



Super Bowl Social Media Snapshot 2009

Executive Summary

New Media Strategies, the industry pioneer and market leader in online brand intelligence, protection and social media engagement, conducted a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the discussion taking place about Super Bowl ads on five social media platforms, which included blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Wikipedia and Digg.

Due to the proliferation of platforms and increased adoption of social technologies like Twitter and Facebook, overall user generated commentary and media are up from last year.

To this end, our analysis showed that across all platforms, participation, interest and buzz were up, yet most advertisers did not fully take advantage of the increase in ways to directly target, engage and sustain a relationship with interested consumers. As a result of each company's Super Bowl ad and subsequent online engagement, there does not appear to be a significant social media-based foundation for most of the advertisers to build on for future efforts.

Participation and Buzz Were Both Up and Organized

Even in a down economy, buzz is up dramatically from Super Bowls past because of the increase in the availability of social media platforms and the ability of the average consumer to participate in the dialogue on topics of interest to them.

- In the 24-hour period surrounding the game, there were **over 191,000 blog mentions** of 41 Super Bowl advertising-related brands, personalities and terms
- During the game itself, there were **nearly 49,000 tweets** about 41 Super Bowl advertising-related brands, personalities and terms
- **Movie trailers and car companies** saw the highest volume of blog mentions; notable performers included Audi, Star Trek, Hyundai and Transformers 2

Companies Didn't Take Advantage

However, our analysis found a clear disconnect between the Super Bowl advertisers and engaged consumers participating in the discussion online. This strategy could have been especially useful in maximizing traditional advertising budgets in a down economy.

For example, despite Facebook's ability to serve as a tool for companies to build lists, much like Obama did by building a database of 13 million, through the group and brand pages, this year's crop of advertisers failed to leverage the free tools available to compliment and maximize their TV buys.

- As a result, our analysis showed **minimal discussion on Facebook brand pages** regarding spots aired during the game
- Companies were **selective in the platforms that they used** – most posted their ads on YouTube at some point, some also ran a Twitter account in the character of their ad spot; however, users proliferated on dozens of social media platforms and no one single company successfully activated and realized the potential that was out there
- For a significant number of online community members, social media usage surrounding this year’s game was centered on **sharing and documenting their own Super Bowl Sunday experiences**, including: preparing snacks for a planned Super Bowl party, watching the game with friends at a local bar and families tailgating in head-to-toe Steelers or Cardinals fan gear
- People are becoming more and more comfortable in the online space as it relates to social media, while advertisers have **yet to fully take the plunge**

Social Media Platforms

Twitter

As one of the fastest growing social networking platforms, Twitter combines the permanency of blogging with the utility of emailing, sociality of Facebook and the agility of text and instant messaging. New Media Strategies examined the volume of posts to Twitter, as a metric to gauge of brand awareness and consumer interest.

Top Ad Trends

During the game – from kick off to the start of NBC’s new Office episode, spanning almost 5 hours – there were **nearly 49,000 tweets** about 41 Super Bowl advertising-related brands, personalities and terms.

The five brands that received the most and the three that received the least buzz on Twitter were as follows:

Most

1. Pepsi	4,160 tweets (8.52%)
2. Transformers	3,514 tweets (7.20%)
3. Hulu	3,125 tweets (6.40%)
4. Denny’s	2,802 tweets (5.74%)
5. Coca-Cola	2,660 tweets (5.45%)

Least

1. Kellogg's Frosted Flakes	69 tweets (0.14%)
2. Dreamworks	56 tweets (0.11%)
3. General Electric	55 tweets (0.11%)

The tweets for each brand correlated strongly with the airing of their related ad – buzz peaked and then immediately died out, driven by interest in the next advertisement.

Top Hashtags

In the context of things like sporting events, industry conferences and television programs, Twitter has fast become the tool for people to organize and communicate with one another in real-time about what they are thinking, seeing and doing. For acute events like the Super Bowl and more general concepts like the bailout ([#bailout](#)), the Twitter community organically establishes one or more “hashtags” with the pound sign “#” to categorize relevant posts.

During the five hour game time period, there were **approximately 7,900 tweets** specifically tagged with one or more ad-related hashtag. In the lead was #superads09, which accounted for 42% of all ad-related hashtags, followed by #superbowlads (36%) and #sbads43 (15%).

