

GAME PLAN?

AND YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA
SUPER BOWL 2018

WHAT'S

This is the **second** piece in a three-part series about capturing all of the marketing opportunities associated with the Super Bowl.

If you'd like to see the other two pieces, check out nisonline.org/professional-resources



HEATHER RULE

WRITER, JOURNALIST AND BLOGGER

Heather is a writer, journalist and blogger passionate about sports and social media. She works as an in-game social media coordinator with Major League Baseball, providing updates for the Minnesota Twins social accounts. She's also a freelance writer and sports reporter, covering a variety of Minnesota high school sports, writing columns about the Minnesota Wild and blogging about IndyCar racing on her personal blog. Her bylines have appeared in the Star Tribune, USA Today, Chicago Tribune/Pioneer Press, 1500ESPN.com, ZoneCoverage.com and USAHockey.com. Twitter is her favorite social media platform, partly because it's a great way to share all kinds of fun GIFs.

FIND HEATHER ONLINE:

Check out her website: heatherrule.com

Read her sports blog: thoughtsfromthestands.blogspot.com

Follow her on Twitter: [@hlrule](https://twitter.com/hlrule)

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GAMEDAY:

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW
ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA
ON THE DAY OF
THE SUPER BOWL

Much like the two teams playing in the Super Bowl, brands have their game plans ready as well in regard to social strategy. Graphics are ready, laptops and phones are charged up (or plugged in), and social teams are prepared to discuss the biggest sporting event of the year.

So, how should you go about posting on social media on the day of the big game? There's a lot to consider, from commercials to being prepared for the unexpected moments to the halftime show.

GAMEDAY - BEFORE THE GAME STARTS **BACK TO BASICS**
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BE READY FOR THE UNEXPECTED "POWER OUT? NO PROBLEM"
HALFTIME SHOW COMMERCIALS  **REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN**

Twitter and Facebook are two of the biggest platforms for in-game reactions. However, don't overlook sites like Pinterest. This can come in handy even before kickoff on Super Bowl Sunday. How do many people watch the Super Bowl? At a party, of course. Fans will likely flock to Pinterest for recipe or party-planning ideas ahead of the big game. Brands might consider how they can best be involved on this platform, maybe by sharing some appetizer recipes or photos of party spreads, especially for food brands. It's also not a bad idea to incorporate the colors of the teams involved.

Keep in mind the specific platforms to use during the game.

TWITTER IS GREAT FOR FAST, INSTANT REACTIONS.

Facebook and Instagram are great for sharing images of Super Bowl parties or prepared graphics.

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Make sure to Tweet with hashtags like #SuperBowl, #SB52 and #BoldNorth to gain more traction and get more eyes on content that's sent out. Millions of users will be posting with these hashtags or following along with them. It could create engagement opportunities with plenty of new people. Depending on the brand, it might be worth creating a brand-specific hashtag for the Super Bowl. For example, let's say a soup company wanted to try this. A logical move might be to have a #SouperBowl hashtag with that play on words. Keep it fairly simple and for those that decide to create a hashtag, make sure to do plenty of promotion within the existing network before game day for folks can post using the hashtag.

REMEMBER THROUGHOUT THE GAME TO KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS AND SOCIAL COMMUNITY IN MIND. If most of your users prefer Facebook, focus energies there during the game. It's not just about the platforms though. Think of the content that users will appreciate during the game, in the spirit of the brand and accounts. Will sports fans like some play-by-play commentary via Twitter? Or maybe your audience is really just a bunch of foodies wanting to compare Super Bowl party food. What about just commenting on the commercials? Thinking outside the box is fine, but don't stray too far from a brand's social media voice either. Consider posting about some of the key highlights, including touchdowns, fumbles, field goals, instant replay reviews and more. This will keep the brand in the conversation about the most influential parts of the game.

One of the main points of posting on social media during the Super Bowl is to capitalize on the conversations surrounding the event. **THINK OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA WORLD AS ONE GIANT PARTY WHERE EVERYONE IS WATCHING THE SAME THING AND TELLING THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT IT.** Whatever gets posted, don't forget about engagement. Make use of the RT and heart buttons on Twitter and monitor comments on Facebook posts. Don't forget to reach out to others using the hashtag columns for the Super Bowl, too. Answer questions users ask, respond with funny GIFs (the possibilities here are almost endless) and share thoughts about what's happening on the field or broadcast. Many people will likely follow the official Super Bowl social accounts, but don't overlook engaging there either. Sometimes a quote-RT can go a long way versus just the simple RT. It's a great way to share additional information to complement the RT'd information.

Stick with any pre-made social media plans for the Super Bowl. Post pre-made graphics for the start of the game, countdowns to halftime, trivia questions, graphics for the winnings team, etc., whatever you have planned. Also, don't be afraid to deviate as the game goes on based on what's working or not working well. See what users are telling you via engagement as well.

