified the negative effects of competitive interference on sales (Danaher et al., 2008), and brand recognition (Zanjani, Diamond, & Chan, 2011). Danaher and colleagues (2008) find that competitive interference has a significant and negative effect on advertising effectiveness. Zanjani et al. (2011) find that print advertising clutter negativity impacts brand recognition. This research bridges the theoretical foundations from research on advertising interference and applies the concept in a study where interference is very high – the Super Bowl broadcast. Next, the study's formal research hypotheses are developed.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Being a NFL Fan

Researchers have found when viewers have an interest in the sporting team or sport it causes an enduring involvement in which fans spend considerable time and resources to be a part of the sport (Funk & James, 2001). Watching a television broadcast of a sport has been found to elicit a continuum of emotional responses based on how involved one is with the game – the more involved one is, the greater the emotional response (Newell, Henderson, & Wu, 2001). This program involvement also causes a heightened attention paid to a broadcast (Moorman et al., 2012). It is hypothesized that being a NFL fan will cause a heightened emotional response during the Super Bowl broadcast which in turn, will cause fans (compared with nonfans) to pay greater attention to the broadcast (including advertisements broadcasted during the Super Bowl). This leads to Hypothesis 1:

H₁: Being a NFL fan has a positive effect on ad attention during the Super Bowl. Thus, people who are involved with the sport of professional football as a fan will have higher ad attention.

Social Environment: Viewing Company

Sports broadcasts generate the social environments that allow individuals to be more expressive than when they view a sport alone (Denham, 2004). Moorman and colleagues (2012) put this idea to test with Dutch soccer fans during a FIFA World Cup match and found that watching the match outside of the home and in the company of others produced greater attention to the advertisements. They attributed this finding to the fact that when watching the event in the company of others people tend to be more expressive and thus are more involved in the contextual program playing (Moorman et al., 2012).

The Super Bowl broadcast provides a perfect backdrop to test the influence of viewing company on how much attention is paid to the advertisements. In the United States, it is common for people to attend “watch parties,” very similar to the party Wansink and Cheney

(2005) created with graduate students to understand and study their food consumption. An excerpt taken from the NFL’s website states that Hallmark has found that “the Super Bowl is the top at-home US party event of the year, surpassing even New Year’s Eve” (Tomkovick et al., 2001, p. 99). Thus, the party environment provides a place to generate excitement and interest in this year’s Super Bowl commercials.

Many Super Bowl viewers do so in the company of others with the hopes of sharing feelings of enjoyment, entertainment and arousal that come from the Super Bowl broadcast. When viewing the broadcast with the presence of others, changing the channels during a commercial break becomes a less-likely occurrence as to the social norms of having to consult with other viewers (Van Meurs, 1998). Based on the cultural implications of the social party atmosphere surrounding the viewing of the Super Bowl broadcast, it is proposed that viewing company will have a positive effect on a viewer’s attention as stated in the following hypothesis:

H₂: Watching the Super Bowl broadcast in the company of others will have a positive effect on ad attention during the Super Bowl.

Ad Attention and Advertising Effectiveness

Ad attention is well theorized in the literature to lead to advertising effectiveness. Pieters, Warlop, and Wedel for example state that “attention to advertising is a necessary... condition for ad effectiveness (2002, p. 778). The process of attending allows consumers to form cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to a stimulus (Olney, Holbrook, & Batra, 1991). Thus, in order for viewers to form cognitive, affective and (or) behavioral responses to advertisements it is important to gain and retain their attention during the broadcast.

Similar to prior research, advertising effectiveness is conceptualized here as to how well the company’s advertising is effective in getting the consumer to understand the brand better, improve its image relative to competitors and/or purchase the brand (Yuvaraju, Subramanyam, & Rao, 2014). The Super Bowl broadcast offers a novel context to consider

advertising effectiveness as most of the commercials aired are original advertisements, meaning the commercial was created specifically for the Super Bowl broadcast and the first time it will be aired is during the nationally-televised broadcast. Thus, viewers may not want to leave the room during the commercials or change the channel because they do not want to miss these new, original advertisements; this focus on the advertisements is referred to as ad attention. It is hypothesized that viewers of the Super Bowl broadcast who take an extra interest and pay special attention to the advertisements (i.e., high ad attention) will rate their favorite advertisement as being more effective, compared with viewers who have low ad attention. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is put forth:

H₃: Ad attention has a positive effect on advertising effectiveness. Thus, people who pay more attention to the ads will rate their favorite advertisements as effective.

