



# **SUPER BOWL ADS VS. INFLUENCER ADS:**

**A COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS**



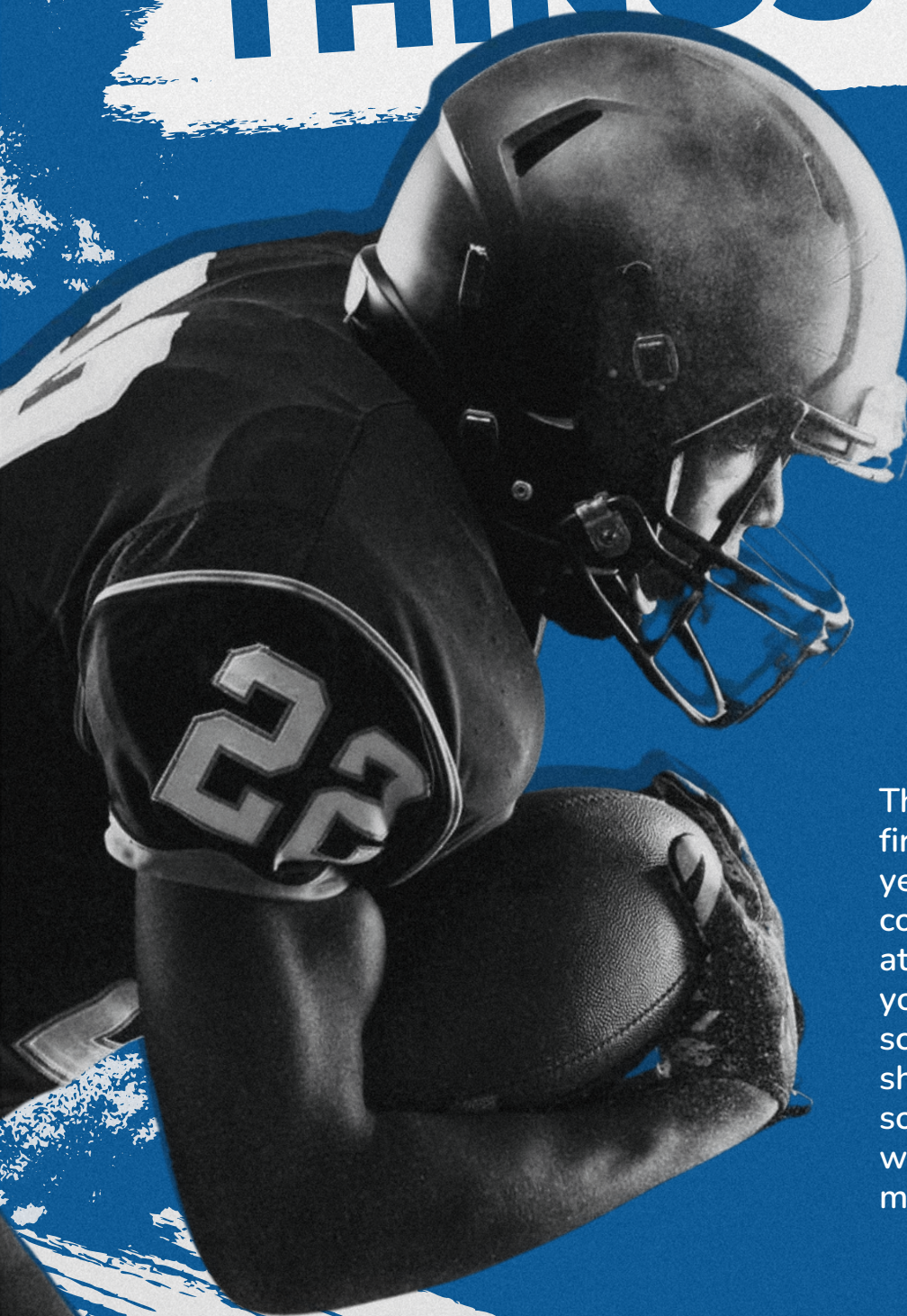
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Super Bowl is one of, if not the largest, annual events in marketing. In 2024, Super Bowl ads cost **\$7 million for 30 seconds** of ad time—that's around **\$233,333** a second! Costs for the 2025 Super Bowl registered at \$8 million (around \$266,666 a second), with a range of \$1-5 million in production costs. However, the question remains: Was their money spent wisely?

