

Super Ad or Super Bad?

I admit I didn't watch Super Bowl 43 in its entirety. So, I wasn't able to watch every ad. In a sense, all the ads were predictable. Some trying to hard to be interesting (while not achieving a thing for their brand) and others just bland. Fox was pushing their programs big time, especially the falling-in-the-ratings American Idol. Ads got lots of added value—you can see the ads again on MySpace. And, commentators will discuss the ads in the newspapers and on TV. In the end, this is the real strategy: get publicity for your ad.

The most ubiquitous advertising came from a certain "king" of beers. It makes me wonder what their advertising strategy is. Is it to establish supremacy as the number one beer advertiser? Is it to make sure that the audience does not know there are other types of beers out there? Is it to make sure you get good and drunk while watching the Super Bowl? As a beer drinker, there is no amount of beer advertising that would make me want to drink that stuff. It is all about the taste, right?

Some ads just made me shake my head. Garmin had a Napoleon re-enactor (I think) driving to a re-enactment. Huh? Sunsilks compared Marilyn Monroe, Shakira and Madonna? The Victoria's Secret Valentine's Ad I felt, was offensive to women by objectifying. I didn't get the Doritos ad at all. I must be in the wrong demo. Some ads were genuinely funny—the Planter's ad, Nationwide and Taco Bell (the Fiesta Platter). E-trade seems to want you to think they are so simple to use a baby could do it.

The cola wars are always played out during the Super Bowl. Pepsi's Justin Timberlake ad was funny and big budget. Coke took a more subdued approach...not as frenetic or loud. Clearly, Pepsi is trying hard to appeal to a younger demographic. In fact Coke's political ad, featuring James Carville, would be

surely lost on a younger person. I liked them both.

My favorite ads were for Careerbuilder.com. They were created based on certain truisms about career planning—you should follow your heart and wishing won't make it so. Clever. Of course, Monster had one that showed people trying to block the sun, and thus Monday, because of the dread of going back to work. Also clever. Both trying to appeal to people's unhappiness (is it so widespread?) with work.

In the end, I wonder if spending this much money on production and media space pays off. Will you drink more Bud? Are you going to try SoBe water? Are you going to apply for a new job?