METHOD

Sample from Viewers of Super Bowl

Super Bowl XLIX featuring the New England Patriots versus the Seattle Seahawks aired on February 1, 2015. The New England Patriots reigned triumphant with a final score of 28–24. Online questionnaires were administered the day after the Super Bowl (February 2, 2015) to over 495 respondents. The survey was closed on February 4, 2015. Of these completed surveys, 483 were deemed useable. Respondents were screened on having watched at least of some of the Super Bowl broadcast which occurred on February 1, 2015. Three hundred forty-three (69.3%) respondents reported watching at least some of the game. The respondents were not forewarned of the study to ensure they watched the telecast of the Super Bowl unbiased without placing a focus on their viewing. The respondents consisted of undergraduate and graduate students at a university located in the Midwest. Four different professors invited students from their classes to participate in the research study in exchange for extra credit. The average age of the sample was 21.3 years old and 40.9 percent of the 343 respondents were female.

Measures

To assess the degree to which an individual is an NFL fan, respondents were asked the following question: “To what extent do you consider yourself a fan of the NFL” using a sliding 100 points scale (0 – not a fan at all to 100 – fanatic), this was adapted from Moorman et al. (2012). Similar to Jin et al., (2008) viewing company was directly assessed by asking respondents “How many people watched the Super Bowl game with you?” Next, respondents were asked about their situational ad attention with the 2015 Super Bowl. The measurement was chosen based on previous research (Jin et al., 2008), which shows that a self-reported state of attention instead of merely its antecedents or consequences. Respondents were asked the following three-items: “I did not want to leave the room during the commercial breaks because I did not want to miss the ads” (strongly disagree/strongly agree), and “I did not want to change the channel during the commercial break because I wanted to watch the ads” (strongly disagree/strongly agree), and “How much attention did you pay to the ads during the Super Bowl broadcast? (not very much/very much) ($\alpha = .88$).

Finally, to assess advertising effectiveness respondents were asked to recall their favorite, and only one, advertisement which was broadcasted during the Super Bowl and keep this advertisement in mind while answering the following questions: “the ad message is understandable”, “the advertisement is believable”, “the ad’s message is relevant to me”, “the benefits described in the ad are believable to me”, “after viewing the ad, I would consider purchasing the product”, and “this ad is much better/worse for products in this product category” (Yuvaraju et al., 2014) ($\alpha = .80$). The advertisement in which the largest number of respondents recalled as their favorite from the 2015 Super Bowl broadcast was the Budweiser “Lost Dog” commercial (89 respondents, 25.9%). The least favorite advertisement recalled was the Nationwide “Make Safe Happen” commercial (86 respondents, 25.1%). Table 2 contains the means standard deviations and the correlations among the study variables.

Analysis and Results

Hierarchical ordinary least squared (OLS) regression was utilized to analyze the data and test the study hypotheses (results are presented in Table 3). First, a regression was run (Model 1) assessing the effects being a NFL fan and viewing company has on ad attention. Gender and age were included as control variables. Next, Model 2 examines the effect the control variables, being an NFL fan, and viewing company has on advertising effectiveness. Finally, in Model 3, ad attention is included as an additional antecedent of advertising effectiveness.

In support of H₁, the effect of being a NFL fan on ad attention during the Super Bowl broadcast is positive and significant (b=.14, p < .05). Hypothesis 2 posits a positive relationship between viewing company and ad

attention. The analysis failed to support this prediction as the beta coefficient was insignificant (b .01, p > .05). In H₃, it was predicted that ad attention would lead to advertising effectiveness. Model 3 yielded a significant estimate (b=.15, p < .01) lending support to this prediction.

In sum, the results of the study support the notion that advertising attention has a significant and positive effect on advertising effectiveness. Further, the results highlight an important antecedent to advertising attention – NFL fandom. Similar to prior research (e.g., Moorman et al. 2012), these results suggest that being involved in the broadcast enhances emotional response and leads to heightened attention. This finding suggests that an emotional involvement in the broadcast is an integral component leading to advertising effectiveness. An important sustentative

TABLE 2:
Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach’s Reliabilities and Correlations

	M	SD	CR	1	2	3	4
1. Ad attention	3.35	1.07	.88	1			
2. Advertising effectiveness	3.50	0.71	.82	.14**	1		
3. NFL fan	47.86	31.79	---	.11*	-.01	1	
4. Viewing company	6.27	7.50	---	-.01	.12*	.20**	1

Note. * p < .05. ** p < .01.

