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# What To Expect From The 2015 Super Bowl Ads

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People may not be sure how the game will play out on the field during [Super Bowl XLIX](#) — but it's becoming quite clear what we can expect from 2015 Super Bowl ads:

**1. Same old brands doing the same old thing.** Some brands have become Super Bowl advertiser staples. Whether it's out of habit, addiction to easy buzz, or perhaps a lack of new ideas, the same old brands will be up to the same old tricks. Doritos will bow the eighth in its series of [annual faux-amateur ad contests](#), [GoDaddy](#) will run yet another spot completely unrelated to its product offering, and big movie houses will hype upcoming releases in overblown trailers including Universal's trailer for "[Jurassic World](#)."

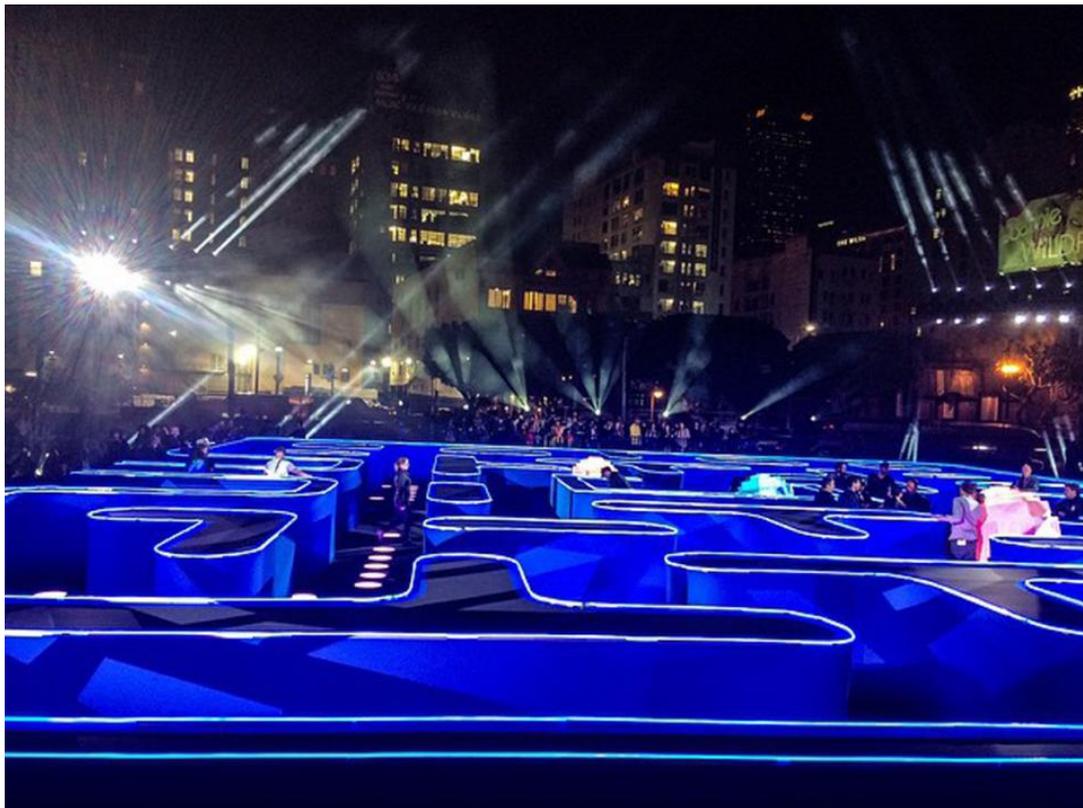


**2. Small brands blowing their budgets.** The Big Game broadcaster NBC is seeking \$4.4 million to \$4.5 million per 30-second spot (up from the \$4 million price tag FOX set last year) and some unknown brands are betting their annual budgets that one will generate enough brand awareness and buzz to be worth it. Hoping to breakthrough are [Loctite](#), a glue maker; [Mophie](#), a brand of mobile battery packs and smartphone cases; and [Avocados from Mexico](#).

**3. Sap over silly.** Several brands are rejecting the sight-gags and sophomoric humor that usually characterize Super Bowl ads. Instead, they're hoping to make a different kind of emotional connection. [Toyota](#) will include paralympic athlete [Amy Purdy](#), a double below knee amputee, in an inspiring spot. [Anheuser-Busch](#) will draft off the sentimentality it has established in its series of Super Bowl ads featuring a horse trainer and his animal friends. And [Dove Men+Care](#) will run a spot intended to challenge male stereotypes. Making a more meaningful appeal is a growing advertising trend but it remains to be seen whether or not The Big Game is an appropriate context for doing so.

**4. Beyond the spot.** Many advertisers have woken up to the fact that a spot on the Super Bowl is not effective as a standalone effort, so they're developing campaigns that extend beyond the big day and into real life. [Bud](#)

[Light](#) has constructed a life-size Pac Man maze in Los Angeles' Fashion District that will be used in its Super Bowl ad. Pictures of the spectacle and speculation about its longer shelf life have already made it to social media.



The ad for web development platform [Wix](#), which includes football legends like Brett Favre and Terrell Owens, is getting a boost from the professional websites of featured players which include more information and purchasable products. The smartest of the bunch is an effort from Pepsi — it's running [a social share-worthy reality show-style video series](#) based on a cooking challenge for Culinary Institute of [Arts](#) students.

**5. Holy hashtags.** In an extension of #4 above, advertisers are using hashtags to translate the Super Bowl's TV hype into social status. Loctite hopes to generate conversations about people's glue victories with [#WinAtGlue](#), while Toyota is asking Twitter users to tweet photos of their dads using [#OneBoldChoice](#).

**6. Ads as news.** Pre-game media coverage on the commercials has taken on a meta quality, with some brands trying to make their Super Bowl spots brand news in and of themselves. Several are strategically revealing details about their spots before the game ([Nationwide](#)), while others are seeding "teaser" videos for their spots ([Skittles](#) and [Toyota](#)), and some are actually airing their ads now ([Lexus](#).) Soon, Super Bowl ad news will be the media coverage on the media coverage (actually that just was, right?!)

**7. Broken brands attempting repair.** Not much is known about the pregame spot [McDonald's](#) is preparing to air, but it definitely will be a bid to turn around the venerable chain's flagging sales and to combat the negative conversations that the brand usually sparks. [Carnival Corp.](#) is hoping that a big spot from Hollywood director [Wally Pfister](#), who has worked on blockbuster movies such as "Inception" and "The Dark Knight" trilogy, will help people forget about incidents like the company's 2013 "Poop Cruise," a nightmarish excursion that forced passengers to live for almost a week amidst their own sewage after a power outage. Super Bowl ads, however, don't hold good track records for their ability to redeem troubled brands. Last year, Radio Shack ran an entertaining spot with a strong brand reconsideration message and generated a lot of attention — but one year later, the company's stock has tumbled and it is on the verge of bankruptcy.



**8. Return of the prodigal brands.** Some brands just can't stay away from The Big Game. [Nissan](#) is returning to the Super Bowl as an advertiser after 18 years; [BMW](#), after four; and [Nationwide](#), after eight. Despite the rising cost to purchase a spot and the increasing standard of creativity and entertainment that the ads are held to, the Super Bowl remains the nation's largest stage for brands.

*Note: This post was updated to reflect a correction: The Pac-Mac maze was constructed by Bud Light, not Budweiser as previously indicated.*

*Denise Lee Yohn is a brand-building expert, speaker, and author of [What Great Brands Do](#). Visit her [site](#), sign up for her [newsletter](#) and follow her on [Twitter](#).*