

The Super Bowl: the Oscars of advertising



18 Feb 2022

This past Sunday, 36 million households in the US and millions of viewers across the globe tuned into the Super Bowl, but many didn't tune in for the game, they came for the halftime show and the commercials.



Source: ©fox news Fox News

"The Super Bowl is like nothing else in the industry in that the actual sport is almost the backdrop to what is ultimately a masterclass in hyped entertainment, that commands a global audience of over 150 million people," says Struan Campbell, founder and director, Levergy.

A masterclass in hyped entertainment

Campbell says this year was the best halftime performance he has ever seen. "The actual Pepsi halftime show was a throwback to hip-hop's golden age, where Dre, Eminem and Snoop were amongst a blockbuster cast."

For him, it brought an overarching 90s revivalism theme that follows suit from a broader fashion and pop culture trend recently paying homage to the period.

show is a completely novel concept in the sponsorship world.

Until 1993 the Super Bowl halftime show was pretty much a dull affair with marching bands. This changed in 1992, when Fox aired an *In Living Color* special during halftime that saw millions of viewers tune in.

The NFL realised halftime could be more than its then format and in 1993 Michael Jackson performed at halftime and the halftime entertainment tradition was born.

"While there is no doubting the impact it makes for the brand and the relevance it provides, one has to ask the cost vs. value question, but without knowing their measurement metrics this is difficult to answer," says Campbell.

I laughed so hard I snorted! <u>#SuperBowl #SuperBowlHalftimeShow#SuperBowl2022 pic.twitter.com/NOLp8vEAnp</u>—Sativa Sally (@SativaSallys) <u>February 9, 2022</u>

Existing NFL partners

From a sponsorship perspective, it's the blockbuster moment for the existing NFL partners that have activated throughout the season. "Those partners reportedly received over \$170m worth of brand exposure amongst them from the final showpiece," says Campbell.

This year the partners obtained more than 75 minutes of on-screen exposure - fewer than the 104 minutes provided last year according to SportPro. Is it worth the cost? "At almost R100m for 30 seconds of airtime, only those brands that are involved will know," says Campbell.

But, says Campbell, at the end of the day this is partly a "so what" question. "It's far more important in how they engaged and involved fans to add value," he says.

Creativity up this year

He thinks the creativity has gone up a level from the last couple of years. "This year we saw more babies, animals, cinematic productions and catchy tunes. I do always think it's hard not to deliver with the budgets and resources (massive creative teams) on hand, but there is an enormous amount of pressure attached to it too."

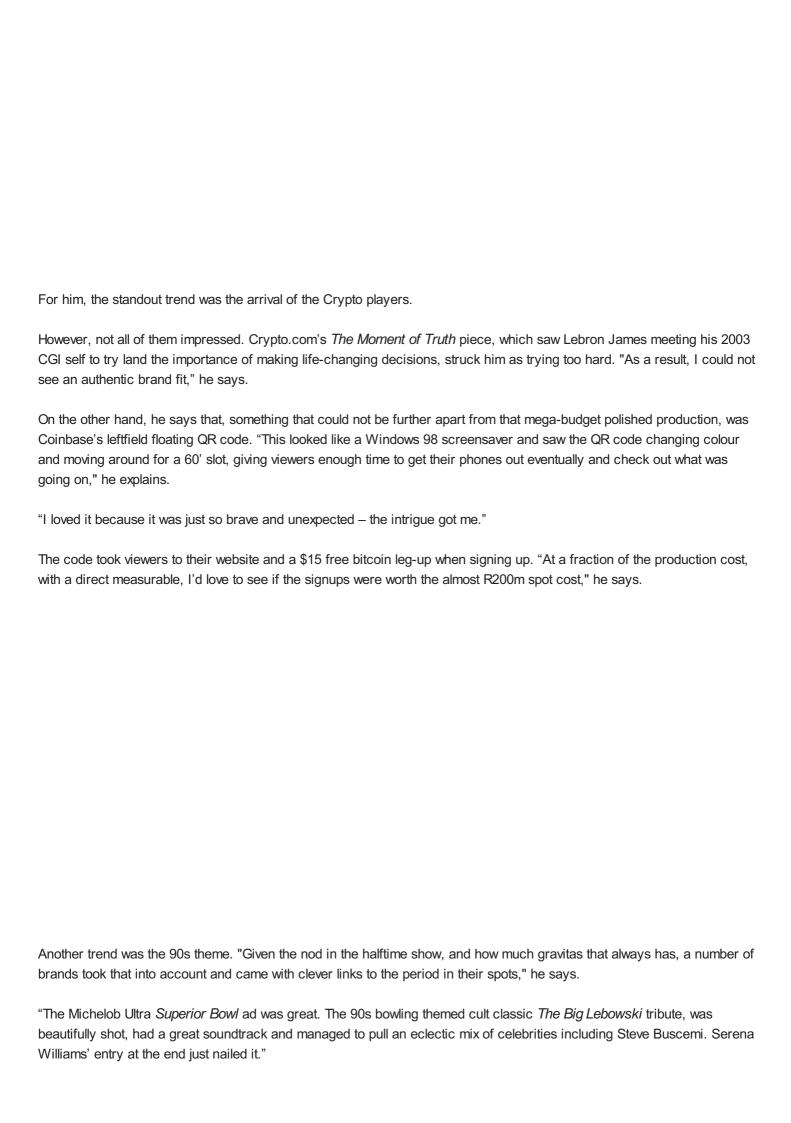
This year, Campbell says, while there's always some humour involved within the myriad of pieces, it felt like it was dialled up more than ever.