- #superads09 3340 tweets
- #superbowlads 2742 tweets
- #sb43ads 1181 tweets
- #superadfreak09 342 tweets
- #superads 142 tweets
- #sbadwatch09 92 tweets
- #superbowlad 42 tweets
- #superbowlads09 38 tweets
- #sb09ads 34 tweets

In this same time period, there were just **over 8,600 tweets** specifically tagged with one or more game-related hashtag. By far, the most popular hashtag was the most obvious, #superbowl, which accounted for almost 96% of all game-related hashtags.

- #superbowl 8232 tweets
- #sb43 100 tweets
- #superbowl09 88 tweets
- #sb09 84 tweets
- #superbowl43 60 tweets
- #tpsb43 55 tweets

Totalling over 15,000 hashtags in a five hour period, an almost split down the middle total, the Twitter community was as interested in organizing around the game as as it was in discussing the advertisements.

Blogs

During the 24 hour period before, during and after the game (midnight on 2/1 to midnight on 2/2), there were **over 191,000 blog mentions** of 41 Super Bowl advertising-related brands, personalities and terms.

Movie trailers and car companies saw the highest volume of blog mentions. Notable performers included Audi, Star Trek, Hyundai and Transformers 2.

Other findings included:

- Though a PETA ad was rejected from being shown during the Super Bowl, it still accounted over **5% of all mentions**

- **Personalities received a disproportionate amount of blog coverage**, as compared to the brands and products they represented; notably MC Hammer (1%), Alec Baldwin (0.6%) and 'Pepsuher' (.1%)
- Miller High Life, Teleflora, and Frosted Flakes received the smallest percentage of mentions, all with **less than a tenth of a percent**
- **22 of the 41 brands** received less than 1% of all mentions

Wikipedia

Wikipedia represented a departure from other forms of social media: users of the website are more interested in finding accurate information than other websites, an interest sometimes thwarted by intentional vandalism. Meanwhile their interest in the game far outweighed their interest in the ads themselves, although trailers for upcoming motion pictures were of significant interest.

Although there is a social aspect to Wikipedia and discussions about individual articles are ongoing, the site is unique from social networks in that opinion is valued less than credible information. While a few people show up to support their team or rally against the opponent, these people are stopped as soon as they break the rules, especially when they commit vandalism.

The main article about Super Bowl XLIII was the most-edited of all, recording a **total of 241 edits** during the duration of Sunday, followed by three trailer-related pages and the two official team pages:

- *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* received **36 edits**
- *G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra* article received **8 edits**
- *Star Trek* article received **7 edits**
- Official Steelers article received **5 edits**
- Official Cardinals received **5 edits**

The most vandalized article was Ben Roethlisberger, which was vandalized **15 times** on Sunday. Three additional vandalism notes include:

- The Arizona Cardinals article was temporarily renamed Arizoona [sic] Cardinals
- Go Daddy was hit **3 times** based on the sexually suggestive nature of its ads
- CareerBuilder was hit **2 times** for its comic depiction of violence toward a koala bear

It should be noted that the low number of edits can be partially credited to the fact that Wikipedia editors put temporary locks on them (meaning only veteran editors can work on them) to keep Wikipedia jokesters from tampering with those pages while the subject

is in the news. In a few days' time, when the media coverage passes, the articles will again be unlocked.

Digg

There were 331 submissions on Digg of 41 Super Bowl advertising-related brands and terms for the same 24-hour period noted above. Movie trailers saw the highest number of Digg submissions, with Transformers, GI Joe and Star Trek receiving 24%, 11%, and 8%, respectively. Audi and Coke clocked in behind these terms in third and fourth place, with 6% and 5% of total submissions.

Other findings included:

- There were 7 search terms – Castrol Motor Oil, Cheetos, General Electric, H&R Block, Heineken, Teleflora, and Usama Young – that **received almost no activity** during the 24 hour period
- Most of the submissions received no more than a handful of Diggings and **did not make it to the front page**
- 23 of the 41 brands received **less than 1% of all submissions**
- 37 of the 41 brands received **fewer than 10 submissions**

Facebook

There was minimal activity on Facebook fan pages and applications for Super Bowl advertising-related brands. The Watercooler, an application that can be customized for different sports teams, experienced the only significant increase in users on both the Pittsburgh Steelers and Arizona Cardinals sites. Overall, using Facebook events to plan Super Bowl-related gatherings and parties was the most popular tool prior to the game. Brands did not appear to engage any of these large party-planning groups, nor did they appear to effectively seed their advertisements within the Facebook community.

