

Super Bowl Is A Super Big Deal For Fast Food Brands

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Summary

- McDonald's Will Make an Emotional Appeal to Reinvigorate Its Brand.
- Carl's Jr. Will Use a Sexy Model to Generate Buzz.
- Papa John's Will Try an End Run around TV Ads with a Social Media Campaign.

The Seahawks and Patriots aren't the only ones gearing up for big day on Sunday. When [Super Bowl XLIX](#) kicks off, many fast food brands will be hoping to score as well.

McDonald's (NYSE: [MCD](#)) is the only national fast food chain advertising during the game. Given that the brand recently moved from its "I'm Lovin' It" tagline to "Choose Lovin'," it's likely the 30-second ad will be an emotional play. A teaser video released online depicts customers being taken aback by McDonald's "randomly accepting a new form of payment" -- a hug perhaps?

Although the brand has run spots on the Big Game before, this might be its most important test. The ad is the company's third so far in an attempt it began earlier this year to reinvigorate sales and rekindle consumer appeal.

Pizza Hut (NYSE: [YUM](#)) will run two spots in its sponsored pre-game show. They're the kind of spots you'd expect from the brand. One of the commercials features Buffalo Bills coach Rex Ryan, playing himself, tossing flags for "incomplete crust" as a way to draw attention to Pizza Hut's new pizza crusts. Dallas Cowboys' Tony Romo also appears in an ad about the chain's Triple Cheese Covered Stuffed Crust. Not a lot of news here, but perhaps the brand's position as the show sponsor will reach a lot of eye balls and get them thinking about ordering a pizza.

It might not have made sense for other quick-serve restaurant (QSR) brands to pony up the \$4 million-\$5 million NBC charged for a 30-second ad in the Big Game, but that doesn't mean regional chains will be missing from the show.

Carl's Jr. (NYSE: [CKR](#)) is getting the most attention for the commercial it will air starring model Charlotte McKinney. The ad, which was released on Twitter (NYSE: [TWTR](#)) last week, shows her walking barely clothed through a farmer's market and promoting the chain's new "all-natural" burger. Sexy, scantily-clothed females have been frequent stars of the company's past ads.

It's a way to appeal to the chain's young male target audience as well as generate buzz about the brand. And the

company doesn't seem to mind the controversy its ads stir up -- in fact, it thrives on it. Its [2012 ad](#) featuring Kate Upton was banned from the Super Bowl but registered a ton of views online.

Other regional players are also likely to air spots with a regional media buy. Jack In the Box (NASDAQ: [JACK](#)) has run Super Bowl ads in the past to promote some of its most significant messages, including a brand relaunch in 2009 with an ad depicting the chain's Jack CEO character in a full body cast after getting hit by a bus.

Not all QSRs are relying on television advertising to make a splash on Sunday. Papa John's (NASDAQ: [PZZA](#)) will try to execute an end run around Super Bowl ads with a campaign called [#UpYourDance](#). The pizza chain will invite people to film their dance moves after their favorite player makes a touchdown and then post them in an online contest with the hashtag [#UpYourDance](#). The winner will win tickets to Super Bowl XL. Papa John's also plans to park a mobile kitchen at the University of Phoenix Stadium where people can sample pizza. The company claims the effort will be its biggest social promotion to date and hopes to take 1 million pizza orders during the game.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Super Bowl is the second-largest food consumption day of the year behind Thanksgiving. No wonder the Super Bowl is a super big deal for fast food brands.

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