Announcer (00:00:03)

The Missouri State Journal, a weekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri State University.

Adair Seifert (00:00:09)

The Super Bowl isn't just a field showdown, but also the ultimate battleground for advertisers competing for your attention during the most-watched television event of the year. So, what makes these 30-second commercials so impactful, and how have they changed over the years?

I'm Adair Seifert and today, Dr. Jamie Grigsby, assistant marketing professor at Missouri State University, offers insight into what makes Super Bowl commercials. The MVP's of the advertising game.

Dr. Jamie Grigsby (00:00:39)

Super Bowl commercials are unique in that they are designed to be shown to a huge number of people. We as advertisers know that millions of people will see these ads. We know it's expensive to buy that ad space. It is, I think, up to $7,000,000 per ad just to get the airspace. So, we as advertisers, we want to make sure that our ads are amazing and attention-getting and those millions of people who see them are going to remember them, so we also design them to be as memorable and as attention-getting as possible. So Super Bowl ads are unique because advertisers are motivated to get their money's worth

Super Bowl ads have evolved over the years as our attention spans have evolved. When advertisers design these ads, they also think about what kinds of things will be attention-getting. We used to be easier to please. We could put a cute puppy or a cute baby and an ad and tell a nice story about them and that's going to be attention-getting to an older audience. Nowadays, people want something to be amazing and need a more involved story. They need more to happen. If you think of the celebrities that we've seen in ads over the decades, it used to be that maybe we just put one celebrity in our ad. Now lots of brands are using half a dozen celebrities in their ads.

Because people have high expectations, getting their attention is harder because there's so much more competing for them nowadays.

Adair Seifert (00:02:34)

She explains the elements that contribute to the success of Super Bowl commercials.

Dr. Jamie Grigsby (00:02:38)

A Super Bowl commercial that is unexpected and relevant to the audience will always do the best.

In 2022 Coinbase ran an ad during the Super Bowl that was just a QR code bouncing around the screen.

This was so simple and I'm sure it was inexpensive for them to make. It was just a code that linked to their app and there was something about how unusual and unexpected that format was that motivated the audience to scan the QR code.

There were so many people who scanned the code and tried to download the app that the app crashed. It was wildly successful. And the reason for that is that it was so weird to have an ad that is just so simple and tells you almost nothing. Coinbase was really successful. So those are the kinds of things that can help Super Bowl commercials be more effective. And to get people curious and interested.

Adair Seifert (00:03:49)

She explains how the rise of social media has impacted the reach and longevity of Super Bowl commercials over the years.

Dr. Jamie Grigsby (00:03:56)

Social media has made a lot of opportunities for advertisers to increase their reach for their ads over the last decade or so. We've seen Super Bowl ads start to come out before the Super Bowl, so part of that is we have YouTube, we can put our ads on YouTube, but they're going to be seen by more people. Potentially people who are not big Super Bowl fans.

We know that they'll get shared on social media and social media is a great space for having conversations about those ads. Social media has been a great way for advertisers to increase their reach with their Super Bowl ads, both before the Super Bowl during the Super Bowl and after because of the way it facilitates those conversations and instant reactions.

Consumers like feeling like their reaction matters too. So, it used to be you watched the Super Bowl in somebody's living room with some friends or family and you shared their reaction. And then maybe tomorrow you go to work and you talk about it. But as a consumer, your reach used to be much smaller too. Now it's a conversation that you can easily have yourself with thousands, if not millions of people.

Adair Seifert (00:05:10)

That was Dr. Jamie Grigsby, assistant marketing professor at Missouri State University.

I'm Adair Seifert for the Missouri State Journal.

Announcer (00:05:18)

For more information, contact the Office of Strategic Communication at 417-836-6397, the Missouri State Journal is available online at ksmu.org.