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## Companies hope ads get pre-Super Bowl buzz

By **DOUG SHERWIN**, The Daily Transcript  
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If you have a Facebook page or friends that like to send you YouTube clips, chances are you've seen a few of this year's Super Bowl ads already.

And that's no coincidence.

Companies are purposely releasing their pricey advertisements -- or a version of them -- early in an attempt to build buzz for Sunday's game, according to industry analysts.

"They were going to get out anyway, so brands have decided instead of fighting it, to use it as a tool," said Greg Joumas, senior vice president and director of client services for the San Diego marketing agency **Bailey Gardiner**.

"They're releasing long formats of the ad. It builds a lot of excitement, so now everyone's excited to see the shortened version. Will it be different? Will it have different scenes?"

The pre-released commercials won't prevent people from watching on Sunday but build intrigue, he said.

"People are so used to seeing things now on YouTube and other digital platforms that it's changed the way marketers think," added Joumas, who's also the chairman of the San Diego Ad Club. "They realize they can get the best of both worlds: get eyeballs on it pre-Super Bowl and not lose people (watching Sunday)."

Companies are using social media sites like Twitter and Facebook to expand their advertising campaigns in the hopes of gaining even more visibility.

"You're seeing a much more integrated strategy around what companies are trying to do," said George Belch, chairman of the San Diego State University marketing department.

He said one of their goals is to make an ad that will go viral, which can have a lasting effect long after the Super Bowl ends.

Belch cited last year's Volkswagen commercial that featured a boy in a Darth Vader costume trying to move objects on command as a prime example. The ad has been viewed 50 million times on YouTube.

"That is a lot of impressions for free," Belch said. "And someone sent it to me, not a marketer."

A 30-second spot for this year's Super Bowl costs \$3.5 million, putting a lot of pressure on marketers to develop a clever commercial.

While the stakes are higher, the philosophy behind each ad should be the same as it is for any other commercial, according to Rachel Kerestes, strategy director for **MiresBall**, West Coast-based brand agency.

"It's got to be true to your brand," she said. "It's not just about being the funniest or the most outrageous. It has to connect with the audience -- the right audience -- and be authentic to who you are or otherwise none of it matters."

And Kerestes said there is such a thing as bad publicity.

"If you're offending your audience, that's not good," she said. "An ad is a paid way of promoting yourself. You want to do that in a way that's going to be helpful."

SDSU's Belch said last year's Eminem Chrysler ad with the tagline "Imported from Detroit," was a good example of the effect a strong Super Bowl ad can have.

"It really resonated with consumers," he said.

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