TABLE 3:
Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Ad Attention and Advertising Effectiveness

	Dependent variables		
	Ad attention	Advertising effectiveness	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	.23 (.21)	3.63** (.14)	3.33** (.18)
Control variables			
Age	.01 (.02)	-.00 (.02)	-.00 (.02)
Gender	-.08 (.13)	-.10 (.09)	-.09 (.09)
Main effects			
H ₁ : NFL fan	.14* (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
H ₂ : Viewing company	-.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01* (.01)
Mediating variable			
H ₃ : Ad attention			.10** (.04)
R ²	.02	.02	.04
F (Statistics)	1.40	1.38	2.46

Note. Unstandardized coefficients reported; numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

Sample size = 343.

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

question then is what can advertisers do to enhance viewers' emotional engagement? In the following section is an ancillary study which will help to further understand the difference between effective and ineffective Super Bowl advertisements in terms of garnering emotional responses.

Ancillary Study: Impact of Adjectives Describing Emotional Responses to Advertisements

Scholars have investigated emotional responses to advertising and specifically, Edell and Burke (1987) posited that after viewing advertisements that emotions arise and these emotions may be positive or negative at the same time, thus these emotions may influence how a viewer remembers the advertisement post-viewing. Edell and Burke (1987) used 69 emotions to describe how an ad made the respondent feel and thus other scholars have condensed this scale to 20 emotions (Yuvaraju et al., 2014).

Recalling different advertisements will produce different emotional responses. For example, when a viewer thinks of their single favorite advertisement from the broadcast, it is suggested that they will choose different adjectives than when they are asked to select adjectives for their recalled single least favorite advertisement. Thus, an additional hypothesis, Hypothesis 4 is as follows:

H₄: There are significant differences of the adjectives used to describe a favorite ad versus a least favorite ad during a televised event.

Emotional Response Adjectives Analysis and Results

Near the conclusion of the survey (as described above), respondents were asked to recall their favorite (and subsequently their least favorite) advertisement they saw during the Super Bowl broadcast. Twenty adjectives were provided to the respondents to select for how they would describe this ad to a friend (Yuvaraju et al., 2014). The twenty adjectives used by Yuvaraju and colleagues were adapted from Edell and Burke (1987) from their feelings toward ads scale (see Table 4). Respondents could select as few or as many of the twenty adjectives as they

saw fit. This procedure allows for a statistical distinction between the adjectives used by the samples to describe their "favorite" and "least favorite" advertisements.

Paired sample t-tests were conducted to examine Hypothesis 4 in order to compare the mean ratings for respondents' favorite Super Bowl advertisement versus their least favorite Super Bowl advertisement. Paired sample t-tests revealed there were significant mean differences for eighteen of the twenty adjectives used to describe their favorite and least favorite Super Bowl advertisements after viewing the 2015 broadcast. The top four adjectives used to describe a favorite advertisement include humorous ($M = .49, SD = .50$), memorable ($M = .48, SD = .50$), creative ($M = .42, SD = .50$), and attention-getting ($M = .49, SD = .34$). The top three adjectives used to describe a least favorite advertisement include boring ($M = .42, SD = .49$), irritating ($M = .40, SD = .49$), and offensive ($M = .16, SD = .37$). An overview of these results is provided in Table 3.

DISCUSSION

Utilizing a naturalistic field study from Super Bowl XLIX, factors affecting how much attention is paid to the advertisements during the Super Bowl and the effect this attention has on advertising effectiveness was examined. The findings indicate that being a NFL fan had a significant positive effect on advertising attention, which in turn, had a significant positive effect on advertising effectiveness. The analysis failed to support the proposed positive relationship between viewers' social surroundings and advertising attention (H_2). However, significant differences in terms of viewers' emotional responses to their favorite versus least favorite advertisement were uncovered.

This study makes an important theoretical contribution to the advertising interference literature. First, by studying the effects of interference under natural conditions, the present study provides evidence for other factors that heightens the attention paid and effectiveness of the advertisements. Involvement in the broadcast domain is an important factor leading to advertising attention. This finding suggests marketing

TABLE 4:
Paired Samples T-Test between Favorite Advertisement and Least Favorite Advertisement