This report compares the effectiveness of Super Bowl advertising against influencer marketing in terms of cost, reach, engagement, and ROI. For comparison, we take the average 2024 Super Bowl ad and leveraged it against a single **\$1 million dollar influencer marketing campaign** we created with our client USIMS. Here's our key notes:

- The 2024 Super Bowl had a total of **123.4 million viewers**, making it the most watched television event in history.
- Super Bowl ads have an average of **\$4.60 per dollar spent ROI**, while influencer campaigns can deliver both higher engagement and targeted conversions at a lower cost.
- In addition to higher impressions, our campaign boasts thousands of engagements such as comments, shares, and likes that broadcast content cannot replicate.
- The Super Bowl is effective for short term buzz, while influencer marketing promotes engagement and brand affinity over time, particularly with brand ambassadors.
- Our sample campaign leveraged **18 million impressions** at the cost of \$1 million. On a \$7 million budget, an expected amount of at least **126 million overall impressions** would be achieved via influencer marketing.

# LET'S KICK THINGS OFF



The Super Bowl is one of the first sporting events in the year that allows everyone to congregate together and yell at their TV screens. Whether you're yelling at the ref or screaming for the halftime show, there seems to be something for everyone to want to make sure they don't miss the Super Bowl.

# LET'S KICK THINGS OFF



The Super Bowl offers a massive pool of captive viewers with some of the widest demographics imaginable. Purchasing Super Bowl ad space requires the ability to interact and be of worthwhile interest to all viewers, or attempt to leave a lasting impression for top-of-mind awareness and buzz. While some ads fade away into obscurity, some have real-life interactions to them such as the individuals affected by the Tubi Interruption Ad from 2024.

However, as the advertising landscape evolves, influencer marketing has become a formidable and cheaper alternative. Influencer ads are highly scalable and allow brands to reach specific niches and demographics with ease unlike broadcasting to a mass audience. Unlike Super Bowl ads, influencer campaigns are more flexible, less costly, and offer real-time adjustments based on performance metrics. As consumers continue to shift towards digital platforms, influencer marketing continues to grow in relevance and widespread adoption due to its higher engagement and ROI from social-first strategies.

# COST ANALYSIS

SUPERBOWL AD TIME HAS SKYROCKETED OVER THE PAST DECADE:

**\$5M**

*Super Bowl 51, 2017*

**\$5.2M**

*Super Bowl 52, 2018*

**\$5.3M**

*Super Bowl 53, 2019*

**\$5.6M**

*Super Bowl 54, 2020*

**\$5.5M**

*Super Bowl 55, 2021*

**\$6.5M**

*Super Bowl 56, 2022*

**\$7M**

*Super Bowl 57, 2023*

**\$7M**

*Super Bowl 58, 2024*

**\$7-8M**

*Super Bowl 59, 2025*



# PRODUCTION COSTS

**\$1-5M**

DEPENDING ON CELEBRITY INVOLVEMENT AND CREATIVE EXECUTION

PRE-GAME AD COSTS

**\$4.5M**

*for 30 seconds*

POST-GAME AD COSTS

**\$4M**

*for 30 seconds*

**2024  
SUPER  
BOWL  
AD **\$7M**  
COST**

*per 30-second spot*

**2025  
SUPER  
BOWL  
AD **\$8M**  
COST**

*per 30-second spot*

**SUPER BOWL ADS**

An important principle to influencer marketing is influencer sizing. Each category will have different rates and it's important to pick what types of influencers you want to target to best match your campaign. In accordance to standard agency guidelines - the size tiers are as follows:

**Nano**  
**<10K**  
Followers

**Micro**  
**10K-100K**  
Followers

**Mid-Tier**  
**100K-500K**  
Followers

**Macro**  
**500K-1M+**  
Followers

When it comes to pricing, the standard may wildly vary depending on how much the influencer values their services, as well as different rates for the type of content and platform.

| Micro        | Mid-tier      | Macro-        | Celebrity     |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>\$1K-</b> | <b>\$10K-</b> | <b>\$50K-</b> | <b>\$250K</b> |
| <b>\$10K</b> | <b>\$50K</b>  | <b>\$250K</b> | <b>-\$1M+</b> |

*Addison Rae's activation during the Super Bowl cost approximately \$500K, meaning brands could have activated her 16 times for the cost of a single Super Bowl ad.*



# INFLUENCER ADS

# COST PER MILLE COMPARISON

OUR TEAM MANAGED TO CREATE ABOUT A \$20 CPM RATE, WHICH IS \$50 CHEAPER THAN THE CPM OFFERED FROM A SUPER BOWL AD.

