

# [***Super Bowl ads keep it heavy on the celebrities, light on the politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B9R-XFC1-DYMD-63CS-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

NEW YORK — The Kansas City Chiefs were crowned victorious over the San Francisco 49ers in this year’s [*Super Bowl*](https://apnews.com/live/super-bowl-2024-updates) — and, off the field, big-name advertisers competed for viewers' attention with celebrity-filled, glitzy messages.

Beyoncé broke the internet yet again in a [*Verizon ad*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7jpCZ1ju9I), which was soon followed by a [*viral music drop*](https://apnews.com/article/beyonce-new-music-act-ii-14ab5948ecfb76c283c638162b7a53f7). Lionel Messi’s showed off his apparent loyalty to [*Michelob Ultra*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88tPE7AAUxM). And T-Mobile, e.l.f. cosmetics, Uber Eats and more offered a slew of mini TV show reunions, bringing together cast members from “Suits” to “Friends."

Despite being an election year in the U.S., there was very little to show for it on Sunday besides an ad by American Values 2024, the super PAC backing Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s [*presidential run*](https://apnews.com/article/rfk-jr-presidential-campaign-independent-2024-30d940109c4956de9c81f332ec418463). It ran a 30-second, retro-styled spot that attempted to lean into his family’s legacy. Kennedy launched his independent bid for the White House last year.

Airing a [*Super Bowl commercial*](https://apnews.com/article/super-bowl-2024-commercials-preview-025d653b2abf0ceadc7e9c7850c0383a) is no easy feat. On top of the reported $7 million price tag for a 30-second spot during the game, brands enlist the biggest actors, invest in dazzling special effects and try to put together an ad that more than 100 million expected viewers will like — or at least remember.

“Advertisers this year are doing everything they can to try to break through the clutter,” Northwestern University marketing professor Tim Calkins said. “They're pulling out all the stops.”

On Sunday, scores of advertisers tapped into light humor and nostalgia to give game breaks a mostly “feel good,” whimsical energy. Still, there were also a few serious and somber moments.

Here’s a rundown of what ad-watchers saw in Super Bowl LVIII.

**CELEBRITIES EVERYWHERE**

Kris Jenner “twists on it” with [*Oreo*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3EsFtUCOno). The face behind [*Pringles’*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYvDdZZ_FQU) iconic mustache is unveiled to be none other than Chris Pratt. And Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez returned for [*Dunkin’*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMKfCTTDp30) cameos, while Ice Spice sips on [*Starry*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xA7ENrLtUw).

In typical Super Bowl fashion, an array of companies’ adverts were adorned by stars — often with numerous celebrities stuffed in a single spot. [*T-Mobile*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjCSipST46I), for example, showcased big names like Bradley Cooper, Common, Jennifer Hudson, Laura Dern and “Suits” stars Gabriel Macht and Patrick J. Adams all in one ad for its “Magenta Status” customer appreciation program.

And the “Suits” homecoming didn’t stop there. In another ad stuffed with celebrity cameos — including “Judge Judy” Judy Sheindlin — [*e.l.f. cosmetics*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjVf8ptmDmk) brought together Gina Torres, Rick Hoffman and Sarah Rafferty in a courtroom spoof.

NBC sitcoms had quite a few reunion moments during the game. In an Uber Eats ad, which shows people forgetting things so they remember [*Uber Eats*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0LXSb0PQ6HQ) can deliver a wide variety of items, Jennifer Aniston seemingly forgets she ever worked with her “Friends” co-star David Schwimmer. And in an ad for [*Mtn Dew Baja Blast*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUg1XA8-U9A), Aubrey Plaza says she can have a ‘Blast’ doing anything — including reuniting with her “Parks and Rec” boss Nick Offerman as they fly on dragons.

Although star power in Super Bowl commercials isn't new, it did feel especially heightened this year.

“It used to be that you’d have a celebrity pop up that would sort of be the spokesperson of the commercial," said Virginia Commonwealth University Brandcenter’s Jessica D. Collins. "Now you’re seeing collaborations of celebrities... all in the same commercial, even (when) they have absolutely nothing to do with each other."

Some brands can pull this off in a smart way — such as tapping into pop culture moments and inside jokes. But experts say that overdoing celeb cameos can take away from the impact of the ad. Viewers may remember what stars they saw in a commercial but not the brand name, University of Minnesota associate professor of marketing Linli Xu notes.

**CUTENESS AND NOSTALGIA**

It wouldn’t be the Super Bowl without some furry friends. [*Budweiser*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C4DNSV3IRE), for example, brought back familiar characters to its gameday slot — which shows Clydesdales and a Labrador retriever team up to help the beer brand make the delivery. And [*Hellmann's*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVIexvfdx7Q) featured the “Mayo Cat."

But the year's ads weren't raining dogs and cats, noted Kimberly Whitler, marketing professor at the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business.

That didn't stop advertisers from searching for other ways into viewers' hearts.

“Everything old is new again,” she said, pointing to successful Super Bowl ads or messages from the past making a return, including [*ETrade’s talking babies*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjLr4bdLPIs).

The 1980s also made a comeback, Whitler noted, with both [*T-Mobile*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVeCwSWNLrM) and [*Nerds*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kI-vfyl2mo) featuring the theme song from “Flashdance,” while the mullet was at the center of [*Kawasaki's*](https://youtu.be/Vpg2xfdbP8E?si=VRRjfhrGYCwLMc5m) spot.

**PULLING AT THE HEARTSTRINGS**

Both Collins and Calkins said that [*Google's spot*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYPTZIFQoDQ) was among their favorites. The ad followed a blind man as he uses “Guided Frame” — Google’s A.I.-powered accessibility feature for the Pixel camera that uses a combination of audio cues, high-contrast animations and tactile vibrations — to take pictures of the people and places in his life.

The spot was a “perfect balance of emotion and showing off a product benefit,” Collins said, adding that she appreciated how Google spotlighted an audience that isn't always noticed. “No celebrities, (and it) purely showed what could have been an absolutely real family. Loved it.”

Xu also pointed to [*Dove's*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0D5MU6_0n0) ad, which focused on how low body-confidence leads to girls quitting sports.

“It’s a powerful message,” she said, in line with Dove's past campaigns dedicated to body positivity in the past.

**SOME SERIOUS MOMENTS**

Several other ads took more serious tones. Robert Kraft’s [*Foundation to Combat Antisemitism*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6HUxANY8z8), for example, ran an ad featuring Martin Luther King Jr.’s speechwriter Dr. Clarence B. Jones.

[*“He Gets Us”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94BqlDQ-Ppo) also returned to the Super Bowl this year. The campaign, which is backed by a group of wealthy Christian donors, aired two ads Sunday night.

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AP Business Reporter Mae Anderson contributed to this report.

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