Adjective	Favorite	Least	t
Active	16%	4%	5.67**
Attention-getting	49%	15%	10.81**
Boring	1%	42%	-15.17**
Cheerful	20%	3%	7.168**
Creative	42%	7%	11.83**
Emotional	27%	20%	2.12*
Energetic	15%	2%	5.86**
Genuine/Sincere	13%	3%	4.77**
Honest	8%	6%	1.21
Humorous	49%	2%	16.46**
Informative	10%	6%	1.76
Irritating	1%	40%	-14.81**
Memorable	48%	10%	12.07**
Natural	5%	1%	3.641**
Offensive	4%	16%	-5.29**
Pleasant	16%	1%	6.92**
Satisfying	15%	1%	6.413**
Strong	16%	9%	2.68**
Unique	30%	9%	7.54**
Warm-hearted	25%	3%	8.18**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

managers may be well served to target Super Bowl advertisements toward individuals who are highly interested in the event, as these individuals appear to pay more attention to the ads and are in turn more influenced by those advertisements. Conversely, when targeting non-NFL fans, advertisers must work hard to garner the attention of these individuals as their attention during a Super Bowl broadcast may be fleeting.

This research study was conducted in a neutral location meaning there were not many fans of the two teams, New England Patriots and Seattle Seahawks, whom played in the Super Bowl (c.f., Pavelchak et al., 1988). Two hundred forty-nine respondents (72.6% of the sample) indicated they do “have a favorite NFL football team” and twelve respondents stated the New England Patriots and four respondents reported the Seattle Seahawks as their preferred teams. Thus, the contribution to the literature highlights an enduring involvement with the sport of professional football itself rather than a preference for an individual team playing in the

championship game. This is a powerful finding as it illustrates the dramatic reach and interest in viewing the Super Bowl broadcast. Viewers who identify themselves as simply being a NFL fan do indeed pay more attention to the Super Bowl advertisements.

Finally, advertising practitioners can take away the emotional responses which were most commonly used to describe respondents “favorite” and “least favorite” advertisements. Advertisers should desire to make the commercials humorous, memorable, creative, and attention-getting. Advertisers should seek to ensure the advertisement is not boring, irritating, and offensive as these adjectives were used to describe a least favorite advertisement. Pre-testing Super Bowl advertisement might help in making sure that the company’s commercial is not rated as one of those three negative emotions. While the study’s results indicate that NFL fans have high levels of advertising attention, marketers must continually work to break through the clutter to garner the attention of non-fans. Ensuring

commercials elicit desirable emotional responses (e.g., humorous, memorable, creative, attention-getting) may be one way to break through the clutter to get the attention of viewers.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Despite the theoretical and practical implications that come from this study, limitations must be addressed. One important issue is how unique the Super Bowl really is as a television sporting event. It is a large event that attracts millions of viewers and this study focuses solely on individuals who watched the television broadcast on February 1, 2015. Other events such as the FIFA World Cup Final, The Masters Golf Tournament, and The Wimbledon Championships garner large viewing audiences and corporate spending on advertisements; thus, future research could examine the constructs in these other contexts.

Today's technologies to view online content have enhanced the reach of the Super Bowl advertisements. The commercials are viewed in other countries around the world and can be viewed outside of the initial television broadcast. Hence, future studies should be encouraged to move away from this single event study focus and broaden their inquiry into the other ways the Super Bowl commercials are viewed. Which advertisements garner the largest number of views on YouTube in the weeks following the Super Bowl? Are viewers, other than US viewers, attracted to different emotional responses from the advertisements? To find out whether the results from this study are generalizable, future research is needed.

There is a need to further understand the mediating role of ad attention. The measure in this study was self-reported as to how much they paid attention to the advertisements. A superior way to measure attention would be to use observational technology such as eye tracking software which would allow researchers to understand how much attention is *really* paid to the advertisements and how much attention is paid to interacting with the other viewers at the watch party. Being able to see when a respondent has their "eyes-on-the-screen" would enable researchers to a larger

extent understand which and what aspects of commercials truly capture a viewer's attention. Future research can also address additional antecedents to ad attention. The focus of this study used two of the most commonly cited factors leading to ad attention (degree of fandom and social viewing context) (Jin et al., 2008; Moorman et al., 2012). There are likely other important factors in this relationship. For example, the influence of alcohol, interruptions due to conversations about a particular advertisement, and spatial position for viewing the television broadcast are all likely influencers of advertising attention. Future research should consider these and other antecedents of advertising attention.

In spite of these limitations, this study advances understanding of the attention paid to advertisements during the Super Bowl and what emotions elicited from the advertisements cause them to be recalled as a favorite or least favorite advertisement. Considering the enormous investment companies make in Super Bowl advertisements, future researchers should expand on the findings in this paper and continue to advance this line of research.

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