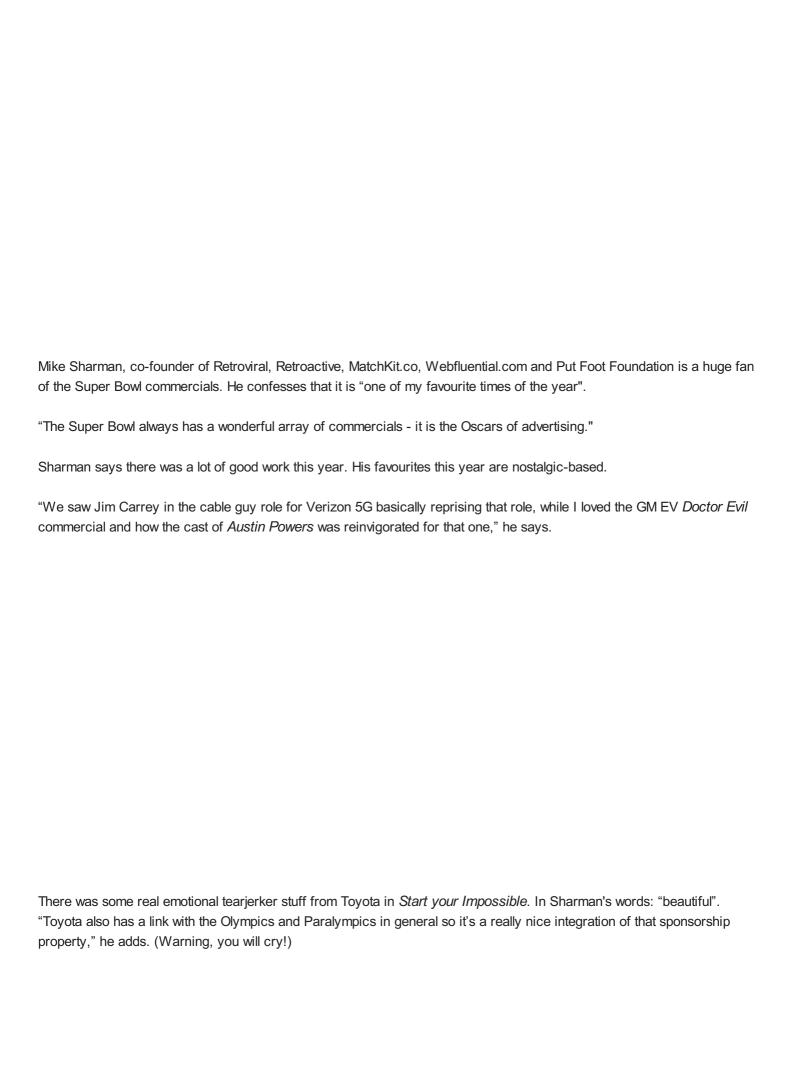
He thinks the question that needs to be asked is how the creative addresses the product or brand, and if it draws an emotional response, whether it be heart-warming or laugh-out-loud.

"Ultimately it needs to entertain. If it pushes into selfish without value, it falls flat. I would say that quite a few of them scored high on the required criteria so its an overall tick this year," he says.

Who got it right?

So, who got it right? For Campbell, Amazon's *Mind reader*, that saw Scarlett Johansson and her real-life partner, Colin Jost, play out what could happen if Alexa were to know too much about us with great performances, was a winner.





One of his personal favourites is the BMW Zeus & Hera commercial starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and (Look out for cute pegasus.)	d Salma Hayek.
To date, this piece of content has had over 12 million views on YouTube.	
Sharman also recommends you check out the director's cuts and extras.	

And in case you were wondering, the LA Rams won 23 - 20 over the Cincinnati Bengals.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalismfrom Wits.

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