THE SUPER BOWL IS A FUN EVENT, SO CONVEY THAT FUN AND PERSONALITY VIA SOCIAL MEDIA. Don't focus too hard on selling or pushing brands too much. Sometimes just getting the name out there in good conversations will be enough to get users noticing a certain brand.

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For the 2017 Super Bowl, an average audience of about 111.3 million viewers tuned in to FOX to see the gridiron battle between the Atlanta Falcons and New England Patriots. The numbers aren't just about TV viewers anymore. The big game can also be measured in terms of social media interactions. Social interactions over the Facebook and Twitter platforms reached 190.8 million from 48.3 million people in the United States, according to Nielsen. Those social interactions were all related to "Super Bowl LI: New England Patriots vs. Atlanta Falcons" and posted on Feb. 5, 2017.

Not too surprisingly, the social media hits were at the highest just after the Patriots won the game 34-28 to complete a once-thought improbable comeback. A total of 7.5 million social media interactions were recorded in a four-minute span once the game ended from 10:30 p.m. ET to 10:34 p.m. ET.

Twitter reported that 27.6 million Tweets were sent out during the game broadcast related to #SB51. It's down slightly from the record 28.4 million Tweets sent out in 2015 but up from 27 million in 2016. As for Facebook, 64 million people posted 240 million interactions, more than the 60 million users and 200 million posts in 2016.

FANS DON'T JUST WATCH THE SUPER BOWL ANYMORE; THEY ALSO ENGAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA. Well, 78 percent of consumers do anyway, according to a 2017 report from Influence Central. Thirty-eight percent look to share thoughts on the Super Bowl commercials while 32 percent react to game plays. Others will share game-day party photos or share strategy about the game.

Key moments during the game will likely turn into big moments on social media, too. For #SB51 in 2017, Twitter reported its top three most-Tweeted moments from the game: When the Patriots finished the comeback win in overtime, the end of Lady Gaga's halftime show and when the Patriots tied the game with 57 seconds left in regulation. Keep those in mind when headed into #SB52; the end of the game and halftime show most certainly generate a lot of interest.

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It's hard to come up with examples of what may happen during a game that's unexpected because, well, then they would be expected. There are a couple general things to be ready for, however.

Player injuries can be a common part of the game, though a lot of them are minor. Football players can get shaken up all the time throughout the game, so if a player just takes a couple minutes to get up and off the sideline after a play, it's not the biggest of concerns. More serious injuries might warrant a lengthy stoppage in play and/or the injured player getting taken off the field on a backboard and cart.

Take some cues from what you see and hear on the broadcast to determine how serious the situation becomes. First and foremost, it's important to be sensitive. An injury timeout may not be the best time for humor or sarcasm. For those players that appear to be seriously injured, based on the scene or what's reported, sometimes it's not a bad idea to put out a simple Tweet like "Prayers for (player's name)." It's simple and addresses the situation without actually addressing the details. Or the other way to go is to not comment on it at all. **AGAIN, IT COULD BE GOOD TO TAKE CUES FROM OTHERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA IF YOU'RE NOT SURE.**

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One of the biggest social media successes during the Super Bowl from the past goes to Oreo when it capitalized on a third-quarter blackout during Super Bowl XLVII in 2013. To refresh memories, a power outage caused lights at the Superdome in New Orleans to go dark for a lengthy 34 minutes. For one of the biggest and most-hyped sporting events in the world, having an unplanned blackout to deal with was a bit unprecedented and certainly unexpected for the teams, officials and the millions of fans watching on TV.

Naturally, the blackout was just one more thing about the Super Bowl for folks to discuss on social media. [OREO WORKED FAST TO MAKE SURE THEY WERE PART OF THE DISCUSSION, TOO.](#) The sandwich cookie brand had a social media team in place which clearly jumped right into action to produce some blackout-related content. Oreo Tweeted out copy that read: "Power out? No problem." Along with an image of a single Oreo cookie almost acting as the illuminating piece of the photo. The copy within the image read: "You can still dunk in the dark." With a silhouette of an Oreo at the end.

As they say in the business, it went viral. The ad got plenty of immediate reaction and more than 15,000 Retweets. The Oreo account even interacted with some of the replies to its ad in the same comedic tone the ad implied. Some would say Oreo "won the internet" for that Super Bowl.

So how did Oreo manage to pull off something so unique to a specific moment, and so quickly? Planning, for one thing. Their in-game social media team at the ready consisted of 15 people waiting to respond to things as they happened surrounding the Super Bowl. Now, not every company or brand may have the resources to put 15 people on board ready to respond to social media, but the idea still isn't a bad one.

[EVEN IF IT'S JUST ONE PERSON, HAVING SOMEONE READY TO PUT TOGETHER A QUICK BRANDED GRAPHIC, A CLEVER LINE OF COPY OR A UNIQUE GIF IN RESPONSE TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SUPER BOWL COULD END UP BENEFITING A BRAND IN A BIG WAY LATER.](#) And remember, sending off that Oreo Tweet was a lot cheaper than spending money for 30 seconds of TV advertising time during the big game.