**SUPER  
BOWL**

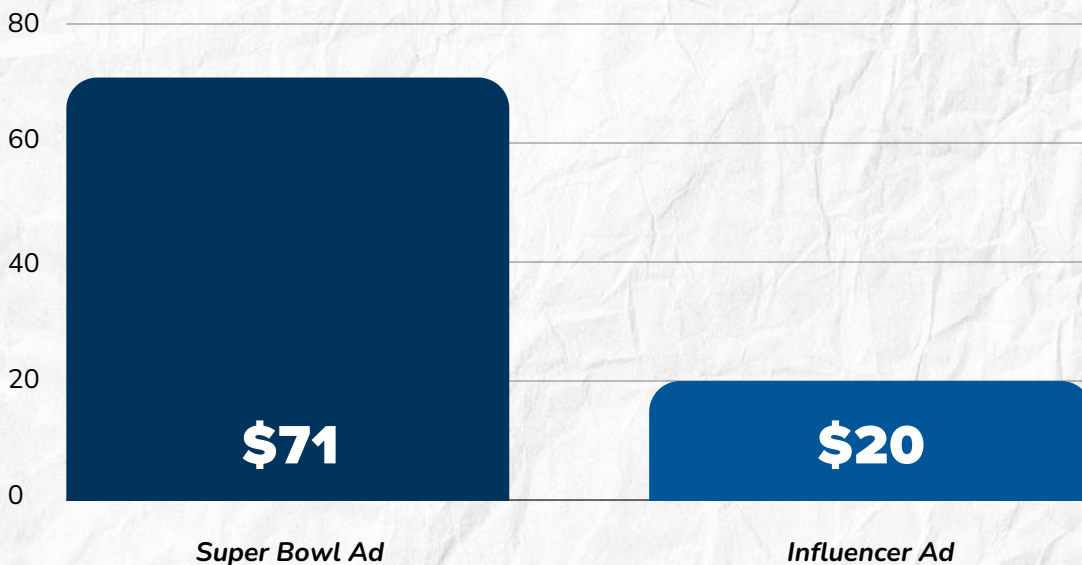
**\$71**

CPM

**INFLU  
ENCER**

**~\$20**

CPM



Campaign budgets can cost anywhere from \$25K to over \$1 million. What companies put in is directly correlated to what they'll get out of it using smart influencer marketing tactics and correct positioning.

How about doing it in-house? While it may be slightly cheaper and offer direct relationships with influencers, it requires a dedicated team, expertise in the field, and long-term management.

Alternatively, working with an agency like NeoReach can get you access to extensive influencer networks, influencer marketing expertise, and overall, a better marketing experience.



# REACH COMPARISON



The Super Bowl remains the biggest TV event, drawing 123.4 million viewers and over 200 million across all networks, making it the most-watched broadcast in history. However, its reach is largely U.S.-centric and lacks global impact. With just 30 seconds to make an impression, advertisers must create high-impact, memorable content—but Super Bowl ads often struggle to maintain engagement beyond the event.

# SUPER BOWL ADS:

**123.4M** *viewers in 2024, the  
highest viewership  
in history*

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**200+M** *unduplicated audience  
across all networks*

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**PRIMARILY  
U.S.-BASED** *Limited  
global  
reach*

## MULTI- PLATFORM EXPOSURE

*TikTok, Instagram, & YouTube*

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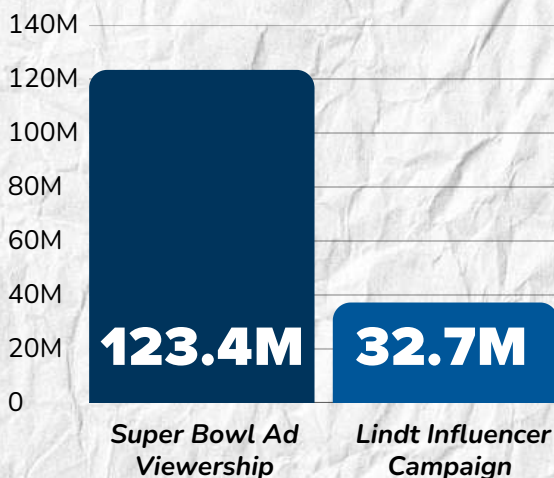
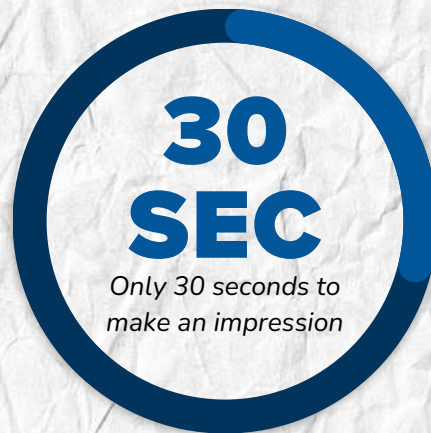
## HIGHLY TARGETED REACH