Other findings included:

- Prior to the game, the Steelers Watercooler application had **419,377 users** while the Arizona Cardinals Watercooler only had **111,226 users**
- After the Super Bowl, the Steelers Watercooler application **increased by 886 users (.002%)**; the Cardinals application **increased by 178 users (.001%)**
- On the Facebook Events page, there were over 500 groups using the event function; this points to the high utility of Facebook as a social medium to organize friends and family
- A qualitative analysis of Super Bowl advertising-related brands showed minimal discussion on brand fan pages regarding spots aired during the game

Beyond Advertising

What Social Media Really Means

New Media Strategies found that while a large percentage of online interest focused primarily on the advertisements and secondarily on the game itself, thousands of online community members in fact focused on a third category: *sharing and documenting their own Super Bowl Sunday experiences*.

Some of these experiences included interaction with and opinions about the ads, but most told stories of preparing snacks for a planned Super Bowl party, watching the game with friends at a local bar and families tailgating in head-to-toe Steelers or Cardinals fan gear.

In addition to the advertising and brand analysis included above, NMS also examined Flickr, Qik, Utterli and Brightkite in search of qualitative insights about how people used social media in the same 24-hour period (12 AM on 2/1 to 12 AM on 2/2).

The results are as follows:

- On [Flickr](#), a social photo-sharing site, **4,605 photos** were tagged with “Super Bowl” or “Superbowl.” Photos ranged from party food in the form of [chili](#) and [cupcakes](#), to living room gatherings where [3D glasses](#) and [beer bottles](#) were standard issue.
- On [Brightkite](#), a social geo-location platform, **352 posts** were tagged with “Super Bowl” or “Superbowl.” Users logged in to post their pictures and brief commentary from places such as [Roseville, CA](#), [Denver, CO](#) and [Bellmawr, NJ](#).
- Less active overall, [Utterli](#), a “mobile media” sharing site and [Qik](#), a social real-time video site combined for just over **140 Super Bowl related posts**. Qik allowed users to document [pre-party food preparations](#) and share a glimpse into [their game-watching environment](#), while one member of the Utterli community posted a [live shot from the game itself](#).

Especially when video and photos are involved, social media enables a this marriage of new and old traditions to be documented and explored in real time, as events happen and people document them in a way that brings a human touch to technology.

Appendix

The 41 brands, personalities and products that were used to collect this social media “snapshot” were as follows:

1. Alec Baldwin
2. Angels & Demons
3. Anheuser-Busch / Clydesdales
4. Bridgestone
5. Bud Light
6. Careerbuilder
7. Cars.com
8. Cash4Gold.com
9. Castrol Motor Oil
10. Cheetos (PepsiCo)
11. Coca-Cola
12. Denny's
13. Doritos (PepsiCo)
14. Dreamworks

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|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 15. E*Trade | 29. Pedigree |
| 16. Fast and The Furious 4 | 30. Pepsi |
| 17. Gatorade (PepsiCo) | 31. PepsuBer |
| 18. General Electric | 32. PETA |
| 19. GI Joe | 33. Race to Witch Mountain |
| 20. GoDaddy | 34. SoBe (PepsiCo) |
| 21. H&R Block | 35. Taco Bell |
| 22. Heineken | 36. Teleflora |
| 23. Hulu | 37. "Up" Movie |
| 24. Kellogg's Frosted Flakes | 38. United Way |
| 25. MC Hammer | 39. Universal Orlando |
| 26. Miller | 40. Usama Young |
| 27. Monster.com | 41. Year One |
| 28. Monsters vs. Aliens | |

Profiles, media and content linked to in this "snapshot" include:

- *phoeknits* on Flickr: <http://flickr.com/photos/phoeknits/3240665505/>
- *Dixon Diary* on Flickr: <http://flickr.com/photos/60188803@N00/3245811887/>
- *Patrick Hocker* on Flickr: <http://flickr.com/photos/pathocker/3245870541/>
- *vjarymow* on Flickr: <http://flickr.com/photos/vjarymow/3243948333/>
- *Brendan Gates "poloballs"* on Flickr: <http://flickr.com/photos/brendangates/3241634896/>
- *Jonbryant* on Brightkite: <http://brightkite.com/objects/40f40118f0d711dda409003048c10834>
- *Wrightad4* on Brightkite: <http://brightkite.com/objects/e1671686f0d611dd8f53003048c10834>
- *lyfords* on Brightkite: <http://brightkite.com/objects/4fba6ce4f0d411dd8731003048c0801e>
- *jkerr* on Qik: <http://qik.com/video/961322>
- *Justin Sanchez "sp4rky"* on Qik: <http://qik.com/video/961157>
- *Eclecticescapades* on Utterli: <http://www.utterli.com/u/utt/u-ODE0Mjg2Mw#utt-ODE0Mjg2Mw>

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