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Along with the game and commercials, the halftime show is another huge draw for viewers as the most-watched musical event of the year. The 2017 halftime show was actually the most-watched musical event of all-time. Just because the game is in pause mode at the half doesn't mean social media will halt.

THE HALFTIME SHOW IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE ENGAGING WITH USERS, TWEETING ABOUT THE SONGS, SPECIAL EFFECTS AND APPAREL OF THE PERFORMERS.

This year, Justin Timberlake will take the stage to headline the Pepsi Super Bowl LII Halftime Show. The 10-time Grammy winner will make his third appearance performing at the Super Bowl, the most for any individual entertainer. He first performed with the boy band NSYNC in 2001, but most will remember his performance with Janet Jackson in 2004, which can be filed under the "be ready for the unexpected" category earlier. Timberlake exposed one of Jackson's breasts in an alleged wardrobe malfunction. Precautions are no doubt taken to avoid any wardrobe malfunctions, but just remember it's also live television and anything can happen.

As the sponsor of the show, Pepsi.com will have content leading up to the Super Bowl to showcase what's in store for the show. This includes behind-the-scenes content with Timberlake and some other promised surprises.

MAKE NOTES ON THE SOCIAL CALENDAR TO CHECK IN WITH PEPSI.COM TO SEE IF THIS CONTENT IS WORTH SHARING OR DISCUSSING ON SOCIAL CHANNELS BEFORE THE GAME OR EVEN DURING THE FIRST HALF.

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Everyone knows commercials are the most fun to tune in to during the Super Bowl. It's when some of the most popular brands around spend top dollar (more than \$5 million per slot) to share some of the most creative ideas in hopes of being remembered as one of the best ads during that particular game. Getting the brand name out there helps, too. [DON'T FORGET TO COMMENT ON VARIOUS COMMERCIALS FOR OTHER BRANDS](#). After all, plenty of users will be out on the social waves sharing their thoughts and critiquing their favorite and not-so-favorite ads.

But as prices keep rising for ad spots, social media has really changed the landscape of advertising. Brands can supplement their TV spots with posts on YouTube and other platforms. Or for many companies that just don't have the cash to compete, social media is a very big benefit for them.

Some companies choose to do a combination of TV and social advertising during the Super Bowl, something that worked well last year for 84 Lumber. This building-supplies marketing company spent about \$15 million for a 90-second ad, but it sent viewers online to see the conclusion of the ad – "The Entire Journey." The first part shown on the broadcast showed what appeared to be a mother and daughter traveling, setting out on a journey.

Sure, \$15 million may be a lot of money, but it worked. 84 Lumber nearly doubled its social audience after the 2017 Super Bowl, gaining more than 65,000 new fans in three days. Other brands that boosted their social media followings included Coca-Cola, AirBNB, KFC, Google, Nintendo, Pepsi, Budweiser, Intel and Audi.

Plenty of brands are more and more turning to social media, however, like Oreo, Esurance and Newcastle Brown Ale. Newcastle, a small brand owned by Heineken, wanted to get people talking about beer around the time of the Super Bowl without spending millions on TV advertising. In 2014, they worked with an ad agency to create a digital campaign poking fun at themselves with actress and musician Anna Kendrick with the theme "If We Made It." Kendrick talks in the ad about not being "beer commercial hot" but is willing to do an ad with the brand for the money. Then days before shooting the ad, the company in the ad said they didn't have any money and Kendrick deadpanned: "Disappointing, because I was really looking forward to the paycheck."

Newcastle also built a website called IfWeMadeIt.com spoofing ads from other brands, plus creating Twitter and Facebook presence along the If We Made It theme. The next year, Newcastle chose to have other brands join them for "Band of Brands." The ad with actress Aubrey Plaza features Super Bowl ad clichés with the point being a bunch of smaller brands could afford to advertise during the Super Bowl broadcast if they all banded together. A total of 37 brands banded together for the final ad in the campaign, though 350 brands worldwide tried to be a part of it. Right away, the videos had 4 million views and more than a billion PR impressions.

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For many people, the Super Bowl is one of the highlights of the year. Maybe it's a gap to break up the post-holiday blues and the winter blues, football fanatics just love the sports aspect, or people want to kick back with some good food and friends. IT'S AN EVENT THAT'S EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS, AND NOW SOCIAL MEDIA IS A BIG PART OF THAT.

DON'T STRESS TOO MUCH ABOUT MAKING SURE EVERYTHING IS PERFECT WITH WHATEVER GOES OUT INTO THE SOCIAL-SPHERE IN REGARD TO THE SUPER BOWL. As long as the basics are in place, with a little preparedness and ability to adapt along the way, everything should work out fine. Enjoy the game and happy Tweeting!

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