*Highly targeted reach,  
scalable for local, national,  
or global campaigns*

# INFLU ENCER ADS:

Influencer marketing, on the other hand, spans multiple platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, allowing brands to foster ongoing consumer connections rather than relying on a single moment. It also enables retargeting, reinforcing brand messages through “The Rule of Seven,” which states that consumers need to see an ad at least seven times before making a purchase. With precise demographic targeting, influencer marketing is often more efficient and cost-effective than traditional mass-market advertising.

For example, Lindt supplemented its Super Bowl ad with influencer content featuring Kylie Kelce on TikTok and Instagram, showcasing how Lindt truffles balance the saltiness of game-day snacks. This campaign alone generated 32.7 million views—25% of the Super Bowl’s total audience. With additional investment in influencer marketing, expanded creative, and strategic targeting, Lindt could have exceeded the Super Bowl’s total reach at a lower cost.



Kylie Kelce’s influencer campaign for Lindt generated 30 million views, equivalent to 25% of total Super Bowl viewership

**30M**

IEWS

**25%**

total Super Bowl viewership

Lindt  
Life is a Ball

# ENGAGEMENT METRICS



# SUPER BOWL ADS:

Super Bowl advertising offers a captive audience with passive viewing and no direct engagement with the advertisement. According to [TVision](#), 2024's Super Bowl ads had an attention index score of 118.4. The ideal benchmark of the scale is 100, indicating that audiences surely are paying attention. Regardless, targeting every individual in the United States is not the best plan on its own and only resonates with applicable audiences.

## PASSIVE VIEWING

*no direct engagement*

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## VIEWER DROP-OFF RATES

*during commercials.*

## METRICS

*like comments, shares, and click-through rates.*

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## CASE STUDIES

*of successful campaigns.*

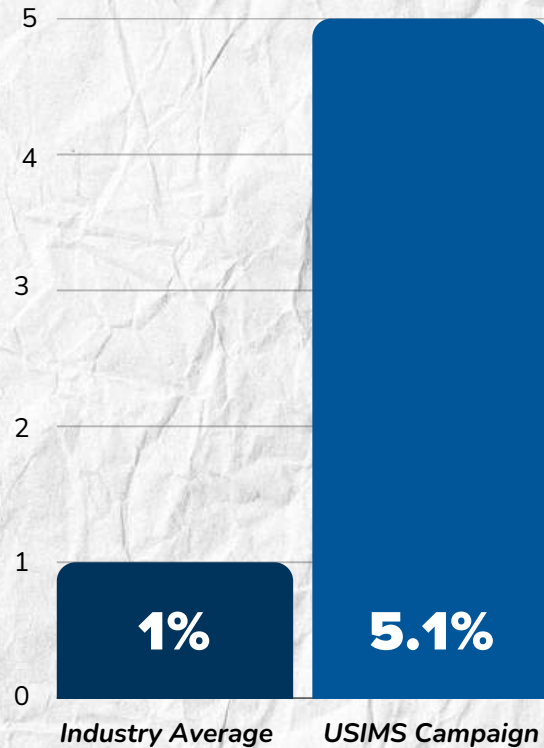
# INFLUENCER ADS:

Influencer marketing is highly dynamic, offering real-time adaptability and the ability to optimize campaigns based on performance metrics. Unlike traditional Super Bowl ads, influencer marketing generates significantly higher engagement rates through likes, comments, shares, and direct conversions, allowing for interactive audience participation.

Using our USIMS campaign as a sample, our content had an overall 5.1% engagement rate for the 18 million views that were garnered. With an industry average of 1% engagement, we were able to produce 5 times the amount of engagement content will get on average. Not only is an influencer campaign more effective, but it also offers excellent tracking and reporting for instant feedback on how your audiences feel and are responding to your creatives.

