



## This year's Super Bowl had the most viewers ever. Over 70 commercials were shown. Can we learn from the best commercials? I present three favorites.

Reading time: 9 minutes

On the Monday morning after the event, the rankings were already available from all kinds of reputable sources. These included the famous USA Today Ad Meter, the Super Bowl Advertising Review of the Kellogg School of Management, the emo ranking of System 1, but also the business magazine Forbes and the good old [New York Times](#) also provided their rankings. And - what a surprise: the matches were rather meagre. A really good guide for us marketers. Not.

What you notice in all the rankings is that very different criteria were applied. As a result, there are many brands that are both happy to be in the top ten and annoyed by very poor rankings, such as Lindt or BMW.

Of course, there is also a [ranking](#) of the commercials that have achieved the most views on YouTube. However, it is well known that entertainment value plays a greater role here than strengthening the brand's salience and purchase probability.

I watched all the commercials and was rarely impressed in the end. Many performances were surprisingly uncreative, considering the extremely high media costs. Others had creative ideas but elegantly forgot to tell us what the message was supposed to be. It was noticeable that even more celebrities were used this year than usual.

For me, as a somewhat cynical observer of the scene, this was a sign that weak ideas needed to be reinforced more often. I also found it striking that sustainability and social responsibility were no longer important topics. Perhaps with the exception of [Dove](#).

But there were a few commercials that met our most important criteria for truly effective advertising. Because they weren't just creative and didn't just appeal to the emotions. They also made it clear when the brand was needed. And ideally, they also made our lives as buyers a little easier.

I will refrain from creating my own rankings and will focus here on three examples that fulfill the following criteria in order to have a brain-friendly effect:

1. They all have a **wow effect**, which means they surprise us and leave us a little in awe. This increases the likelihood that we will remember the message.
2. They show us **relevance**, for example by having a clear contextual reference. This increases the likelihood that we will remember the brand in that context - and therefore buy it.

And ideally, they promise to make our lives a little **easier** in this context. This also increases the likelihood that we will remember the brand in the purchasing situation.



Let's get started. A Unilever commercial for a really boring category 'mayonnaise'. You'd have to award points for the attempt alone.

[Hellmann's mayonnaise](#) The story: Probably the most frequent advertising scene of all time right at the start. A woman looks desperately at the leftovers in her fridge and doesn't know what to do with them. The cat of the house meows at this very moment, which sounds like may-ow. The woman likes this idea and reacts ecstatically because her cat can speak. Now the movie turns into a satire on American media hype. The cat that can talk, even if only "may-ow", becomes a star. The fans are shown storming the shelves with Hellmann's mayo. A movie with a clear wow effect, super positioned for an unknown context of use. And with the appropriate slogan: "Save the leftovers". Our memory plays along and remembers the message and the next time we see leftovers we all think of? Exactly.



Picture credits: Youtube.com

Another favorite is the film by [Booking.com](#). The story: The well-known comedian Tina Fey uses body doubles to experience the many different types of accommodation at Booking.com. Of course, the funniest problems happen when a double makes erotic advances to the bellboy in a five-star resort. Or when a Yeti-Tina appears in a wooden cabin that is a little too close to nature. It's fun to watch this episodic movie with its many little wow effects.

And the message is clear. We're not always in the same vacation frame of mind and Booking offers us a huge range of choices, depending on whether we're on a self-discovery trip or indulging in hedonistic motives. And while Tina Fey watches everything on mobile, she shows us how easy it is to change personal preferences with a click and rip doubles out of their vacation dreams.



Picture credits: Youtube.com

I liked a few other candy and beverage commercials, but for the sake of balance, I'd rather present an insurance commercial seen at #1 by USA Today, for example.

[State Farm](#) is one of the largest insurance and financial services providers in the USA. The story: State Farm agent Arnold Schwarzenegger emerges from a spectacularly burning family home, - wait for it - with two puppies in his arms. The relieved mother thanks him and Arnie delivers the slogan: "Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there".

Well, almost. Because Arnie of course says "Neighbaaa" and the director interrupts the shoot. This is followed by some action scenes in which they desperately try to get rid of Arnie's accent. Which doesn't work, so Arnie's sidekick, Danny de Vito, turns up at the end and does his usual cool job.



A delightfully slapsticky film that has lots of little wow effects and expertly drives home the brand promise: insurance is as close as your trustworthy neighbor. Arnie's Neighbaaa is hard to get out of your mind. Tested for you.



Picture credits: Youtube.com

If you've now worked up an appetite for a few more spots, here are a few more suggestions:

1. [T-Mobile Home Internet](#): Actor Jason Momoa (Aquaman) is in trouble with his cable provider and gets help via T-Mobile 5G Wifi. Very American song and dance execution with a sexy big boy at the center. Nice little wow effects and T-Mobile makes life easier.
2. [Google Pixel](#): A visually impaired man records his life in sharp photos - with a new function of the Google Pixel. Well, the ending is a bit thick, but everything is right here. Wow effect, context and it's really much simpler.
3. [NFL: Born to Play](#). For the NFL fans among you: a heart-warming story about a boy from Ghana
4. [Michelob Ultra](#): Acclaimed by some, experienced as rather banal by others: Lionel Messi tricks with the ball on the beach while waiting for his beer. The spot clearly wins thanks to the ingenious catchy tune. The brand comes up short.
5. [Pfizer](#): Some are fans, I'm less impressed. However, visually good AI-supported design, deceased scientists are animated. It's too narcissistic for me. But the only pharma spot should be mentioned.
6. [CrowdStrike](#): A mixture of Westworld and Star Wars. A cybersecurity woman puts the alien attackers to flight. Entertaining, unfortunately somewhat weak resolution and far too little branding
7. [KIA EV 9](#) - a tear-jerker. Therefore, highly rated by some. For me rather in the midfield. No relevant context, no clear brand benefit. A little wow, a lot of cheesy emo, but too little relevance. And no recognizable brand asset.

So, that's enough, let's look forward to the next Super Bowl and the new wonderful opportunities to bitch again about the weak executions.



## Book recommendation

By Ralph Ohnemus, Uwe H. Lebok, Florian Klaus:

### Context marketing

The key to consumer behaviour to [order](#).



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