**18M**

VIEWS



**INFLUENCER  
ADS:**

# ROI COMPARISON



# SUPER BOWL ADS:

2024's overall ad effectiveness scores dropped below norm (97 vs. 100)

**\$233,333**

Cost per second:

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**56.7**

Cost per impression

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**4.60 PER \$1 SPENT**

ROI

# COST PER ENGAGEMENT

*Lower due to direct audience targeting*

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**ROI:**

*Can exceed Super Bowl ads when supported by long-term activations*

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**22% BOOST**

*Brands that extend beyond the game see 22% boost in word-of-mouth.*

# INFLUENCER ADS:



# FLEXIBILITY & SCALABILITY

Super Bowl ads are a spectacle—there's no denying that. They command attention, spark conversations, and, for a lucky few, become part of pop culture history. But for all their grandeur, they come with a big limitation: once they air, that's it. There's no second chance, no tweaking based on audience response, no way to course-correct if the message doesn't land. Brands pour millions into a single 30-second moment, crossing their fingers that it sticks

Influencer marketing, on the other hand, is built for adaptability and precision. Instead of a one-and-done approach, brands can test different creatives, see what resonates, and fine-tune their messaging in real-time. They're not just hoping for engagement—they're actively shaping it. By partnering with influencers, brands can have ongoing conversations with their audience, rather than just making a grand statement and walking away.

And the best part? It's scalable. Whether a brand wants to go big with macro-influencers or build deep, trusting relationships through micro-creators, there's room to adjust strategy, optimize performance, and maximize ROI. In today's fast-moving digital landscape, that kind of flexibility isn't just valuable—it's essential.

# SUPER BOWL ADS:

## **ONE-TIME EVENT**

*with no real-time adjustments*

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## **LIMITED ABILITY**

*to test creative effectiveness beforehand*

## **MULTI-TOUCH CAMPAIGNS**

*adaptable to audience feedback*

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## **ONGOING OPTIMIZATIONS**

*based on performance analytics*

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## **SIMULTANEOUS TESTING**

*Multiple creatives can be tested  
simultaneously*

# INFLU ENCER ADS:

# CASE STUDY

**CERA VE** MICHAEL CERA |  
SUPER BOWL 2024



# CERA VE MICHAEL CERA SUPER BOWL 2024

CeraVe's Super Bowl 2024 ad is a masterclass in leveraging word-of-mouth marketing and influencer marketing before the Super Bowl ad had even gone live. Incredibly, CeraVe's 2024 ad was their first Super Bowl ad and here we are a year later, still talking about and praising it.

The idea behind the campaign came from Reddit threads found by the team behind the campaign, Ogilvy. The Reddit threads were speculating years ago that Michael Cera was connected to the brand because of his name. From there, the brand itself fueled rumors online by having Michael Cera walk around New York City holding huge bags filled with the products.

CeraVe is already an extremely popular brand online, especially amongst TikTokers; #CeraVe being used on 312.8K posts as of the writing of this report. Because of their great reputation on TikTok, it wasn't hard for them to be able to recruit influencers and get them in on the prank. However, they didn't just activate skincare influencers, CeraVe specifically sought out commentator influencers, looking for them to dissect the rumors down and debunk them.

Kirbie Johnson, an entertainment and beauty reporter and producer and host of celebrity interviews, partnered with CeraVe, saying in her TikTok, "As entertaining as it would be if somebody like Michael Cera created CeraVe, we know a few things that refute this." She went on to give bullet points about the brand that appeal to many that use it, like the fact that it is developed by dermatologists.



Instead of releasing a teaser for their Super Bowl ad, CeraVe relied on their influencer marketing as their teaser. If the fact that we're still talking about the ad a year later doesn't tell you the success of the campaign, I don't know what will.

The takeaway from this campaign is that influencer marketing done well can take on a life of its own. While Super Bowl ads hold our attention, they rarely get spoken about past a couple of weeks after the big game, and that's especially because of the lack of engagement that broadcast advertisements have.

# CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

## THE QUESTION

Super Bowl ads are effective, expensive, and widely variable in their ROI. However, they offer unparalleled reach. Influencer campaigns provide higher engagement, scalability, and better targeting at a fraction of the cost. So, what should you do?

## OUR RECOMMENDATION

Brands should consider combining both strategies, like CeraVe did; get the Super Bowl ad slot but hype up that ad slot with influencer marketing for sustained engagement and conversions prior to the big game. Influencer campaigns allow for sustained and cost-effective audience engagement. While the best strategy depends on your objectives, budget, and target audience, all of these are much more within your control with an influencer marketing campaign.